

Title	Attendance and Lateness
Associated Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and Discipline (TPO/STU/03) • Safeguarding and Child Protection (TPO/HS/05)

REVIEWED: September 2022

NEXT REVIEW: September 2023

1. Policy Statement

1.1 The Brooke Weston Trust is committed to transforming educational achievement and to giving students the best start in life academically and as citizens. Brooke Weston Trust believes regular attendance and punctuality is vital to successful learning.

1.2 To achieve this, Brooke Weston Trust commits to:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons

2. Who does this policy apply to?

2.1 This policy applies to parents/carers, students and staff at each of the Trust's academies.

3. Who is responsible for implementing and reviewing this policy?

3.1 The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the governors of each academy and remain under review by the Brooke Weston Trust Executive Leadership Team and the Safeguarding Review Group.

3.2 **The governing body** is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of attendance across each academy's policies and ethos
- Ensuring academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data, during governing body meetings or through link visits
- Monitoring attendance figures for the academy
- Ensuring staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the senior leadership team to account for the implementation of this policy

3.3 **The Principal** for each academy is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the academy
- Monitoring academy-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.4 **A designated senior member of staff responsible for attendance** within each academy will:

- Lead attendance across the academy
- Offer a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes
- Have an oversight of data analysis
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Arranging calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families, in collaboration with education welfare/student support personnel

Further information about each academy's attendance lead can be found on the respective academy website.

3.5 The attendance officer, or equivalent role within each of the academies is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to academy staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Principal
- Working with education welfare/student support personnel to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

3.6 Class teachers and form tutors within each academy are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the attendance team within the required timescale for each academy
- Promoting the importance of strong attendance and impact on students' education.

3.7 Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day and on time
- Call the academy to report their child's absence as specified by each academy on their website, on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the academy with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.8 Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time and be punctual for attending lessons within the school day.

3.9 Each academy will ensure that records of absences are kept up to date and ensure liaison with parents/carers where absences remain unauthorised.

3.10 Parents/carers are responsible for informing their child's academy on a day to day basis of the absence of their child.

4. What are the principles behind this policy?

4.1 This policy is operated in accordance with Working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

4.2 These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 6 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

4.3 Students are expected to attend regularly when their Academy is in session and be punctual at all times. Parents/carers are encouraged to commit their children to regular attendance and to the ethos of their child's Academy through signing the Home School Agreement (see BWT website).

- 4.4 Parents have a legal responsibility to secure the regular attendance of their compulsory school aged child/children at the Academy. Failure to ensure a regular level of attendance is an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996 and may lead to legal action.
- 4.5 Each academy will have due regard to the Keeping Children Safe in Education document with regards to children missing from education. The Academy will refer to the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection policy where there are particular concerns about a child's attendance.

5. Procedures

Admissions and Attendance Registers

5.1 Registration

Each academy is required to keep an admissions and attendance register. Each academy will take an attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. This will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

5.2 Any amendment made to the admissions and/or attendance register must include:

- the original entry
- the amended entry
- the reason for the amendment
- the date on which the amendment was made
- the name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

5.3 Each academy will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

5.4 Details of when the register will be taken is included in each academy's website. The first register will be taken no longer than 30 minutes after the school day begins.

5.5 Admissions Register

- The admissions register must contain the personal details of every student in the Academy, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the Academy, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended
- A student can lawfully be deleted from the admissions register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Every entry in the admission attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made

Unplanned Absence

5.6 Parents/carers must notify the academy on the first day of an unplanned absence for their child – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – the timescale by which they need to inform the academy is detailed on each academy's website.

5.7 Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

- 5.8 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the academy may ask parents/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription or appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The academy will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- 5.9 If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned Absence

- 5.10 Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school on advance of the appointment. Parents/carers should contact the school reception in the first instance regarding any requests for leave of absence.
- 5.11 Parents/carers should however try and make appointments out of academy hours. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Lateness and punctuality

- 5.12 A student who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Following up unexplained absence

- 5.13 On the first day of absence, each academy will:
- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence and each day thereafter, if applicable, to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may take further measures, such as notifying the Police or other external agencies.
 - ensure proper safeguarding action is taken if necessary,
 - identify whether the absence is approved or not; and
 - identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the Academy's electronic register or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.
- 5.14 Where concerns persist about the level of attendance or lateness, individual meetings will be held with the student and parents/carers to determine strategies to secure improvement in attendance.
- 5.15 The Brooke Weston Trust takes cases of persistent absence very seriously. Persistent absence is defined as missing 10 per cent of sessions (equivalent to 28 sessions) a year. In such cases, each academy will undertake relevant academy-level procedures to promote and support regular attendance.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

- 5.16 Each academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal's discretion for exceptional circumstances. In general terms, the Trust will not sanction holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relevant to the application. This is stated in the Home-School Agreement. Unauthorised term time leave may result in issuing of a Penalty Notice (see paragraph 5.20).
- 5.17 Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. Please refer to the relevant academy's website to complete the leave of absence request form. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.
- 5.18 Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:
- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 5.5-5.7.

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student’s parents/carers belong. If necessary, the Academy will seek advice from the parents’/carers’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the Academy but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.

Legal Sanctions

- 5.19** The Brooke Weston Trust takes cases of persistent absence very seriously. Persistent absence is defined as missing 10 per cent of sessions (equivalent to 28 sessions) a year.
- 5.20** Academies can fine parents/carers for unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. This is known as a Penalty Notice. If issued with a penalty notice, parents/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
- 5.21** Penalty notices can be issued by a Principal, local authority officer or the Police.
- 5.22** The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Principal, following the local authority’s code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:
- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
 - One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
 - Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.
- 5.23** If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent/carer or withdraw the notice.
- 5.24 Attendance monitoring**
- 5.25** Each academy will monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts who require support with their attendance. This will be based on contextual factors of these individuals and of the demographic the school is based within.
- 5.26 Monitoring attendance:**
The academy will:
- Monitor attendance and absence data on a half-termly, termly and yearly basis across the academy and at an individual pupil level
 - Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- 5.27** The academy will compare attendance data to the national average, as published at national and local authority level through the DfE’s school absence national statistics release.
- 5.28 Analysing attendance:**
The academy will:
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
 - Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- 5.29** Using data to improve attendance:
The academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils or families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

5.30 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

5.31 The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

5.32 Strategies for promoting attendance

Each academy will have a strategy in place for rewarding and improving attendance. Details of this will be found on each academy's website.

6. Policy Review

- 6.1 This policy will be monitored as part of the Trust's annual internal review and reviewed on a three year cycle or as required by legislature changes.

Document Control

Date of last review:	September 2022	Author:	Head of Governance
Date of next review:	September 2025	Version:	4
Approved by:	Strategic Delivery Group	Status:	

Summary of Main Changes

- Expanded section on responsibility for supporting attendance and implementation of this policy (**section 3**)
- Included reference to legislation and guidance which forms the basis of this policy (**section 4**)
- Separate sections added on planned and unplanned absence (**paragraph 5.6-5.11**)
- Additional statement included in process for following up first day of absence (**paragraph 5.13**)
- Clarified request for absence should be submitted 2 weeks before the date of absence
- Additional section on attendance monitoring by the academy and strategies to promote attendance (**section 5**)

APPENDIX 1 – Attendance Codes

In addition to being marked present (/=AM, \=PM) or being marked as late but registered before the register closed (marked L), there are other codes which may be used:

Code B: Off-site educational activity:

Students that are present at an off-site, supervised educational activity, approved by the Academy. If the provider of the alternative activity notifies the Academy of any absences by individual students the Academy should record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered – at another educational establishment

A student is scheduled to attend another school at which they are registered.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

A student is spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

A student is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the Academy and supervised by someone authorised by the Academy.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

A student is on an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the Academy, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the Academy.

Code W: Work experience

A student will be expected to attend the work experience regularly and any absences will be reported to the Academy and the appropriate absence code used.

Absence Codes

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant leave of absence. The Academy may consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent/carer gave advance notice; and the student's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a student to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: holiday authorised by the Academy

The Principal may in exceptional circumstances exercise their discretion to agree to a leave of absence during a school year. The application must be made in advance and the Principal must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the leave. It is for the Principal to determine the duration of the leave of absence.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Code R: Religious observance

The Academy will treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong. Where necessary, the Academy will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Study leave should be used sparingly and only for year 11 students during mock and public examinations.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

Unauthorised Absence Codes

If the Academy does not authorise a leave of absence or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents/carers did not apply for the leave of absence in advance the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the Principal or absence is in excess of the agreed period

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

The Academy will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. When the reason for the student's absence has been established the register should be amended.

Code O: Absent from the Academy without Authorisation

If the Academy is not satisfied with the reason given for absence it will record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived at the Academy after registration closed

Administrative Codes

Code X: Not required to be at the Academy

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a student is unable to attend because:

- The Academy site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the Academy is not available and where the student's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the student from attending the Academy.

Code Z: Student not on admission register

This code is available to enable the Academy to set up registers in advance of a student joining the Academy. The Academy will put a student on the admission register from the first day that the Academy has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend the Academy.

Code #: Planned school closure

Whole or partial school closure due to half-term, bank holiday or INSET day