



Brentwood School Attendance Policy

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

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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.

The Law

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).

Punctuality

Pupils are expected to be punctual and arrive at school on time. Start times vary depending on the Key Stage and are set out in Table 1. below.

Should a pupil be unavoidably late they must report directly to the Prep School Office or Headmaster's Reception (as appropriate) where they will need to sign in.

Table 1. The start and close of the school day (exc. wraparound, co-curricular or enrichment activities)

School/Key Stage		School Starts	School ends
Prep	Foundation and EYFS	9:00	15:00
	KS1	9:00	15:15
	KS2	8:20	Y3/4 - 15:40 Y5/6 - 15:50 (Times may vary on activity days)
Senior	KS3, 4 and 5	8:30	15:55

Reporting absence

If a pupil is unfit for school, the parent / guardian should report this to the school on the pupil's first day of absence which has not previously been agreed with the school.

The absence reporting system is available on **My School Portal** and can be found under the 'Parent Forms' tab. The absence reporting form should be completed **before the school start time** (see Table 1. The start and close of the School day) and must state the reason for absence as well as duration if, for example, the absence is for only part of the day. If the absence is for more than a day, the parent or guardian must complete the form for each subsequent day of absence.

The school will contact parents/guardians if there has been no communication from the parents/guardians explaining reasons for absence. However, 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.

If for any reason a child does not want to attend school, it is important that parents or guardians discuss the problem with the school at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate measures, such as additional pastoral support and/or the support of appropriate external agencies, can be put in place to address the issues.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

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

Unauthorised absences are those that the school considers unreasonable, as determined by the Headmaster or Head of Prep. An absence is unauthorised until acceptable explanation is received and it is for the school, not the parent or 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 Prep.

Requesting leave of absence

The Headmaster and Head of Prep have 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 may submit a leave request via **My School Portal**. The Leave Request Form can be found under the 'Parent Forms' tab. Full details of the request should be given and a decision will be duly communicated directly to the parent or guardian.

Persistent or Severe absence

The school reports the following attendance issues to the local authority:

- More than 10 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence;
- 15 or more consecutive or cumulative days due to illness where additional support to continue with education may be required from the local authority;
- Failure to attend regularly (where attendance repeatedly fell below 90% without good reason and there was concern regarding unauthorised absence);
- Deletion from the school register when the next school is not known.

Form teachers are responsible for bringing any causes for concern to the attention of the Head of Year or Senior Attendance Champion (Deputy Head Pastoral of either the Senior or Prep School) who, working with form teachers and the pastoral team, will pursue any issues that require following up with a pupil's parents or guardians and with the Local Authority as appropriate.

Issues which may affect a pupil's attendance

Physical ill health

If a child is unable to attend school because of physical illness, parents should inform the school on the first day of the absence and keep the school informed via My School Portal on each subsequent day of absence.

In limited circumstances where a pupil is not able to attend school in the short-term but is able to engage with school work remotely, for example as a result of a hospital stay, recovery from short-term infectious illnesses or injuries where attendance on site may inhibit recovery, following the guidance on home learning linked to the Safeguarding policy, the school will work with the pupil, parent and relevant health care professionals (as appropriate) so that they can keep on track with their learning and stay in touch with their teachers and peers.

Mental health issues

The School sets and maintains high expectations for the attendance, engagement and punctuality of all pupils, including those who are nervous or anxious about attending school, and recognises that if a pupil has a social, emotional or mental health issue, particularly a severe issue for which they are receiving clinical treatment, there can be attendance challenges.

As outlined in the DfE guidance document for schools, 'Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance' (February 2023), 'many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly.'

In order to support children who are feeling worried about coming into school, there is a strong pastoral network in place in school which includes the Form Teacher or Tutor, Heads and Deputy Heads of Year, Pastoral Mentors and School Counsellors and we work in partnership with parents to help the child or young person overcome barriers to, or difficulties with, attendance.

In addition to the DfE guidance document, 'Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance' (February 2023), the School follows the Essex Local Authority guidance to schools, '[Let's Talk, We Miss You. Best practice and guidance for maximising school attendance including emotionally based school avoidance](#)'.

Pupils with long-term medical conditions or any other physical or mental health needs affecting attendance, including those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), may require additional support to continue their education and the school will work with the pupil, parents, external professionals and the Local Authority as required.

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Attendance Champions (Deputy Head Pastoral for the Senior and Deputy Head Pastoral for the Prep School) and the Director of EYFS have responsibility for:

Monitoring the attendance of children in the school and will work with Heads of Year and parents to resolve any difficulties.

Regularly reviewing attendance and contacting the parent / guardian where there are any concerns about a pupil's attendance. Where necessary, agreeing measures to help improve attendance, which will continue to be monitored closely.

Escalation: If attendance continues to be a concern in subsequent half terms, without good reason for the absence, parents will be contacted in writing and a meeting will be arranged. The School will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more, or may require additional support from the local authority due to illness related absence (15 or more consecutive or cumulative days).

Maintaining the Admissions Register (The School roll)

Where a pupil joins or leaves the School, details will be included or deleted in accordance with the provisions of the [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#).

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**, i.e., 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, are transferred to the new School. The School also requests this information from a pupil's former School, including details of any safeguarding concerns.

Further help: Who to contact

If you have specific questions or concerns regarding any aspect of school attendance Policy please contact the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Prep	Foundation & EYFS & KS1	Roz Townsend Director of EYFS	townsendr@brentwood.essex.sch.uk
	KS2	Susannah Trowell Senior Attendance Champion (for the Prep School) Prep Deputy Head (Pastoral)	trowells@brentwood.essex.sch.uk
Senior	KS3, 4 & 5	Nicky Jenkin Senior Attendance Champion (for the Senior School) Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)	nij@brentwood.essex.sch.uk

For any queries or matters about attendance on a day-to-day basis please contact:

Prep	Foundation & EYFS KS1 & KS2	Jo Smith Prep School Receptionist	smithj@brentwood.essex.sch.uk
Senior	KS3, 4 & 5	Claire Pearce Senior School Attendance Officer	pearcec@brentwood.essex.sch.uk

To Report absence, and request leave please use My School Portal as set out on page 3 of this policy.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Attendance registers at Brentwood School are maintained in accordance with the [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#). The attendance register is relevant to all day pupils of compulsory school age. In the interests of welfare, health and safety, pastoral care and educational benefit, attendance registers are maintained in the same way for pupils in the Sixth Form.

All attendance data is stored on the iSAMS database and registers are backed up on a daily basis and stored for at least six years.

Each attendance register will include the following information:

- Details of the pupil's form/tutor group;
- Whether a pupil is present or absent on any given morning or afternoon;
- For pupils of statutory age, information about authorised or unauthorised absence. Details of such information will be found in correspondence between home and school, which is kept in each pupil's correspondence file/or electronically.

The following table sets out the Registration window for each key stage across the school. Arrival outside of the registration window will mean that a pupil is marked as absent.

Table 2. Registration Open & Close times

School/Key Stage		Morning		Afternoon	
		open	closed	open	closed
Prep	Foundation and EYFS	9:00	09:15	12:50	13:05
	KS1	9:00	09:15	12:50	13:05
	KS2	8:25	8:40	13:45	14:00
Senior	KS3, 4 and 5	8:30	8:35	14:20 (start of P6)	14:30

Annexe A: Prep School Registration Procedure

- Registration is completed both at the start of the school day and the start of school after lunch. Pupils are registered in the registration periods set out in Table 2.
- Pupils are expected to be present from the beginning of the registration periods in order to be marked as present.
- Class Teachers are required to complete the electronic register at the start of the morning session and afternoon sessions and enter a reason for absence if known.
- Late arrival in a Registration period will result in a 'Late' mark.
- Should a pupil be unavoidably late and miss the registration period altogether they will be marked as absent.
- If arriving late to school pupils must report directly to the Prep School Office where they will sign in.
- Authorised or unauthorised lateness for all or part of the morning or afternoon session will be shown as an 'absent' for that particular morning or afternoon session as a whole.
- Where the reason for absence 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.
- The Prep Receptionist is responsible for ensuring that registers are complete after each registration session and for ensuring that all unauthorised absences are investigated by contacting parents/guardians if the School has not already had a notification via MySchoolPortal.

Annexe B: Senior School Registration Procedure

- All boarders are registered in houses before school starts in the mornings.
- All pupils (day and boarding) are registered at 8:30 and at the beginning of period 6 at 14:20 as set out in Table 2. Pupils are also registered electronically in each lesson on the iSAMS database.
- Pupils are expected to be present from the beginning of the registration periods in order to be marked as present. Late arrival in a Registration period will result in a 'Late' mark.
- Should a pupil be unavoidably late and miss the registration period altogether they will be marked as absent.
- If arriving late to school pupils must report directly to the Headmaster's Reception where they will sign in.
- Form Tutors are responsible for completing attendance registers at the start of the morning session and for following up unexplained absence in a timely manner. The "N" code which is used to indicate that no reason has been provided for absence, must not be allowed to remain indefinitely and is later corrected as soon as possible (and certainly within five working days) using the appropriate code on iSAMS.
- PM registration is taken at the start of Period 6 by the supervising tutor or Teacher. The Attendance Officer monitors PM registration and will raise any unexplained absence with the Head of Year and Form tutor so that they can in turn follow up with the appropriate action.
- Outside of the official registration periods, Class Teachers are responsible for raising any unexplained absence with the Headmaster's Reception and Administration Team, as outlined in our Missing Pupil Procedure.
- Heads of Year are responsible for bringing any causes for concern to the attention of the Director of Pastoral Care and Safeguarding who, working with the Heads of Year and tutors, will pursue any issues that require following up with a pupil's parent or guardian and the Safeguarding Team will report concerns that have escalated with the Local Authority as appropriate, in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy.
- The Attendance Officer, with the support of tutors and year teams, will follow up any absences not accounted for.

Annexe C: Senior School - Leaving early/Signing out

Senior School Pupils who leave the school site before the end of the school day should explain why in the signing out book before signing out. Pupils should not leave the school site in this way without first obtaining the permission of a member of staff. In circumstances authorised in advance, pupils should remind their tutors on the day that they will be signing out in this way. The Sanatorium staff will update the signing out book for those children too unwell to sign it themselves, having contacted the pupil's parents/guardians to arrange for the pupil to be collected and taken home.