

Attendance Policy



Bramley Church of England VA Infant and Nursery School

Approved by: Shona Taylor

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Last reviewed on: January 2020

Next review due by: June 2022

It is our task as teachers at Bramley Church of England (Aided) Infant and Nursery School to promote and support our children's learning and enable each one of them to achieve their full potential. We endeavour to provide a school day that excites challenges and motivates each child, and allows them to develop as independent learners. Our organisation of their learning promotes enjoyment, perseverance and self-discipline. We encourage the children to achieve personal excellence in all aspects of work and behaviour.

The school staff, alongside the Local Authority, firmly believes that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. We know that every day lost to education can have a serious impact on children's attainment and overall progress in school. As a staff we do all we can to encourage parents and carers to ensure that the children in our care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly. We set the target of 96% Attendance for all children. Attendance is rewarded with a certificate for each term and an end of Year certificate for overall attendance, the attendance certificates are for 100% and 96%+.

Key Objectives

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school regularly
- attend school punctually
- attend school appropriately prepared for the school day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that the child in their care arrives at school punctually, prepared for the school day
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence and send a note on their return to school
- discuss promptly with their child's class teacher or senior staff, any problems that deter their child from attending school
- avoid taking holidays in term time

We expect that the school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- monitor every child's attendance using SIMS
- contact parents as soon as possible when unexplained and/or prolonged absence occurs and obtain notes authorising the absence
- encourage good attendance and punctuality
- provide a welcoming and safe learning environment for children
- meet with the school's Inclusion Officer regularly to discuss any new concerns and report on the progress of existing cases
- meet with the parents of children whose attendance causes concern
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Service

Leave of Absence

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and parents/carers are expected to book their family holidays during those times. Leave of absence will not be granted for holidays to be taken in term time.

In exceptional circumstances when leave in term time is unavoidable, or when children are required to attend medical appointments during school hours, a leave of absence request form must be completed as soon as possible once the dates of the proposed period of absence are known. The Leave of Absence Request Form can be obtained from the school office.

No parent/carer can demand leave of absence for their child as a right. If leave is taken, without prior authorisation, the child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the school register.

The Head Teacher will decide whether or not to authorise the absence having decided whether or not the circumstances are exceptional.

Should absence be taken without the Head Teacher's authorisation the case will be referred to Inclusion Service and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Children in Reception who are not yet five years – Requests for leave of absence will be treated in line with the rest of the school. As the child is on the school role the attendance will be treated as unauthorised. If the child is not of statutory school age the parents would not be issued with a penalty notice for the five days, the guidance from the Inclusion Service concerning penalty notices may be sought after more than five days unauthorised attendance for these children.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- on the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer, the school will endeavour to contact them that day via a telephone call
- if there is no response to telephone call or the absence remains unexplained or still a concern, the office will inform the Home School Link Worker and Head Teacher/Assistant Head Teacher, further investigation and action will be made accordingly
- if there is persistent non-attendance, the school's Home School Link Worker and/or Head Teacher /Assistant Head Teacher will keep records of the contact with home during the period of absence and this will be discussed with the Inclusion Officer when a formal referral may be made
- if a child has persistent absence or has been identified on truancy patrols and meets the criteria for a Penalty Notice to be issued; or has been taken out of school without the school's permission for 5 or more days; the school will liaise with the Inclusion Officer/ LA to decide whether a Penalty Notice should be issued
- failure to comply with the expectations set by the Inclusion Service may result in further action, an application for an Educational Supervision Order, or court prosecution

Responding to lateness

When a pupil is late for school they should enter the building via the front office so that they can be recorded as being present. Registers for the main school open at 8.45 a.m. and are taken promptly. Children arriving in school after 8.45am should enter via the office. Children will be recorded as being late if they arrive after 8.45 a.m. but before 9.00 a.m., when the registers close. Any child arriving after 9.00 a.m. will be recorded as late after close of register (U coded) and this denotes an unauthorised absence. A monthly late report is compiled by the office staff and given to the Head Teacher to analyse.

Persistent lateness will be monitored and letters sent to parents to inform them of learning time lost. If lateness remains a problem and this lateness is after close of register a referral may be made to the Inclusion Service.

Changing School

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next;
- the address of the new school;
- the new home address (if appropriate and known).

The pupils' school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Inclusion Service.

Penalty Notices

The Inclusion Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when Penalty Notices may be issued

Pupils identified by Police and Inclusion Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which becomes law on 1st September 2013 state that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Where a child is taken out of school for **5 days or more** and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the Head Teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below **90%** and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. The amount payable is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.