



Three Bridges Primary School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Approval Date: February 2019

Review Date: June 2024

Headteacher: *T Emberson*

‘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.

Please be aware that this policy must be read in conjunction with Crawley Schools Attendance and Punctuality Policy (01/09/17 reviewed January 2018).

Three Bridges Primary School expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.

We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved. At Three Bridges School, the Governors have agreed to make this target that of 96%.

Overall Aims:

1. To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
2. To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
3. To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
4. To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
5. To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.
6. To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.

Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality:

The Legal Framework:

There are legal obligations on:

- 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 register.
- The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

Headteacher:

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquiries.

- To oversee the analysis of weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.
- To meet with the School Administrator to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with external agencies and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To revise and amend the policy, as required.

School Administrator:

- To liaise with office staff in respect of the first response procedure when a child does not arrive at school with no reason received.
- To monitor weekly attendance data for their year groups.
- To liaise with office staff, the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To promptly inform the HT, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.
- To check weekly data and County e-pods.
- To produce half termly/yearly data for HT, SLT and Governors to review and analyse.
- To record reasons for absence and updating class registers.
- To implement the daily checking of registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
- To contact parents/carers by letter, following a reduction of learning under 90%.
- To maintain attendance records in line with this policy. (See appendix)
- To liaise with and report to outside agencies.
- To report to the Local Authority, as requested.
- To maintain clear communication with the SLT regarding attendance and punctuality.
- To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.
- To support HT with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

Staff:

- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- To complete the daily class attendance and punctuality chart, with the pupils'.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day at the start of the day and after lunch.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To promptly inform the HT and School Administrator, of pupils who persist with poor attendance.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

Parents:

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, colds etc. parents should inform the school and attempt to bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them. If a pupil has a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know prior to the appointment and provide a copy of it. Pupils' should be brought back to school after appointments. Parents are advised to make such appointments after school or in the holidays if at all possible. Pupils should miss as little time as possible.

Therefore, parents 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 in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Arrange medical and dental appointments after school or in the holidays wherever possible.
- Use the Studybugs app to report a child's absence/telephone the school on every day of absence for their child. School will endeavour to make contact with the family if no communication is provided. In rare cases, the inability to make contact is referred to Pupil Entitlement Investigations.

- 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 the child's life, which may impact on learning.
- Create an Individual Health Care Plan with a member of SLT if there are long-term sickness concerns.
- If a child has a high level of illness, the school reserves the right to request medical appointment evidence. If none is forthcoming, school will unauthorise the absence and the family may receive a FPN. (It is advised by the Government and Health Authorities that a normal, healthy child might have a maximum of 6 days' illness per year).

Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance:

Aims:

- To ensure good attendance and punctuality (above 96%) is regularly promoted and supported and remains high profile across school.
- To achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality (above 96%) through rewarding good attendance and punctuality.

Weekly Celebration Attendance Assemblies

**Due to current COVID19 restrictions the school is unable to hold assemblies, however attendance information will continue to be sent out weekly via the Newsletter (September 2020)*

Celebration Attendance Assemblies are held on a Friday each week.

Attendance certificates are awarded to those classes with the highest percentage attendance for the previous week.

Termly attendance certificates are awarded to those classes with the highest percentage for that term.

At the end of the school year attendance certificates are awarded to the class with highest percentage attendance for the academic year.

School Attendance Newsletter

Every week our school's newsletter has a 'celebrating our attendance & awards' page. This enables us to share which class had the highest weekly attendance and the class with the highest attendance to date.

Monitoring First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, an absence call will be made. The Headteacher will liaise with office staff to monitor the First Response procedure:

- Call parents' contact number(s). If no response, office staff call other contacts.
- If no response, an email is sent to parents.

- If no response is received after an hour, office staff will notify the Headteacher and then consider the need for a home visit if no response continues.
- In rare cases, the inability to make contact is referred to Pupil Entitlement Investigations Office.

Extended Holidays

Reference Crawley Schools 'Parental Request to School to Authorise an Absence in Exceptional Circumstances' form.

In line with the Local Authority, 'Leave in term Time Guidance' and the 2013 Amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations, leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstances.

- The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk. The school may contact outside agencies in order to ensure that a visit is legitimate and safe for the child/children.
- The School reserves the right to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if a child, who is absent on unauthorised holiday for less than 5 days, is then absent due to illness for the remaining week.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Penalty Notices

If a child is taken out of school without the Headteacher's authorisation, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and of legal action being taken.

If a family request 4 days' absence for holiday but then takes an additional day making a total of 5 days holiday, school reserves the right to 'unauthorise' the additional fifth day and issue a FPN.

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60 per parent.

- If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £120.
- If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority may prosecute under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.
- A family may receive two FTP's in one calendar year before the case goes straight to Court but only three FTP's across the whole of the child's school life before the case goes straight to Court.

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

“If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence.”

The court can fine parents up to £2,500 per child on conviction, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that:

- Penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child.
- ‘Parents’ include any person responsible for the child or who has care of him/her or adopted/fostered etc.

These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in parents having a criminal record.

Appendices

Request for Withdrawal from Learning	Appendix I
West Sussex County Council Code of Conduct in Respect of Penalty Notices	Appendix II
Fixed Penalty Notice – Frequently Asked Questions	Appendix III
Leaflet (A Brief Guide to Fixed Penalty Notices)	Appendix IV

Please ask a member of staff in the school office should you require a copy of any of these appendices. These appendices can also be viewed/printed from the school website

www.threebridgesprimaryschool.co.uk

****COVID 19 UPDATE**

Attendance expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance became **mandatory** and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents’ duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools’ responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities’ codes of conduct

The following pupils are not expected to attend school:

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed COVID.
- Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19.
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine.
- Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in any future local lockdown scenario only.

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to COVID-19 as identified above, Three Bridges Primary school will offer access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

Attendance codes

From September 2020, the school returned to using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak (set out on page 9 of the attendance guidance). An additional category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID19)' has now been added.

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to COVID-19' should be recorded using code X4
- schools should continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before the outbreak

Transition and Expected Attendance

The school will follow up all absences. If a child fails to return to school, the Attendance Officer will refer to the CME guidance and Pupil Entitlement Investigation on; Email - PEI@westsussex.gov.uk Tel - 0330 222 8200

Previous Attendance & Punctuality Policies Approved October 2016 & February 2019