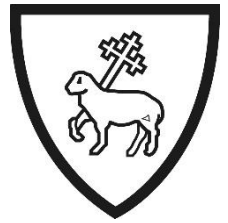


Date of review	Feb 2023
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# Brockington College

## Attendance Policy for Students

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Brockington College, a Church of England Academy, has at its heart a distinctive Christian ethos. Based on our Christian foundation and values we seek to promote a culture of developing every person and therefore every school policy is written from this perspective, with a commitment to learning and maturing in the context of communal and individual development.
- 1.2 We lay particular stress on the Christian values of compassion, forgiveness, justice, koinonia, learning, perseverance, respect and wisdom for individuals and across the school community.

### 2. Aims

- 2.1 We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:
- promoting good attendance
  - reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
  - ensuring every student 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 students have the support in place to attend school.
- 2.2 We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- 2.3 Good attendance at school is essential for a child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. 100% attendance is certainly possible, but in the event of a child being away from school, it is essential that the parent/carer informs the school of the reasons for absence. Brockington College will challenge persistent non-attendance and will communicate with and encourage parents/carers who facilitate single day absences on a regular basis to help to develop the values of perseverance and resilience within their child to come to school unless they are really physically unable.

### 3. Legislation and guidance

- 3.1 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](#)
- 3.2 This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

- 3.3 Parents and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's Attendance Policy, as any absence will have a huge impact on their child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents and carers, together with school staff, all have a part to play in ensuring that a child's full potential is achieved.
- 3.4 Students are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:
- **authorised absence** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence
  - **unauthorised absence** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's/carer's request.
- 3.5 Please be aware that when a parent/carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. A child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and, as a result, the absence may not be authorised.
- 3.6 Keeping a child off school with minor ailments such as a headache, slight cold, hay fever or menstrual cramps is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require the school to request that medical evidence is obtained from the child's doctor. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming their appointment or a prescription. Medical evidence should be handed in at reception to be passed to the school's home-school liaison and attendance officer. (Please note that the school is not asking any parent/carer to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost).
- 3.7 There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.
- 3.8 The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents and carers, the school, the governing board and the local authority.

#### 4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 The governing body is responsible for:
- promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's 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 principal to account for the implementation of this policy.
- 4.2 The principal is responsible 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 students
  - monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
  - issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- 4.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance 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 students and families.

- 4.4 The school attendance officer is responsible for:
- monitoring and analysing attendance data alongside Pastoral staff (see section 7)
  - 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 principal
  - working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
  - advising the principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- 4.5 The school has a Home-School Liaison and Attendance Officer who can be contacted via telephone 0116 2863722 or via email [admin@brockington.embracemat.org](mailto:admin@brockington.embracemat.org)
- 4.6 Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office via Bromcom within the first 10 minutes of each lesson.
- 4.7 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 head of year/pastoral manager/attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- 4.8 Parents/carers are expected to:
- make sure their child attends every day/timetabled session on time
  - call the school or complete the online absence form to report their child's absence before time, e.g. 8.30am 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 one emergency contact number for their child
  - ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- 4.9 Students are expected to:
- attend every timetabled session on time.

## **5. Recording attendance**

### **5.1 Attendance register**

- 5.1.1 We will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register.
- 5.1.2 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 student is:
- present
  - attending an approved off-site educational activity
  - absent
  - unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 5.1.3 Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- the original entry
  - the amended entry
  - the reason for the amendment
  - the date on which the amendment was made
  - the name and position of the person who made the amendment.
- 5.1.4 See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.
- 5.1.5 We will also record:
- whether the absence is authorised or not
  - the nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity

- the nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

5.1.6 We will keep every entry on the attendance register for three years after the date on which the entry was made.

5.1.7 Students must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day.

5.1.8 The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.25pm and will be kept open until 1.05pm.

## **5.2 Unplanned absence**

5.2.1 The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 8).

5.2.2 We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

5.2.3 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student'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.

5.2.4 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.

## **5.3 Planned absence**

5.3.1 Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

5.3.2 Leaves of absence can be requested through the online absence form on the school website.

5.3.3 However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

5.3.4 The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 6 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## **5.4 Lateness and punctuality**

5.4.1 A student 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.

5.4.2 Every student must arrive and be lined up for form time by 8.30am.

5.4.3 Between 8.30am and 8.35am, students arriving will be signed in as late to school and receive a C2. Three occasions of being late over a two week period will lead to a C3 being issued for persistent lateness.

5.4.4 At 8.35am, the gates are closed and locked. Any student arriving after this time must sign in through reception and will be issued with a C3 for being late to school.

## **5.5 Following up unexplained absence**

5.5.1 Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- send a text message at 11am which parent/carer will need to respond to. If there is no response a second text will be sent at 1pm. If there is still no response by 2pm a phone call will be made to follow up on the reason for absence. If there is still no response the attendance officer will liaise with a DSL and there may be reason for a home visit to be completed or a referral made to early help
- 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 five 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 external agencies to support.

## **5.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

5.6.1 The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, through letters and reports.

## **6. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **6.1 Approval for term-time absence**

6.1.1 The principal will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

6.1.2 The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

6.1.3 Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

6.1.4 Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 5.2 and 5.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller student 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 student is attending educational provision
- other exceptional reasons that the principal deems appropriate to authorise a term time holiday.

### **6.2 Legal sanctions**

6.2.1 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.

6.2.2 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.

6.2.3 Penalty notices can be issued by a principal, local authority officer or the police.

6.2.4 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 student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

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

## 7. Strategies for promoting good attendance

7.1 We celebrate good attendance throughout our school:

- by awarding individual certificates and VAP3s to individual students who have 100% for each half term
- by presenting students who have achieved 100% attendance for the term with a congratulatory 100% certificate from their head of year
- by awarding certificates to individual students who get 100% attendance for the whole academic year (September to July) in our end of year 'Oscars' celebrations.

7.2 Good attendance is essential to success in school.

- 90% attendance = half a day missed every week.
- One school year at 90% attendance = four whole weeks of lessons missed.
- 90% attendance over five years of secondary school = half a school year missed.
- 17 missed school days a year = one GCSE grade drop in achievement.

## 8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 The school's home-school liaison and attendance officer will monitor fortnightly with the head of year and pastoral manager. The assistant principal responsible for pastoral will be sent a summary document of intervention being undertaken.

8.2 Where issues persist, the following will be initiated:

- **Stage 1:** Fortnightly meetings with the home-school liaison and attendance officer / head of year to identify and discuss students with below expected levels of attendance.
- **Stage 2:** Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality, the home-school liaison and attendance officer / head of year may make verbal contact with home.
- **Stage 3:** If the concerns persist, the home-school liaison and attendance officer will write to the parents/carers to notify them of current attendance and offer support or assistance if required.
- **Stage 4:** The home-school liaison and attendance officer will monitor ongoing attendance and if no improvement, a further letter will be sent to parents/carers to request a meeting at school and medical evidence for absences.
- **Stage 5:** If appropriate, an attendance plan could be drawn up with the students, parents/carers, home-school liaison and attendance officer / head of year to support improvement in attendance over a certain period.
- **Stage 5:** Review meeting held with referral to local authority considered .
- **Stage 6:** If the concerns persist, the school will make a formal referral to the pupil services court team to deal with the on-going issues.

8.3 Should concerns persist, the home-school liaison and attendance officer will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately Leicestershire County Council can take legal action.

### 8.4 Monitoring attendance

8.4.1 The school will:

- monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- student-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. Brockington will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## **8.5 Analysing attendance**

### **8.5.1 Brockington will:**

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

## **8.6 Using data to improve attendance**

### **8.6.1 Brockington College will:**

- provide regular attendance reports to teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students 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.

## **8.7 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

8.7.1 Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

### **8.7.2 Brockington College will:**

- use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- hold regular meetings with the parents of students who Brockington College (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- send letters home to inform parent/carer of attendance levels
- place students identified as persistent absent on an attendance plan

8.7.3 A fixed penalty notice, when requested by the principal, can be issued as long as the following criteria apply:

- where there have been at least ten unauthorised sessions (a day is made up of two sessions) of absence during a period of six school weeks. In respect of unauthorised leave of absence, the ten sessions must be consecutive
- parent/carers will receive a warning letter at least ten days prior to the issue of a penalty notice.
- discretion will be used to enable up to two penalty notices to be issued to each parent/carer for each child within a twelve-month period. If the law continues to be broken around school attendance, the pupil services court team intervention process will be used.

## **9 Links with other policies**

9.1.1 This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy

## Appendix 1 - Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>I</b>	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement



Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student 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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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 student is in custody

<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day