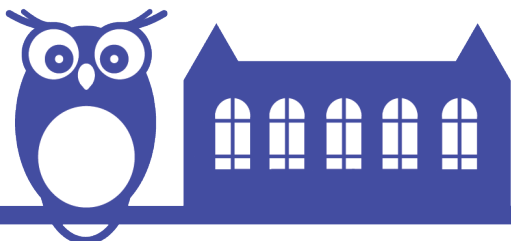


Attendance Policy

Review Date	Reviewer	Approved by	Date Approved	Implemented
September 2022	J Barker	C Harris	September 2022	September 2022
September 2023	P Vasey	C Harris	September 2023	September 2023
September 2025				



Revision History

Issue Number	Date	Revisions Made
3	Sept 2020	Legislation updated
4	Sept 2022	<p>Reviewed and updated in accordance with the guidance 'Working together to Improve School Attendance'.</p> <p>Added Mrs Harris as person with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p> <p>Included contact details for Mrs Harris.</p> <p>Included references to the analysing of attendance data.</p> <p>Amended the aims to include reference to identify and removing barriers to attendance and working with external agencies to provide support to improve attendance.</p> <p>Updated Absence procedures to include specific reference to safeguarding, contact details and persistently and severely absent students.</p> <p>Included reference to the legal action that can be used to enforce school attendance.</p> <p>Updated section on Leave of Absence in Term-Time to include reference to Penalty Notices.</p> <p>Updated section on Rewarding Good Attendance.</p> <p>Updated sections on The School Day and Lateness.</p> <p>Updated Roles and Responsibilities to include Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator and definition of a parent.</p>
5	Sept 2023	No changes

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Introduction

This policy has been reviewed and rewritten in line with the DFE 'Working together to improve school attendance' Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities (published May 22 applies from September 2022) and 'School attendance parental responsibility measures' (January 2015).

As part of the North East Learning Trust, Browney Academy seeks to ensure that all pupils receive an education which maximises opportunities and enables them to realise their true potential. The Academy will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the Academy community feels wanted and secure.

We believe that all pupils benefit from the education we provide and, therefore, from regular attendance. The aim of our attendance policy is to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils.

Mrs Harris, Headteacher has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance and can be contacted via telephone on 0191 3710777 or email at enquiries@browneyacademy.co.uk. The Office Manager will ensure the accurate completion of registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session, and at the beginning of each teaching class. Attendance figures will be reported to parents in annual reports. All staff will work with pupils and their families to support parents/carers in helping them to meet their legal duty; to ensure that their child/children attend the Academy regularly and on time. A whole Academy attendance target of 97% has been set for this academic year and various measures will be put in place to help work towards this.

The Academy has established an effective system of incentives and rewards to acknowledge those pupils with outstanding and improved attendance and will support those pupils and parents/carers who are finding school attendance and punctuality difficult.

To identify patterns of absence the Academy will analyse weekly attendance data and inform parents/carers where attendance falls below the Academy target. If there are further absences the Academy will work with pupils and parents/carers to identify and remove barriers to attending school.

Aims

- To maintain high standards of attendance of pupils registered at the Academy.

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- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the Trust and the Academy including pupils, parents/carers, staff, Governors, and Trustees.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and the Academy.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority's (LA) Attendance Team and local partners working together to re-engage pupils.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following periods of absence.
- To target support for persistent absence (those whose attendance falls below 90% 19 days of absence) and severe absence (those whose absence falls below 50% 95 days of absence) to remove any barriers to attendance by working with pupils, parent/carers and across a range of local partners.
- To ensure that all stakeholders understand the importance and also value outstanding attendance.
- To recognise and reward outstanding attendance.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust and Academy policies:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Children Missing in Education
- Exclusion Policy
- Home Visit Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Pupils/Students with Medical Conditions

Attendance and Attainment

We recognise that the relationship between attendance and attainment of our pupils is inextricably linked.

Regular attendance at the Academy is crucial to maximise pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the Academy is dedicated to ensuring the attendance policy is adhered to.

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Types of Absence

Every half-day (1 session) absence from the Academy must be classified as either authorised or unauthorised. It is not the responsibility of parents to classify an absence, only the Headteacher is able to authorise an absence from school.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for a good reason such as illness or medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time. Other exceptional circumstances that warrant an authorised leave of absence will be considered on an individual basis considering the specific facts and circumstances.

Unauthorised absence are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for reasons which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the LA using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Absence codes are entered in line with statutory guidance.

Procedure for reporting absences

When a child is to be absent without prior permission, parents should inform the Academy by telephone on the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents or carers.

Response to Absences

When a pupil is absent for no apparent reason it is the duty of all staff to consider possible causes. When considering reasons, they should bear in mind factors that could relate to Child Protection, Behaviour and Discipline and Anti-Bullying policies. The class teacher will have a role in identifying reasons for absence and addressing such issues, with the support of the whole school staff.

Attendance monitoring stages

Colour	Percentage	Action taken
Green	100%	Rewards system / recognition
Green	96%-99.9%	Rewards system / recognition
Yellow	93%-95.9%	Reward system / recognition
		Target monitoring

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Amber	90%-92.9%	Reward system / recognition
		Target monitoring Referral system for failing attendance IAP monitoring Referral to Attendance Officer Contact with parents Possible fine or legal sanctions for parents
Red	Less than 90%	Rewards system / recognition for improvements
		Target monitoring Referral system for failing attendance IAP monitoring Contact with parents Possible fine Possible court action / legal sanctions

Green – well done. Keep up the good work. This attendance will have a positive impact on your education.

Yellow – there is some work that needs to be done to help you to improve your attendance. You may be given targets and you will be monitored to help avoid your attendance becoming worse.

Amber – you will be closely monitored. You may receive an action plan to improve your attendance. The attendance officer will be involved in monitoring you.

Red – your attendance is a real cause for concern. There may be genuine reasons for absence, and we would expect to know about these. You will be monitored each week by the attendance officer who may visit your home, have a meeting with parents/carers and offer support.

If parents/carers and/or pupils need help with attendance, you can contact school or the Academy Education Welfare Officer. You may be asked to attend a meeting in the Academy to talk about the problems and to put a plan in place. Sometimes, the Academy may need to involve other services to help; referrals will be made to outside agencies if the Academy feels such action is warranted.

The Academy will always try to communicate with you regarding your child's attendance if it declines. This communication may involve explaining that attendance is a cause for concern by letter, making telephone calls to you, and inviting you to attend a meeting in the Academy depending on the circumstances. The Academy will work with you to discuss ways that we can offer support in finding a way to improve the situation.

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Persistently and severely absent pupils

Persistent Absence (those whose attendance falls below 90% 19 days absence) and Severe Absence (those whose absence falls below 50% 95 days absence)

The Academy will adopt a whole school approach to help and support pupils and parent/carers to remove barriers. This will include support from school, the pastoral team and/or the Education Welfare Officer. The Academy will help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include a referral to local support services where absence is a symptom of wider issues. Pupils will become part of a Support Monitoring Group depending on the needs of the pupil this will be led by the senior leadership team or SENDCO. The Academy may also request that a parent/carer provides the Academy with supporting medical evidence to verify prolonged or frequent absences and will refuse to authorise absences unless this proof is provided.

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, a referral will be made to the LA Attendance Improvement Team to consider enforcement action through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

The Law

The Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

In April 2017, the Supreme Court held that attending school 'regularly' means attending in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school and not 'sufficiently frequent attendance'. This means that a child must attend school on every day that the school requires him or her to do so and failure to do this may lead to the committing of an offence.

Legal action to enforce school attendance includes a Parenting Order, an Education Supervision Order, a School Attendance Order or a fine.

In accordance with Section 444 of The Education Act 1996. If a child is absent without authorisation, then the parent is guilty of an offence. This is a strict liability offence i.e., all that needs to be shown is a lack of regular attendance. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £1000. If the child is absent without authorisation and the parent knew about the child's absence and failed to act, then the parent is guilty of an aggravated offence. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £2500 and a prison sentence of up to three months.

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Leave of Absence in Term Time

The law states that parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of the Academy for holidays during term time other than in exceptional circumstances.

Headteachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence during term time **unless there are exceptional circumstances**. The Academy will consider each request of absence individually; considering the circumstances, such as the nature of the event for which leave is sought and any key events taking place in the Academy at that time e.g., termly tests.

Please note that absence will not be authorised under any circumstances during any period of public examinations or internal assessments.

An application for leave of absence must be submitted at least two weeks in advance via a form which is available from the Academy website or in person from the Academy reception. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion (or in the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher is the person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school). Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from the Academy. As stated in the most recent DFE guidance on attendance, if an application for leave of absence is not made prior to the time of the required absence then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised regardless of circumstances.

If the academy refuses a request for term-time leave and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority. The Local Authority criteria for issuing a Penalty Notice is 7 days or more of unauthorised absence in a minimum 12 rolling school week period. A separate notice will be issued to each parent for each child. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid between 1 – 21 days after issue, increasing to £120 if paid between 22 – 28 days.

In exceptional circumstances, however, the Academy may be prepared to authorise a holiday during term-time. Proof of exceptional circumstances must be provided at the time of submitting the Leave of Absence Request form. If a leave of absence is taken during term-time without the Academy's permission, the pupil's absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In the event of a pupil not returning to the academy on the agreed date, any absences after this date will be recorded as unauthorised.

Rewarding Good Attendance

Class attendance is recognised and celebrated weekly in our celebration assemblies. Each week, we identify the class with the highest attendance, who are rewarded with an extra playtime on the Woodland Village.

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Children who achieve 100% attendance receive a termly certificate in recognition of their achievement.

The School Day

Early Years and Key Stage 1 (8:45 - 3:15pm)

Key Stage 2 (8:50 -3:20pm)

Lateness

If a child is regularly late for school or is often absent, then the class teacher contacts the parent concerned to have an informal discussion about this. If this persists, then the teacher registers their concern with the Senior Leadership Team who will then work out patterns of absence and lateness.

Roles and Responsibilities

Local Academy Council:

As part of our approach to maintaining high attendance, the Local Academy Council will:

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant Trust and Academy policies and guidance directed to parents/carers and staff.
- Annually review the Academy's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow staff, parents/carers, and pupils to implement the policy effectively.
- At their termly meetings they will review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen to be fully aware and supportive of expected attendance targets for the year.
- Ensure that the Academy is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for pupils who are educated off site.
- Ensure that the Academy has an Attendance Champion.

Senior Management Team:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with pupils and their parents/carer.
- Ensure the Academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular

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attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.

- Coordinate with the Local Academy Council to monitor the implementation of the policy and its effectiveness, with annual review of full policy.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the Academy's Attendance Policy and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Ensure government legislation on attendance is complied with and that the leadership team are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them.
- Nominate or appoint a senior manager to take responsibility for overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to the job.
- Report to the Local Academy Council each term on attendance records, data, and provision.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator:

- Work closely with nursery schools for smooth year transition for those pupils with SEND and offer additional small group or 1-1 visits to school during transition or for pupils transferring to the Academy.
- Develop good support for pupils with health conditions.
- Develop specific support for students with SEND.
- Work in partnership with the Academy Nurse and support services.
- Regular data monitoring with SLT.

Staff:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with pupils and their parents.
- Ensure the Academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Ensure the senior manager responsible for overseeing attendance and any other relevant personnel are kept fully aware of and up to date with any concerns relating to pupils that may impact on their attendance.
- Ensure compliance with regulation and guidance on attendance.
- Work professionally with parents, carers, pupils, and relevant agencies to secure improvements in attendance via appropriate support or enforcement measures.
- Ensure understanding and that the correct systems are followed for recording attendance and that attendance is taken each lesson and session.

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Attendance Officer:

- Assist in the implementation of the Academy's Attendance Policy
- Act as a liaison officer between home, the Academy and the LA on all matters related to Academy attendance
- Offer advice, assistance, and support to parents/carers and pupils on attendance issues.
- Assess reasons for non-attendance and initiate and support appropriate action to improve it.
- Initiate and refer cases for legal action as appropriate, to the LA Attendance Improvement Team.
- Provide information and reports which may be used in court when necessary.
- To consider a range of strategies to address the problem of poor attendance including:
 - Attendance meetings with both the parent/carer and pupil; to decide as to how all parties can work together to improve the pupil's attendance.
 - Home visits, telephone calls and letters to parents/carers relating to their child's attendance.
 - Refer all appropriate cases to the LA Attendance Improvement Team.

Parents/Carers

School attendance parental responsibility measures' (January 2015) define a parent as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child.

As a parent you have decided to have your child registered at the Academy, and therefore have an additional legal duty to ensure your child attends school regularly. This means your child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Parents/carers will:

- Engage with their child's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at the Academy.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy regarding absences, ill health, medical or dental appointments, leave of absence in term time and punctuality.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary absences.

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- Ensure the Academy is informed of any changes to personal details including home address and emergency contact details.
- Keep the Academy informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance and work with staff in resolving any issues that may be having an impact on their child.
- Encourage support and motivate their child to attend the Academy every-day, as it is vital that your child receives the same messages at home as they do at the Academy about the importance of attendance.

Pupils

- Will ensure that they are ready for school and are prepared for their journey to school at the correct time.
- Will ensure that they have prepared their equipment required for school and have packed their bags in readiness for the day ahead.
- Will ensure that once they arrive at school, they proceed directly to the school entrance and DO NOT take any diversions that their parents/carers have not authorised.
- Will ensure that when the first bell goes, they proceed without delay to registration.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences.

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