



Attendance Policy

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Introduction

We believe that every child at West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School has a fundamental right to be educated with good attendance being the key to personal development, learning and

achievement in all areas. Parents, carers and teachers have a duty to encourage maximum attendance at school.

The Law on Attendance

You must make sure your child gets a full-time education that meets their needs (for example if they have special educational needs). You can send your child to school or educate them yourself.

Children must get an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.

The Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their children are 'properly educated, either at school or otherwise'. Children must remain in full-time education for as long as they are of compulsory school age. There is no entitlement for pupils to be granted leave of absence for holidays during term time. Under the Education Regulations (1995), the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. The register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Working together to improve school attendance August 2024
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Rationale

At our school we are committed to:

- supporting parents / carers to perform their legal duty;

- encouraging children to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending regularly and in taking pride in their attendance and punctuality;
- working in partnership with parents, carers, our staff team, governing board and the Local Authority to address difficulties and recognise external factors which influence pupil attendance;
- identifying patterns of non-attendance at an early stage and working to resolve personal/social difficulties;
- following efficiently, the school systems for accurate recording and monitoring of attendance and punctuality.

Definitions

Authorised Absence

‘Authorised Absence’ means that the school has given approval for the pupil to be away from school. Where possible, the school must be notified in advance of this. We appreciate though, that sometimes this is not possible, for instance, when a child is poorly. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents/carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents/carers will be authorised.

(this list is not limited to):

- An absence for sickness
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time
- Religious or cultural observances for days set aside by a religious body, for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency, taken with the school’s permission

Unauthorised Absence

An ‘Unauthorised Absence’ is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the combined permission of both the school and a parent/carer. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school and the school is not satisfied that the reason given for the absence is justified, even with the support of a parent. Should one sibling be poorly and not in school, we would expect to see the other sibling(s) in school if they are well enough.

(this list is not limited to):

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the close of registration
- Absence due to unofficial responsibilities at home
- Absence due to birthdays
- Absence due to term-time trips and holidays that have not been authorised by the school
- Leaving school without reason/the school’s permission during the day

- Tiredness
- Parent/carer unable to bring child to school

Persistent absenteeism:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling during the academic year, for any reason

Severe absenteeism:

- Missing 50 percent or more of schooling during the academic year, for any reason

Requesting an Absence:

Any planned absence must be requested in writing and using the Absence Request Form (appendix 8). As much information needs to be provided in this form as this will guide the Headteacher, Russell Brentnall as to whether the absence can be authorised. A letter will then be sent to the parent/carer stating whether the absence has been authorised or unauthorised.

Procedures

The following procedures are in place and must be adhered to, to ensure that we are able to monitor attendance and punctuality effectively.

Registration

Children must attend school punctually and regularly:

- Nursery start at 8.40am
- KS1 (Reception classes and Years 1 and 2) and KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) start at 8.40am

The school gates open at 8.38am each day and children are expected to be in class by 8.50am when the register will be taken. Registers will close at 8.50am. Any child arriving after 8.50am must be signed in by their parent/carer at the school office and will be marked as late in the register with an 'L' code.

Any arrival after 9.30am will be marked as 'unauthorised absence' with a 'U' code (unless the child is late because of a valid, agreed prior appointment).

Reporting an Absence

If a child is absent, these are the methods for reporting this:

- Via the Arbor App which you can download on to any mobile device
- Contacting the school via phone on 01273 770777
- For urgent situations, emailing Natalie Bellis, Welfare Manager: nataliebellis@wblatch.brighton-hove.sch.uk

Any messages must state the child's full name, class and exact details of all symptoms - 'not feeling

well' or 'feeling tired' are not symptoms. This will enable the school to code the absence correctly and ensure safeguarding procedures are also followed.

If your child has minor symptoms for example, sniffles, feeling fatigued, they are expected to attend school. In the event of this being a reason for absence, it is likely that it will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

We will of course monitor all children who may be feeling mildly unwell and contact parents/carers should we feel the need to. Alternatively, should your child wake up poorly and their symptoms improve, they should then be brought to school even though they may have missed morning registration as they will receive their afternoon session mark.

Parents are required to notify the school of their child's absence using the above reporting methods by 8.30am on each day of absence.

RED – STAY AT HOME Sickness & Diarrhoea 48 hours must have elapsed before a child can return to school from the last episode.	AMBER – COME TO SCHOOL AND COMMUNICATE WITH STAFF Headache, Feeling Sick, Stomach Ache Children often feel unwell if they are anxious, if in doubt contact the school for advice.	GREEN – COME TO SCHOOL Mild cough, Cold, Sore Throat, Feeling Tired We will always contact you if your child is ill during the school day
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Should we not receive communication by 9.30am, then a text message will be sent to notify parents/carers that their child has not registered in school. In this event, if no communication has been received, the child's absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised' ('O' code) on their attendance record.

Late Attendance

Parents must make every effort to have their children in school at the correct time to ensure they do not miss key learning. If your child is noted as being late to school frequently, an email will be sent to parents/carers to bring the lateness to their attention as a first stage. If the lateness persists, a formal letter will be sent by the Attendance Officer reminding parents/carers of their responsibility to ensure children arrive at school on time each day. Should there be no improvement, the Headteacher will write personally to the parents/carers and may decide to refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer. See Appendixes 1 and 2 for examples of these letters.

Concerns around Attendance and Punctuality

If we do not receive a telephone voice message, Arbor message or email to Natalie Bellis, by 9.30am, we will send a message to the parent/carer via Arbor requesting the reason as to why the child is not in school. If no response is provided, a letter will be sent out to request further information. If no response is provided from this letter, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (O) code.

If we have previous concerns about a child's welfare (for example, the child is on the child protection register or we believe could be in danger), we may request that our Welfare Manager, Natalie Bellis completes an unscheduled home visit. If we continue to have concerns, then we would seek support from other agencies to safeguard the child, including the Police and Children's Services. If there has been absence for 3 days and there has been no communication as to the reasons why, the Welfare Manager will automatically conduct a home visit. If there is no response following this visit, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care (Front Door for Families)

Where attendance is a concern, parents/carers may be required to provide medical evidence when the child returns so that the absence is not recorded as unauthorised. Parents/carers will be notified of this arrangement by letter. See Appendixes 3, 4 and 5. When absence is near or below the persistent absence threshold of 90%, an Attendance Support Meeting will be arranged to discuss barriers to attendance and how all parties can work together to improve attendance. In cases where there is limited or no improvement, a further meeting will be arranged with the Headteacher, Russell Brentnall. The decision at this meeting may lead to a referral to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, consideration of an Attendance Contract or issuing a 'Notice to Improve'

What is a Notice to Improve?

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a Penalty Notice is issued. If the 10-session threshold for issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice has been met and support is appropriate, but not engaged with by the parent or has not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate (for example a term-time holiday). The Notice to Improve should include an improvement period of between 3 and 6 weeks and contain a clear warning that any unauthorised absence in that period can trigger an FPN or prosecution without further warning (if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period). A Notice to Improve is issued by the school. Schools can choose not to use a Notice to Improve, for example where support would be appropriate but a Notice to Improve is not expected to have any impact on a parent's behaviour (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

What is an Attendance Contract?

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school (with the exception of independent schools and non-maintained special schools) or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. An attendance contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. An attendance contract is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution.

Possible triggers for attendance letters could be as follows, please note this is not an exhaustive list of

triggers and each case is considered on its own merit:

- Attendance is below 96%
- Frequent 'Lates' after the register has closed
- Unexplained or unauthorised absences
- Patterns forming regarding absences, for example regular Fridays and Monday absence from school.

Collecting Your Child Before the End of the School Day

We expect your child to attend school for the whole day (i.e. both morning and afternoon sessions). It is recognised however, that there may be some occasions/circumstances whereby it might be necessary to collect your child earlier than 3.10pm. Early collection will only be permitted by prior request/agreement in writing (email) or via phone call from the parent/carer, confirming the reason for the early collection, who will be collecting and the time. In the event one child needs to be collected early, we would not normally expect siblings to be collected at the same time. After School Club should be considered by parents as an alternative to collecting siblings or collecting children for a reason not directly relevant, for example a parent's medical appointment. Parent/Carers are able to book After School Club via the Arbor app.

Absence from Learning

Children should attend school for the maximum number of days possible (190), since absences can have a detrimental effect on their learning.

Parents receive a list of holiday dates at the beginning of each academic year; these can be found on the school's webpage: [West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School - Term Dates](#). Families are expected to take their holidays outside term time. Any request to remove a child from learning during term time for holiday will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. If it is necessary to make a request for Absence from Learning (see Appendix 8 and the school website. Such requests should be kept to a minimum and should not, in any case, exceed two weeks (10 days/20 sessions) during a school year. Your 'Absence Request Form' will either be approved or not; in either case, you will receive an email/letter confirming the outcome (see Appendix 6, 7, 7a, 7b, 7c, for examples of these letters).

Any absence the day before or the day after a school holiday will be unauthorised ('O' code) unless evidence is provided.

Exceptional leave of absence will only be authorised if attendance at the time of request is above 96% and is unlikely to fall below 96% as a result of the requested leave. Any Absence from Learning which builds up to longer than one school week (5 days/10 sessions) in a period of 10 weeks is treated as unauthorised, and may result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Attendance at Funerals

Requests for attendance at funeral for family members should be submitted as via an 'Absence Request Form'. To ensure equal treatment throughout the school, only one day's absence will be authorised to attend the funeral service itself, travelling time will not be authorised unless included as part of the day's absence.

Attendance at School Open Mornings / Entrance Exams (applicable for Year 6 only during the months of September/October)

Time off to attend Secondary School Open Mornings or Entrance Exams will be authorised, however, your child is expected to be in school for the other part of the day. Days off for revision prior to the Entrance Exam will not be authorised. Parents should report their child's absence for the morning or afternoon session using the normal Daily Absence Reporting Notification procedure, confirming for which session their child will be absent and which school they will be attending.

Strategies for Improving Punctuality and Attendance

All staff at our school are committed to doing all they can to ensure children attend punctually and regularly. In an attempt to improve rates of punctuality and attendance we:

- refer children who are causing concern to the weekly Safeguarding meeting held with the Senior Leadership Team
- work with the Attendance Lead/Welfare Manager, Natalie Bellis to ensure all barriers to learning are shared
- Share and discuss individual attendance Registration Certificates during Parents' Evenings. In addition, the child's annual Registration Certificate is sent at the end of the academic year with the child's school report to give a view of the 'whole child' at school;
- keep a record of those who arrive late each day;
- keep a record of parents and carers who have telephoned to explain their child's absence;
- keep a record of parents and carers whom we have telephoned or left a message on the answering service;
- ensure our registers are completed accurately;
- talk with parents and carers to identify whether support is needed to get children into school and on time. We signpost parents to the support network of parents local to their home who they may wish to liaise with.
- Use of the pupil premium budget to pay for children to attend breakfast club in order to improve their attendance and punctuality;
- involve governors in our monitoring procedures.
- To track key groups of pupils where absence is a cause for concern
- To ensure a robust screening system is in place to support pupils whose attendance is starting to be a cause for concern

Celebrating attendance

At West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School, attendance is the responsibility of parents/carers; pupils and staff. For this reason, the school is wanting to ensure methods of celebrating attendance include individuals, classes and groups of children. These can include the following:

- The class who has the best weekly attendance will be shared in assembly and written up on the Attendance Notice Board. Each class will have chosen an activity they can access, when they are awarded with the highest attendance award.

- Attendance trophy for the class with the highest attendance for the week will be awarded during the celebration assembly each Friday morning
- Certificates provided for improved attendance at the end of each term
- Gold, Silver and Bronze Attendance certificates provided for the class teachers to give out at the end of each academic year
- Class attendance percentages shared with all teachers to share with their class
- Individualised incentives and rewards for specific groups of pupils
- End of term attendance rewards for pupils who have consistently high attendance
- Reward sessions for the class with the highest attendance for each half term.
- Recognition of those achieving 100% annual attendance using Amazon voucher/other rewards based around pupil voice

We also need to recognise that children getting to school on time and / or attending regularly, is solely down to the responsibility of the parent / carer.

Long Term Absence

When children have an illness which means that they will be away from school for over five days, the school may signpost and encourage children to access online learning where the class teacher will upload work for the child to complete at home. This will very much depend on the nature of the illness and be based on knowledge of the child and their circumstances.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the appropriate support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school. In Brighton and Hove this will be via Children's Services (Front Door for Families); Children Missing Education Team, who may request further information to instigate a referral to the EOTAS team (Education Other Than At School)

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Procedures

Emotionally-based school avoidance (EBSA) is a term referring to reduced or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. Rather than the term 'school refusal', the term EBSA recognises that this avoidance has its root in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. EBSA should not be thought of as a deliberate act of defiance, but instead as a complex issue inextricably linked with mental health and wellbeing.

EBSA also doesn't just mean not attending school entirely. Staff may also observe pupils:

- Not going to their classroom
- Not attending some lessons
- Avoiding some physical spaces or people

Why does EBSA happen?

There is no one reason why children and young people avoid school. It varies by individual, and is usually caused by a combination of various factors and their interaction, rather than a single cause. Potential risk factors for EBSA can be split into three main categories; the child or young person, the family and home, and the school.

Some examples of EBSA risk factors could include:

Child/young person	Family/ Home	School
Anxiety, depression or other mental health concerns	High levels of family stress (including financial stress, conflict and domestic violence)	Bullying
Difficulties with managing and regulating emotions	Being a young carer	Difficult relationships with staff members
Trauma and adverse childhood experiences	Loss and bereavement	Difficulties in particular subjects
Low levels of self-confidence and self esteem	Family history of EBSA	Demanding pressurised academic environment
Separation anxiety or attachment issues with a parent/carer	Poor parental mental health	Difficult in making and maintain friendships
Having a special need or a disability	Changes to the home environment	Transition from primary to secondary school through key stages

What we do to support pupil and families with EBSA:

Although EBSA is a complex issue, positive outcomes are very achievable. There are some strategies outlined here, split into universal approaches and more targeted strategies.

Universal

West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School takes a whole-school approach to mental health which has benefits for pupils, staff and families. We involve all members of the school community in promoting and supporting wellbeing. By developing a culture which prioritises wellbeing and is supportive and safe, we can reduce the impact of EBSA risk factors. We have a mental health and wellbeing ambassador (PSHE co-ordinator/welfare manager) who implements wellbeing strategies, assemblies, lessons and activities throughout the school. We have a number of nurture and SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health) interventions which can support with EBSA. These will be discussed with the parent/carer and pupil to ensure all support is appropriate and accessible.

What our staff can do

Keep an eye out for early indicators and start conversations with parents and children.

Raise any emerging concerns for discussion at the weekly Safeguarding meeting;

As part of regular reviews of attendance data, school staff should try to spot early patterns of absence arising, keeping an eye out for sporadic attendance and lateness. These will also be recorded on CPOMs and signs of any patterns emerging will be explored. Staff are supported with their development of 'professional curiosity' whilst not making assumptions about specific families.

If staff notice these patterns emerging, beginning a dialogue with the child or young person about how they are feeling can help them open up and ask for help.

These conversations can feel difficult or uncomfortable, but will also let a pupil know that they are

being listened to and supported.

Other early indicators can include:

- A parent or carer reporting that the child or young person does not want to come to school
- Physical signs believed to be linked to stress (e.g. stomach ache, sickness, headache)
- The child or young person often complaining of feeling ill
- Behavioural changes or fluctuations e.g. interactions with others, reduced motivation and engagement in learning tasks

Protective Factors

A protective factor is an attribute or condition that can help protect a child or young person against some of the risk factors outlined above, thereby preventing EBSA or reducing its impact.

Developing protective factors isn't something a child or young person can be expected to do alone. Schools play a very important role in developing protective factors in their pupils.

At West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School...

- We build a school culture that recognises all emotional reactions as normal and helps pupils feel safe to express their emotions.
- We have nurturing staff who can initiate conversations around EBSA and offer support.
- Our Welfare Manager has a Diploma in Trauma which specialises in attachment aware and trauma informed practice.
- We support children in developing effective emotional regulation strategies, which include Just Right, Active Listening; Emotion Coaching.
- We provide quiet or safe spaces for pupils to access if they are experiencing intense emotions.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to decision-making in the school, helping them feel that their voices are valued and heard.
- We work together to reduce everyday stressors in the classroom for pupils who easily become overwhelmed.
- We check in regularly with pupils to see whether any agreed adaptations or strategies are working and useful, and adjusting if not.
- The use of the ATTEND framework, is used as a supportive document for any parent/carer/pupil needing to participate in an Attendance Support meeting, however this framework may also have a positive impact at an earlier stage of EBSA

Positive and supportive communication with families

West Blatchington Primary and Nursery staff ensure that parents and carers feel connected and involved with the school. This is key to support children and young people's mental health. We understand that due to the coronavirus pandemic and other socio-economic factors, parents and carers may have disengaged from the school community. Some parents and carers may also have had difficult times at school themselves when they were younger, and their confidence in the ability of the school to support their child may be low.

By finding ways to involve them in school life and communicating with them regularly, we build

parents' and carers' trust in the school.

We recognise that if the family of the child or young person trusts that the school will be able to support their child, they will be more likely to encourage the child to attend school, as they know that they will be cared for and supported.

The Welfare Manager, Natalie Bellis, is always available for further conversations, if more specific information is needing to be shared.

Targeted Support

Assess

We keep an eye out for early indicators of EBSA in pupils and act quickly. Work with pupils to identify the risk factors they are experiencing which may be causing EBSA. The Child Outcomes Research

Plan

Co-produce a return to school action plan with the pupil, family and school all involved in the process. Agree a date of review, and share the plan with all parties involved. If the student is finding the idea of returning to school particularly difficult, the plan could focus on smaller steps – like meeting a friend from school or completing a piece of work – to begin the process of returning to school. Work with the child or young person on a return to school pupil support plan, detailing the support they can expect when they come back to school. Again, share this with all parties. This planning stage may involve other staff members in school such as the SENCo/Deputy Head, and also external professionals such as the Schools Mental Health Service, BHISS (Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service). If a reduced timetable needs to be considered, this will be completed in consultation with the Local Authority. This would be a time limited intervention of up to 6 weeks and always requires the consent of the parent/carer prior to implementation.

Do

Maintain good communication with the family and pupil during the return to school – for example, supporting the completion of school work at home and sharing feedback on the work. Regular communication with parent/carer/pupil/staff. Ensuring pupil voice remains central to any support being provided.

Monitor and Review

Monitor the progress made and adjust the plan for the next steps. Further consultation with other agencies may be needed.

[Emotionally Based School Avoidance \(EBSA\) Toolkit and Training | Bromley Education Matters](#)

Attendance for Pupils with Additional Health Needs

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the child's LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

Definitions

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues.
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend any of the following.

- **Hospital school:** a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
 - **Home tuition:** many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment. This service would only usually be able to be accessed via clear medical evidence from a health professional such as CAMHS; consultant psychiatrist and then agreed with the Local Authority that threshold criteria have been met.
 - **Medical PRUs:** these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.
- we don't have these, so can I remove?!

Local Authority duties

The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The school has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the pupil.
- Ensure the education pupils receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

The LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

The School Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the **termly** review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on- and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy
- **The Head Teacher is responsible for:**
- Working with the School Board to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting pupils with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual pupils.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs.
- Providing teachers who support pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil.
- Providing a report to the School Board on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of pupils.
- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

The SENDCO is responsible for:

- Dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.

- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Head Teacher, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Keeping pupils informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA.

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.
- **Parents are expected to:**
 - Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.
 - Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
 - Notify the school of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
 - Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
 - Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and this is incorporated within the Headteacher's termly report to Governors. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be and that any trends are being identified.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact Natalie Bellis, Welfare Manager or in her absence, a member of the Senior Leadership team. If there is a longer-term concern about the attendance or punctuality of a particular child, this will be addressed via the Attendance procedures and may also include a referral to Children's Social Care (Front Door for Families) and the Local Authority Children Missing Education Team. All efforts will be made to contact the parent/carer.

Requests for Pupil Absence from Learning due to Exceptional Circumstances

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents of a child of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of that child at the school where he/ she is a registered pupil. Failure to fulfil this duty may result in the Local Authority prosecuting the parents.

The Headteacher reserves the right to make individual judgements as to what constitutes exceptional circumstances. We may ask for confirmation of travel arrangements or other supporting documents.

As a rule, the financial factor when a parent claims that they are unable to afford a holiday during school holidays when prices may be significantly higher than in term time, does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Similarly, the nature of a proposed holiday cannot be taken as exceptional circumstances.

We will not grant exceptional leave if:

- A child's attendance record is less than 96% - even if any previous absence was due to unavoidable causes such as illness;
- The period of leave coincides with the start of term, or is near to or coincides with tests, SATs, exams or other significant events in the school calendar.

Fixed Penalty Notices – Brighton and Hove Local Authority

The national threshold for triggering a Fixed Penalty Notice is met when a pupil has been recorded as having had unauthorised absence for 10 or more sessions (5 or more school days) in a period of 10 school weeks. One or a combination of the following codes count as unauthorised absence:

- N-codes (no reason yet provided for absence)
- O-codes (poor attendance)
- U-codes (lateness after close of registration)

The first fine is £160 *per parent/carer per child*, if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

If a second fine is issued to that parent/carer within a period of 3 school years, the fine is £160 *per parent/carer per child* to be paid within 28 days and there is no reduction if paid within 21 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child, within 3 years of the first fine being issued. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action could be taken, such as prosecution.

Full details relating to Fixed Penalty Notice amounts and thresholds can be found in the Code of Conduct on the Brighton & Hove City Council website.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – First Late Letter

Date

[Parent/Carer Name & Address]

Dear [Parent/Carer]

Re: [child's name] [class]

As part of our commitment to improve the attainment of our pupils, we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During this process, we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions. We are therefore, writing to you due to [name of pupil]'s current number of late sessions:

Attendance	<current attendance> %
Number of late sessions	<current AA> %
Number of "unauthorised" lates	<current UA> %

Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of learning lost a year
10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of learning lost a year
15 minutes late every day = 10 days of learning lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of learning lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of learning lost a year

We understand that the school mornings can be hectic for many, but when your child is late for school they are missing out on vital parts of their education. If your child arrives after 9.30am, he/she will have an "unauthorised" absence mark which means that he/she will have an unauthorised absence for that morning session. I have enclosed a registration certificate for your information.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely

-

Natalie Bellis
Welfare Manager/Attendance Lead
Enc

-

Date

Name & Address of Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Dear [name(s)]

Re: Late Attendance – [child's name]

I refer to the letter of [previous letter date] sent by our Welfare Manager, Natalie Bellis and note that there has been no improvement in [child's name] late arrivals. He/she has continued to regularly arrive late for school and, so far this year been late on [number] occasions.

Our expectation is that all pupils arrive at school by 8.50am at the latest and I can see that [child's name]'s continues to arrive in school later than their friends. Arriving even a few minutes late, could mean that your child is regularly missing early work and essential instructions. It also means that they do not start the school day by arriving with their friends.

If there are reasons for lateness that would benefit from further discussion, our Welfare Manager, Natalie Bellis will be more than happy to meet with you to explore any issues you may be experiencing.

Please support the school by arranging for [child's name] to arrive in time for the start of school, i.e. before 8.50am. .

I will be monitoring [child's name]'s arrival times for the next 4 weeks and will hope to see a significant improvement. If there is little or no improvement, a meeting will be arranged to discuss what further support can be provided.

If you have any difficulties in ensuring your child attends school on time, please contact Natalie Bellis, Welfare Manager, to discuss the matter in order that we may consider suitable support if necessary/appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Russell Brentnall
Headteacher

Appendix 3 - First attendance letter

Dear «salutation»

«chosen_name» «chosen_surname» DOB: «date_of_birth»

At West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School, it is our aim to make sure that every child gets the best out of their education. Part of the school's role is to monitor attendance patterns on a fortnightly basis and make contact with parents and carers where attendance has fallen below the expected 96%. Following the most recent screening, «chosen_forename»'s attendance is currently «percentage_attendance»%.

If you are receiving this letter, this may be that your child's absence has taken place earlier on in the academic year, it may also be that you have not been able to provide evidence due to the nature of the absence. Please do not worry – the school has a duty to inform all parents and carers when attendance has dropped. This does not mean that any further action will be taken, it is just a case of letting you know and ensuring we are working in a preventative way to ensure there are no other reasons for absence, which school could support with (friendship issues, anxiety, emotional health and wellbeing difficulties).

For reference, please see the table below which highlights the need to keep attendance high on the schools agenda.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year

Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.

95%: 10 days absence a year

These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.

90%: 19 days absence a year

These pupils are missing a month of school per year. The Government classifies pupils in this group as “Persistent Absentees” and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of young people in this group may face legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

If you have any queries or if there are any ways that you feel the school can support further, please contact Natalie Bellis, our Family Liaison Worker, on 01273 770777.

Yours sincerely

Russell Brentnall
Headteacher

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may lead to legal proceedings

—

being taken against you by the Local Authority. Alternatively the school may request that the Local Authority issues a penalty notice of £80 per parent per child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the timescale the penalty will increase to £160. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, you may be prosecuted.

Appendix 4: 2nd Attendance Letter

Dear «salutation»

«chosen_name» «chosen_surname» DOB: «date_of_birth»

Further to our previous letter, I have noticed that «chosen_forename»'s attendance has continued to decline and is now «percentage_attendance»%.

As you can appreciate, we are wanting to ensure we are doing all that we can to support «chosen_forename» to attend school every day so that they can achieve to the best of their ability.

For information, 92% attendance is equivalent to missing 17 days of school per year and 75 lessons. I am sure you agree that when looking at it like this, this means «chosen_forename» has missed a lot of learning.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year

Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.

95%: 10 days absence a year

These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.

90%: 19 days absence a year

These pupils are missing a month of school per year. The Government classifies pupils in this group as "Persistent Absentees" and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of young people in this group may face legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

The school will continue to monitor «chosen_forename» attendance and unless there is a significant improvement you will be invited to attend an Attendance Support Meeting to discuss ways of how we can all support «chosen_forename»'s with coming to school each day.

We fully understand that these absences may be related to illness. If this is the case, it will really help for the school to have any evidence relating to the illness (this could include a prescription, an appointment text, a hospital letter or a doctor's note, etc.) and we can attach this to your child's record. This then enables us to fully understand the absence and ensure it is coded appropriately. **If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence.**

Please do not hesitate to contact Natalie Bellis, our Welfare Manager, if you would like further support with any attendance issues.

We are confident that we will see an improvement in «chosen_forename»'s attendance and we will be able to celebrate this with them.

Yours sincerely

Russell Brentnall
Headteacher

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may lead to legal proceedings being taken against you by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Alternatively the school may request that the Local Authority issues a penalty notice of £80 per parent per child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the timescale the penalty will increase to £160. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, you may be prosecuted.

Dear «salutation»

«chosen_name» «chosen_surname» DOB: «date_of_birth»

As you will be aware from our previous two letters, we have concerns with regard to «chosen_forename»'s attendance.

I am inviting you to attend an Attendance Support Meeting at the school on **date** at **time**, because «chosen_forename» has not attended school regularly. This meeting will be held with our Welfare Manager, Natalie Bellis.

The meeting will give you an opportunity to discuss any difficulties you are experiencing in ensuring your child attends school regularly. The class teacher will also be providing an overview of your child's learning and progress.

It would also be very much appreciated if you could complete the ATTEND forms that will be sent to you in the post, and bring them to the meeting. This will really help all of us in identifying any key areas that are affecting attendance and how best we can support your child. If you would like your child to attend the meeting, please do let front office know.

It is important that you attend this meeting. If you are unable to attend at the time and date specified, please contact the school office on 01273 770777 and an alternative appointment will be made.

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually. If you fail to attend this meeting and make no contact with me to arrange an alternative appointment, and should your child's attendance not improve to a satisfactory level, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority to consider legal proceedings against you under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Alternatively, the school may request that the Local Authority issue a penalty notice of £80 per parent per child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the timescale, the penalty will increase to £160. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, you may be prosecuted.

Yours sincerely

Russell Brentnall
Headteacher

Appendix 6 – Approved Absence from Learning

Date

Thank you for your email requesting absence for a holiday during the term time, from.....

As you know, regular attendance at school is vital to a pupil's achievement and success, it is also a legal requirement under the Education Act 1996. Most pupils find it difficult to catch up on school work even after one day of absence.

The local authority's policy is that holidays must not be taken during term time and requests for any holiday will be denied.

However, since this is an exceptional circumstance, after careful consideration, I have decided to agree the request for authorised absence.

Finally, I trust that you will strive to achieve good attendance for your child for the rest of the year and I need to inform you that a further request for leave of absence would be denied. Holiday during term time is only granted for exceptional circumstances. Thank you for your co-operation.

Russell Brentnall
Headteacher

Appendix 7a – Declined Absence from Learning Letter: no fine

Dear

Thank you for the absence request form requesting absence for a holiday for XXXXX from XXX to xxxxxx

As you know, regular attendance at school is vital to a pupil's achievement and success, it is also a legal requirement under the Education Act 1996. Most pupils find it difficult to catch up on school work even after one day of absence.

The local authority's policy is that holidays must not be taken during term time and requests for any holiday will be denied.

After careful consideration, I would like to inform you should XXXXXXXX be absent between the above dates, it will show as unauthorised absence with no fine.

Please be reminded that unauthorised absences of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, will automatically be referred to the Local Authority who will issue a fixed penalty notice of £160 per parent/per child, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Finally, I trust that you will strive to achieve good attendance for your child for the rest of the year and I need to inform you that a further request for leave of absence would be denied. Holiday during term time is only granted for exceptional circumstances.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Brentnall
Headteacher

Appendix 7b: first fine

Name
Address

Date

Student:

Dear

Thank you for completing the Absence Request form in relation to taking **Pupil Name** out of school for the purpose of reason, from date to date

I have considered your application and regret to inform you that your application for leave has not been granted.

The Department for Education advised that leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. I am unable to authorise this leave as the reasons stated in the request are not deemed to be exceptional.

If the absence goes ahead, a referral will be made to the Local Authority who will issue you with a penalty notice. This first penalty notice issued will be charged at £160 per parent/per child, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

I would like to inform you that if there are further episodes of 10 or more sessions (5 days), a second penalty notice may be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same pupil, if these take place within 3 years of the date of issue of the first penalty notice. This will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action can be taken, including considering prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and potentially a fine of up to £2,500

Should you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact the school office on 01273 770777

There is no right of appeal once a penalty notice has been issued.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Brentnall
Headteacher

Appendix 7c: second fine

Dear

Thank you for completing the Absence Request form in relation to taking **Pupil Name** out of school for the purpose of reason, from date to date

I have considered your application and regret to inform you that your application for leave has not been granted.

The Department for Education advised that leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. I am unable to authorise this leave as the reasons stated in the request are not deemed to be exceptional.

If this absence from school goes ahead, a referral will be made to the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice.

This is the second episode of more than 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within a 3 year period of when the first penalty notice was issued on date to date. This will be charged at a flat rate of £160 per parent/per child if paid within 28 days.

I would also like to remind you that in a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within these 3 years, alternative action can be taken, including considering prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or a fine of up to £2,500

Should you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact the school office on 01273 770777.....within one week of the date of this letter.

There is no right of appeal once a penalty notice has been issued. Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Brentnall
Headteacher

Appendix 7d: court proceedings

Student:

Dear

Thank you for completing the Absence Request form in relation to taking Pupil Name out of school for the purpose of reason, from date to date

I have considered your application and regret to inform you that your application for leave has not been granted.

The Department for Education advised that leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. I am unable to authorise this leave as the reasons stated in the request are not deemed to be exceptional.

Following the 2 previous episodes of unauthorised absence and fines being issued on date to date and date to date, I need to inform you that the national threshold has been met for a third time within these 3 years.

Alternative action will now be taken and may include consideration of prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or issuing a fine of up to £2,500

Should you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact the school office on 01273 770777.....within one week of the date of this letter.

There is no right of appeal in relation to any alternative action taken by the Local Authority.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Brentnall
Headteacher

Requests for Pupil Absence from Learning due to Exceptional Circumstances

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents of a child of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of that child at the school where he/ she is a registered pupil. Failure to fulfil this duty may result in the Local Authority prosecuting the parents.

The Headteacher reserves the right to make individual judgements as to what constitutes exceptional circumstances. We may ask for confirmation of travel arrangements or other supporting documents.

As a rule, the financial factor when a parent claims that they are unable to afford a holiday during school holidays when prices may be significantly higher than in term time, does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

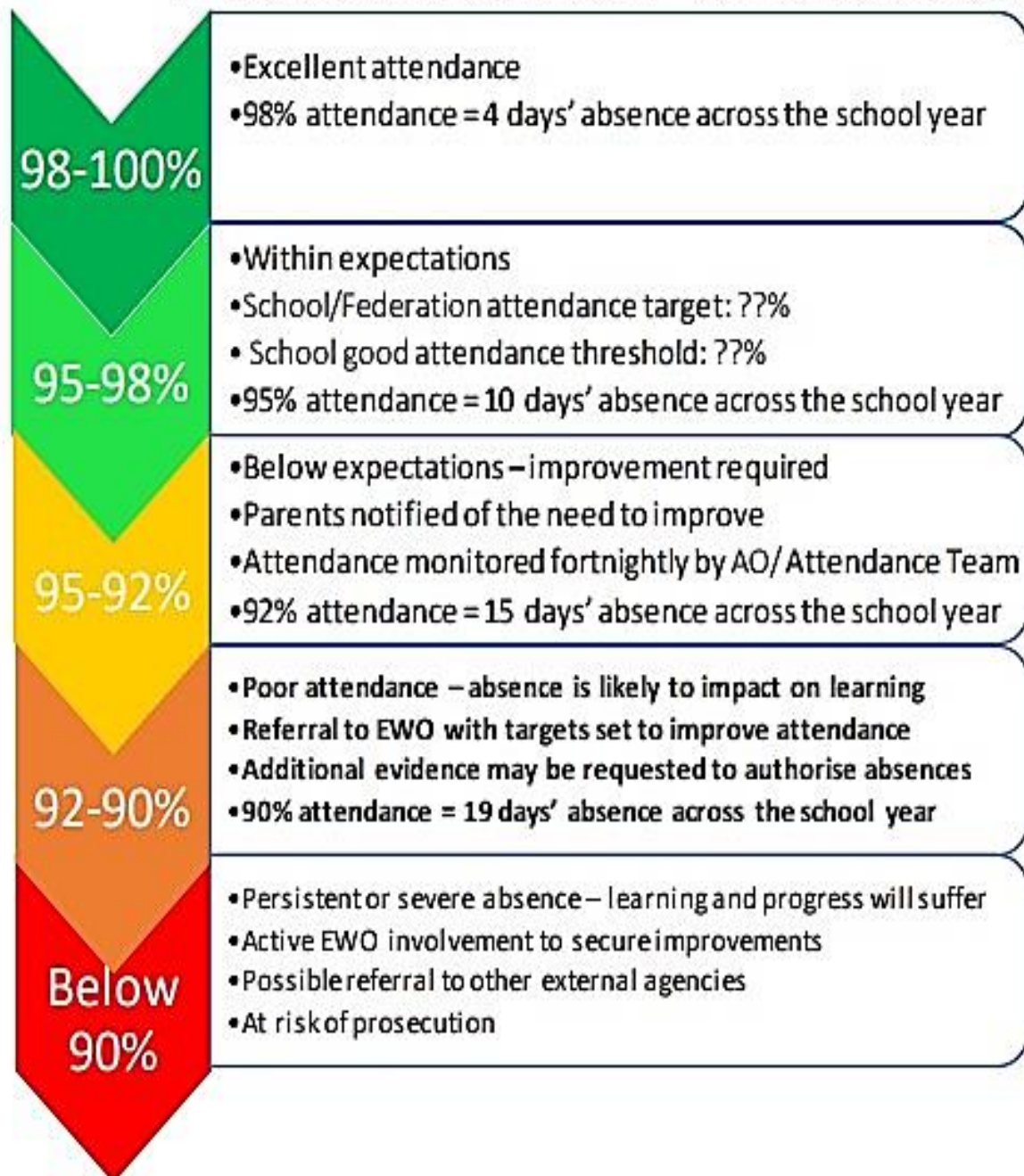
Similarly, the nature of a proposed holiday cannot be taken as exceptional circumstances.

We will not grant exceptional leave if:

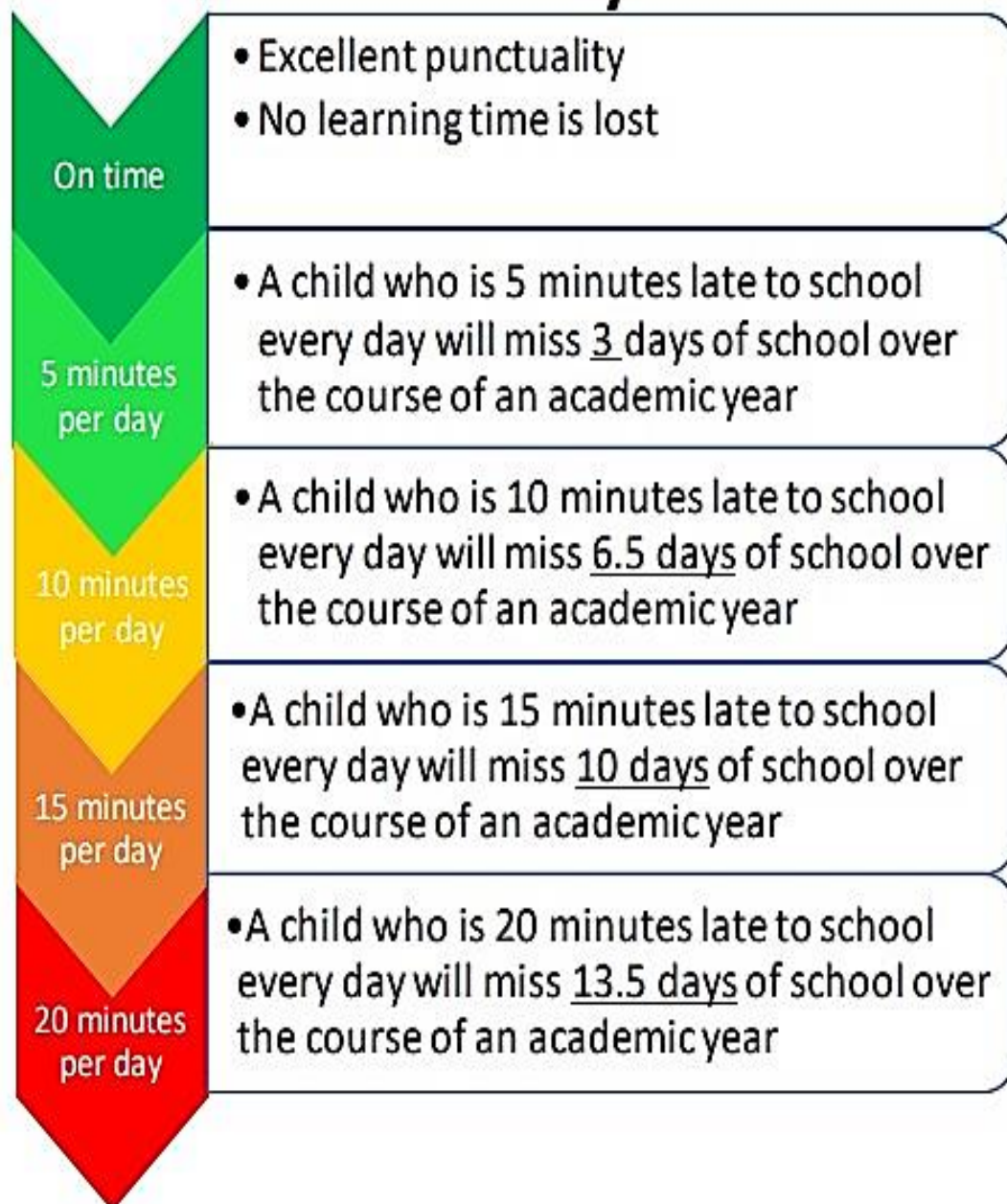
- A child's attendance record is less than 96% - even if any previous absence was due to unavoidable causes such as illness;
- The period of leave coincides with the start of term, or is near to or coincides with tests, SATs, exams or other significant events in the school calendar.

Impact of Attendance over a Year Chart

Attendance Matters



Punctuality Matters



Requests for leave of absence during term time can only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Any supporting evidence must be supplied at the time this application is submitted.

Please complete this form stating the dates of absence, and detailing the reasons why this absence can only be taken during term time.

The application must be received by the school office two or more school weeks before the first day of absence. In rare cases, where this may not be possible, please contact school using the following email address which will be forwarded on to the Headteacher: admin@wblatch.brighton-hove.sch.uk.

Permission must be requested and secured before taking any planned absence during term time. If permission is not secured and absence is taken without permission, the Local Authority will issue each parent(s)/carer(s) with a penalty notice, for every absent pupil. The first penalty notice issued to parent/carers in respect of a particular pupil, will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice issued to the same parent/carers in respect of the same pupil, within 3 years of the date of issue of the first penalty notice, is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action can be taken, including considering prosecution/fine of up to £2,500 under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

More information about the school's attendance policy can be found on our website:

[West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School - Home](#)

If you are unable to access our website, please speak to the school office who can provide you with a paper copy of the policy.

Name of
Child(ren):

Class(es):

Name of Parent(s)
/ Carer(s):

Home
Address(es):

Contact telephone
number(s) and e-
mail address(es):

Sibling(s) and
school(s) they
attend:

Reason for leave
(attach further
information as
necessary):

First & last dates
of absence:

Signed:

*By signing this document, I am confirming that I have read and
understood the above notice.*

Dated:

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Authorised / Unauthorised:

Date of response:

Method used to respond to parent:

Additional Information/Evidence: