



The Brookfield School Attendance Policy

Aim

For parents/carers to fulfil their responsibility to ensure that their children attend school for all sessions, enabling their physical, emotional and social wellbeing and enabling them to achieve to the best of their ability, make a positive contribution and accomplish economic well-being.

Objectives

- To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance
- To inform parent/carers of attendance and punctuality issues
- To identify causes of non-attendance and consequently take action
- To improve attendance of individuals, groups and the school
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parent/carers, carers and pupils
- To work with other agencies
- To recognise the diverse needs of our individual pupils, particularly when planning re-integration

The Law

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parent/carers are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parent/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly then the parent/carer is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent/carer, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000). Any absence should be considered unauthorised unless there is a valid reason otherwise. Unauthorised absence at any level is considered unacceptable by both the school and local authority.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 allowed Head Teachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Head Teachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **The amendments make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Procedures

Attendance is checked on a daily basis through the school office and pupils' individual attendance is monitored on a fortnightly basis by the Safeguarding Officer (SO). As well as absence over consecutive days and persistent absence, the Head Teacher, Safeguarding Officer and Education Welfare Officer also look at 10+ absent sessions in any 26 week period of time including isolated days and unauthorised absence.

Attendance information is stored on SIMs. All absence notes received are kept securely in pupils' personal files. Please refer to the Privacy Policy for data storage information.

Pupils' current attendance is on all reports that are sent home.

If a child's absence causes us concern, we will try to make contact with you to ascertain the reasons for absence. If absences become regular and we are not satisfied with the reasons given for absence, we will ask for parental/carer permission to liaise with the child's GP. We will also request parents/carers attend meetings to discuss ways to improve absence and we may involve the education Welfare Officer (EWO) and/or the local authority if we do not see improved attendance. Our Safeguarding Officer will attend your home with either another member of staff or a police officer to collect a child who is refusing to attend school and/or to undertake a 'Safe and Well' check if we have not seen the child for 15 school days.

The following staff have responsibilities regarding attendance:

Office Staff

- Making daily phone calls and texts home to check whereabouts of child and reasons for absence
- Taking phone calls from parents/carers re absence
- Sending list of absentee pupils to SLT and other staff daily
- Keeping parents/carers informed of any unexplained absences e.g pupils are off site

Form Tutors

- Being good role-models for pupils by actively promoting the school's attendance ethos via discussion in tutor time
- Giving attendance a high profile
- Praising pupils for attendance
- Taking prompt action where pupils are late

Data Manager

- Monitoring year group attendance targets and keeping records
- Overseeing administration of the SIMS Register system. Streamlining and making adjustments to systems and procedures
- Supporting the work of SLT, SO and Form Tutors by providing regular attendance information via weekly monitoring spreadsheet

Safeguarding Officer

- Supporting Form Tutors on issues of non-attendance, remedying causes
- Meeting with parents/carers to discuss attendance problems as soon as they are identified
- Supporting with referrals to the Local Authority

- Looking for patterns of absences with EWO and SLT
- Issuing attendance letters and organising Attendance Support Plans– see Appendix 3
- Making home visits

Senior Leadership Team

- Giving attendance a high profile at assemblies, school events and in the school newsletter.
- Pursuing issues of non-attendance and remedying causes
Report on attendance to directors

Parents/carers

- Ensuring that children leave for school on time every day
- Providing written explanation for children's absences from school
- Providing medical evidence e.g. doctor's note if requested for either frequent or extended periods of absence (see Appendix 2)
- Not taking children out of school in term time
- Where it is not possible to avoid taking children out of school during term time, a holiday form must be completed and permission granted by the Head Teacher
- Notifying the school as soon as problems arise with child's attendance
- Telephoning the school on the first morning the child is absent and thereafter daily keeping the school informed by telephone
- Supporting the school in its ethos relating to the direct link between attendance and success
- Signing the child out at the school office if taking him/her out of school for any reason during the school day

Pupils:

- Arriving at 8.40am for registration every morning
- Signing in at the school office if arriving after 9.00am
- Being on time for lessons
- Making sure a note is sent from parent/carers to explain absences
- Telling Form Tutor if having any problems attending school

Rewards for good attendance

- Reward trips
- Good attendance references to potential employers/colleges
- Success

Sanctions

The school reserves the right to use any of the following consequences to fulfil its obligations with respect to school attendance

- Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent/carer commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school offering the parent/carer the opportunity to enter into a parent/carer contract following a pupil's truancy under section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (with The Governing Body)
- Penalty Notices issued by the school
- Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent/carer commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly.

This can result in the school issuing a penalty notice under section 23 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (by Head teachers and Deputy and Assistant Heads authorised by them)

- Parent/carer orders or penalty notices can also be issued by the Local authority
- Prosecution by the LA on behalf of the school

We will always consider every case on an individual basis, but the following also apply:

Accepted medical evidence for absences of one day or less:

(School Office can photocopy the evidence)

- Doctor's or Hospital appointment card from surgery reception showing date and child's name
- Letter showing appointment date and child's name
- Copy of prescription showing date of issue and child's name
- Copy of medication box/pack showing date of issue and child's name

For longer periods of absence, we will take into account:

- Letter from recognised health professional (including mental health) advising of need for absence, hospitalisation or long-term treatment
- We may also request permission to contact the child's GP or other health professional to confirm the causes of absence

Appendices

Appendix 1: Table of timescales and actions

Appendix 2: Flowchart of timescales and actions

Appendix 3: Attendance Officer Letters to be sent off in the following order, after weekly monitoring by SO and head teacher

- Letter 1 – first absence letter
- Letter 2 – serious concerns
- Letter 3 – medical evidence
- Letter 4 – further attendance meeting
- Letter 5 – EWO meeting
- Letter 6 – Pre Penalty Notice Warning
- Letter 7 – unauthorised holiday
- Letter 8 – late registration

Appendix 4: Attendance Support Plan (meeting notes)

Appendix 5: Attendance Panel Meeting

Approved by Board of Directors

Signed: June Poole

Date: 23rd January 2019

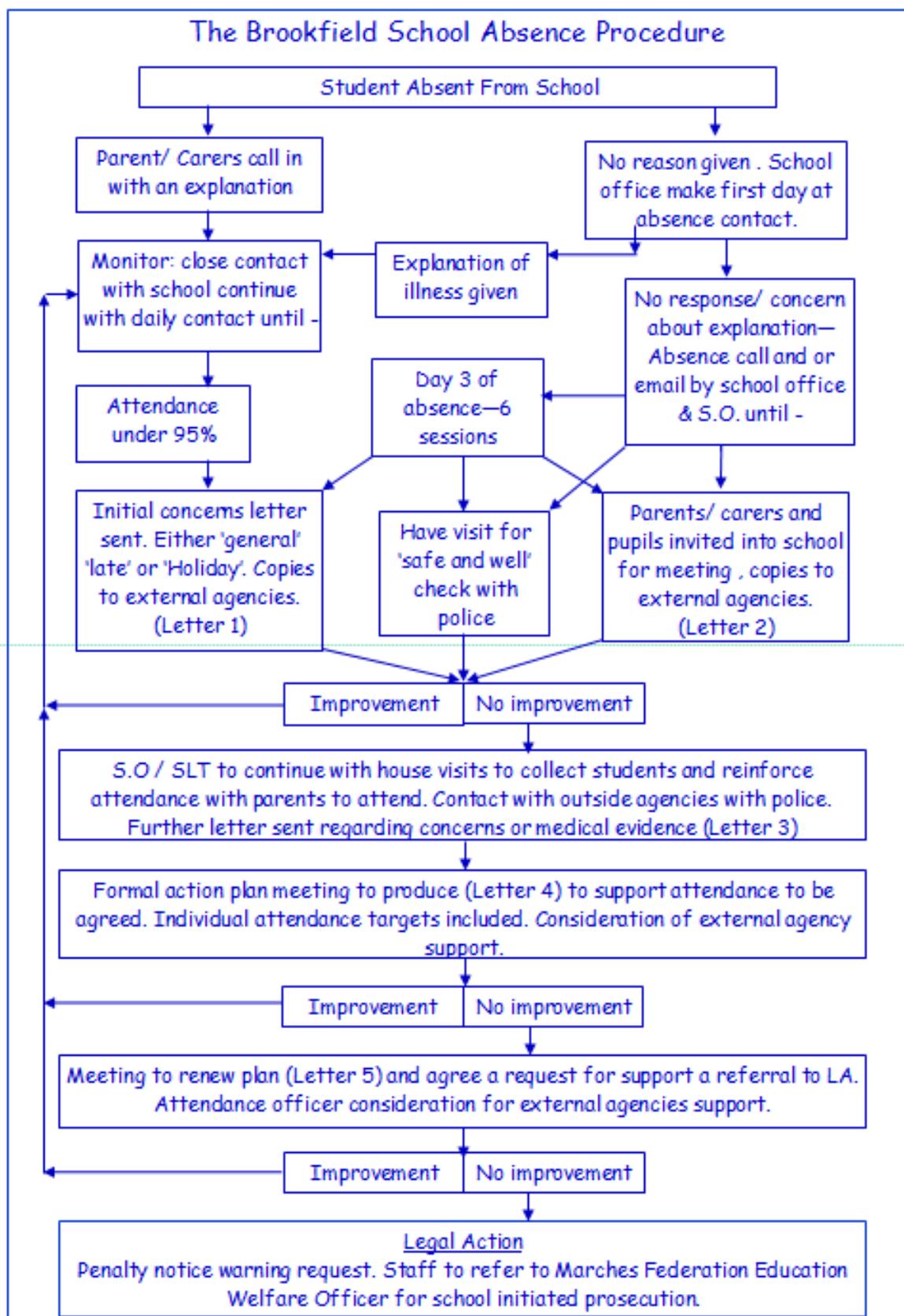
Review date: January 2020

Appendix 1: Timescale and actions

Suggested time scale	Attendance profile	What needs to be done	By who/ who with
Day 1	Unexplained absence - Any absence without reason	First-day-of-absence contact	School Office
Day 6 of absence or 10+ sessions absence in any 26 week period	No response or concern about explanations	Call to Parent/carers Home visit where concerns exist Letter raising concerns	SO
In addition, as required	Attendance under 95%	Letter to Parent/carers. Request for medical evidence may be required. Absence monitored by SO as part of attendance strategy meetings.	School Office/SLT/SO
Further absence days or persistent absence (whichever is greater)	Further unauthorised absence/continual absence	Parent/carers and pupil to be invited to school meeting. Request for medical evidence may be required Formal action plan to support attendance to be agreed, individual attendance targets to be included.	HT/SO

Suggested time scale	Attendance profile	What needs to be done	By who/ who with
		Date set for further meeting to review plan. Consideration of external agency support	
Approx 6 weeks after initial meeting	Further unauthorised absence	Meeting to review plan and agree a request for support or referral to the LA Attendance Officer Consideration for external agency support	SO Attendance director
Legal Action	Unauthorised absence for holiday totalling 10 or more sessions; or further unauthorised absence	School staff to refer to the LA Attendance Officer for school-initiated prosecution	Head Teacher

Appendix 2: Flowchart of timescales and actions



Letter 1: 1st absence letter

Date

Name & Address

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance	%	
Authorised absences	%	
Unauthorised absences	%	

Xxxxx's attendance at school has been monitored because of concerns about how frequently he is absent. Above are the details of Xxxxx's current attendance for this school year:

Poor school attendance will have a huge impact on a student's ability to achieve his goals and will make it almost impossible to keep up with school work. It also disrupts school routines and the learning of others.

Improving school attendance is a priority at The Brookfield School and we work closely with the Education Welfare Service to ensure students attend school. It is important to remember that it is a parents/carers responsibility to ensure that every child attends school every day that they are required to attend.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me on 01432 265153.

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

Letter 2 – Serious concern

Date

Name & Address

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance		
Authorised absences		
Unauthorised absences		

The above student has not been in school for the last 3 days and we have received no contact from you regarding Xxxx's absences.

This is a serious concern for us therefore we are requesting that you and your son/daughter attend a meeting at school to discuss this.

Please remember that it is your responsibility to ensure that your child attends school every day that they are required to attend and that **failure to engage will help and support or to secure your child's school attendance may result in legal proceedings.**

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

Letter 3 – medical evidence

Date

Name & Address

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance		
Authorised absences		
Unauthorised absences		

In view of the number of absences XXXXXX has incurred, The Brookfield School are requesting that all future absences be covered by medical evidence so that School can decide if any further absences are authorised or unauthorised. This can be provided by proof of appointment card or proof of prescribed medication. The more information you can provide us will assist us with the decision.

Failure to provide the necessary documents to enable us to authorise the absence will result in these absences being unauthorised which may lead to legal action being taken against you.

Currently your child is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee and we wish to support you and your child to improve on his/her attendance and punctuality. It is important to remember that it is a parents/carers responsibility to ensure that every child attends school every day that they are required to attend.

Let us know how we can best support you and your child so that they can show up for school on time every day. We want your child to be successful in school. If you have any questions or need more information or you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me at this office.

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

Letter 4 – Further attendance meeting

Date

Name & Address

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance		
Authorised absences		
Unauthorised absences		

We are writing to request that you attend a meeting (see below) to review the attendance plan arranged at the last meeting and to examine further ways we can move forward to improve the attendance of Xxxxxxx.

Meeting to take place:

On – xxxxxxxxxxxx at xxxam/pm at The Brookfield School.

Once again may I remind that that it is parents/carers responsibility to ensure that every child attends school every day that they are required to attend. **Failure to support this will result in a Penalty Notice.** Improving school attendance is a priority at The Brookfield School and we work closely with the Education Welfare Officer to ensure students attend school. The EWO is already monitoring xxxxx's attendance and if it does not improve you may receive a Penalty Notice Warning letter.

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

Letter 5 – EWO meeting

Date

Name & Address

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance		
Authorised absences		
Unauthorised absences		

I am sorry to report that the school and Education Welfare Officer are still showing concerns.

I would therefore like to invite you to a meeting at Brookfield School on XXXXXXX at XXXX am/pm. **Karen Millington (EWO) will be attending.** The purpose of the meeting is to find ways to help and support XXXXX and discuss ways that the school and Education Welfare can move forward to help and encourage XXXXX to take advantage of the educational opportunities on offer. It is important to remember that it is parents/carers responsibility to ensure that every child attends school every day that they are required to attend.

I look forward to seeing you, but if the date and time are inconvenient please ring me at the above number so we can rearrange the meeting.

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

Letter 6 – Pre penalty warning notice

Date

Name & Address

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance		
Authorised absences		
Unauthorised absences		

Xxxxx's attendance at school has been monitored because of concerns about how frequently he/she is absent. Above are the details of Xxxxx's current attendance for this school year. Poor school attendance will have a huge impact on a student's ability to achieve his or her goals and will make it almost impossible to keep up with school work. It also disrupts school routines and the learning of others. It is important to remember that it is a parents/carers responsibility to ensure that every child attends school every day that they are required to attend. Improving school attendance is a priority at The Brookfield School and we work closely with the Education Welfare Officer to ensure students attend school. Further to previous letters I am now writing to let you know that details of Xxxxx's attendance may be referred to their services. **As a result you may receive a Penalty Notice Warning letter.**

A Penalty Notice warning letter may be issued when a student has had 10 sessions (5 school days) or more unauthorised absences from school. The student's attendance will then be closely monitored and if there has not been an improvement or an improvement has been made but not sustained, a **Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued which will lead to a fine of at least £60 or Herefordshire Council may take further legal action.** We very much regret having to take such action and I would encourage you to notify school when your son or daughter is absent from school. By doing so we may be in a position to authorise the absence and avoid the need to consider issuing a warning. You may wish to visit our website and view the school's Attendance Policy which will provide you with further information regarding absences from school. A copy of Xxxxx's Attendance Register is enclosed. Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me on 01432 265153.

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

School holiday

Name & Address

Letter 7 – unauthorised holiday

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance		
Authorised absences		
Unauthorised absences		

It has been brought to my attention that xxxxxxxx had an unauthorised holiday during term time for the following dates xxxxxxxxxxxx2018.

As you are aware, The Brookfield School does not authorise term time holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances, as this was not the case, I have not authorised these absences. As a result, a referral to Herefordshire Council will be requested. Please find enclosed an information leaflet regarding Penalty Notices.

It is not a given right to request and take repeat holidays in term time.

I hope, of course, that such future action will not be necessary and that your child will take full advantage of future educational opportunities. It is important to remember that it is parents/carers responsibility to ensure that every child attends school every day that they are required to attend.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at school.

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

Appendix – Late letter

Letter 8 – Late letter

Date

Name & Address

Dear xx ,

Re: Name of Pupil DOB

	Percentage	Sessions
Current attendance		
Authorised absences		
Unauthorised absences		

It has been brought to my attention that XXX is sometimes late for registration in the mornings. Our records show XX occasions since September.

I realise that it can be difficult in the mornings – there’s often a last minute rush in our house! However, I need to point out to you the importance of punctuality for the children. If XXX could be here, by 8.40 am each morning, he/she can then can be in the hall for registration, thus starting the day in calm, settling manner. It is important to remember that it is a parents/carers responsibility to ensure that every child attends school every day that they are required to attend.

It can be quite disconcerting for children to enter the classroom after registration, and lateness is something that can usually be avoided. I hope this letter will help to rectify the matter and trust XXXX will not be late in future. If you feel there is any way in which I can support you please don’t hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Yours sincerely



David Gaston

Head Teacher

The Brookfield School
Individual Attendance Plan

Student Name:	Year:
Parents/Carers:	Teacher:

Discussion pointers:

- √ Student strengths
- √ Concerns (attendance and others identified)
- √ General consequences of non-attendance (school and in life)
- √ Possible positive reinforcement (school and home) for improved attendance
- √ Effective strategies already in place
- √ Ways of monitoring

