



BREDON HILL ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Attendance Policy - Introduction

Bredon Hill Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent that can result in legal action by the Local Authority (LA). Details of such a penalty notice are outlined in a letter in response to a leave of absence request.

Reasons for absence

Every half-day absence from school legally has to be recorded by staff at the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason (in line with DfE guidelines and at the discretion of the headteacher), such as illness or another unavoidable reason.

Unauthorised absences are those that the staff do not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. These are an offence by the parent and can include:

- Keeping children off school without a good reason.
- Truancy before the register has been marked.
- Absences that have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school after registration has closed.
- Taking children out of school for a holiday during term.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school (8.20am). The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless an acceptable reason is provided.

The afternoon registration will be taken during lesson 4.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to contact the school on first and following days of absence. The attendance officer/school office staff will contact parents/carers if the school has not been notified of the absence.

Continuing Absence

If there is continuing absence the school will liaise with their Education Welfare Officer.

Absence Notes

Notes and evidence of phone calls and e-mails received from parents/carers explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period. In addition, written medical evidence may sometimes be requested for extended/frequent periods of absence due to illness.

Leave of absence in term time

Absence during term-time for holidays or other events interrupts teaching and learning for the pupil, and disrupts the routine for others in school. It can have a serious impact on progress and attainment.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term-time for holidays and other special occasions unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Parents should note that there is no right to such leave; if granted, it is at the sole discretion of the headteacher.

Any request for leave must be made in advance; schools cannot grant such leave retrospectively. Any leave taken without prior agreement will be recorded as unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence may lead to parents being issued with a penalty notice.

The school will consider any request for leave on its individual merits, but leave will be granted only in truly exceptional circumstances.

Requests for Leave of Absence

If a parent/carer wishes to request leave of absence, they should complete the relevant form available from the school office and return it to the school office at least 6 weeks in advance of the proposed date. Parents/carers will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application for leave of absence.

Children Missing Education

In line with Children Missing Education: Statutory guidance for local authorities (2016), the school has a duty to notify the local of the following of any child with:

- Irregular attendance or regular absence where attendance is not improving despite ongoing school intervention.
- 10 days continuous absence (including if the child is likely to be absent for more than 15 days due to illness/injury).

Persistent Absence and Irregular Attendance

The school has a responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is irregular or below 90% over the school year.

10% absence adds up to missing almost half a term out of the whole school year. Pupils who miss this much school are called 'persistent absentees' by the government, whatever the reason for their absence.

Procedures are in place for children who are regularly absent and/or risk becoming persistent absentees including:

- Monitoring individual pupils, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- Working in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue.
- Writing to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- Face-to-face meetings in school with parents/carers.
- To offer support to parents/carers experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Celebrating good/improved attendance.
- Support from EWO.
- Access wider support services.

The school promotes good attendance and recognises improved attendance e.g. weekly award for the tutor group with the highest attendance shared with the whole school.

Roles & Responsibilities

Governors

- To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

School

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns.

Education Welfare Officer

- To support the whole school through regular monitoring of individual children's attendance.
- To liaise with the Headteacher/Office staff.
- To support parents/carers to resolve attendance issues.
- To liaise with the LAs prosecutions officer, when legal intervention needs to be considered.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Attendance data will be collected weekly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include

- Persistent Absence Status (less than 90%).
- Incomplete weeks.
- Regular pattern of absence on certain days.
- Lateness.
- Periods of extended absence.
- Periods of "unauthorised" absence.

This data will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer as part of the regular weekly meetings and referrals made as necessary.

The Headteacher or the Attendance Officer and the Education Welfare Officer will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Headteacher will recommend an attendance target to the Governors.

The Governors will set an annual target of attendance and absence and review this annually at its first meeting.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. All of the staff at Bredon Hill Academy are committed to working closely with parents as the best way to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance.

Appendices

1. The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall enable them to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to their age, ability and aptitude and
 - (b) to any special needs they may have
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term 'parent' is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006