



Brentwood School

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy is applicable to all pupils in the Preparatory School, including those in the EYFS.

Introduction

Every child has a fundamental right to be educated and regular attendance is extremely important if children are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. To ensure that this is achieved parents and teachers have a duty to ensure maximum attendance at school. All children are expected to attend school except when they are ill, in which case they should be fully recovered before returning. Punctuality is equally important.

The safety and wellbeing of all our pupils at Brentwood School is our highest priority and it is, therefore, the duty of staff to follow up unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner and to identify and deal with children who go missing from education (see *School Attendance; Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities*, September 2018)

What to do if a child has to be away

If a child is unfit for school, the parent or guardian should contact the school before 08.25 on the pupil's first day of absence which has not previously been agreed with the school and each subsequent day of absence. Pastoral leaders/teachers through the administrative staff will contact parents or guardians on the first day and consecutive day of absence if there has been no communication from the parents or guardians explaining reasons for absence. Absence will not be authorised without legitimate explanation. Leave may be granted in an emergency or for medical appointments that are unavoidably during school time but, wherever possible, appointments should be made outside school hours.

The Headmaster has a duty to ensure that term dates are protected and leave of absence will not normally be granted for family holidays in term time. In exceptional circumstances parents should write directly to the Headmaster of the Preparatory or Head of Early Years and Key Stage 1 explaining fully why the request is being made to remove a pupil from school in term time.

If for any reason a child has any concerns about attending school, it is important that parents or guardians discuss the problem with the school at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate measures can be put in place to address the issues and support the child.

What constitutes Authorised and Unauthorised Absence?

Authorised absences are those which the school agree are unavoidable, e.g. illness or family bereavement, and absences which leave has been given such as agreed holidays or medical appointments.

Unauthorised absences are those that the school considers unreasonable, to be determined by the Headmaster or Head of Early Years and Key Stage 1. An absence is unauthorised until acceptable explanation is received and it is for the school, not the parent / guardian, to decide whether an absence should be recorded as authorised or unauthorised. Providing confirmation of the reason for the absence does not automatically register the absence as authorised, this is solely at the discretion of the Headmaster or Head of Early Years and Key Stage 1.

Lateness

Should a child be unavoidably late and miss the register they must report directly to the school office where their attendance will be recorded on the school register. Arrival after registration is completed will result in a 'Late' mark being recorded on the register.

Monitoring and Review

The Deputy Headteacher (Preparatory) and the Head of Early Years and Key Stage 1 has responsibility for monitoring the attendance of children in the school and will work with parents to resolve any difficulties. Attendance is reviewed at the end of each term and the Deputy Head or Head of Early Years and Key Stage 1 will contact the parent or guardian should a child's attendance fall to 85% or below. Where necessary, measures will be agreed to improve attendance which will continue to be monitored closely. If attendance falls below 85% in subsequent terms parents will be contacted in writing and asked to meet with the Headmaster or Head of Early Years and Key Stage 1. Where attendance repeatedly falls below 85% and there is concern regarding unauthorised absence the authority attendance officer will be informed.

The law states that it is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to ensure that a child attends school regularly and on time. Neglect of this responsibility will result in the school taking action to ensure attendance and ultimately can lead to further action being taken (Education Act 1996).

Within these regulations, the School has a legal duty to report certain attendance concerns to the Local Authority:

- ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence);
- Failure to attend regularly;
- Deletion from the school register when the next school is not known.

As outlined in 'Children missing education (2016)', the School must notify Essex Local Authority within five days when we remove or add a pupil's name to the admissions register at non-standard transitions, ie, where a compulsory school age child leaves a school before completing the school's final year or joins the school after the beginning of the school's first year.

The School records where children are moving onto when they leave Brentwood and the start-dates at their new schools. Pupil information, including pupil academic reports,

SEND and safeguarding concerns, is transferred to the new school. The School also requests this information from a pupil's former school, including details of any safeguarding concerns.

School Registration Procedures.

Attendance registers at Brentwood School are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (see also amendments to the regulations, 2016). The register is backed up on a daily basis and stored for at least three years.

Class Teachers are required to complete the electronic register at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions and enter a reason for absence. Where the reason is not known at the outset, an 'N' ('no reason provided') is entered. However, Teachers are required to establish the reason as soon as possible and update the register accordingly. Where a pupil joins or leaves the school, details will be included or deleted in accordance with the provisions of the *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006* (see also amendments to the regulations, 2016).