Brockton C.E. Primary School

Policy Document for

Attendance Policy

Policy Presented to and Approved by Staff and governors: **Autumn Term 2014**
Policy to be reviewed by: **Autumn Term 2017**

This policy is a statement of the principles and strategies for Attendance and Punctuality at Brockton Church of England School and links with the Local Authority Policy for Attendance and Punctuality. It forms a link with part of the PSHE & Citizenship Education at our School.

The Governors at Brockton C.E. Primary School recognise that Christian schools help those entrusted to their care to understand the meaning of life and to recognise and fulfil their potential in the service of Christ.

Introduction

Attendance is a major target at our school. The School and the Governing Body endeavour to work closely with parents on all matters regarding attendance.

At Brockton School there is an expectation that all children on roll will attend school every day,when the school is open, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development and maintaining of consistent positive attitudes towards school. Regular attendance at school must not be underestimated. It is the prerequisite to a good education and is therefore a high priority for all school staff, governors, Local Authority and parents/carers themselves. To achieve this we strive to make our school a happy place to be where everyone feels valued and has the opportunity to achieve the very best they can. This supports the statement from the Education Act 1996, Section 7:

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

Our School Aims

- To improve the level of attendance
- To ensure that there is common and consistent practice amongst staff
- To have a system of rewards which encourage all children to attend regularly
- To enable parents and carers to understand the importance of good attendance and to involve parents/carers in the reward activities
- To enable parents, carers and children to see that poor attendance can result in poor achievement

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school before 9.15a.m. on the first day of illness to explain the absence.
- Only the Headteacher can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and the parent/carer.
- An absence is also unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of the parent.

Our Attendance strategy

- School doors open from 8.55a.m. to enable all children to be in class at 9.00a.m., the start of the school day.
- All registers are marked at 9.00a.m.
- Children arriving after 9.00a.m. are recorded in the late book with the time of arrival.
- All parents/carers should ring or email the school between 8.00 and 9.00a.m., if their child is going to be absent from school, to explain the reason.
- Where necessary, first day calls are made by the school staff for child absence.
- Absence is monitored closely and where a child has been away for more than two days a further call may be made to clarify the reason.
- In cases of persistent absence a child may be referred to the School Nurse for help, advice and support.
- In cases of persistent absence the Education Social Worker will be involved with the aim of improving attendance.
- Lateness is monitored closely and where this is a problem, parents/carers are contacted with a view to resolving the situation.
- In cases of persistent absence and/or lateness parents/carers will be required to attend a meeting to discuss how this can be improved.

Routine Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents are asked to ensure that all routine medical/dental appointments are arranged outside the school day. If this is not possible we would ask that you arrange appointments for as late as possible in the afternoon so your child can maximise their learning time. However we do recognise that it is more difficult to arrange hospital appointments out of school hours.
Absence for these appointments will be authorised as a medical absence. Parents will be encouraged to return their child to school following a medical appointment.

Long term absence

Where a child has an illness that means they will be away from school for over 5 days, parents are asked to keep the school informed.

If an absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence (due to extreme poor health), the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given appropriate tuition outside school.

Leave in term time

We strongly believe that all our children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. Children should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable. Such absences put enormous pressure on teachers who must plan lessons around pupils who are not in class, and also cause disruption to their classmates and the system as a whole.

As of 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have removed the right of parents and carers to apply for up to ten days holiday during term time. Headteachers retain the discretion to authorise absence during term time, but they may only do so in exceptional circumstances. If a Headteacher grants a leave request, it will be for them to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. The annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance.

The Headteacher and Governors consider the definition of 'exceptional circumstances' to be circumstances that involve 'one off lifetime events'; examples of which are:-

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting.
- Leave for members of the Police, Fire Service or other emergency services, where the employer provides a written letter to the effect that leave cannot be taken at any other time.
- Significant family events eg. parent/carer's wedding.

Procedure for requesting Leave of Absence:

- Parents/Carers to ask for the time **before taking the leave.**
- Parents will receive equal treatment from the school in terms of requests.
- Appropriate forms to be completed and returned in good time, along with any supporting evidence of the 'exceptional circumstances'.

Any absence which has not been agreed in advance by the Head Teacher is marked as unauthorised absence

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that: "if absence is unauthorised the Education Welfare Service can issue a penalty notice, including a fine, which can result in prosecution if it is not paid."

Monitoring and review

- It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will receive an annual report from the Headteacher. The Governing Body has the responsibility for the school policy and seeing that it is implemented. They will seek to ensure that the attendance figures are as high as they can be.
- The school will keep accurate attendance records (Class attendance percentages, percentage of holidays)
- The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus and school profile
- The Office Administrator will be responsible for following up absences and reporting to the Headteacher any areas of concern.