

Bramham and Shadwell Federation

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Adopted by the Teaching and Learning Sub-
committee
May 2019

Date to be reviewed: May 2021

School Policy

Signed: _____

Chair of sub-committee



The Bramham & Shadwell Federation Attendance Policy intends:-

- To raise attainment and achievement levels by having high expectations of attendance
- To report back termly on attendance to parents
- To report back half termly to parents/cares where attendance and punctuality are a concern
- To work effectively with our various partners to maintain high attendance levels

Child attainment and achievement depends on regular presence in school. Any absence leads to missed learning and other experiences and may cause difficulties with social relationships. These can encourage an increased pattern of non- attendance.

Encouraging good attendance is the shared responsibility of the school, the parent and partners in Children Leeds. Parents have a responsibility to see that their children receive the appropriate education and it is the responsibility of Children Leeds through its Attendance Service to ensure that this happens.

Aims

- to deliver a motivating, relevant, accessible curriculum to all children;
- maintain high expectations in relation to attendance; all parents/carers should be aware that every day counts and that their children's attendance is important;
- To encourage and celebrate good attendance through our reward systems.

COLLECTION OF DATA

Registration

Shadwell Primary School

Morning registration takes place at 8.55am. Any child arriving after this will be recorded as late. Children arriving after 9.25am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence for that session.

- Morning = 1 session Afternoon = 1 session

All class teachers are responsible for the sending of registers to the office on time.

Afternoon registration takes place at:

- 1:15pm for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
- 1pm for years 3,4,5,6

Bramham Primary School

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- Morning = 1 session Afternoon = 1 session

All class teachers are responsible for the sending of registers to the office on time.

Afternoon registration takes place at:

- 1pm for all classes

USE OF DATA

The efficient and speedy collection of the data is essential to the development of effective strategies for action. Data is required to monitor:

Individual absence and lateness at school

Patterns of lateness and absence and the identification of trends by

- (i) Year Groups (ii) Seasonal patterns (iii) Patterns and nature of unauthorised absence.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Authorised absence is where the school accepts there is good reason for absence. An authorised absence requires a written, SMS message or telephone communication from the parent/carer. A child's own word cannot be taken as reason for absence.

SMS messages / phone calls are sent after 10am and are made on the first and every successive day of absence unless word has been received from parents about reasons for an extended absence.

Children who return to school following an unauthorised absence will require a written note to justify the absence otherwise the absence will remain unauthorised.

All absence related issues go to the school office.

Unauthorised absence is any absence which does not fall into the following categories:

- a) Absence caused by illness or other unavoidable cause. If your child has higher than average illness then parent/carer's may be asked for an official medical note.
- b) An approved absence for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong
- c) Special circumstances approved by the Executive Head Teacher

For information concerning extended leave see section below.

ILLNESS

At the Bramham & Shadwell Federation we understand children do get ill and wish to support families so attendance can be as high as possible while acknowledging that specific medical conditions / disabilities may reduce attendance.

If your child has higher than average illness i.e. 3 days in the Autumn term, 5 days in the autumn and spring term and 7 days for the whole year the school may follow this procedure:

- a) Write to parents to make them aware we are concerned about the amount of time their child/ren are absent from school due to illness
- b) Request the intervention of the school nurse
- c) Illness will not be authorised unless evidence is seen. Where evidence is not provided absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- d) Where illness is marked as unauthorised for more than 5 days in any 12 week period, further intervention may be sought from the attendance officer and the child may be placed on the Fast Track Attendance Improvement Initiative.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

The Bramham & Shadwell Federation expects that parents will take their holidays during the approved school breaks. It should be noted that there are 175 days each year when your child is on holiday from school.

No child will be authorised holiday during term-time.

- Parents must notify school of all holidays in writing using the Exceptional Circumstances Leave Form – available from the school office.
- If your child is absent, and we have not had the Exceptional Circumstances Leave Form submitted to the school office, we will request that the attendance officer visit your home and report on his findings.
- School will respond to the request via the Federation Attendance Panel, which will explain the holiday is unauthorised and will explain all possible implications.

- A penalty notice will be issued by Leeds City Council for unauthorised absences for 5 days or more within a 12 week period, this includes absences for holidays as well as other unauthorised absences. (for example, a parent could be issued with a £60 penalty if their child misses 1 day of school each week over a 5 week period, whilst another parent might be issued the same penalty for a single 1 week absence)
- School will notify Children’s Services - Attendance Team of the unauthorised holiday who will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN).
- A fixed penalty notice will be £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days of issue. If paid between 21 and 28 days the fine will then double. If not paid after 28 days the parent/carer may face prosecution.
- The Penalty notice is charged by Leeds City Council. The monies are not collected or received by the school.

EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE

In very exceptional circumstances and only then your child has an excellent attendance record (97% or over) may the Executive Head Teacher permit up to 10 days absence and this must be requested in advance. If you take your child out of school when exceptional circumstances has **NOT** been granted, the absence will be recorded as ‘parentally condoned truancy’ and may be referred to Children’s Services Attendance Team and you may be at risk of a fixed Penalty Notice.

Should your child be granted exceptional leave your child must return to school on the agreed date. If they do not we will have no alternative but to start proceedings, registering your child as ‘a child missing education’. This could put your child at risk of losing their place in school.

This approach is to be reflected in all documentation provided for new and existing children.

Red, Amber and Green (RAG) Monitoring System

In order to monitor attendance and provide a clear and simple way to identify problems we have adopted the RED, AMBER, GREEN (or RAG) monitoring system.

Each half-term parents will receive a letter colour coded to indicate their child’s level of attendance. The letters are coded as follows:

GREEN	-	Excellent attendance	97% and above
AMBER	-	Borderline Attendance	94% to 96.9%
RED	-	Poor Attendance	93.9% and below

Depending on the colour of the letter parents/guardians may be asked to attend the school to meet with the attendance team to discuss how we can help.

PERSISTENT ABSENTEES

Children with absence below 92% will receive a visit from the Local Authority Attendance Officer.

FAST TRACK ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE.

The Fast Track Attendance Improvement Initiative is a quick way to address irregular school attendance. All pupils with unauthorised absence under 97% will be placed on the initiative. The initial contact will be in the form of a telephone conversation which will be along the lines of “I am ringing to inform you that your child’s attendance is currently below 97%. The Department for Education classes this as a concern, and it can be linked to lower achievement for some pupils. Is there anything we can do to help”?

Once on the Fast Track Attendance Improvement they will be monitored for 20 days and if there are any further unauthorised absences a School Attendance Panel will be held. At the end of the meeting the parents/carers maybe issued with a Fixed Penalty Warning Notice. The child’s attendance will then be monitored again for a short period. If during that period of monitoring there are further unauthorised absences the case will be referred into Leeds City Councils Children’s Services for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

The Fast track Attendance Improvement Initiative can be implemented in September based on attendance during the last 12 weeks of the previous academic year.

Please see appendix 1

FOLLOW UP

It is important that parents/carers are aware of absences and lateness and of their responsibility to account for all such events, and that all action taken is documented.

There is a range of situations where the school needs to respond:

1. Unauthorised or unexplained absence – Telephone call by 10am first day.
Unexplained absence of three days or more, when a child has not returned to school - telephone call with a written record.
2. A pattern of absence - parental notes, over a period of weeks followed by parental agreement, which could lead to the child being placed on the Fast Track Initiative.
3. Persistent lateness covering more than 5 sessions in any one half term – parental notes followed by possible parental contract
4. Persistent lateness and absence – Fast Track Initiative possibly leading to a referral into Children’s service – Attendance Team which could lead to **fixed penalty notices or ultimately court proceedings which could lead to fines or parenting orders.**

Bramham School Actions to alleviate persistent lateness for specific children in including those who are in receipt of pupil premium funding

A breakfast club that opens at 8.30am with toast and a drink. There are a selection of activities to encourage the children to come into school early. Discussions will be made with the children to identify their preference of activity.

The key leaders in the implementation of this policy are the Head teacher, Family Support Worker, Attendance Team in conjunction with Children's Services – Attendance Team:

Actions will include:

- Monitoring and analysing data making appropriate links to achievement
- Implementing attendance action plans
- Promoting consistency throughout the school
- Issuing appropriate rewards e.g. Attendance Certificates
- Liaising with the Attendance Strategy Team

On a regular basis the Attendance Team should discuss with the Head teacher:

1. Half termly attendance statistics for each Pupil to highlight trends;
2. Details of children undergoing attendance related casework;
3. Details of children placed on the Fast Track Initiative - outcomes

Lateness

Persistent lateness is often a significant indicator of under achievement.

Lateness to school must be acted upon and parents made fully aware of the school's expectations concerning punctuality. Dealing with lateness to school is the Attendance Team responsibility. Persistent lateness will be followed up by parental notes, home visits and possibly a parental agreement.

For safety reasons late children must be signed into school by an adult.

Rewards

The importance of good attendance is regularly promoted during lessons and assemblies. A variety of rewards are given for consistently high attendance.

As a class

Weekly celebration of the class with the highest attendance is done collectively. This is announced by the children in Celebration assembly. If any class achieve 100% they get 15 minutes extra playtime.

Individually

There is a bronze certificate for 100% attendance for Autumn term

Silver certificate and a silver star badge for 100% attendance for Autumn and Spring terms or for the Spring and Summer terms.

Gold certificate and gold star badge for 100% attendance for the whole year.

Communications

Parents have a responsibility for ensuring their child attends school every day and punctually.

Annual home school agreements.

Parents have a right to be provided in good time with the necessary information from the school which would enable them to meet these obligations. This includes:

- The times of the school day
- School dates and holidays
- School procedures relating to attendance and punctuality
- School expectations regarding lateness
- Prompt communication of matters causing concern

The school expects that all parents communicate with the school in writing, electronic communication or telephone, giving a reason

- (i) In advance of any planned absence
- (ii) By 10am on the first day of absence

Further non-compliance on the part of the parents should be documented. A record of all communication will be kept.

The Attendance Team within school are trained in strategies for following up Children Missing from Education.

Children's service – Attendance Team

The Bramham & Shadwell Federation works closely with the Attendance Team to improve attendance, punctuality and reduce Persistent Absenteeism. School will refer to the Attendance team when we feel all available interventions have been tried with a family and the next course of action would be legal proceedings, in cases where a Fixed Penalty Notice is required and when a child is missing education.

Reintegration

When long-term absentees return to school it is important that they are sympathetically treated by all staff. Re-integration plans are drawn up by the Executive Head Teacher/Executive Deputy in liaison with the class teacher, child and parents/carers.

New Children

The importance of good attendance and punctuality is clearly expressed at the Parents' Induction and forms part of the annual learning contract between school and parents.

Children who commence at a later date

All these children need to be monitored over their first few weeks at school including attendance and punctuality. As part of an interview for prospective entry this review process needs to be clearly articulated as a support to the child and a means of directly informing the parent of the achievement of their child.

A Way Forward

An attendance policy will not in itself improve attendance overnight, but it does provide a consistent set of strategies within which the whole school can work.

The Attendance Team cannot take on every attendance case at one time, but it is not unreasonable to expect a team to target a certain number of cases with the aim of improving the overall attendance rate.

Roles Checklist

Attendance Team (School)

- Monitor all children in the vulnerable attendance category
- Make phone calls home and follow up with letters where attendance is a concern
- Send out the positive attendance message in Assembly, make children keep the link between attendance and attainment firmly in the minds of Class Teachers and children
- To liaise weekly with the Attendance Manager to identify children causing concern and to communicate all action to the Attendance Leader
- To interview children and parents re unsatisfactory attendance and agree improvement strategies
- To arrange/attend reviews in school
- Monitor unauthorised holidays and request Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Hold school attendance panel meetings when needed.
- To complete CME referrals
- Carry out termly Fast Track Initiatives.
- To monitor and analyse attendance data
- To review and evaluate school's attendance policy
- To monitor work of school's attendance team
- To report periodically to the Senior Management Team and Governors

School Office

- Collect daily messages
- To maintain and update Pupil Roll
- Oversee first day calls
- Memo Class Teachers with information

- Information shared with Attendance Leader
- Scan attendance on a 1 to 2 day basis
- Follow up unexplained absences with letter pro-forma

The Attendance Team (Children's Services)

- To issue Fixed Penalty Notices when requested by school.
- To complete relevant checks and keep school updated when school complete a CME referral.
- Preparing evidence for court action including application for education supervision orders

Complaints

If parents/carers are dissatisfied with any aspect of the schools handling of attendance issues they should put their concerns in writing for the attention of the Executive Head Teacher. If complaints cannot be resolved the matter can be taken to the governing body.

Attendance

