

Attendance Policy

Brixworth CEVC Primary School



Approved:	December 2017
Reviewed:	May 2024

Attendance Policy

Brixworth Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all of our pupils and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based upon the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the education opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

Ours is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to achieve excellence. For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day on which the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

We expect all school staff to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school.

The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

The vast majority of our pupils achieve over 96% attendance and this is what we expect from all our pupils as a minimum.

The school must:

- keep regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance registers. These are completed at the beginning of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session
- ensure that parents/carers are aware of the times for the beginning of the school day, school term dates and other INSET days when a pupil is not expected to attend school
- notify the parents of any immediate closure e.g. due to bad weather
- notify parents as early as possible where their child's attendance is cause for concern and a letter will be sent when attendance drops below 90%
- work alongside parents to improve attendance. This may involve writing a home-school agreement if persistent absenteeism is causing a concern.
- notify the Schools Attendance Support Officer (SASO) of individual children whose attendance is cause for concern.

The Pupil must:

- attend school regularly
- arrive on time and be appropriately dressed and prepared for the school day.

The school will reward and celebrate good attendance.

Regular attendance is important to children's learning as any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling. Regular absence will seriously affect their learning which may not be possible to catch up on.

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly and failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered a safeguarding matter. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti-bullying.

If a parent/carer considers their child has an illness which may warrant them remaining at home, they must consider first of all whether they feel that their child would still be able to take part in the majority, if not all, of the school's activities. In this case, they should still send their child to school. Should the child become unwell during the day and/or if the school feels that they are no longer able to participate in school activities, the school will contact the parents/carers to collect their child.

If parents/carers feel that their child cannot take part in the school's activities and would need to remain at home, then they must contact the school office as soon as possible on the first and any subsequent days of absence before 9.30am. The person ringing in will be asked to identify themselves and clearly give the reason for the absence. The information will be recorded.

If absence persists, we may contact the GP for support in getting your child back into school.

If a child has a medical appointment, then parent/carers must have tried to make the appointment outside of school hours.

If this is not possible, contact the school prior to the appointment to advise when the appointment is, what time the child will be collected from and returned to school. A copy of the appointment letter may be requested.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons which can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

The school opens at 8.50am. Registers are marked by 9.00am. Your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At 9.30am the registers will be closed. In accordance with Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

Afternoon registration is at 1.15pm. Registers close at 1.20pm.

If your child is going to be late for school, parents/carers must contact the school as soon as possible to tell them that the child will arrive late and make every effort to get the child to school as soon as possible.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with us to resolve the problem but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Leave of Absence

From 1st September 2013, new legislation gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

If you need to take your child out of school for exceptional or unavoidable circumstances, a request must be made in writing to the Headteacher in advance of the absence.

West Northamptonshire Council may take further action if your child or children have 5 or more consecutive days off school or 10 sessions (83.3%) unauthorised absence in any 6-week period. The school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local authority for consideration of legal action. This could include:

A Penalty Notice payable up to £120 fine without further reference to you for a penalty notice this warning is valid for 12 months.

Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.

Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

If parents/carers are having difficulty getting their child to attend school they must notify the school immediately and speak to the class teacher or Inclusion Manager. The school will make every effort to meet with parents and attempt to rectify the problem.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents/carers) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoons away from school for a good reason, like illness, medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes. This means authorised absences will only be approved in the following circumstances:

- (i) Genuine illness, particularly where there is a risk of infection to others
- (ii) Days of religious observance notified in advance
- (iii) Absence due to family circumstances e.g. bereavement of a close family member or parent with serious illness.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. This type of absence can lead to the involvement of the Education and Inclusion Partnership Team and possible sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

