



Attendance Policy

Also See:	Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school	Dudley Education Support Service guidance
	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	Suspensions and exclusions
	KCSIE	Supporting pupils with medical conditions at schools
	Working together To Improve School Attendance	Children missing in education
Statutory Requirement:	Required	Required on Website: Not Required

Complete if Applicable

Responsible Person: Head Teacher/Attendance Lead
Date Approved: September 2024
Review Cycle: Every two years
Date of Next Review: September 2026
Approval Level: Governing Body

Complete if Applicable

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

By signing this policy, I am showing I have read, understood and will abide by this policy during my time with Brierley Hill Primary School.

Introduction

We are an aspirational 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 reach out for excellence. For our 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 the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly, and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Poor attendance and punctuality are major barriers to a child's chances of success. Children whose attendance is above 96% are three times more likely to achieve acceptable GCSE grades in English and maths than children who attend school for less than 85% of the time. We aim to remove all barriers to learning at Brierley Hill and poor attendance is one of the most significant barriers to a child learning successfully. The habit of good attendance and punctuality begins at primary school, so it is essential that your child attends school regularly. By this we set 96% as a minimum expectation (that's the equivalent of one day a month being missed). As part of our ongoing commitment to improving attendance, school share their daily attendance data with DfE.

Why attendance is so important?

Brierley Hill's culture of the importance of working with families in partnership, helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

Learning: - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (December 2023) Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024) and School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

Protecting children from maltreatment

Preventing impairment of children's health or development.

Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Taking action to enable all children have the best life chances.

Detecting early support through Early Help Assessments, attendance support plans, team around the family meetings, support meetings and home visits.

Failing to attend our school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter, as such Brierley Hill's safeguarding procedures will be followed including home visits from school staff and external agencies, communication and/or referrals with appropriate external agencies and support plans and strategies will be implemented.

Our Aims

It is the aim of Brierley Hill Primary School that pupils have good attendance and:

- ensure that all staff, including governors, understand the issues and procedures for attendance
- Inform all parents of their responsibilities and emphasise why a child should go to school regularly. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time. The law states that a pupil, except for medical and dental reasons, must attend every session of school
- encourage good attendance in pupils
- maintain attendance figures above 96%
- To both challenge the reasons for and reduce the number of unauthorised absences

- Support children by doing the following:
- Share details on attendance in our regular Newsletter
- Report to you at least half-termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events.

The school day for Nursery children begins at 8:30am and 12:30pm. For Reception, KS1 and 2 children it runs from 8.40am to 3.10pm. Registers close at 8.50am in the classroom and if your child arrives in school after this, they are considered as late with an associated absence recorded. Our school is required to keep detailed records of attendance and is legally required to account for every absence throughout the year. The number of absences and 'lates' will be reported on the child's end of year report. Registers close 30 minutes after opening, sharp. Attendance after this will be recorded as 'U' and will be present in school but session is missed.

Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

- **Parents** must ensure that their children are educated. Parents/carers who do not work in partnership with the school can be prosecuted if they fail to ensure that their child attends regularly. Parents should inform school on the first day of any absence and ensure they tell us the expected length of the absence. Whilst holidays in term time are not permitted, we do not expect parents to lie to us. Please discuss your needs on an individual basis with the Head teacher.
- **Brierley Hill Primary School** must keep an attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and has to report pupils who fail to attend regularly. School will undertake first day absence phone calls if a parent or carer has not informed us of a child's absence. We will work our way through the emergency contacts lists and if no adult can be spoken to we will undertake home visits. If we still cannot contact a key adult, then either the police or social services will be informed.
- The **Local Authority (LA)** has to offer educational provision for all school age children through its schools and the **Education Support Service**. The **Education Support Service** has the role of helping parents and the LA meet the statutory obligations on school attendance.

The Partnership Approach - the practical application of policy to promote good attendance

Parents and pupils are informed of the importance of good attendance by the Head Teacher, attendance officer and class teachers on a regular basis. Information leaflets issued by Brierley Hill Primary School reinforce this (e.g. School Prospectus, Year Group letters, Home School Agreement, DfE information on School Attendance). These are available in English, Punjabi and Urdu via the school website. Parents are asked to inform school as soon as an absence occurs, explaining the reason for that absence.

Brierley Hill is responsible for recording pupils' attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning school sessions and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age. Agreed symbols are used to explain the type of absence.

Absence NOT supported by a letter, phone call or personal visit will be recorded as 'Unauthorised Absence'. For this reason, parents are requested to inform school of any absences on the day of the absence. A phone call first thing is best with the office manned from 8:15am and answerphone messages checked by the office team.

Our aim is a minimum of 96% attendance as an average across the school. Attendance will be reported on at the end of each term to parents/carers. This will be in the form of a summary so attendance across the term can be tracked, and codes can highlight to school and parents/carers any patterns.

Where attendance dips below 96% in the first instance the attendance officer will informally explore underlying factors with parents/carers. If the attendance dips to 93% then a (concern)letter will be written informing parents/carers of our increasing concerns, at this point an attendance support plan will be offered. If this is not addressed by improving attendance from this point or attendance dips at/below 90%, this is classed as persistent absence and a (targeted) letter will be sent to parents/carers and the Attendance Senior Champion will hold face to face meetings with parents/carers to discuss the impact the absence is having on the child in school and to provide the parent/carer the opportunity to explain the underlying issues.

If this still does not improve attendance a referral is made to the **school attendance and education support service**, who may undertake home visits and will look in to legal action.

The school is also particularly keen to challenge broken attendance patterns – where a child is having frequent days off rather than one continuous absence as this disrupts the teaching and learning sequence across the week. Medical appointments with the doctor, dentist or hospital are authorised as long as school has prior notice of the visit. If a parent/carer needs to collect their child during school time they do so via the school office entrance. Under no circumstances are children sent out of school on their own.

Promoting good attendance and punctuality

The School is very pro-active in promoting good attendance and punctuality. We, wherever possible, try to reward good or improving attendance. We do so by:

- Weekly attendance winners and runners up
- Half-termly MUFTI reward for best class attendance in each Key Stage
- Termly individual 96% attendance rewards such as certificates, prizes, phone calls home and parties.
- Class rewards
- Most improved attendance of individuals
- Letters thanking the parents/carers of those whose attendance has improved.
- Telephone calls and Face to face meetings to praise.
- Popcorn parties- each day that the class has 100% attendance, they receive a piece of popcorn for their board. Once they have 10 pieces, they have a popcorn party.
- 100% attendance every 2 weeks stickers and prizes
- Funded breakfast club places to support with anxiety/ transition.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Attend school regularly.
- Be honest about their absences.
- Share their concerns if they are worried about coming to School.

Parents, Guardians or Carers should:

- Encourage and ensure good attendance and punctuality.
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences.
- Inform the school on the first day of non-attendance. This can be done by telephone, voicemail or personal contact. A message from a child is not sufficient.
- Discuss planned absences with the school in advance, e.g. special occasions, religious celebrations so that school can register accordingly. A leave of Absence (LOA) request must be completed.

- Engage with support that is offered from the school, including parental contracts, attendance support plans and meetings with governors.

- Further information can be found here:

[School attendance and absence: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-and-absence-overview)

Medical letters and appointment cards will need to be seen for doctors, dentist, hospital and opticians etc. We advise parents and carers, if possible, to make appointments outside of school hours.

Brierley Hill Primary School ensures that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and timely.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown on the first day.
- Pupil attendance and punctuality is monitored regularly, and parents are informed when there are concerns.
- Class teachers get a weekly email about children on the vulnerable list that week (Persistent absence, significant change, holidays etc) so that conversations can take place.
- Where medical conditions occur, the school takes a more flexible and tolerant approach as long as the family keep in regular contact with the attendance officer.
- Cases are looked at on an individual manner and the attendance officer keeps case notes.
- Where unauthorised absence reaches 20% the attendance officer makes a referral to the Education Welfare Officer who is then responsible for visiting the home and monitoring the absence. Should the attendance not improve the ESS are responsible for issuing fixed penalty notice fines. The school tries all reasonable efforts to avoid this occurrence.
- School attendance statistics are examined on a weekly basis via the weekly updates to the school's website homepage. They are reported on to governors via the head teacher's termly report to parents.
- Attendance is discussed weekly in SLT, including a breakdown to individual cohort and data is analysed to understand barriers and how to overcome these barriers.
- Attendance is reported to and discussed at governor meetings, strategic lead for attendance attends to discuss cases.
- We lead on attendance support plans to highlight, support and refer to wider agencies to improve attendance.
- We will work with the local authority to prevent legal intervention.
- Relevant referrals are timely and to the correct agencies.
- Discussion around funded breakfast club place.

We will continue to reward the children for excellent attendance individually and for the best class attendance each week.

The people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

- Bethany Bowen as Attendance Officer
- Russell Bond as Executive Head Teacher (who may allow absences in exceptional circumstances)
- Lana Duffin (Senior Attendance Champion) (SENCO) – as Deputy Headteacher may act in Mr Bond's absence.

Contact: main office on 01384 816980 or email info@brierley.dudley.sch.uk

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us.
- Or you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Support Officer and/or a member of the senior management team if absences persist.

- Refer the matter to our Attendance Support Officer and/or the Local Authority if attendance moves below 96%

All absences should be reported on the first day by phone or supported by a letter from the parent or carer. When a child is expected to be away for some time, an early phone call explaining the circumstances is needed. If no contact is made on the first day the absence is recorded as unauthorised and a variety of means are used to make contact. The Senior attendance Champion is made aware, based on information and knowledge of the family, a home visit may be conducted. A home visit will be conducted at the start of Day 3 by senior staff if there has been no communication with the family.

Parent contact telephone numbers

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, including absence. We need to have your contact numbers at all times. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. Brierley Hill requires at least 2 different contacts for your child/ren.

You have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details.

The Law relating to attendance:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that *'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs they may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

The Law relating to safeguarding:

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

A **'parent'** is defined as:

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.
-

A person with **parental responsibility** is defined as: (The Children Act 1989)

Having parental responsibility means assuming all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority that a parent of a child has by law.

People other than a child's natural parents can acquire parental responsibility through:

- being granted a residence order
- being appointed a guardian
- being named in an emergency protection order (although parental responsibility in such a case is limited to taking reasonable steps to safeguard or promote the child's welfare)
- adopting a child

If the parents of a child were not married to each other when the child was born, the mother automatically has parental responsibility, but the father only does (from 1 December 2003) by jointly registering the birth of the child with the mother. He can, however, subsequently acquire parental responsibility by various legal means. Brierley Hill would require a name of the birth certificate as proof of parental responsibility.

Attendance Support Plans:

Brierley Hill want to work with parents/carers and families to improve your child’s access to their education. As part of the support, we will work with you to develop an attendance support plan (ASP), this will look at barriers for pupils and parents and look at support and advice that can be put in place to overcome these barriers. The attendance support plan is agreed with Brierley Hill and parents and if required external agencies. This is a supportive process to allow a whole view of the pupils and family’s needs and a way of tracking improvements. These plans are reviewed in a 6-week cycle.

Persistent Absente ESSm (PA):

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need parents’ fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system, and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Any Brierley Hill child identified as having **attendance below 93%** will have all further absence **unauthorised** on schools register. However, should parent(s) provide evidence from a medical practitioner advising that the period of absence was necessary, the absence for the evidenced period will be authorised.

Communication with parents/carers:

Brierley Hill will communicate with parents in a variety of ways, telephone calls, emails, face to face meetings and letters.

There is a clear system about when school will communicate with parents/cares about your children’s attendance.

Letter 1- Expectation	Attendance has fallen below 96%	A letter is sent to raise awareness that attendance has fallen below school expectation and a summary will be sent along side to aide conversations and raise awareness
Letter 2-Concern	Attendance has fallen below 93%	A letter is sent with attendance summary and parents/carers invited in to instigate an ASP
Attendance Support Plan initiated	93% ASP put in place for support	Early Help Assessment may be started and further agencies for support
Letter 3-Targetted	Attendance has fallen at 90% or lower	A targeted letter and meeting with LA involved and external agencies. Parental contract offered Further investigation of barriers Possible legal intervention

Leave of absence (LOA)

Government legislation states that schools are unable to authorise any absence for holidays. Head teachers still have the right to allow leave for exceptional circumstances, but these are not for holidays. It's important that parents and school maintain the high degree of trust that is established. We expect parents and carers to be honest about the reasons for absence. Where parents do request time out of school, they should collect a 'Request for leave' form from the main office. On returning it to school, staff will sign the form to show they have received it and take a photocopy for school records. Parents/carers then keep the signed original. For parents of Year 6 children the SATs week is in mid-May.

Leave of absence is not allowed in term time unless approved for exceptional circumstances by the head teacher. Any leave of absence taken without the school's knowledge or consent will be referred to Education Support Services and penalty notices may be issued. These are set **at £80 per child per parent.**

If a parent/carer takes a holiday for less than 5 full days, they will be subject to a warning letter from the ESS. Any holiday absence greater than 5 days is referred to ESS and fixed penalty notices issued. Please note the Head teacher will not act to rescind fines imposed by the ESS.

[School attendance and absence: Legal action to enforce school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Holidays in term time/leave of absence

Local authority guidance:

*"It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are exceptional reasons, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the head teacher (not the Local Authority) or his/her designate may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing/on a form provided by the school. Where a parent takes a leave of absence to which the application was refused or takes a leave of absence where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty fine (upon a return from such leave) by the Local Authority may be requested. When requesting a **fixed penalty fine the school may calculate the period of days taken within 10 days is no more than 10 sessions.**"*

Further information from Dudley Local Authority:

[School attendance advice | Dudley Council](#)

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

Leave of absence shall not be granted unless –

- a) An application has been made in advance to the proprietor by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides:
and
- b) The proprietor, or a person authorised by the proprietor in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

In light of the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations, Brierley Hill Primary School will only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances.

All applications must be made in writing to the Head Teacher at least 5 school days prior to the requested leave date.

Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing. A general guide for parent's, is leave for any holiday, activity or event that could be arranged during the annual 13-week holiday time would not be authorised.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time and parent/carers proceed with the leave, it will be recorded as a (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement) on schools register.

Failure to notify and/or request leave of absence in term time, providing at least 5-day notice will result in all absence being recorded as (O) (unauthorised absence not covered by any other description).

If a pupil does not return to school after the leave of absence date, and Brierley Hill have made reasonable attempts to discuss this, school will investigate the reasons surrounding the absence, refer to the Local Authority and under **Regulation 8, 1 (f) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** consider removal from the school register.

Extended periods of absence

If a child is known to take a holiday without notifying the school after 20 sessions (10 consecutive school days) the child's place can be taken from them and they can be removed from our role. On their return they will only be reinstated if the place is still available.

Religious Observance

Several religions are represented in our school population, the vast majority being Christian and Muslim. Parents should inform the school, in advance, if a pupil is to be absent from school due to a religious festival. The minimum time possible should be taken off school. The school has agreed with Brierley Hill mosque that only one day should be taken for each of the two Eid festivals. A second day's absence around these is recorded as unauthorised.

Working with the School Attendance and Education Support Service (SA & ESS)

Regular discussions are held between the Named Point of Contact (Education Support Officer), attendance officer and Headteacher to discuss attendance and lateness issues. Strategies undertaken by the school to promote good attendance and details of absence patterns are discussed. Pupils who fall below an acceptable level of attendance are discussed in greater detail. Evidence of non-attendance, family history and relevant information are provided, discussed and recorded. Appropriate action is agreed and feedback on such action is shared and recorded.

The Education Investigation Service will continue to support the government guidelines to improve attendance within every school in the borough in turn this will help give every child their right to a full-time education.

Understanding types of absence

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

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time (emergencies or other unavoidable cause). Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Unauthorised leave of absence/holiday or day trips in term time.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN):

PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence recorded by schools after 19th August 2024.

Please also note that we are aware of an information poster circulating around Dudley schools that outlines very similar information to that given here. However, the poster states that INSET days can be included in the 5-day/10-session count. This is not accurate. Dudley will not issue penalty notices which only reach the 5-day/10-session threshold due to the inclusion of an INSET day in the count.

National threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

This means that although schools are not compelled to request the local authority to issue penalty notices, schools should not have a blanket position of requesting or not requesting the local authority to issue penalty notices. For example, in relation to leaves of absence, schools should judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.

Who may be fined?

Penalty notices may be issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school. However, they should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

First offence

The first time a penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Second offence (within 3 years)

The second time a penalty notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days. The lower rate is not an option.

Third offence and any further offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed, a penalty notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. Parents found guilty of an offence under s444 (Education Act 1996) can be fined up to £2,500 and will have a criminal conviction.

The above steps of escalation relate to each individual child and each parent. This will mean, for example, that a parent may be fined in respect of one child but prosecuted in respect of another for the same leave of absence period.

Pupils on reduction of pupil entitlement:

Pupils that are on a RIPE will be recorded accurately on the recording system. All paperwork will be completed in line with local authority guidance and information shared. Parents will understand that this is a need for a short intervention to be able to allow pupils success and reintegrate back into the classroom.

RIPEs will not be used to deal with behaviour.

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent:

Brierley Hill will proactively use data to identify these pupils early. We will work with the children and families to understand barriers and the reasons for the absences thus far. Where it is identified as school barriers, Brierley Hill will identify, signpost and support access to these services. If these barriers continue to persist Brierley Hill will engage all multi-agencies (including the local authority) and act as the lead partner to implement support. This support will be reviewed, if the issue persists, Brierley Hill will facilitate an early help assessment. It is expected that parents will proactively engage with this support that is offered and will prevent the need for more formal support.

Pupils that are persistently absent:

Where attendance becomes persistent, Brierley Hill will provide additional and targeted support to remove barriers, including working with other stakeholders/partners. Brierley Hill will implement an attendance support plan (ASP) and will regularly review, working jointly with the local authority to provide the best support options for families. Brierley Hill will engage other schools that siblings may attend to support the family holistically. It is expected that parents/families will engage with the formal support offered including parental contract, attendance support plans and/or early help to prevent the need for legal intervention. Where there is a lack of engagement or the formal support is not working, work with the local authority on legal intervention. Where there are safeguarding concerns identify support through statutory Children's social care.

Pupils that are severely absent:

Brierley Hill will have an understanding about barriers to attendance due to the previous levels of support that will have been offered. A joint approach between multi-agencies (local authority education support service and children's services) will be agreed and consistently supportive of the family's needs. The local authority will be involved, and all agencies should make this a priority. This may include an attendance support plan that includes multi-need to discuss next steps such as an alternative form of education, educational and health care plan (health need). At this stage Brierley Hill will be conscious of any potential safeguarding issues and ensure that joint agency working is successful and may require building attendance into a family plan. Brierley Hill commits to attending these team around the child/family meetings.

Children missing from education (CME):

All children of school age are expected to be educated; it is essential that school responds timely to concerns if a child has been missing from Brierley Hill. Brierley Hill will engage with the children missing in education team at the local authority and complete referrals (Appendix D). ChildrenMissingEducation@dudley.gov.uk

Children absent from education (CAE):

Brierley Hill will monitor attendance, pupils who have not returned from a leave of absence after 10 days or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive days, when the school and the local authority have not established the whereabouts of the child. There has to have been every reasonable attempt to make contact and genuine reasons for non-attendance, not sickness.

Elective home education (EHE):

Brierley Hill encourages parents who wish to remove their child from roll to elective educate to inform us. School will work with the local authority to share information about reason for withdrawal if this information is known.

Pupils with Medical conditions/and/or SEND with poor attendance:

Brierley Hill will maintain the same ambition for attendance for pupils and parents and ensure there is a joined-up approach with the pastoral need with additional support and adjustments, where suitable, for our children and families. Brierley Hill will understand the need of our pupils and develop working relationships with wider services available, making timely referrals. Attendance will be discussed at pastoral meetings, pupils progress meetings and governors. Parents will proactively engage with the support offered.

Brierley Hill will proactively use data and knowledge of the families/cohorts to identify early support required to prioritise support and unblock barriers. Brierley Hill is committed to working with other local schools and the local authority to share effective practice where common barriers to attendance become clear.

Brierley Hill is particularly mindful of pupils' mental and physical health, we will provide additional support and work collaboratively with the pupil and family, building strong relationships by listening and understanding the barriers to develop opportunities to remove them.

Pupils with a social worker (including but not limited to including the virtual school):

Brierley Hill will make the social worker aware if there is an absence in a timely manner, especially where concerns arise or there is an unexplained absence. Brierley Hill will work with agencies to regularly review the attendance data and ensure that attendance is a significant factor in the family plan. The Designated Teacher for Looked After will report attendance via welfare call daily and discuss attendance during Looked after reviews and educational plan meetings.

Education travel support:

Brierley Hill understands that for some reasons beyond school and parents' control, pupils are placed at our school with a significant distance to travel. School will support parents with travel applications and, if possible, reasonable adjustments such as funded breakfast club places. Home-to-school transport information can be found here:

[Education Travel Support | Dudley Council](#)

Deletion of names from the admissions register:

Brierley Hill will only delete a pupil from the admissions register as set out by guidance and criteria under regulation 9 of school attendance regulations 2024.

Under regulation 13(4) to (6), Brierley Hill will return this information to the local authority via an off-roll form.

Brierley Hill will follow the process for Reception non-starters as set out in the flow chart (Appendix E)

Fixed Penalty Notice:

National threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

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Who may be fined?

Penalty notices may be issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school. However, they should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

First offence

The first time a penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Second offence (within 3 years)

The second time a penalty notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days. The lower rate is not an option.

Third offence and any further offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed, a penalty notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. Parents found guilty of an offence under s444 (Education Act 1996) can

be fined up to £2,500 and will have a criminal conviction.

The above steps of escalation relate to each individual child and each parent. This will mean, for example, that a parent may be fined in respect of one child but prosecuted in respect of another for the same leave of absence period.

Appendix A: Attendance codes from September 2024

Attending the school	
/\	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

Appendix B- Leave of Absence request form (LOA)

Section A: Student's Details

All sections must be fully completed – ONE APPLICATION PER STUDENT

School:			
Student's Name:		Date of Birth	/ /
Student's Address:		Telephone No.	
		Mobile Tel No.	
		Post Code	

Section B: Reason for Leave of Absence

I would like to request a Leave of Absence for the above-named student:

First date of Absence from school	/ /	Returning to school on	/ /
-----------------------------------	-----	------------------------	-----

Head teachers can only authorise a Leave of Absence if they consider that the detail and information **you provide** constitutes an **exceptional circumstance**. You **MUST** provide **all the details and information** you would want the Head teacher to consider in deciding if your request can be granted.

By signing this application, I understand and agree the following:

1. That I have read the Attendance Policy and that **if I take my child on an Unauthorised Leave of Absence the school can request that I and any other Parents/Carers of my child are issued with a Penalty Notice (a fine of up to £160 in respect of each child and each Parent/Carer) and/or be subject to further legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court.**
2. That I am a Parent/Carer with whom the student 'normally resides'.
3. That I understand it is the Head teacher's decision as to what is and what is not an "exceptional circumstance" and I should discuss any questions I have regarding the decision made by the Head Teacher prior to the absence starting.

Parent/Carer Applicant PRINT NAME	Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss (delete as appropriate)	Date of Birth	/ /
Parent/Carer Applicant SIGNATURE		Date of Application	/ /
Relationship to student			

Section C: Additional Parent/Carer(s) with Parental Responsibility

You must enter the names/dates of birth and address details of every **ADDITIONAL** adult who holds Parental Responsibility and/or care of your child.

Parent/Carer FULL NAME	Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss (delete as appropriate)	Date of Birth	/ /
Address (if different from student's home address)	-----		
			Post Code
Relationship to student			
Parent/Carer FULL NAME	Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss (delete as appropriate)	Date of Birth	/ /
Address (if different from student's home address)	-----		
			Post Code
Relationship to student			

For School Use ONLY

Request form Received	Date	/ /	Checked as complete Name of school staff:	Y/N
Information corresponds with school records & Data collection sheet included	Y/N		Head teacher's review	Date / /
Outcome: Agreed / Declined	/ /		Applicant advised of outcome	Date / /
How applicant was advised of outcome (i.e. verbally, by letter, by telephone) School staff may need to provide evidence of the above should Court proceedings follow.	-----			

School's Request for Penalty Notice

I have read the Leave of Absence Request – Guidance Notes and understand that once requested and issued a Penalty Notice cannot be withdrawn other than in the circumstances detailed.			<input type="checkbox"/>
Agreed by Head teacher	Date	/ /	
Referral to Schools Attendance Support Service	Date	/ /	
Referrer Name			Position in School
Have you attached a copy of the student's Attendance Summary/Certificate	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you attached a copy of the decline letter sent to Parent/Carer(s)?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix C- Examples of letters 1, 2 and 3. However this may be adapted to suit the needs of each situation.

Letter 1- Expectations

Ref: Attendance expectations

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We are therefore writing to you due to **<Name of pupil>**'s current level of attendance:

Current Attendance	<current attendance> %
Authorised Absence	<current AA> %
Unauthorised Absence	<current UA> %

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year – Less than 30 Hours of Learning Lost Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best levels/grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.
95%: 10 days absence a year – 50 Hours of Learning Lost These pupils are less likely to achieve their target levels/grades and will start to find it difficult to maintain a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2-week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.
90%: 19 days absence a year – 95 Hours of Learning Lost The Government classes pupils in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work and achieve their target levels/grades. Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by Dudley Council, including the issuing of Penalty Notices and Fines.

You will be aware that it is the parents/carers responsibility to notify the school on the first day of your child's absence and to explain the reasons why they are unable to attend school and an expected date when they are to return.

Please ensure that your child attends school every day in order to make progress with their learning. If you require any support with your child's attendance, please contact us on **01384 816980**

Yours sincerely

Russell Bond
Executive Headteacher
Brierley Hill Primary School

Bethany Bowen
Attendance Officer
Brierley Hill Primary School

Letter 2- Concern- ASP

Ref: Attendance concern

I am writing to advise you that **<name of pupil>**'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to below 93% and is currently 93% and as a result we are becoming concerned that **<name of pupil>** is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of **<name of pupil>** attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning and is a legal requirement. Good attendance enables students to keep up with the work required.

As part of our continued commitment to your child, we would like to instigate an attendance support plan (ASP). Please contact our attendance officer to arrange an convenient time to conduct the meeting. At this meeting we will discuss an Early Help Assessment, I have attached an information leaflet about this so that we can discuss at the attendance support meeting.

I will continue to monitor **<name of pupil>**'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. Where possible, please ensure that school are provided with relevant doctors' notes and medical appointment details.

If there are any circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on **<name of pupil>** attending school regularly, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Bethany Bowen
Attendance Officer

Mrs L Duffin
Attendance Senior Champion

Ref: Targeted attendance concern

Warning of possible Legal Action

Dear

We have been in contact with you many times in the past about your child's poor attendance. 's attendance has continued to fall and is now %

In the past we have offered many opportunities for you to work with us (and with other agencies) to improve (Child's name) attendance. None of this work has resulted in a sustained improvement in (Child's name) attendance.

To make it very clear just how much support has been offered we are listing below all of the strategies we have implemented and the outcomes of those strategies:

Strategy 1	Date	Outcome
Strategy 2	Date	Outcome
Strategy 3	Date	Outcome
Strategy 4	Date	Outcome
Strategy 5	Date	Outcome
Other actions by school as per your attendance policy (please specify)	Date	Outcome

Please see attached the attendance Support Plan, which you signed and agreed to engage with.

It is now necessary for us to consider referring this matter to the Education Support Team at Dudley Council, which may result in legal action against you in the Magistrates Court. Please be aware that, in line with our attendance policy, we will refer the absence to Dudley Local Authority for the issue of a Penalty Notice (fine) or consideration of immediate prosecution in the Magistrates court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school

A Penalty Notice may be issued **to each parent/carer, for each child** at:

Up to £80 per parent/carer, per child if paid within 21 days, rising up to **£160 per parent/carer, per child if paid between 21-28 days.**

Please note that if the fine is not paid within 28 days or the Local Authority proceed straight to court action you are likely to be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. The maximum fine the court can impose for a first offence is £1,000 per parent, per child.

If, however, you have a history of offences of this nature you may be prosecuted under Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996 and the court can fine you up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months . This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Brierley Hill is committed to supporting parents in helping their children attend school and achieve success in life, but we can only do this if you will work with us. Please help us to help you and your child.

If you wish to discuss this matter further or feel you need any additional support with any issue which is affecting your child's school attendance, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Duffin, our school Attendance Champion.

Appendix D: CME referral form:

SECTION 1	REFERRER DETAILS					
	School / Agency				Referral date	
	Name of referrer					
	Position/Job title					
	Email & Tel. number					
	CHILD DETAILS					
	Surname			Year Group		
	Forename					
	Date of Birth		Ethnicity		Gender	
	Unique Pupil Number					
	Current address					
	Last known school					
	PARENT/CARER DETAILS (1)					
	Name		Relationship			
	Address		Resident with child?		Y	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Telephone number(s)					
	PARENT/CARER DETAILS (2)					
	Name		Relationship			
	Address		Resident with child?		Y	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Telephone number(s)					
	<i>If details of additional parents are included on the pupil information sheets, please tick this box</i>					<input type="checkbox"/>
	TICK WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY					
	Looked after child	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child in Need (CIN)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child Protection Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Refugee or Asylum Seeker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	SEN Involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child placed through FAP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>NB - If the FAP box is ticked, ESS will also forward a copy of this form to Dudley Admissions Service.</i>		Early Help involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix E:

Process for Reception & Year 7 non-starters

