

# BY BROOK VALLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy

Last Review Date: March 2024

Ratified By Governors Date: March 2024

Next Review Date: March 2025

Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at By Brook Valley Primary CE School. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy is designed to meet the needs of all pupils. The policy is designed to be child-centred and to make sure as far as is possible that pupils understand what is happening in their lives, why, and what options are available to them.

### Our Vision

***Roots to grow, wings to fly***

***“They will soar on wings like eagles.” Isaiah 40:31***

The roots of our school community, based on our Christian values, nurture, help and support us to grow to be the

best versions of ourselves. The wings of faith allow us to soar freely and flourish now and in the future

**Roots to grow, wings to fly**  
**“They will soar on wings like eagles” Isaiah 40:31**

Registered Address: By Brook Valley Academy Trust, The Street, Yatton Keynell, Wiltshire,  
SN14 7BA

Registered in England and Wales  
Company Registration No. 8020467

At By Brook Valley we are committed to creating a positive, safe and caring Christian environment, where all members of the school and wider community are respected and valued.

We support one another to put down strong roots within our distinctively Christian culture, growing from our core values of hope, honesty, forgiveness and friendship. In this way, we will each be the very best we can be.

This policy should be read and understood from this perspective.

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

<b>Policies, Procedures or Practices</b>	Attendance	Date	March 2023
EIA CARRIED OUT BY:	F&E	EIA APPROVED BY:	FGB March 2023

Groups that may be affected:

Are there any concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly: issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication).	Potential disadvantage for disabled children/parent regarding timekeeping/absence	
Gender Reassignment (transsexual)		
Marriage and civil partnership		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Racial Groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers)	Potential disadvantage for traveller groups	
Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)	Potential need for absence to be authorised for religious reasons	
Gender (male, female)		

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Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived)		

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

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## AIM

To maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality throughout the school

This will be achieved by:

- Maintaining procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality
- Maintaining clear registration systems for class teachers
- Ensuring clear procedures to distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence and late registration
- Ensuring effective referral systems when a problem is identified, involving external agencies where necessary.

Staff, governors, pupils, parents and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will work in partnership together to implement this policy.

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our pupils have the right to an education. Regular attendance and punctuality at school are essential if pupils are to:

- make good progress in their work
- develop to their full potential
- develop the discipline in school to prepare them for adult life.

The effects of missed schooling will often be:

- learning affected and potential not reached
- disrupted work
- difficulties forming relationships and settling into groups

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents must ensure their children are educated. For most parents/carers this means registering their child at a school and ensuring their regular attendance. Failure to do so can result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or lead to prosecution.

It is parent's responsibility to:

- help promote good attendance and punctuality;
- as far as possible, arrange medical appointments outside school hours;
- avoid family holidays and visits during term time in line with the Absence Policy;
- discourage absence for minor ailments;
- discuss any issues preventing the child from attending school with the class teacher or headteacher, rather than keeping their child at home;
- follow school procedures for reporting absence, including telephoning the school office on the first morning of illness;
- ensure their child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed and 'ready to learn' (ie not too tired or too hungry);
- ensure that their child is signed in at the school office if they arrive late;
- ensure that their child is signed out at the school office if leaving school early;
- ensure that their child is signed in and out at the school office when leaving and returning from appointments.

If their child is unavoidably absent from school, parents should: -

- contact the school - telephone on the first morning of absence;
- Apply to the headteacher, in advance, for permission for leave of absence

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(eg. appointments);

- be aware that any unexplained absences are recorded as unauthorised and are recorded on school reports;
- be aware that time off school for visits to relatives, shopping or long weekends will not be authorised and if taken will be recorded on their school record;
- Be aware that if a child arrives at school after 9:10 am this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL

The school is responsible for supporting the attendance of our pupils and for managing concerns or issues which may lead to non-attendance.

### For Class Teachers

- To take the register promptly and accurately in the morning and afternoon.
- To take any opportunity to request a reason for absence from the parents, when reasons are not provided.
- To note reasons for absence (if told by parent) and record in the register.
- To discuss any concerns with the Head teacher who will, if appropriate, notify the Educational Welfare Officer.
- To encourage pupils who are trying to improve their attendance.
- To notify parents promptly of any concerns regarding attendance or punctuality.

### For the School Office

- To provide all parents with a copy of the school's Attendance Booklet.
- To attempt contact with parents on the first day of any unexplained absence to establish the reason (by 9:30am if no message received from parents).
- To note reasons for absence with the correct letter in the register and record whether it is authorised or unauthorised.
- To monitor attendance and alert staff of any concerns.

### For the Headteacher

- To ensure registers are accurate and apply the standard recommended coding by Wiltshire LA, which is in accordance with DfES guidelines for reasons of absence.
- To keep a record of each academic year's register for the following three years.
- To meet with the school's EWO to discuss pupils with difficulties with school attendance.
- To identify pupils who are experiencing attendance and punctuality difficulties and work with them and their families accordingly.
- Offer advice on strategies for improving attendance and punctuality to parents.
- Provide staff with the appropriate professional development to ensure a whole school approach.
- To notify parents promptly of any concerns regarding attendance or punctuality.

### For School Governors

- To annually review and update the Attendance Policy.
- To monitor attendance figures.

## THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL WELFARE OFFICER IN THE SCHOOL

The Educational Welfare Service is available to provide specific services to encourage good School attendance and allow pupils to benefit fully from the educational facilities available to them.

- Regular monitoring of registers.
- Regular meetings with the school to discuss and advise on problems related to attendance.

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- To agree on action to be taken by the school and/or the Education Welfare Service.
- To liaise and make referrals with other agencies as appropriate.
- Feedback and exchange information in relation to work that has been undertaken by the Education Welfare Officer and/or the school.
- Under certain circumstances it may be necessary for legal action to be taken for non-school attendance.

## SCHOOL RESPONSES TO ABSENCES

The law requires all schools to indicate in the register whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

If a child is expected at school but does not arrive, attempts will be made to contact the parent on the first morning of absence.

### Authorised Absence

Authorised absence means that the Headteacher has either given approval beforehand for the pupil to be away, or that the explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification.

After an absence, even if the school receives a note, telephone call or personal contact about an absence, it is not obliged to accept that as a valid reason for absence. Only the Headteacher, within the context of the law, can authorise absence, not the parents. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the explanation or receives no explanation at all, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Accurate use of register codes within the school will allow the teachers and Educational Welfare Officer to determine quickly the basis of the authorised absence in question.

Term time leave of absence – there is a discretionary power for leave to be granted in exceptional circumstances of up to 5 days in accordance with arrangements made by the Governors of the School. No parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as a right.

### Unauthorised Absence

The School is not able to authorise absences for repeated long weekends, shopping etc. and these will be recorded as unauthorised absences.

When no satisfactory explanation is received or the pupil has truanted, an unauthorised absence is recorded.

All unauthorised absence is regarded as truancy by the Government and will be entered on pupil's individual school reports.

### Procedures

- a) The administration officer will monitor attendance and punctuality producing termly reports to the Headteacher. Those with attendance below 95% will be monitored. Where attendance falls below 90% with 10+ unauthorised absences, the Headteacher will liaise with parents and inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), and where attendance falls below 85% the responsibility for action may be passed to the EWO.
- b) Lateness will also be monitored by the administration officer and the Headteacher.
- c) Staff will be alert to critical times such as a return after a long period of sickness or a traumatic event and will ensure that the child is supported appropriately.
- d) Following a period of extended absence staff will show flexibility in reintegrating the child into the school community. This reintegration may be on a phased basis, and

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- arrangements will be made in consultation with parents and other professions as appropriate.
- e) The school will provide proactive strategies for working with individual pupils or groups of years to promote good attendance. In cases of poor attendance, the Headteacher or EWO will set improvement targets in consultation with the parents.

## **SCHOOL ROLL**

The law requires the school to keep an admission register that serves as the School Roll.

The admission roll should contain details of the pupil from the day that they are admitted to the school (Education Regulations 1995).

Pupils should only be removed from the school roll in accordance with the Education Regulations 1995.

Copies of each year register must be kept for three years.

Please see the school's Attendance Booklet.

## **Absence Codes**

### **Present**

/	-	Present on time
L	-	Late but before the register closes
B	-	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)
D	-	Dual registration (attending other establishment)
P	-	Approved sporting activity
V	-	Educational visit, inc. Marlborough House, school trips. Can also be used for extended absence due to illness (eg. broken leg) if a comprehensive programme of work is provided and marked.
W	-	Work experience

### **Authorised Absence by teacher**

E	-	Excluded
F	-	Extended family holiday – agreed under exceptional circumstances
I	-	Illness (Not medical / dental appointments)
J	-	Interview
H	-	Holiday - up to 5 days at Headteacher's discretion. (Exceptional circumstances)
M	-	Medical / dental / illness

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- R - Religious observance
- T - Traveller absence
- C - other authorised circumstances - to be used sparingly for rare occasions or agreed special occasions where no other code is applicable (eg. bereavement, marriage).
- S - Study leave
- X - Non-compulsory school age absence  
Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) (This code is not counted as an absence in the school census)

#### **Unauthorised Absence**

- G - Family holiday (not agreed or days taken in excess)
- O - Unauthorised circumstances
- N - No reason yet provided for absence
- U - Late after register closes

#### **Attendance not required**

- # - Holiday for all / Only staff should attend (TD Days)
- \* - Not on roll
- Y - Enforced closure (eg. heating breakdown)

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## REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO BE ABSENT ON HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

All parents will understand that regular attendance at school is necessary for children to make good progress with their education. Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress. Therefore, we hope that family holidays will be arranged during school holiday periods.

Schools may agree up to 5 days holiday absence in special circumstances with consideration being given to pupil's attendance, attainment and public examinations. Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Head teacher.

Circumstances which are notified to the school or Local Authority **after** a decision has been made by the Head teacher will not be considered. Therefore, please be certain to provide details of the special circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence.

Please read the Local Authority leaflet which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised holidays during term time (available at the office and on our website).

Name of Child(ren)	
Class	
Date of First Day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Number of Days requested	

Exceptional Circumstances (reason) for holiday to be taken during term time:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Parent/Carer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Full name of Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>For school use:</b>	Attendance	%:	Request
authorised:	Yes/No		

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## RESPONSE TO HOLIDAY UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES REQUEST

I am writing to inform you that you have been granted permission for your child ..... to be absent from school from ..... to .....  
The maximum taken should be 5 days in any one academic year, which starts in September and ends in July. Your child will now have had ..... days. If over the allotted 5 days any future request in the same academic year cannot be considered. This policy is in accordance with Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996.

If you wish to discuss this matter further please contact the school office or alternatively the Education Welfare Service on 01249 659223.

Yours sincerely,

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### REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO BE ABSENT IN TERM TIME (other than holiday)

Dear Parents,

All parents will understand that regular attendance at school is necessary for children to make good progress with their education. Therefore, we hope that appointments will be made after school ends. However, we appreciate that this may not always be possible and other circumstances may arise.

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I am requesting that my child be absent from school on: \_\_\_\_\_  
from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Please give the full reason for requesting leave of absence in term time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Full name of Parent / Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Carer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

.....

### RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR LEAVE

I am writing to inform you that you have been granted permission for your

child \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

to be absent from school on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to

\_\_\_\_\_.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

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