



## Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School

<b>Policy</b>	Attendance Policy
<b>Policy Revision</b>	8
<b>Date adopted</b>	September 2023
<b>Date reviewed</b>	October 2025
<b>Date of next review</b>	October 2026

### Rationale

At Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School, we want to provide the **best** education for children. This can only be achieved by attending school every day and being on time. The progress that children make at school relies on strong attendance and being late to school is unsettling for children and disrupts the class at the start of the school day.

- Ensuring regular attendance is every parent's legal responsibility. Permitting absence from school without good reason is against the law.
- **We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and our school target for all pupils during the academic year is 95%.**
- Your child should be at school, on time every day unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.
- For children under compulsory school age it is very important to introduce good attendance habits right from the start.
- Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter and will be subject to school's attendance monitoring procedures

### Target

Our aim is for the vast majority of learners to achieve an attendance rate of 95% or higher in an academic year. Our real target is to achieve better than this, because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling. Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

## **Aims**

We recognise that...

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of the opportunity to access this education.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Some parents may need the support of the school in order to meet their attendance obligations.
- Situations beyond the control of the pupils and parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of the parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- Most children want to attend school to learn, socialise and prepare themselves for their future role in society.

## **Expectations**

*We expect the following from all our parents and pupils:*

- That children attend school regularly.
- That children arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.
- That children know they can tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them attending school.

*Parents and pupils can expect the following from the school:*

- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without notification.
- Immediate and confidential support and action, on any problem notified to us.

*How parents can help us:*

- Follow the school's Attendance Protocol and Procedures for absence or lateness.
- Ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Contact the school immediately, whenever their child is absent, giving details of the reason for the absence and the length of time the child will be away.
- Help their child prepare for the school day and has everything needed for the day ahead.
- Attend Parents' Consultations to discuss progress and talk to staff if there are any problems or changes of family circumstances which may affect the child's attendance.
- Contact the school if problems arise which may keep their child away from school, so the school can help.

## **Encouraging Attendance through Good Practice and Rewards**

*Attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:*

- Accurate completion of the register at the beginning of each session.
- Early identification and support of pupils and parents experiencing difficulties with attendance e.g. collecting the child from home.
- Celebrating classes with the best attendance each week.
- Focusing attendance for everyone via the Attendance Board.
- Keeping parent's updated on their child's current attendance percentage within expected levels
- Rewarding individuals for achieving attendance target at the end of the school year.

## Schools Procedure for Marking Attendance

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Registers will be taken twice daily (**at 8.50am and 1.00pm**).
- For children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 or children who are eligible for 30 hour Nursery, the school day will run from **8:45am till 3:20pm**. Children eligible for 15 hours will attend school from **8:45-11:45am** or **12.20pm – 3.20pm** daily
- The school gates will open at **8:45am** for everyone. Children will be dropped off at the gate where they will be greeted by Bracebridge staff and escorted into class.
- At the end of the day, the gates will open at **3:15pm** and parents will collect children from the playground classroom doors.
- Daily attendance will be analysed by the Attendance Officer and any concerns will be discussed with the Headteacher.
- Each weekly attendance will be further analysed and any concerns will be discussed with the Headteacher. Parents will be contacted if necessary.
- Each week an award for the highest class attendance will be given and this will be displayed on the Attendance Board.
- Each week the attendance figure for each class and the whole school will be shown on the Attendance Board.
- Class treats for 95% attendance will be awarded weekly during Together Time
- A 'Sunshine' will be recorded for weekly school attendance above target of 95%.
- Attendance Awards given to children at the end of the school year for those children at or above school target of 95%.
- Attendance Achievement Award given at the end of Year 2 for those children with exceptional 3 years attendance

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the school Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

-	Not Yet Marked
/	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual reg.)
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
C1	Authorised Regulated Performance
C2	Temporary Reduced Timetable
D	Dual registration (attend elsewhere)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision)
G	Holiday not granted by school
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental)
J1	Interview (employment or educational admission)
K	Alternative provision (LA arranged)
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements by LA
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Y1-7	Unable to attend (transport normally provided not available) (widespread disruption to travel) (part or whole of the school closed) (sentence of detention) Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law (any other unavoidable cause)
Z	Pupil not on roll
#	Planned whole school closure

## **Parents Procedure For Reporting Absence**

- If a child is absent from school for any reason, parents must contact the school by **9am** on the first morning of absence and on subsequent days of absence. The school has a voicemail facility to ensure that parents can leave us a message
- If the child is off for more than 3 days due to illness, school will check in with parents and also have the right to request evidence of illness. This can include a screenshot of a text message about a doctor's appointment or letter.
- If a child requires an authorised leave of absence for an emergency medical or hospital appointment (no more than 1 day), school will require a photocopy of the date and time of appointment before authorisation
- Any request for Leave of Absence must be completed in writing to the Headteacher at least 4 weeks in advance of the requested dates for absence and failure to do so will automatically result in the absence being **unauthorised**
- Should any parents fail to notify the school or follow the points above, then schools' procedures will take place as detailed below accordingly

## **Schools Procedure For Monitoring Daily Absence**

- If no reason for absence has been received to school by **9.30am**, the school will telephone parents to ascertain the reason for absence. It is essential that you answer our call.
- Should you not answer our call, school will continue to attempt to make contact via telephone and parent hub message.
- In the event that school is still unable to make contact, two members of the school staff **may** make a home visit in order to see the child and parent to ensure that the child is safe in line with government safeguarding procedures and the school's Safeguarding Policy. A records of any visits or concerns will be recorded by school on the child's safeguarding records.
- Should school have further concerns or no response during a home visit, they then have a duty of care to refer to either the Police for a 'Safe and Well' check or Social Services for intervention.
- This procedure will be repeated for the duration of a child's absence if no notification has been given to the school.

## **Lateness**

Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School discourages late arrival by challenging parents of children who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and time with their class teacher, missing vital information and news for the day. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

It is important that children arrive at school on time and are in the classroom ready to learn promptly.

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Registers will be taken twice daily (**at 8.50am and 1.00pm**).
- Any child arriving after the close of registration will be recorded as follows:
  - Before 9.30am: Marked as late (L)
  - After 9.30am: Marked as an authorised absence for the morning session (U)
- Teachers will complete registers in accordance with guidance given by the Headteacher.
- Any concerns that a teacher has about a child's attendance and punctuality will be reported to the Headteacher.

## **Authorised/Unauthorised Absences**

- All absences have to be classed as authorised or unauthorised
- An **authorised absence** is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be away

The following may be reasons for **authorising** absences:

- Illness, if notified as above and with medical evidence if requested by school
  - Family bereavements of immediate family (parents, grandparents, siblings)
  - Emergency medical and dental appointment where proof is available, however routine GP or dental appointments should be made outside of the school day
  - Days of religious observance
  - Fixed term exclusion
  - Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated
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- All other absences will be regarded as **unauthorised**
  - Permission for absences other than illness, appointments or bereavement must be sought from the Headteacher no less than 4 weeks prior to the period of absence and failure to do so will automatically result in the absence being **unauthorised**
  - Parents are able to request school leave in writing to the Headteacher.

## **Children Missing Education (CME)**

Section 175 of the Education Act puts a duty on all schools to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes identifying children who are not receiving education.

We will carry out all reasonable enquiries within our capacity to ascertain the whereabouts of a pupil and endeavour to engage them in education prior to informing the local authority that a child is missing education.

## **Persistent Absence and Attendance Monitoring including lateness**

In line with Government Policy, **Persistent Absentees (PA)** are defined as children whose attendance is **below 90%** and where unsatisfactory reasons for absence are given. They have set this figure because this amount of absence from school has a detrimental effect on a child's educational progress and their attainment which is why it is so important that your child attends school on a regular basis and we need the fullest support and co-operation of parents/carers to achieve this.

PA pupils and their parents/carers are subject to an action plan. A School Attendance Panel (SAP) may be formed with the Headteacher and the Attendance Officer and the parents to discuss the child's attendance and decide on a course of action with the parents/carers. At every stage the school will support children and parents/carers to ensure that their children maintain a good attendance level.

However, it is a criminal offence for parents/carers to allow a child not to attend school regularly and it is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure this is not the case. Where appropriate, the use of Penalty Notices may be considered for the parents/carers of a child whose attendance falls below 90%. (See below for full details),

The following procedures outlined may apply to children whose attendance is a cause for concern or where there are concerns about deteriorating attendance or patterns of absence are emerging.

- Every pupil's attendance will be closely monitored
- All children will receive a letter detailing their current attendance and for those pupils causing concern the following steps will be taken as appropriate:

**Step 1: A letter of concern issued**

**Step 2: If no improvement, parents invited to attendance panel meeting with Headteacher and Attendance officer.**

**Step 3: For further periods of poor attendance a written warning and the possibility of a fixed penalty notice - kept on record**

**Step 4: For further periods of poor attendance issue of fixed penalty notice**

**Step 5: Prosecution in court for non-payment and for further periods of poor attendance**

- The Headteacher will regularly collect attendance data and use these during meetings with the Attendance Governor and Attendance Officer which will take place every half term. The attendance of pupils causing concern will be discussed and actions decided upon.
- Attendance will be a standing item on the agenda at each weekly Safe and Well Meeting with all staff and every full trustees meeting and form part of the Headteachers SOAP ( School on a page report)
- The attendance of every pupil in Reception and KS1 will be reported to parents in the annual report at the end of the school year.
- We will employ a number of strategies to promote good attendance for all pupils. This will include regular updates for parents, appropriate personal encouragement for particular children, weekly award of attendance cup, termly awards and annual prizes/certificates.

**Fixed Penalty Notice (See Appendix 1)**

- Our school **does not** authorise or permit term time leave of absence for holidays except in exceptional circumstances. **See Appendix 2**  
COST DOES NOT FACTOR AS AN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE
- Parents **should not** book holidays during term time as they will not be authorised and a fixed penalty notice may be issued on behalf of the school by the Local Authority
- From the new academic year, fixed penalty notices will be referred to as "Penalty Notices". If your child is absent from school during term time and it is not authorised, a Penalty Notice will be administered as follows:
  - • £80 per parent, per child, to be paid within 21 days
  - • If not paid within 21 days, £160 per parent, per child
  - • If not paid within 28 days, legal action will be taken
- If a child is absent for a second time, within a three-year rolling period, the fine will be £160 per parent per child, with no early payment discount.
- If a third period of absence occurs, there will not be a penalty notice issued, but the matter will be dealt with by the court and a larger fine issued - plus costs.

- There will also be a 10-week rolling period for “one-off” days unauthorised, e.g. if a child is late returning to school after the school holidays, and they have had other unauthorised absences from the previous term, these will be added together and a fine may be issued.
- For all pupils whose attendance falls below 95%, a “Notice to Improve” will be issued; should their attendance not improve within a 3-week period, a fine will be issued.

A Penalty Notice can be issued under the following legislation:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child’s regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.**

## **Summary**

The school will publish its absence figures to parents/carers and promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff and trustees are committed to working with parents/carers and pupils in the best way to achieve the highest possible level of attendance.

Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School believes that regular school attendance enables children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

We are committed to promoting good attendance by supporting all parents and pupils and acting early to prevent poor attendance.

## **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The Policy will be brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils in September each year.

It will be reviewed annually.

**Signed:**



Mr Rob Pitman  
Chair of Trustees

08.10.25

## Appendix 1

### Guide to Penalty Notices

#### **What is a Penalty Notice?**

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is introduced to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour and improve attendance, they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, from August 2024 **only 2** penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and **any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate.**

Any further offences will result in criminal prosecution

The law will be clear that where a penalty notice threshold has been met- in each individual case, the school **MUST** consider if a penalty notice is appropriate.

#### **Threshold for Penalty Notices**

##### **5 days of unauthorised absence**

-Penalty Notice fines may be issued for **ANY** term-time absences that are unauthorised (e.g. a 5-day term time holiday)- whether these absences are taken one after the other or accumulated over a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

##### **10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any 10-week period**

Penalty Notice fines will also be considered where there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in any rolling period of 10 school weeks

**A school day has 2 sessions per day - 1 morning, 1 afternoon**

A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence ( e.g. 6 sessions of holiday plus 4 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks )

The sessions can be consecutive or not

The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years so will transfer over from one school year to the next (e.gh 2 session of unauthorised absence in Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term)

#### **First Offence**

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a term time unauthorised absence or irregular attendance the amount will be

**£160** per parent, per child (if paid within 28 days)

Reduced **to £80** per parent, per child if paid within 21 days

#### **Second offence (in a 3-year rolling period)**

The second time a penalty notice is issued for a term-time unauthorised absence or irregular attendance to the **same parent** for the **same child** the amount will be:

**£160** per parent, per child – **NO REDUCTION**

#### **Third Offence or any other offence ( in a 3-year rolling period)**

The third time the offence is committed by the **same parent** for the **same child** a penalty notice will **NOT** be issued but the family will be referred to the Local Authority for **prosecution** which may result in fines **upto £2500 per parent per child.**

Penalty notices are issued **per parent, per child.**

This means that fines are issued to each parent with parental responsibility for each child who is absent, even if parents are separated or not living in the same household.

## Appendix 2

### Guidance for parents on Exceptional Circumstances

#### What do we mean by exceptional circumstances?

The fundamental principles of defining exceptional circumstances are rare, unavoidable and short. By unavoidable we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

DfE guidance states 'Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.'

It is not possible to create a definitive list of circumstances under which absence may be authorised, however we have agreed the following circumstances **may** be considered exceptional. Requests for leave of absence which do not fall under these conditions will be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Headteacher. Parents may be requested to provide evidence in addition to the submission of a request for absence from.

#### What are exceptional circumstances?

This is under the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Up to 3 days for the wedding of a close family member in another country – grandparent, parent or sibling
- Absence for bereavement of a close family member for funeral service and travelling time either side, not for extended leave
- An educational visit which happens on a specific day and cannot be altered
- Visiting seriously ill relatives
- Religious observance
- Adjustments for SEN children and those with disabilities
- Consideration may be given to families of service personnel on account of this they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time

**COST, AFFORDABILITY AND THE CHEAPER PRICE OF HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME  
DOES NOT FACTOR AS AN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE.**