

Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery



Attendance Policy

March 2025

Champions for Attendance:

Headteacher: Mrs C Parker and Designated Safeguarding Leader

Attendance Officer: Mrs N Butler and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leader

Governor: Mrs J Fendall

LA Education Welfare Officer: Mrs A. Gaunt

In line with the Equalities Act (2010) we aim to ensure that any child, irrespective of protected characteristics (These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) is treated fairly and with respect. The law states that the public sector equality duty includes a general duty to, "Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not." This policy can be adapted to suit individual needs.

Rationale

Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery believes regular attendance is vital for all our children if they are to gain the most from their education. There are clear documented links between regular attendance and positive attainment. Punctuality is also very important to ensure each child gets the most out of school. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late for school. All young people have a right to an education. A child is of statutory school age between 5 and 16. Parents / Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends regularly and punctually. If a child does not, Parents / Carers may be breaking the law.

At Broadbent Fold Primary School and Nursery, we aim for every child to have attendance of 100% and expect 98% or above. We recognise excellent attendance with yearly attendance certificates and rewards.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Roles & Responsibilities

The **Headteacher** in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and our attendance officer, take responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures. They are the key people who motivate and lead the staff by demonstrating a commitment to promoting good attendance by:

- Leading public celebrations of good attendance by awarding certificates for whole class attendance, awarding certificates and badges for 100% attendance at the end of a school year. Improved attendance awards to motivate pupils and families.
- Providing attendance reports to the Governing Body of the school termly and annually.
- Being available for parents who may wish to discuss specific problems or in-school difficulties which their child is experiencing.
- Providing information to governors, parents, the LA attendance officer and the DfE regarding the monitoring and evaluation of the school's attendance policy and the associated in-school practices.
- Any attendance below 93% will result in a warning letter and meeting being put into place.
- Monitoring weekly attendance levels, half termly child percentages and contacting families whose children are at risk of falling below 90% attendance.
- Put into place Attendance Agreements with families when falling below 90%.
- Communicating with and reporting to the Local Authority on attendance matters and seeking relevant advice.

The **Governing Body** of the school is actively engaged in promoting good attendance at the school by supporting and encouraging children and teachers in their work. They achieve this by:

- Leading and taking part in public celebrations of good attendance.
- Supporting staff in the development of a whole school approach to promoting good attendance.
- Supporting staff in setting up appropriate attendance targets for the whole school.
- Working with the Headteacher to monitor and evaluate attendance trends in the school.
- Delegating authority (if necessary) to the Headteacher to decide whether or not an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Review data with the Headteacher on vulnerable groups / individuals.

- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Due to their regular daily contact with children, class teachers are ideally placed to assess whether the explanations received for a child's absence or lateness are reasonable, or if the child is at an early stage in developing a pattern of absence. At Broadbent Fold, we recognise that building good relationships with children and parents is vital in promoting good attendance.

Staff will:

- Praise and celebrate regular attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Identify children who are beginning to develop, or have developed, a pattern of absence.
- Welcome children back after they have been absent due to illness.
- Where necessary, take specific steps to assist children and their families who are returning to school when they have been absent due to illness.
- Be a positive, active role model.
- Refer any concerns to the Headteacher or Attendance Officer.
- Organise online learning where required.

The **attendance officer** is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

We believe all children should attend school regularly if we they are to reach their full potential. We encourage children to appreciate the importance of attending school regularly and on time, and to have a positive working attitude.

A **pupil** should:

- Aim for 100% attendance, only being absent for genuine reasons.
- If he/she arrives late, parents must report to the school office to say that they have arrived in school and the reason for lateness. Children will be marked as late.
- Not leave the school premises during the school day without permission and only when accompanied by an adult. Year 6 pupils can walk home alone, inline with our Walking Home Policy.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.
- Adhering to the statements in the 'Home-School' agreement.
- Accessing their child's attendance certificate on Arbor and monitor.

Morning Registration:

Nursery	9am
Reception	8.45am
Key Stage 1 and Lower KS2:	8.40am
Upper Key Stage 2:	8.50am

On arrival to school the children go straight into their classrooms to start learning. Children should be ready, in their classrooms, with the appropriate equipment for registration. Children arriving after registration time without an authorised reason are marked as late (**L**). Registration closes 30 minutes after individual class start times. Any child arriving after this time, without a valid reason for their absence, will have their attendance marked as late after register closes (**U**). The school has an effective procedure to monitor children's absence. Class teachers regularly check the attendance of their class and will follow up a child's absence with appropriate personnel in school or with the child's parents.

The issues of confidentiality and child protection underpin any issues regarding attendance. The school has a clear and explicit confidentiality policy that ensures good practice throughout the school which both children and parents should understand. It must be

understood that teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality regarding attendance issues.

Strategies for Maintaining Good Attendance and Punctuality

The school actively promotes good attendance and punctuality through involving children in the formation of this and other school policies and documents. These include the Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, School Values and the Home-School Agreement contract. Messages will be sent home to praise the pupil and families for attendance and improvements in attendance. Certificates rewarding 100% and good attendance (98%+) will be given in celebration assemblies on a termly basis. For particular achievements and improvements in attendance a certificate will be given to families / children. End of the year 100% awards will be given in a special assembly. Whole class attendance will be celebrated weekly and individual attendance is clear on end of year reports.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Religious Observance

Requests for absence for religious observance should be made in writing to the Headteacher. These will only be granted where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which parents belong.

Inclement Weather

We understand that it may be difficult for children to attend school due to inclement weather, despite this, we will always endeavour to keep the school open. Please see our Adverse Weather policy.

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Illness

The school acknowledges that children may have unavoidable absences due to illness. It is important that children are not sent to school when they are unwell, especially in the event of a stomach upset when we request that children are kept off for at least 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.

Medical appointments

Medical and dental appointments should, wherever possible, be avoided during the school day to minimise disruption to the learning of the child and that of other children. Medical absence will usually be authorised although proof of the appointment will be requested by the school. Online learning may be put into place. Schools to liaise with families where this is needed.

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Missing education

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

Absence procedures

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school system.

First Day Absence

Parents/carers must contact the school before **9am** if their child is absent. This can be done through email or telephone. Parents/carers must provide details of the person leaving the message, the child's name and their reason for absence. If you have chosen to remove your child from school for a holiday, then this must also be followed up in writing.

If no contact has been made by 9.30am then the attendance officer will attempt to contact parents/carers through Arbor or telephone to find out why the child is absent.

Information received is transferred to the registers and class teachers informed. In the case of identified vulnerable pupils and children on the Attendance Monitoring List, the

information is passed to the headteacher who will make a decision on any action to be taken.

Second and Third Day Absence

If no contact has been made on the second day, a telephone call will be made to the parents/carers and the adult listed as the second emergency contact e.g. grandparent.

Continuing Absence

If no contact has been made after 3 days, then a pupil may be considered as “missing in education”. For this reason, an attempt will be made, by the school, to hand deliver a 3-day absence letter reminder. The letter will request that the parent/carer contacts school as a matter of urgency. It will state that failure to do so will result in collaboration with other agencies which may include Education Welfare Services, Police or Social Services. If no contact is made, then a CME (Child Missing in Education) form will be submitted to the Education Welfare Service (EWS).

Daily confirmation of absence - Parents/Carers must provide daily confirmation of absence for every day that a child is absent

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the LA, on a **termly** basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Term-time absences and Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil’s education into account. The headteacher’s decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the

headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. It is very unlikely that a holiday will be granted in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances (examples may include **but are not limited to**: parents work in HM Forces or other sectors where annual leave is limited; the family has suffered a bereavement or has a member of family with a terminal illness). Following a request for a leave of absence during term-time, school will respond in writing, stating the reason for the decision made.

When an absence is authorised, if a child fails to return to school by the agreed return date, without good reason. Only in **exceptional circumstances** will a child be granted leave of absence **exceeding 5 school days / 10 sessions** (1 day = 2 sessions). Such circumstances may include the following:

- Loss of passport
- Serious illness/accident to child or accompanying family member
- Death of a family member
- Missed or delayed flights
- War/civil unrest
- Severe weather conditions

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are categorised as unauthorised. Tameside LA considers that regular attendance at school is of such importance that Penalty Notices may be used in a range of situations where unauthorised absence occurs. It may be one of the actions considered if a child does not return to school on the date specified following a term-time holiday. Penalty Notices will be issued to families who take children out for holidays without the permission from the headteacher.

SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 consecutive school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Early Help Assessment.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

Persistent absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Penalty notices and legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after **one term**, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a notice to improve is necessary.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's ['Working together to improve school attendance'](#) guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.

- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a **half-termly, termly and full-year** basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

School will follow Keeping Children Safe in Education and do the following to improve attendance / find out where a child is.

- Our Attendance Officer will contact home on the first day of absence via telephone and/e-mail.
- Any subsequent absences with no contact our Attendance Officer will do a follow-up phone call / e-mail/ complete a home visit with the Headteacher.
- Send out warning letters if attendance starts to cause a concern – this is a gentle reminder.
- Arrange Attendance Panels with Headteacher and Attendance Officer to look at ways of supporting the family and improving attendance. To offer Early Help or external support.
- Contact Education Welfare for Guidance and Support if no improvement.

Closure of School at Short Notice:

In the event of inclement weather, the headteacher (or SLT) will liaise with the Site Manager, assess the situation on site, check with the Met Office website and make a decision as to whether the school is to close. The decision will be communicated to staff, children and their

families via e-mails and posted on the school website. Our aim is to make a decision as soon as possible and at least one hour prior to the scheduled school opening time. It may be unavoidable, that a decision is made during the day to close the school. This policy should be read in conjunction with Our 'Adverse Weather' Policy and these policies can be found on our school website.

Every day and minute counts:

If you are late every day by 5 minutes, it adds up to over 3 days learning lost every year.

Minutes Late	Days of Learning Lost
5 Minutes	3.4 Days (98.4% Attendance)
10 Minutes	6.9 Days (97.6% Attendance)
15 Minutes	10.3 Days / 2 Weeks (94.7% Attendance)
20 Minutes	13.8 Days (92.9% Attendance)
30 Minutes	20.7 Days / 4 weeks (89.2% Attendance)

Be aware of how much learning time is lost with increasing numbers of days absent:

