



Brede Primary School

Policy name	Attendance
Policy status	Statutory
Date approved by governing body	05.12.2022
Review date	Dec 2025

Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	2
4. Recording attendance	5
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	8
7. Attendance monitoring	8
8. Monitoring arrangements	9
9. Links with other policies.....	9
Appendix 1: attendance codes	9

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices as needed.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Julie Knock and can be contacted via the school office: office@brede.e-sussex.sch.uk Tel: 01424 882393.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher

The attendance officer is the school secretary and can be contacted via the school office: office@brede.e-sussex.sch.uk Tel: 01424 882393.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office via SIMs after morning and afternoon registration.

3.6 School Administration Staff

School administration staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school systems.
- Transfer calls from parents to the headteacher or deputy headteacher as required in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must be in their classroom ready to start the school day at 08.55.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08.55 and will be kept open until 09.00. The register for the afternoon session is taken at 13.00.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence or as soon as practically possible by calling the main school office. (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides official confirmation of the appointment is required. Please contact the main school office to request authorisation.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

All lateness is recorded and monitored by the Headteacher. Parents will be contacted if a child is late on more than one occasions in a term.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

When a concern is raised the school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional and unavoidable circumstances', thus cannot be taken when the school is closed. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted in the same term as the requested absence if possible and at least two weeks in advance before the absence, using the Withdrawal from Learning Form – available from the main school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Attendance monitoring

6.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are individuals or particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

6.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will

- Provide attendance reports to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every three years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Parents' Guidance on Attendance and Punctuality - see appendix 2.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined

		the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Parents Attendance Guidance

Parents' Guidance on Attendance and Punctuality

Following the enforced school closures over the past two years, the Department of Education requires schools to place an additional emphasis on attendance. We want all pupils to take full advantage of their education at Brede Primary and to work in partnership with you. If you are having any difficulties with your child's attendance, please get in touch with us.

Below are the procedures we use at Brede:

Arriving late to school

The school gates open at 8.40 am and close at 8.55 am. Children are welcome to wait on the playground if supervised by a parent/ carer. The bell will ring at 8.45 am when the children can enter the classrooms. Hedgehog Class will be collected from the playground at 8.45 am for the first week of term in September.

All children must be in their classrooms, ready to start school by 8.55 am. Arriving after this will be recorded as late in the register. If a child is late on two or more occasions in a term, the Headteacher will contact the parents/carers.

Authorised Absence

Absence due to illness

Children should be kept at home if they have been sick and/or have diarrhoea due to an infectious illness, such as norovirus. They should not return until 48 hours after the sickness/diarrhoea has ended. If you suspect your child has coronavirus (COVID-19), please follow the latest NHS advice, available at:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms in children - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms-in-children)

Please telephone the school on the first day of illness and each day thereafter.

Whilst school appreciates that young children are often unwell, the Headteacher is required to monitor registers weekly. If a child is absent frequently due to illness, the parents/carers will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss any ongoing health problems and offered additional support if appropriate. At this stage, medical evidence will be required before authorising any further absence (see unauthorised absence).

Absence due to medical appointments

If possible, doctor/medical or dentist appointments should be made outside the school day. Please inform the school in advance by bringing the appointment card/letter into the school office.

Absence due to religious beliefs

If your child is attending a religious festival, please complete a Withdrawal from Learning form (available from the main school office) for the Headteacher's consideration.

Absence due to exceptional circumstances

Please complete a Withdrawal from Learning form (available from the main school office). Only exceptional circumstances can be considered and must indicate why the request can only be taken during term time. Evidence should be attached to the form.

Applying for an absence from learning due to a family holiday

Holiday requests during term-time will not be authorised. A £60 penalty notice is issued for every 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised holiday taken in an academic year.

Unauthorised Absence

If the procedures outlined here are not followed, this will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised. Parents/carers will be invited to meet with the Headteacher, and an attendance contract will be issued. If a parent/carer fails to attend this meeting, the contract will be issued in their absence. Failure to comply with the attendance contract could result in legal action, including a £60 fixed penalty fine for each parent/carer.

If a child is continuously absent from school for twenty days without notification, they will be removed from the school register and reported as missing in education.

Appendix 2: Penalty Notice Guidance.

Penalty Notices and the Education Act 1996

Section 444A of the Act gives powers to the local authority, and headteachers to issue Penalty Notices in circumstances where it is believed that a person has committed an offence under Section 444(1); that is, where a child fails to attend regularly at their registered school.

What is a Penalty Notice?

A Penalty Notice is a fine which may be issued as an alternative to prosecution. If it is paid it does not require a court appearance and does not result in a criminal record.

Who can be issued with a Penalty Notice?

Where absence warrants the issuing of a Penalty Notice, anyone with Parental Responsibility, or having day to day care of the child can be issued with one Penalty Notice for each of the children with unauthorised absence. If two parents have two children this may result in four Penalty Notices, 2 Penalty Notices per parent.

What if my child has further unauthorised absence from school?

If you pay the Penalty Notice and your child has further unauthorised absences additional legal action may be taken. For example, in the event that a Penalty Notice has previously been served to you due to unauthorised holiday, should your child have any future unauthorised leave this may result in further legal action for you, such as prosecution or an Education Supervision Order.

How is a Penalty Notice issued and how much is the fine?

Penalty Notices are either posted to your home or delivered to you by hand. Each Penalty Notice fine is £60 if paid within 21 days of the date of posting and £120 if paid after this but within 28 days of the date of posting.

When are they issued?

As set down by the Department for Education, Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised absence. Penalty Notices are issued when a pupil has had 10 or more half-day sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence, in the last 10 school week period.

Unauthorised absence is absence not approved by the school and will be coded on your child's attendance record as one of the following:

- O* – unauthorised absence
- U* – late after close of registration
- G* – non-approved leave of absence (holiday).

Persistent Lateness (L) code which reaches the threshold may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

Is a warning given?

If your child has an ongoing pattern of unauthorised absence then you will normally receive a written warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued. This warning will advise you about the extent of your child's absence and warn you that if your child's attendance does not show a significant improvement and if this improvement is not maintained thereafter, a Penalty Notice may be issued without further warning.

How do I pay?

Details of payment arrangements are included in the Penalty Notice. You must ensure that you include your Penalty Notice reference number on any payment method so the payment can be tracked. Failure to do so may result in the Penalty Notice being recorded as unpaid. Full payment is required within prescribed timescales.

SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

What happens if I do not pay?

From the date of posting you have up to 21 days to pay £60 or failing that a further 7 days to pay £120. If you fail to make any payment within the 28 days provided the local authority will consider commencing proceedings in the Magistrates' Court for the original offence of failing to ensure regular attendance under s444 Education Act 1996. If convicted there are a number of possible sentences, including a fine of up to £1,000 (in the case of a prosecution under section 444(1)) or a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a period of up to three months' imprisonment (in the case of a prosecution under section 444(1A)).

Is there an appeal process?

There is no statutory right of appeal. Once a Penalty Notice has been issued, it can only be withdrawn if it can be shown that it was issued in error.