



Brecknock and Torriano Schools Federation

Attendance Policy 2023-2024

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1. Aims

At Brecknock and Torriano Primary Schools we want to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education to maximise opportunities, attainment, well-being, and wider life chances for everybody to realise their potential. We aim for an environment, which enables and encourages all members of the school community to strive for excellence and enjoyment in education. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and punctually.

There is a renewed national focus on maximising pupils' time in the classroom, as evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best further qualifications.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos which demonstrates to children, parents/carers, and the wider community the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

This includes:

- 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
- Recognising a child's right to an education and understanding the challenges children face globally in accessing education.

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:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across the federation 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 Executive Headteacher/Head of Schools to account for the implementation of this policy

Our attendance governor meets regularly with the Director of Inclusion to discuss attendance matters and initiatives to improve attendance, and reduce cases of persistent absence.

3.2 The Executive Headteacher and Head of School

The Executive Headteacher and Head of School has overall responsibility 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 (Director of Inclusion)

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
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- 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
- Awareness of those pupils the school is most concerned about for example looked after children, children subject to safeguarding procedures, or other vulnerable children.
- Raising the profile of good attendance across the school, including leading regular assemblies

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Director of Inclusion and can be contacted via telephone, 020 7485 6334 at Brecknock Primary School and 0207 424 0202 at Torriano Primary School.

3.4 The attendance officers

The school attendance officers are responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Ensure attendance data is accurate and up to date
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Executive Headteacher/Head of Schools
- Collaborating with school staff e.g., inclusion or pastoral team to tackle persistent absence and to follow up absences.
- Working with Pupil Attendance Service officers to tackle persistent absence
- Awareness of those pupils the school is most concerned about for example looked after children, children subject to safeguarding procedures, or other vulnerable children.
- Advising the Executive Headteacher and Head of School when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer can be contacted via the school admin on 020 7485 6334.

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 twice daily, am/pm. It is a legal requirement that the attendance register must be marked accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Highlighting any emerging patterns of absence and lateness or any alarming changes in this area to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance or the attendance officer or the designated safeguarding lead. This should be recorded on CPoms.
- Encouraging patterns of punctuality and good attendance by praising those children who come to school each day and arrive on time.
- Ensuring that information about absences is passed on to the appropriate person.
- Welcoming back pupils after an absence using positive language.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the inclusion or pastoral team 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 school every day, on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence, and each subsequent day of absence, 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
- Speak to their class teacher if they are concerned about their attendance or punctuality.

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

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 arrive in school by 8.55am for a 9am start on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.10. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45pm/1.30pm (KS2) and will be kept open until 1pm/1.45 (KS2).

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 by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff (see also section 7). A telephone call is the preferred method of contact. If not possible to telephone, an email may be sent to admin@brecknock.camden.sch.uk.

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.

However, 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. Requests for leave are granted only in exceptional circumstances. Application forms are available from admin. Please see 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

We encourage good attendance and punctuality. Each morning, the school bell will ring at 8.55am, signalling the start of the school day. Children are encouraged to be on time and this is celebrated in weekly attendance assemblies and in the newsletter.

In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

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.
- 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
- Contact 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 Camden's Pupil Attendance Service.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Parents can monitor their child's attendance using Arbor's parent portal. School will regularly contact families where attendance is concerning. This will be via telephone and through letters home. Letters celebrating improvements in attendance will also be sent regularly. Staff will meet with parents requiring support with attendance and develop plans of support, or identify additional services for referral where required.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Executive Head/Head of School will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Executive Head/Head of School'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 as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, available from the school admin office. The Executive Head/Head of School may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence and may call a meeting.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments - appointments should always be made outside school times where possible. (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
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Unavoidable cause - Family emergencies

Unauthorised absence:

An unauthorised absence is where either no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is not considered acceptable by the school.

This includes:

- Day trips and holidays in term time.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Parents / Carers keeping children off school to assist with translation.
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a late mark – See lateness section (4.4).

If an absence is recorded as unauthorised the school may refer this to the Local Authority's Pupil Attendance Service. The Local Authority can use various sanctions to promote regular attendance such as issuing a penalty notice fine or initiate court proceedings. (See section 5.2)

A referral may be made to the LA under the following circumstances:

- 10 days of continuous unauthorised absence
- More than 10 days of authorised leave
- A term time holiday 5 days or longer.
- A pupil who has been more than 30 minutes late (after the close of registers) on a minimum of eight occasions in a rolling eight-week period.
- 94% or less attendance and with 10% or more unauthorised absences

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 the Executive Head/Head of Schools, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We celebrate good attendance and punctuality. Each week, we hold an attendance assembly which details the attendance leaderboard by class, along with the class which has been on time. Additional incentives and celebration are offered to classes making improvements and to individuals who are actively working on improving their readiness for learning, their attendance or their punctuality.

School staff work with families to identify barriers to good attendance and to support families in improving school attendance. The pastoral and inclusion team are available to meet with families to identify and provide support. In some cases, this might be referral to other professionals such as the Educational Psychology Service, CAMHS or Early Help.

7. Attendance monitoring

Attendance registers are monitored carefully and data is reported to the Local Authority and to the Governing Board. Careful analysis is made to ensure all children are accessing school regularly and that all children, including vulnerable groups are supported to have excellent school attendance. Throughout the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletter and we ask for your full support.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are 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.

7.2 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
- Share data with the Governing Board in reporting on pupil attendance and rates of persistent absence.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, 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

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school across the school year for whatever reason.

Severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school across the school year for whatever reason.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA or SA thresholds or is at risk of moving towards that level, is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/**carers** 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. This includes drawing up of an action plan around raising attendance.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Send out letters of concern where attendance falls into the persistently absent category.

The school is sensitive to the needs and circumstances of pupils returning after significant periods of absence and will support the smooth reintegration of pupils both academically and socially. In such circumstances the school will work with parents, carers and the pupil towards an agreed reintegration plan.

8. Safeguarding and access to support services

At Brecknock and Torriano Primary Schools, we believe every pupil should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn and participate in all school activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers. Safeguarding is about offering early help and support to children and families and difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying the child or that there are difficulties within the family. Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding matter if this places your child at risk of harm.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school; safeguarding and promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses:

Attendance, Behaviour, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum, Anti-bullying, protecting children from abuse and neglect, online safety, radicalisation and extremism, awareness of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

We will seek advice on attendance concerns from Camden's Pupil Attendance Service and where appropriate we will seek consent to refer to other support services that can help support pupils and their families to improve attendance.

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the schools Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

9. Monitoring arrangements

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

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

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: Absence escalation table – daily procedure

* If the child is, consider to be vulnerable then this process will be escalated.

Absence	Action	Outcome
Day 1	<p>If no reason received: first day contact – telephone call / text / email.</p> <p>Ask for expected return date.</p> <p>Ask for regular updates if absence more than one day.</p>	<p>Parent provides acceptable reason – authorised absence (AA).</p> <p>Reason provided is unacceptable - unauthorised absence (UA)</p> <p>Unable to contact family – check if child is identified as vulnerable –refer to Attendance / Safeguarding Lead (UA)</p>
Day 2	<p>If no response at day 1 – repeat above – if no contact, try emergency contacts.</p>	<p>If contact made – as above - school decide if absence should be AA or UA.</p> <p>If no contact made update Attendance/Safeguarding Lead & check with support staff, consider home visit. (UA)</p>
Day 3	<p>If no response at days 1 & 2.</p> <p>Repeat above. If no response carry out home visit.</p>	<p>Home visit – if no response leave template note.</p> <p>Parents provide evidence for absence then (AA).</p> <p>Reason provided is unacceptable - unauthorised absence (UA).</p>
Day 4	<p>Repeat above. Try contacting family, emergency contacts and home visit – refer to Attendance / Safeguarding Lead.</p>	<p>If continued UA update Attendance / Safeguarding Lead.</p>
Day 5	<p>Repeat above. Try contacting family, emergency contacts and home visit – refer to Attendance / Safeguarding Lead.</p>	<p>If continued UA update Attendance / Safeguarding Lead.</p> <p>If reason provided is unacceptable - issue 5 day absence school warning letter.</p> <p>Notify Local Authority PAS. Penalty Notice Warning to be considered.</p>
Day 7	<p>Repeat above. Try contacting family, emergency contacts and home visit – refer to Attendance / Safeguarding Lead.</p>	<p>If continued UA update Attendance / Safeguarding Lead.</p> <p>If continued UA notify Local Authority PAS for Penalty Notice Warning and continue to implement procedures to address absence.</p>
Day 10	<p>Continuous absence – no reason provided</p>	<p>If continued UA update Attendance / Safeguarding Lead.</p> <p>Update Local Authority PAS and continue to implement procedures to address absence.</p>

Appendix 3: Absence escalation table - % procedure

* If the child is, consider to be vulnerable then this process will be escalated.

Percentage	Responsibility	Action
91% - 94%	School Action: Attendance Lead / Attendance Officer	Review attendance – look for patterns. Consider if authorised – is evidence being provided? Monitor. If unauthorised, contact parents advising them of attendance level and of concerns / expectations and possible next actions.
90% or below	School Action + PAS (Pupil Attendance Service) / other agencies where appropriate.	At less than 90% attendance a child is a Persistent Absentee and absence requires further investigation and possible statutory intervention depending on reason for absence. Review attendance – consider if absence is authorised – review reason and pattern. Send out letters of concern where attendance falls into the persistently absent category. If they are subject to safeguarding concerns raised, then discuss with Designated Safeguarding Lead. Home visits should be made to ensure vital information is not missed. Meetings with Attendance Lead/Officer scheduled. Consider absences using Emotional Based School Avoidance guidance. Is a school attendance panel appropriate? Consider referral to Local Authority PAS for a meeting. Has it reached the threshold for Penalty Notice warning? Early Help offered
50% or below	School Action + PAS / other agencies where appropriate.	At less than 50% attendance a child is a Severely Absent and absence requires urgent further investigation and possible statutory intervention depending on reason for absence.