



BRINKWORTH EARL DANBY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Serving the communities of Brinkworth and Dauntsey

VISION Believe to Achieve!

To provide a secure, happy and stimulating learning environment in which EVERYONE is valued, spiritual growth is nurtured and potential maximised.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The **Department for Education** states; every day at school counts enormously and so does every consecutive day attended by pupils. Pupils need to be able to absorb new facts and knowledge, acquire new skills and consolidate before building further and progressing. They simply cannot do so if their structured school terms are disrupted by too many preventable absences.

1. Aims

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We believe that it is only possible for pupils to make the best progress and fulfil their educational potential if they attend school regularly and punctually. We also believe that regular attendance contributes towards pupils feeling fully included in the school community and developing a positive attitude towards education which should continue through their whole lives.

Registered pupils of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school. There are 190 days in a school year from September through to the following July on which the children are expected to be in school. Our aim is for all children to achieve the highest attendance rate possible.

Illness and emergency situations should be the only factors which cause a child to miss school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Registration Policy.

2. Definitions

2.1 In all cases 'parents' shall be read as meaning parent, parents, guardian or recognised carer.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 General

The governors and staff fulfil the statutory duties for attendance, as stated under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

On entry to the school, parents and pupils are asked to sign a home-school agreement, which includes a commitment to regular and punctual attendance.

3.2 Pupil Responsibilities

Pupils have a responsibility to make sure that they follow school procedures for registration, particularly if arriving late at school.

3.3 Parental Responsibilities

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents must ensure that their child receives an education. Under normal conditions, this means registering their child with a school and then ensuring their regular attendance. Failure to ensure regular attendance can result in prosecution. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school and should:

- (I) ensure that their child arrives at school on time, suitably dressed and in a "condition to learn" (e.g. not tired, hungry or ill);
- (II) establish regular attendance as normal behaviour and ensure that children are only absent from school for genuine sickness or other exceptional circumstances;
- (III) take an active interest in their child's education, e.g. attend parent interviews;
- (IV) liaise with the school and any outside agencies to resolve problems relating to non-attendance or which may have a negative effect on their child's attendance.

3.4 School Responsibilities

The school has a responsibility to promote and support good attendance, taking seriously any problems that may lead to non-attendance. The school will endeavour to ensure that all parents and pupils are aware of the importance of regular and punctual attendance by means of the school's newsletter and an annual notice. Furthermore, individual pupil attendance is recorded annually on every child's report.

The school is required by law to take an attendance register twice a day; at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The register must show whether pupils are present or not. In cases of absence, the register must show whether such absence is authorised or unauthorised. It must also indicate those pupils who have arrived late or are being educated elsewhere.

The Head Teacher will contact the parents in person or by phone if a pupil:

- (I) Fails to attend school regularly;
- (II) Is absent for more than 10 consecutive school sessions without explanation;
- (III) Has unauthorised absence of a total of 10 sessions or more in any six week period;
- (IV) Has authorised absence of more than 25% of the available school sessions;
- (V) Has unauthorised absence of more than 15% (including late arrival) of the available school sessions;

If the child's attendance continues to cause concern the initial contact will be followed by letter. If there is still no improvement the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be notified.

3.5 Local Authority Responsibilities

Wiltshire Local Authority (LA) has a responsibility to take action in the event of non-attendance or the persistent late arrival of children. These duties are discharged by the Education Welfare Service.

The Education Act 1996 (s 444A and s444B) and The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 give powers to the LA and other designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where the parent is considered capable of but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance (see Section 4.4).

3.6 Governor Responsibilities

The Governing body reviews attendance figures at every Full governing body meeting. The Governors periodically review and amend procedures and registration systems to meet needs. They assess training and resource implications.

4. Absence

4.1 Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

It is the school which authorises absences and not parents. Parents are requested to contact the school to request arranged absences, such as a doctor's appointment, and to inform the school immediately of any illness. If parents have not contacted the school, the Administrative Officer will contact parents on the first day of absence, and will continue to do so until contact is made. The Headteacher monitors whole school attendance on a weekly basis and has clear procedures to follow should there be any concerns. Individual students, for whom there are concerns, are monitored on a daily basis.

4.2 Absence during Term Time

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

4.3 Requests for Leave of Absence

A request for a leave of absence must only be considered if;

- The parent the child normally lives with applies in advance for the absence; and
- There are exceptional circumstances for the absence

If the parent with whom the child normally lives does not apply for the absence this would be considered as an unauthorised absence and this parent would be liable to the issue of a Penalty Notice. Absence cannot be authorised if anybody else applies for the holiday.

A request for leave of absence could be considered exceptional in the following circumstance;

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking leave of absence outside term time at any point in the academic year;
- The terminal illness or bereavement of a parent or sibling if the absence is concurrent.

The overriding principle should be that the absence ought not to be authorised if it will have a detrimental effect on the child's education.

4.4 Unauthorised Absence (Penalty Notice)

If a pupil accumulates 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within the previous 6 month period of a current academic year, the school must notify the LA. A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child where that applies. A penalty of £60 will apply if paid within 28 days or £120 up to 42 days. If after 42 days the penalty has not been paid, legal proceedings will be taken through the magistrates court for the outstanding penalty charges.

All Wiltshire Schools are expected to follow the Wiltshire Code of Conduct and send notification to the Penalty Notice Officer after a period of unauthorised leave of absence.

4.5 Holidays in term time

The Governors and Headteacher do not support parents taking their children out of school for holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as a family needing to spend time together during or following a crisis. Apart from such exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher will not authorise any holiday absences during term time, including overlapping days at the beginnings and endings of terms. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment) Regulations 2013

5. Procedures

5.1 Procedures In School

- (I) School doors open at 8.45am. Registration begins at 9.00am. By that time, pupils should be in the classroom, following early morning class procedures and Wake and Shake, ready for registration;
- (II) Children arriving after 9.00am should report to the school office by way of the front door. They will be recorded as late arrivals;
- (III) If a pupil is marked as absent on the register, and no reason has been given, the parents will be contacted by telephone. If no telephone contact is possible then a letter will be sent by post;
- (IV) If pupils are absent from school for more than 10 consecutive sessions without contacting the school, then the Education Welfare Service will be contacted;
- (V) If a pupil's absence record is erratic, or if a pupil is persistently late, then the school will contact the parents. The Education Welfare Officer may also be contacted.

5.2 Home-School Procedures

- (I) Parents of children who are going to be absent from school should contact the school office before 9.00am either by telephone or in person. An answer phone will record messages out of school hours or if there is no one available to take calls;
- (II) When a pupil first attends our school they, along with their parents are asked to sign a home school agreement. This includes a commitment on behalf of the parents and pupil to regular attendance;
- (III) Parents are requested to notify the school office of medical or dental appointments verbally or in writing and show the appointment card, prior to the date of the appointment. If an emergency appointment is needed, they should contact the school by telephone in the morning as previously mentioned;
- (IV) Parents are requested to notify the school of circumstances that are likely to affect their child's attendance at school;

5.3 Monitoring & Evaluation Procedures

Attendance is monitored regularly. Administrative Staff:

- (I) Check registers daily for unauthorised absence and record attendance on SIMS 'Attendance Manager';
- (II) Following weekly checks of electronic systems, bring irregularities or concerns to the attention of the Head Teacher who will follow these procedures;
- (III) Produce and check a report at the end of terms 2, 4 and 6 to submit to the DfE;
- (IV) Produce an annual analysis of attendance for governors