

BRIGHSTONE C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy April 2022

Produced by: Melissa Jones - Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date Agreed by FGB: 17th May 2022

Next Review date: May 2023

Reviewed by: Rebecca Lennon and Lorraine Ireland

Date	Reviewed	Changes
15.05.2022	RL & LI	New policy created

Contents

1. Policy statement and principles	4
2. Why Regular Attendance is important	4
2.1. Safeguarding	4
2.2. Vulnerable children	4
2.3. Learning	5
3. Context	5
3.1. The Law Relating to attendance and safeguarding	5
3.2. Compulsory School Age	5
3.3. Safeguarding	5
3.4. Covid 19	7
4. Roles and responsibilities	7
4.1. People with responsibility for attendance	7
4.2. Promoting Regular Attendance	7
4.3. Admission and attendance register.....	8
4.4. Family Contact Details	8
5. The school day	8
5.1. Lateness	9
5.2. How we manage lateness	9
6. Types of Absence	9
6.1. Authorised Absences	9
6.2. Unauthorised Absences	9
6.3. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)	10
7. Absence Procedures	10
7.1. Safeguarding	11
7.2. Leave in Term Time	11
7.3. Appointments	12
7.4. Religious or cultural observance	12
8. Children Missing Education (CME)	12
8.1. Safeguarding	13
8.2. Missing children/runaways	13

8.3.	Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System	14
8.4.	Children of migrant families/unaccompanied minors.....	14
8.5.	Children of service personnel	14
8.6.	Children of gypsy, Roma and traveller (GRT) families.....	14
8.7.	Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusions.....	14
9.	Elective Home Education (EHE)	15
9.1.	Decision to home educate.....	15
10.	Children with health needs who cannot attend school	16
11.	Alternative Provision	17
11.1.	Part-time timetables.....	17
12.	Support and Intervention	18
12.1.	School Targets and Initiatives.....	18
13.	Attendance Codes	19
Appendix 1	20
	EXEMPLAR First absence warning letter template.....	20
Appendix 2	21
	EXEMPLAR Low attendance concerns letter template	21
Appendix 3	22
	EXEMPLAR Unauthorised absence letter template	22
Appendix 4	23
	Learning from serious case reviews	23

1. Policy statement and principles

- 1.1. All staff are committed to working with parents and children as the best way to ensure high levels of attendance are achieved and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.
- 1.2. At Brighstone Primary School we aim for an environment which enables and encourages children to enjoy and excel in their education.
- 1.3. Regular and punctual attendance is essential for effective learning and children should be at school, on time, every day it is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.
- 1.4. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can have safeguarding implications.
- 1.5. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary age groups.
- 1.6. The school will work with the community and partner agencies to:
 - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
 - Ensure every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
 - Act early to address patterns of absence.

2. Why Regular Attendance is important

2.1. Safeguarding

- 2.1.1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and is the number one priority for Brighstone Primary School.
- 2.1.2. Difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying a child and they and/or their family are in need of early help and support.
- 2.1.3. Lack of, or erratic attendance, persistent absence or children missing education are safeguarding issues and must be seen as a warning sign to a range of concerns including neglect, sexual abuse, child sexual or child criminal exploitation. They may also be an indication of peer-on-peer abuse including bullying and sexual harassment or significant mental ill health concerns. They must not be seen as purely isolated attendance concerns.
- 2.1.4. Where children have or have had a social worker or are in need of safeguarding support, this will inform decisions about attendance issues.
- 2.1.5. Staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.
- 2.1.6. More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

2.2. Vulnerable children

- 2.2.1. It is also important for parents/carers/social workers to let the school know of any specific vulnerability in relation to their child or home circumstances. If you are uncertain about what would be considered a vulnerability, please contact our Family Liaison Officer.

2.3. Learning

2.3.1. We know from experience and from studies that regular absence and poor punctuality can have a detrimental effect on a child's learning. When a child is absent or arrives late it disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning not only of that child but also that of others in the same class.

2.3.2. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason constitutes an offence in law and may result in a penalty notice or prosecution.

3. Context

3.1. The Law Relating to attendance and safeguarding

3.1.1. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

"the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have either at school or otherwise"

3.2. Compulsory School Age:

3.2.1. A child must start full-time education once they reach compulsory school age. This is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday - whichever comes first.

3.2.2. A child can leave school on the last Friday in June if they will be 16 by the end of the summer holidays (see attendance coding guide in 'School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities').

3.2.3. They must then do one of the following until they're 18:

- stay in full-time education, for example at a college
- start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

Safeguarding

3.2.4. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Other relevant guidance/advice

- Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2021 - statutory guidance for schools [Keeping children safe in education 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/98461/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2021.pdf)

- Working together to safeguard children – statutory guidance for safeguarding partners [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2018.pdf)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/2006/1100/contents))
- School attendance main guidance Aug 2020 [School attendance guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/School_attendance_guidance.pdf)
- School attendance Covid addendum – ongoing updating by DfE check website for latest version [Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Addendum_recording_attendance_in_relation_to_coronavirus_COVID-19_during_the_2021_to_2022_academic_year.pdf)
- Looked After Children [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Promoting_the_education_of_looked-after_children_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf)
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2013 [Additional health needs guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Additional_health_needs_guidance.pdf)
- Children Missing in Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities Sept 2016 [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Stat_guidance_template.pdf)
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children (September 2014) [Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils: supporting access to education - Case study - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Gypsy_Roma_and_Traveller_pupils_supporting_access_to_education_-_Case_study.pdf)
- Statutory Guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Statutory_guidance_on_children_who_run_away_or_go_missing_from_home_or_care.pdf)
- Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation [Department for Education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Department_for_Education.pdf)
- NSPCC (July 2021) [Protecting children from sexual exploitation | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning-and-development/protecting-children-from-sexual-exploitation/)
- Elective home education guidance for local authorities (April 2019) [Elective home education: departmental guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Elective_home_education_departmental_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf)
- Elective home education – a guide for parents (April 2019) [Elective home education: guide for parents \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Elective_home_education_guide_for_parents.pdf)
- Alternative Provision Statutory guidance for local authorities (Jan 2013) [Alternative Provision statutory guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682111/Alternative_Provision_statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf)

- Additional LA contacts:
 - IOW LSCB
 - IOW Education and Inclusion
- Related policies:
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding
 - Admissions
 - Exclusion
 - Anti-bullying
 - Promoting Positive Behaviour
 - Supporting Children with Medical Needs
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

3.3. Covid 19

3.3.1. Government advice is constantly being updated. The School will follow all local and national government advice and guidance and adapt procedures as required.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. People with responsibility for attendance

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher, attendance lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Rebecca Lennon	headteacher@brighstoneprimary.org.uk
Family Liaison Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead	Melissa Jones	m.jones@brighstoneprimary.org.uk
SENCo	Sue Boyd	s.boyd@brighstoneprimary.org.uk
LAC Coordinator	Kirsti Cousins	k.cousins@brighstoneprimary.org.uk
Local authority named officer for SEND	James Ranson	James.ranson@iow.gov.uk
Local authority named officer for the education of children with additional health needs		
Local authority named officer for elective home education	Louise Tatton	Louise.tatton@iow.gov.uk

4.2. Promoting Regular Attendance

4.2.1. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers/social workers, children and all members of staff.

4.2.2. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Celebrate good attendance in the weekly newsletter;
- Provide parents/carers with details on the importance of good attendance;
- Work with parents whose children's attendance has become a cause for concern to support them in improving attendance to school.

4.3. Admission and attendance register

4.3.1. The school will keep an admission register and attendance register. The contents of which includes:

- All children on roll
- All children's personal details, including full legal name
- Details of at least three emergency contacts, with one being outside of the family home
- The date of admission (or re-admission)
- Information regarding parents and carers
- Details of the school last attended.

4.3.2. The school will enter children on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed that the child will start, or the day that the school has been notified that the child will attend.

4.3.3. The school will take and submit the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. This will be done within the first 10 minutes.

4.3.4. On each occasion, we will record children's attendance using the national codes. (For details of current national attendance codes see [School attendance guidance School attendance guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61222/school-attendance-guidance.pdf))

4.3.5. Children will be marked absent if they were not in class during the period when the register is open.

4.4. Family Contact Details

4.4.1. In order to allow us to safeguard children, it is important that parents and carers provide the school with their current contact details and provide at least three other contact numbers of trusted adults in case of emergency.

5. The school day

5.1.1. The school day starts at 8.25am and we expect your child to be in classroom ready to learn by that time.

5.1.2. Registers are marked by 8.30am and 12.50pm and your child will receive a 'late' mark if they are not in their classroom by that time.

5.1.3. The registers will be closed at 8.55am. If your child arrives after that time, they will receive an unauthorised absence mark that shows them to be on site but not counted as a present for statistical/legal purposes.

5.1.4 Children arriving late to school should report to reception where the office administrator (or another member of staff if the office administrator is unavailable) will take their name and reason for lateness and code the registers accordingly. Any further follow up for lateness will be actioned accordingly.

5.2. Lateness

5.2.1. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information/instructions and news for the day. Late arriving children also disrupts others. It can also be embarrassing for the child, which can then lead to further absence.

5.3. How we manage lateness

5.3.1. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss and seek a resolution to the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

6. Types of Absence

6.1. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the School (not by the parents), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

6.2. Authorised Absences

6.2.1. An authorised absence is where the headteacher has either given permission in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered is accepted as exceptional circumstances. Holidays are never authorised.

6.2.2. Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness, medical or dental appointments for which the school has granted leave (appointments should be made outside the school day where possible)
- Unavoidable cause (which is expected to be an emergency and unavoidable)
- Days of religious or cultural observance for which the school has granted leave
- Traveller child travelling for the purposes of parents' employment, which has been agreed with the school
- Other exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the headteacher; i.e. funerals, weddings (see section 7.3 below for further information).

6.3. Unauthorised Absences

6.3.1. An unauthorised absence is where either no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is not considered acceptable by the school.

6.3.2. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children from attending the school unnecessarily or without reason
- Parents/carers keeping children off school to assist with translation
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a late mark; i.e. after registers have closed (see section 5 above for times)
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day (truancy)

6.3.3. If an absence is recorded as unauthorised and absence is causing a concern the school may refer this to the Local Authority's Education Service at any point (processes for CME are listed in section 8 below).

6.3.4. The Local Authority can use various sanctions to promote regular attendance, such as issuing a Penalty Notice Fine or initiate court proceedings.

6.3.5. Whilst any child may be absent sometimes, it can be that they are reluctant to attend or there are safeguarding concerns.

6.3.6. Any problems with regular absence are best sorted out between the school and the parents/carers and the child.

6.4. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

6.4.1. A child is considered to be a 'persistent absentee' (PA) if they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the academic year for **whatever reason**.

6.4.2. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that level is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

6.4.3. PA children are tracked and monitored carefully and we combine this with academic intervention where absence affects attainment.

All our PA children and their parents/carers will be supported through an action plan. The plan may include working with the education and Inclusion service and may involve the allocation of additional support through early help, and any further identified need of support as appropriate.

6.4.4. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the LA – Education and Inclusion and the school's Family Liaison Officer.

6.4.5. If your child has, or is at risk of, reaching the threshold for PA, you will be asked to provide evidence for any future absence. This may be medical evidence for illness, which can be in the form of prescriptions, medicine packaging or hospital letters.

7. Absence Procedures

7.1. If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as early as possible and at the latest by 08.15am on every day of absence and give an expected return date.
- You can contact us via 01983 740285 or office@brighstoneprimary.org.uk on a daily basis.
- Notify us every day thereafter to advise school of your child's progress.
- Send a note/email on the first day the child returns with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us.

7.2. Safeguarding

- 7.2.1. To ensure that a child is safe and well, and to understand the reason for absence so that it can be recorded with the correct code on the register, any unexplained absences will be followed up immediately.
- 7.2.2. The Family Liaison Officer and DSL will ensure that children who are vulnerable are prioritised for contact. A written risk assessment will be put in place to determine the type and frequency of safe and well checks that are needed and actions to be taken, including referrals to Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) and the police if required.

7.2.3. Therefore, if your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone, text or email you by 9.30am on the first day if we have not heard from you with a reason for your child's absence. We may need to speak to your child to ascertain that they are safe and well.
- Follow up with a text message to any parents/carers whom the school are unable to contact via telephone by 10.30am.
- If there are additional safeguarding or welfare concerns, the DSL and headteacher may visit the home on the same day if there is continued lack of contact, to carry out a safe and well check on the child.

7.2.4 We may contact the police and/or local authority staff to assist with safe and well checks, particularly if there are additional safeguarding or welfare concerns.

Following up

- Invite you in to school to discuss the situation
- Refer the matter to the LA if attendance moves below 90%.

7.3. Leave in Term Time

- 7.3.1. There is no entitlement in law for any leave of absence from school in term time.
- 7.3.2. Taking leave in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in term time.
- 7.3.3. We require parents to observe the term times of school. All applications for a leave of absence must be made in advance to the headteacher and will only be considered for

authorisation if there are exceptional circumstances.

- 7.3.4. If the school grants a leave request, we will determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. We do not have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.
- 7.3.5. In making a decision, the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.
- 7.3.6. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions, such as a penalty notice.
- 7.3.7. Each request for absence under an exceptional circumstance category will be considered individually.
- 7.3.8. When making the decision the following factors may be considered:
 - The amount of time requested
 - The age of the child
 - The child's general absence/attendance record
 - Proximity to internal or external test/examinations
 - Length of the proposed leave
 - Child's capacity to catch up any work missed
 - Child's educational needs
 - General welfare of the child
 - Circumstances of the request
 - Purpose of the leave
 - Frequency of the activity, and
 - When the request was made.

When leave of absence has been granted, the absence will be recorded as authorised, using the appropriate register symbol.

7.4. Appointments

- 7.4.1. As far as possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the school prior to the appointment.
- 7.4.2. Children must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible. If the appointment requires the child to leave during the day, they must follow the school's signing out procedure.
- 7.4.3. Should a child arrive late to the school, following an appointment, they should report to reception where the student will be marked into school with the appropriate mark.

7.5. Religious or cultural observance

- 7.5.1. Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance. The School will authorise absences where a reasonable request is made. Parents/carers should inform the school prior to any absence due to religious observance.

8. Children Missing Education (CME)

- Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities Sept 2016 [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561222/Children_Missing_Education_Statutory_Guidance_for_Local_Authorities_Sept_2016.pdf)

- 8.1. The Local Authority (LA) officers with responsibility for CME are IOW Council – Education and Inclusion service.
- 8.2. For the purpose of this policy, a CME is defined as a child or young person of compulsory school age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by an LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere.
- 8.3. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g., age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- 8.4. Children who go missing from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- 8.5. Children who are already known to children's social care, who are on a child in need or child protection plan or in the care of the local authority are additionally vulnerable and in need of robust protection.
- 8.6. Where a child has not returned to the School for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from the school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days the child can be removed from the admission register, **but only** if the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. Records of all checks must be kept on the child's file. Taking a child off roll must be seen as a last resort.
- 8.7. This only applies if the School does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the child is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable causes.
- 8.8. Before removing a child from the register the school will make reasonable enquiries, with the local authority, to ascertain the whereabouts of the child, being compliant with GDPR, which could include:
- Making contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours, using known contact details
 - Checking with agencies known to be involved with family
 - Checking with the local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known
 - Checking with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved
 - Checking with the local authority where the child lives, if different from the school's location
 - Making home visit(s), and, if appropriate, make enquiries with neighbours and relatives

- 8.9. All home visits will be risk assessed before being carried out.
- 8.10. The school will treat each case on its individual merits and use their judgement, ensuring they have taken into account all of the facts.
- 8.11. Safeguarding
- 8.11.1. For children at risk of harm or neglect:
- 8.11.2. The DSL will ensure the School response to identifying children missing from education supports identifying potential abuse or exploitation and also prevents them going missing in the future.
- 8.11.3. The school will follow local child protection procedures.
- 8.11.4. However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to children's social care Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the police as per the school's safeguarding procedures.
- 8.12. Missing children/runaways:
- 8.12.1. The local authority lead person responsible for children missing from home or care is Rachael Williams – IOW Education and Inclusion.
- 8.12.2. Should the school suspect a child has gone missing/run away, the DSL will ensure the school's child protection procedures are followed and the police and MASH are contacted.
- 8.13. Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System:
- 8.13.1. LA youth offending teams are responsible for supervising children (aged 8 to 18).
- 8.13.2. Where a child is registered at the school prior to custody, the school will keep the place open for their return.
- 8.14. Children of migrant families/unaccompanied minors:
- 8.14.1. There is an increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address or may have arrived in to an LA area without the authority becoming aware.
- 8.14.2. If the School becomes aware of such families, they will notify the LA immediately.
- 8.15. Children of service personnel:
- 8.15.1. If the School is concerned about the continuity of education for a child leaving the school, the school will contact the Ministry of Defence: Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) for advice.
- 8.15.2. The most effective way to contact the CEAS team is via email: DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk CEAS helpline: 01980 618244 or 94344 8244
- 8.16. Children of gypsy, Roma and traveller (GRT) families:

- 8.16.1. When a GRT child leaves the School without naming their next destination school, the school will contact the LA. If necessary, the school will consult the LA Traveller Education Support Services/named CME officer for advice on the best strategies to ensure minimal disruption to the child's education.

8.17. Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusions

- 8.17.1. All incidents where a child is sent home due to poor behaviour, will be coded on the register as an exclusion, even if pre-agreed with a parent, i.e., children being sent home during lunch times. If an exclusion is for part of the day (including lunch-time), it will be noted as a half day exclusion.

Safeguarding

- 8.17.2. Whilst a child is excluded from school, parents have a duty to ensure that their child is safe and well and appropriately supervised at home.
- 8.17.3. A child must not be present in a public place during School hours throughout the exclusion period, unless there is reasonable justification for this. Parents may be liable to prosecution and/or receive a penalty notice from the local authority if their child is present in a public place during school hours during the dates of the exclusion. It will be for the parent to show reasonable justification.
- 8.17.4. The headteacher will take account of the legal duty of care when sending a child home following an exclusion.
- 8.17.5. The school will continue to ensure regular safe and well checks are completed. This is particularly important for additionally vulnerable children.
- 8.17.6. Following a permanent exclusion, safe and well checks will be carried out until the result of any appeal is known.

9. Elective Home Education (EHE)

- 9.1. Elective home education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home instead of sending them to school full-time.
- 9.2. Whilst many home-educated children have a positive learning experience, this is not the case for all and can mean some children are less visible to services that are there to keep them safe and supported.
- 9.3. DfE guidance for local authorities sets out the role and responsibilities of LAs [Elective home education: departmental guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/departmental-guidance-for-local-authorities) Whilst this guidance is primarily aimed at LAs, attendance staff and those maintaining the school registers will make themselves familiar with it. The school will also follow the local authority policy.
- 9.4. The decision by parents as to how to educate their child, whether at a school or at home, should be an informed, active and positive one. It is important that parents obtain sufficient information when making that decision.
- 9.5. We advise any parent who wishes to educate their child at home to discuss their decision with

the school first. Please contact the headteacher or Family Liaison Officer in the first instance.

9.6. We will ensure we:

- Respond positively and constructively
- Take all necessary steps to resolve any issues in school that may be influencing parents' consideration of EHE
- Signpost the parent/carer to the local EHE Team, or the School Admissions team, who will provide further advice and guidance to help the parent to make an informed choice.

9.7. Decision to home educate

- 9.7.1. Parents must inform the school in writing that they intend to educate their child at home.
- 9.7.2. Once the letter of notification, written by the parent/carer, to home educate has been received, the school will immediately notify the local authority elective home education officer (EHEO) Louise Tatton and the child's name will be removed from the school register on receipt of the letter and the parents/carers will be notified.
- 9.7.3. The child's place at school will remain 'open' for 10 ten working days whilst the EHEO verifies with parents that they have made an informed choice about educating their child at home.
- 9.7.4. The parent and child will be offered the opportunity to discuss their decision with the headteacher.
- 9.7.5. We will never seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion or because the child has a poor attendance record. In the case of exclusion, we will follow the relevant legislation and have regard to the statutory guidance.
- 9.7.6. If a child has a poor attendance record, the school and, if appropriate, local authority will seek to address the issues behind the absenteeism and use the other remedies available to them.

Safeguarding

- 9.8. The School will complete a risk assessment for any vulnerable children for whom a parent elects to educate at home and will work closely with safeguarding partners if they feel that a child's welfare or safety is compromised.

10. Children with health needs who cannot attend school

- 10.1. Children with health needs are vulnerable.
- 10.2. The School will contact their Local Authority named officer for the education of children with additional health needs when it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative due to health needs.
- 10.3. To support children with health needs who cannot attend, the school will:

- Liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.
- Have a designated member of staff who will be responsible for the child and act as the main point of contact.
- Liaise with the LA to monitor that the child receives full time education which is of good quality, (as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2013)¹ which allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible (*full time is not defined in law but should equate to what the child would normally have in school - unless it would not be in the child's best interests*).
- Liaise with any alternative provision to ensure the child is safeguarded and carry out due diligence checks.
- Ensure the child has a comprehensive health care (or similar) plan, which addresses medical, educational, social, emotional and mental health needs, has been contributed to by the child and parents/carers.
- Record discussions, decisions taken and rationale.

10.4. Ensure that cases are regularly reviewed and escalated if necessary with clear review arrangements and timescales. Children with vulnerabilities including children with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and children who have or have had a social worker.

¹ DfE Statutory Guidance: Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs January 2013 [Additional health needs guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269812/Additional_health_needs_guidance.pdf)

10.5. The school will ensure that children with additional vulnerabilities are accurately identified and have a named lead professional responsible for coordinating their holistic needs. This will include monitoring their attendance,

11. Alternative Provision

- 11.1. All professionals have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The tracking and reporting of attendance at alternative provision is an essential component in achieving this. Children at alternative provision are additionally vulnerable and will be closely monitored.
- 11.2. The senior leader with responsibility for alternative provision is Mrs Rebecca Lennon.
- 11.3. The arrangements for monitoring of attendance, contacting of parents and carrying out safe and well checks will form part of a written individual plan, agreed with the child, parents/carers and alternative provider before the child begins their placement.
- 11.4. Attendance at off-site alternative provision will be monitored daily by the School FLO who will ensure that swift action is taken when a child does not attend their alternative provision place.

- 11.5. The School will make regular visits to the alternative provision to meet the child, their link tutor and to check on their wellbeing and academic progress.
- 11.6. Alternative providers are required to contact the school on the first day by 10.30am whenever the child is absent.
- 11.7. The senior leader with responsibility for alternative provision will ensure arrangements are in place to formally monitor, report on attendance at alternative provision to SLT on a weekly basis, liaising with the DSL, SENCo, LAC coordinator or other key colleagues as necessary.
- 11.8. Children whose attendance falls below 90% will have a plan put in place to support better attendance.
- 11.9. There is an expectation that any safeguarding concerns are raised with the DSL and that all alternative providers adhere to the child protection and safeguarding policies held by the school.
- 11.10. Part-time timetables/provision
- 11.11. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all children.
- 11.12. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a child's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a child from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.
- 11.13. A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution. Any individual support programme or other agreement will have a time limit by which point the child is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.
- 11.14. There will be an identified lead person with responsibility for monitoring the part-time timetable
- 11.15. Therefore, part-time timetables will last no longer than 6 weeks and formal written reviews will take place at least fortnightly and will include the child, parents/carers and other professionals as appropriate.
- 11.16. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, school has agreed to a child being absent from the school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

Safeguarding

- 11.17. The school will ensure that the DSL has been consulted, LA informed, a risk assessment carried out and suitably robust arrangements are in place to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of any child on a part-time timetable.

12. Support and Intervention

- 12.1. The School recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the year. We recognise that certain groups of children may be more at

risk of poor attendance and will provide support and assistance wherever possible.

- 12.2. When a child is absent, the school may consider sending out information (exemplar in appendix 1) outlining the support that is available to parents to ensure good attendance.
- 12.3. If a child's absence then drops below 95% a concerns letter (exemplar in appendix 2) will be sent to the parents/carers where they will be advised their child's attendance will be monitored.
- 12.4. If still no improvement is seen, parents will receive an unauthorised absence letter (exemplar in appendix 3) informing them of the decision to mark any further absences as unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided.
- 12.5. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the school FLO. It may become necessary for the FLO to become involved in a supportive capacity to promote improved attendance.
- 12.6. If a student's absence drops below 90%, the local authority Education and Inclusion service will be informed. Once referred to the E&I, they will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the E&I service has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

School Targets and Initiatives

- 12.7. The school has targets to improve attendance and everyone has an important part to play in meeting these targets.
- 12.8. We have set a whole school attendance target of 96.5% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.
- 12.9. Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.
- 12.10. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided to parents/carers.
- 12.11. School leaders and governors ensure that attendance data, particularly for identified vulnerable groups, is closely and regularly monitored identifying trends or patterns and assessing the impact of actions taken.

13. Attendance Codes

The School will use the attendance codes as published by the Department for Education [School attendance guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk) and will ensure any subsequent guidance is followed.

Appendix 1

EXEMPLAR First absence warning letter template

Appendix 1

«salutation»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing

»Dear

«salutation»,

I am writing with reference to «chosen_forename»'s recent absence(s) from school and to take this opportunity to give you some information regarding the provision we are able to make for children, should «chosen_forename» feel unable to attend in the future:

If a child is feeling a little unwell in the morning, they may well improve during the day and, therefore, it is usually better to send them to school and we can provide a quiet working area until they feel able to re-join their class.

We have first aiders at Brighstone Primary School that can assess the condition and, with your authorisation, administer medication should «chosen_forename» feel unwell after arriving at the school.

We also offer bespoke pastoral support and/or referrals to services for any children who have been absent due to bereavement or other personal circumstances.

We are always willing to support children and therefore should «chosen_forename» have any problems or issues that may prevent «him_her» from wanting to attend, please contact the class teacher or FLO immediately so that these problems or issues can be resolved.

We have a supportive network of staff Brighstone Primary School and I am sure you will agree that whatever problem «chosen_forename» may encounter, there is support available to «him_her», to ensure regular attendance to the school.

With kind regards,

Appendix 2

EXEMPLAR Low attendance concerns letter template

«salutation»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

«forename» «surname»

Dear «salutation»

I am writing to advise that «forename»'s attendance is currently «percentage_attendance»%, which is a concern to us at Brighstone Primary School as this has a great impact on «forename»'s learning.

All children should reach a minimum of 96.5% attendance and I look forward to receiving your co-operation in this matter. The school will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance closely and look forward to seeing an improvement.

If there are any issues that we are unaware of that are impacting on «chosen_forename»'s ability to attend school regularly, please contact me on 01983 740285 to discuss the matter further and to explore any further support that the school can offer.

Please could you contact the School FLO to arrange a meeting to look at what support we can put in place to resolve any issues or concerns.

Yours sincerely,

EXEMPLAR Unauthorised absence letter template

«salutation»

«address_block»

Student - «forename» «surname» - «reg»

Dear «salutation»

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s attendance is currently «percentage attendance»%. We place great importance on attendance at Brighstone Primary School and the link between attainment and attendance and as such we expect all of our children to reach an attendance percentage of at least 96.5%.

I have no alternative at this time but to inform you that because of «forename»'s persistent absence, any absence «he_she» may now have will be recorded as unauthorised and a doctor's note/medical certificate will be required to explain «his_her» absence.

I have to inform you that «forename»'s attendance is now a cause for concern and this will be reported to LA – Education and Inclusion Service, which could lead to further action being taken, which in more serious cases can mean court action.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 makes it parents/carers responsibility to ensure their child's attendance at the school that they are on roll. Failure to do so may result in legal action being taken.

I am sure you will agree that in order for «forename» to receive the best education available to «him_her», «he_she» needs to be attending the school regularly.

I am inviting you to meet with me at school to discuss how we can help and support you and «chosen_forename»'s attendance. An appointment has been made for you on: Date & Time

If you are unable to attend, please contact the main School reception to arrange a more convenient date and time. Please report to reception on arrival.

I look forward to meeting with you.

With kind regards,

Learning from serious case reviews

[CHSCB-Local-Review-Chadrack-Report-FINAL.pdf \(chscp.org.uk\)](#)