

# BRUNSWICK PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 2016

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors \_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Head Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date

**REVIEW DATE:**

## **Brunswick Park Primary School's Attendance Policy**

'Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school'.

### **School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DfE Aug 2013**

School starts promptly at 08:55 every day. The children are expected to be in the playground, ready to line up with their class or be by their classroom door when the bell rings in Bantry Street.

Any child arriving after 09:00 will be asked for a reason for their lateness. Pupils arriving after 09:15 will be marked (U), unauthorised late. They will take a late card to class and then begin their lessons. A 'U' mark is interpreted by the Educational Welfare Officer as an absence; parents or carers of children who are consistently late will be contacted and a meeting arranged with school staff responsible for attendance or with the Educational Welfare Officer.

Brunswick Park expects excellent attendance and punctuality from all pupils at all times. We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

- Brunswick Park Primary School's current target for pupil attendance is 96%.
- At Brunswick Park we aim for a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils.

### **Overall Aims:**

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, supported by rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential through a high level of school attendance and excellent punctuality.
- To ensure all the school's stakeholders, including governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance to ensure timely action can be taken.
- To identify causes of poor attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them in a timely manner.
- To work with external agencies in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

## **Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality: The Legal Framework**

There are legal obligations regarding:

- **The parent(s):** to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the school's register.
- **The school:** to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school. We work closely with the link Educational Welfare Officer who is employed by Southwark Council to advise the school and parents/carers of their legal duties. The link Educational Welfare Officer inspects registers on a regular basis.

Staff responsibilities are as follows:

### **Head Teacher**

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the attendance policy.
- To deal with parental requests for leave of absence in line with Southwark LA guidance and the requirements of the law.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Southwark LA guidance.
- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquires.
- To report attendance matters to Governors.
- To ensure staff follow the registration systems and procedures stated in this policy.

### **Assistant Head Teacher for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare**

- To oversee the analysis of/analyse weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings in a timely manner.
- To meet with the School Administrator to monitor systems and procedures for attendance, to ensure they are having a positive impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with external agencies such as the Educational Welfare Officer and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used consistently and in accordance with policy.
- To work with the teachers to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To revise and amend the attendance policy as required.
- To ensure staff follow the registration systems and procedures stated in this policy.

### **School Administrator**

- To carry out and record the outcome of first day absence calls, when a child does not arrive at school when no reason for absence has been received.
- To monitor weekly attendance data for Year Groups.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To inform the Assistant Head Teacher or Head Teacher in a timely manner if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.
- To produce weekly/termly/yearly data for SLT to analyse.
- To record reasons for absence and update class registers promptly (Local Authority suggests within 10 working days).
- To implement the daily checking of registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
- To contact parents/carers by letter following 3 instances of lateness or absence.
- To maintain Walton Samuel, School MIS attendance records in line with this policy.
- To liaise with and report to outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service and Early Help Team.
- To maintain clear communication with the SLT regarding attendance and punctuality.
- To inform parents of school procedures when parents/carers have failed to use agreed school procedures to inform the school about pupil absence
- To ensure staff follow the registration systems and procedures stated in this policy.

### **Staff:**

- To ensure quality first teaching every day, with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge and inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the e-register system.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This is done on the school's e-register system at 09:00 for the whole school. Afternoon registers for Reception, Year 1 and 2 are taken at 13:00. Afternoon registers for Years 3 and 4 are taken at 13:30. Afternoon registers for Years 5 and 6 are taken at 14:00.
- To remind children, parents and carers regularly about the importance of good attendance.
- To follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought in a timely manner.
- To provide a welcoming and safe environment that encourages excellent attendance and promotes the best performance from children.

- To establish effective communication links with parents and carers and work collaboratively to meet children's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection.
- To work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and implementing strategies to overcome them.
- To inform a member of SLT promptly about pupils whose attendance is persistently poor.
- To feed back to parents and carers regularly about pupil attendance and punctuality and at Parents Evenings.

### **Parents and Carers:**

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents/carers should contact the school as early as possible. **If a child has a minor ailment, e.g. mild headache or stomach ache etc. parents/carers should inform the school and bring them in. These ailments are not considered serious enough to warrant absence from school. If the child does not get any better, school will contact parents/carers as early as is appropriate to collect them.** If pupils have a clinic or hospital appointment, parents/carers should let the school know and also bring in evidence of the appointment. GP and dental appointments, with the exception of orthodontic appointments at hospital, should be made after school where possible. Examples of valid evidence for your child's absence are as follows:

- Proof of Medical appointment e.g. hospital letter, appointment card for dentist or optician;
- Appointment letter or card for other agencies, e.g. speech therapist, CAMHS, physiotherapist;
- Text message or email from your GP confirming a booked appointment.

### **Therefore, parents and carers are expected to:**

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school well prepared and in the correct uniform.
- Arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school time wherever possible.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence for their child.
- Provide a written explanation and evidence of absence, including dates of absence, as soon as their child returns to school. Please note authorising absence is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and is done at the Head Teacher's discretion.

- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in their child's life, which may affect learning.

### **Persistent Absence (PA)**

**Persistent absence is attendance that falls below 90%. Parents/carers will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the reasons for absence. Meetings may take place with school staff or with the Educational Welfare Officer. Depending on the outcome of the meeting a formal referral may be made to the Local Authority, which may result in legal proceedings.**

**The Local Authority, through the Educational Welfare Service, is expected:**

- To undertake home visits where necessary;
- To carry out register inspections;
- To advise on any local authority initiatives;
- To support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions e.g. through the Early Help service;
- To work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance;
- To ensure that parents/carers are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance;
- To uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment and involvement in entertainment and child protection.

Formal meetings for pupils with continued poor attendance and punctuality are held after a specified period of time. Targets are set and attendance is monitored for a further specified period of time.

**Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns will be acted on immediately, in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.**

### **Weekly Celebration Assemblies**

Celebration Assemblies are held every week, on a Tuesday. Classes with the highest attendance receive an Attendance Cup to celebrate this with their class for the week.

### **School Newsletter**

The school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It has a dedicated section to remind parents/carers of our school attendance target, and to inform them of which classes have the best attendance.

**School Attendance Board**

The board includes attendance information and information about the classes with the highest attendance; this board is updated weekly and encourages classes to strive to keep their attendance above 95%.

**Breakfast Club**

Daily Breakfast Club is available to pupils for a small contribution. This supports parents and carers by allowing them to drop their children off from 08:00, ensuring they are on time for school. The club is supervised by four members of staff.