



## **Attendance Policy**

**Brierley CE (VC) Primary School**

## **Our Vision**

Though we are many, we are one body. Together, we learn and grow.

God is at the heart of all we do, shining His light to guide us on our journey. Together, we face change and transformation with courage.

In love, we nurture all to be resilient, hopeful and aspirational; to become the very best version of ourselves, knowing that we are loved.

Each member of our school community is honoured and celebrated for their unique character and qualities: difference is met with dignity and compassion. Though we are many, we are one body.

Our community at Brierley stretches beyond the school, where we share God's message of love through our actions, our thoughts and our words as we continue on life's path.

## **Aims & Objectives**

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 96% for all pupils, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Reception age children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

## **Responsibility of Parents/Carers**

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Attendance and achievement are closely linked and good habits, developed early in life do have an impact on levels of achievement. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

## **Punctuality**

It is the parent/carers' responsibility to ensure that their children arrive to school on time. Doors open at 8.50am

Records are kept of pupils who are late. Registers are taken at 9am. Children who arrive after this time must report to the school office. Registration codes will be applied in line with DfE guidance.

Children should be collected promptly at the end of the school day and necessary arrangements should be in place for the journey home. If these differ from the child's normal arrangements, the class teacher and school office should be made aware of this.

## **Absences**

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to notify the school on the first day of absence before 9:30am.

Parents can report an absence by telephoning the school office on 01226 711332 or by emailing [office@brierleyschool.com](mailto:office@brierleyschool.com)

Parents/carers who have not notified school of their child's absence by 9.30am, will be visited by members of school staff that same day.

Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where possible, on the child's return to school.

Parents should ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance, and the child should attend school before/after the appointment.

Parents are asked to liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g. a sick parent/carer.

We will work with parents and the education welfare service to improve attendance where a pupil's attendance percentage falls below the school's expectation and becomes a concern.

The link below shows the [Health Protection Agency's](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf) Infection Control in Schools & Recommended Periods of Absence

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance\\_on\\_infection\\_control\\_in%20schools\\_poster.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf)

## **Illness/Medical absences**

In addition to the points above, if a child is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc.

The school will request medical evidence for any illness absence taken immediately before or after a school holiday.

### **Absence for Holidays**

Any absence from school will have an impact on your child's learning and as such leave/holidays during term are strongly discouraged.

Parents/carers are expected to take their children on holiday during the school holidays to minimise the impact of missing education.

If there are exceptional circumstances, parents/carers must complete a leave of absence request form in advance of the trip (ideally at least 4 weeks prior).

These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the Head Teacher will use her discretion whilst applying government recommendations.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To obtain a leave of absence form from the school office.
- To complete and submit the form in advance of the period of absence (ideally 4 weeks prior).

If parents/carers decide to take a holiday without the Head Teacher's authorisation, the child's absences will be marked as unauthorised.

Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued by the Education Welfare Service for unauthorised holiday absence during term time. This fine is payable at £60 per child, per parent.

### **Unexplained Absence**

When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason is given, the parent/carers may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local Authority.

Regular monitoring is carried out by the Education Welfare Officer. Children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by the Education Welfare Officer and may be invited in to an attendance meeting to discuss absences and any appropriate support.

### **Role of the Education Welfare Officer:**

- To investigate absence which exceeds more than 10%, and to hold meetings with these parents as required.
- To investigate lateness which exceeds more than 5%.
- To investigate any unexplained absence which exceeds more than 5 consecutive days.
- To ensure parents are aware of their legal duty under the Education Act to ensure their children attend school.
- To refer cases to the Local Authority for prosecution where persistent absenteeism has not improved despite thorough intervention and support from the school and Education Welfare Officer.
- To report accurate whole school and individual attendance data when required.

### **Children Missing in Education**

If a child's absence continues for a total of 10 days, and there is no contact made with school, the family will be referred as a CME case for the Local Authority. See link below for further guidance on the school website:

<https://brierley.sites.schooljotter2.com/key-information-1/attendance>

### **Persistent Latecomers**

Children who repeatedly attend school late after 9.00am will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer. Warning letters will be issued to the parents/carers of these children. In addition, the Education Welfare Officer is able to carry out unannounced home visits.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) has received Council Cabinet approval for changes to the Code of Conduct regarding the issuing of Penalty Notices which are to be implemented from the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019.

#### **The changes to the Code of Conduct are:**

The removal of the following criteria which Headteachers were required to consider under the Code of Conduct when assessing the merits of a **leave of absence** request during term time:

- previous periods of leave of absence
- leave of absences taken in the first term
- exams and assessments
- employers letter(s)
- removal of school attendance target

Under the new Code, Penalty Notices can be issued if **any** of following three conditions applies:

- A pupil has accrued five or more consecutive days of unauthorised leave of absence (holiday in term time)
- If due to sporadic unauthorised absences, then, other than in specific circumstances, the liable parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement. If there are further absences within the 15 day monitoring period then a Penalty Notice may be issued
- An excluded pupil present in a public place without justification, during the school hours of the school day where the pupil is on roll, during the first five days of each fixed period or permanent exclusion.

In summary; fines will be issued for

- i) any unauthorised holiday absence of 5 days or more.
- ii) sporadic unauthorised absence in liaison with the Education Welfare Service.
- iii) excluded pupils who are seen in public places within school hours.

January 2022