

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

STATEMENT OF PRACTICE

Version Control

Current version	Previous version	Summary of changes made
Nov 25	Dec 23	Policy reviewed, amended and updated in line with current procedures.
Dec 23	Nov 21	Policy amended and Global Policing information added
Nov 21	Oct 19	Policy reviewed and checked in consultation with Julie Cheung (Headteacher).
08 Oct 19	02 Nov 17	Policy checked no changes made
02 Nov 17	Nov 16	Policy amended to new format.
Nov 2016		Policy reviewed and checked through by Attendance Officer. Changes made to requests for holidays are no longer authorised. 'Late' signing-in book removed and electronic signing in system details inserted. Adopted Nov 16.

Review Date:	Committee:	Ratified:
08/07/2022	CIC	04/07/2022
09/11/2022	CIC	05/12/2022
07/06/2023	CIC	03/07/2023
06/03/2024	CIC	25/03/2024
26/11/2025	CIC	15/12/2025

RATIONAL

At Brownlow Fold School, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils benefit fully from the educational opportunities available to them. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to pupils' learning, wellbeing, and long-term outcomes. Poor attendance and persistent lateness can have a significant negative impact on pupils' learning, progress, and access to the full curriculum.

In line with statutory guidance, we recognise that promoting good attendance and punctuality requires strong relationships with families, early identification of barriers, and a supportive, inclusive approach. We also believe that fostering positive attitudes towards school and attendance is key to success. We strive to make school a happy, welcoming, and rewarding experience for all pupils, where attendance is valued, pupils feel safe and included, and families are supported to overcome any challenges that may affect attendance or punctuality.

AIMS

At Brownlow Fold School we aim to:

- Secure the full-time attendance of every pupil in order that every child is given the best possible opportunity to achieve their full potential
- Identify absence at the earliest stage and intervene promptly
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to remove barriers to attendance
- Promote a whole-school culture that recognises the importance of good attendance
- Use attendance data effectively to inform early intervention and targeted support
- Comply fully with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education on school attendance

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is informed by, and fully compliant with, the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024).

Parents and carers have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable education through regular school attendance.

Schools have a legal responsibility to monitor attendance regularly, identify pupils who may be at risk of persistent or irregular attendance, put appropriate and timely support in place, and work collaboratively with the local authority and other relevant agencies where concerns continue.

There is no fixed attendance percentage threshold for intervention or referral. Decisions are based on attendance patterns, emerging concerns, and whether barriers to attendance have been effectively identified and addressed. Where a child of compulsory school age is continuously absent without explanation or demonstrates irregular attendance due to unauthorised absence, the school has a legal duty to make a referral to the local authority in line with statutory guidance.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Improving and maintaining high standards of attendance at Brownlow Fold School is a shared responsibility between pupils, parents and carers, school staff, governors, and the local authority. Strong, consistent partnership working is essential to securing the best possible attendance outcomes for all pupils

The Local Authority will:

- Support the school in improving attendance outcomes and reducing persistent absence
- Provide advice, guidance, and targeted intervention where attendance causes concern
- Administer penalty notices in line with the national penalty notice framework
- Work collaboratively with the school and other agencies to support pupils and families

Pupils:

At Brownlow Fold School, all pupils are expected to attend school **regularly** and **on time**. Good attendance helps pupils learn well, build friendships, and engage fully in school life.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day and arrive punctually
- Be ready to learn and take a positive part in school life
- Report to the main office if they arrive late
- Remain on the school premises during the school day unless permission has been given
- Accept support and guidance if attendance becomes difficult

If a pupil experiences attendance difficulties, they will be supported sensitively and appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult about any worries or barriers to attending school. Where needed, parents and carers will be contacted so that school and home can work together to find solutions.

We recognise and celebrate good and improved attendance and punctuality, and our approach always focuses on removing barriers, supporting wellbeing, and helping every pupil to feel positive about coming to school.

Parents and carers:

They are expected to:

- Work in partnership with the school, putting the best interests of the child first
- Take an active interest in their child's school life
- Ensure their child attends school every day and arrives on time
- Notify the school of any absence on the first day, and maintain contact if the absence continues
- For periods of continuous illness, contact the school each day to confirm the child's absence
- Inform the school in advance of any request for leave of absence using the appropriate school form
- Provide evidence for medical or dental appointments where requested
- Arrange extended leave during school holiday periods wherever possible
- Attend meetings and respond promptly to communication from the school regarding attendance

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually
- Informing the school of the reason for any absence on the first day and maintaining contact throughout the absence
- Working positively with the school to address attendance concerns and support improvement
- Ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually

- Informing the school of the reason for any absence on the first day and maintaining contact throughout the absence
- Working in partnership with the school to address attendance concerns and support improvement.

The School will:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality through positive relationships, high expectations, and a supportive school culture
- Monitor attendance daily and analyse patterns over time to identify emerging concerns early
- Communicate promptly and clearly with families where attendance issues arise
- Provide early help and targeted support to remove barriers to attendance
- Record all attendance-related interventions accurately
- Refer to the local authority and other external services where necessary, in line with statutory guidance

Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff, and consistent approaches will be used across the school to support and improve attendance for all pupils.

REGISTRATION (INCLUDING PUNCTUALITY)

Accurate and timely registration is essential to safeguarding pupils, monitoring attendance, and promoting punctuality.

- Morning registration takes place at 8:50am and afternoon registration at 1:15pm
- Registers close at 9:15am and 1:25pm
- Pupils arriving after registers have closed must report to the main office and will be recorded as late and parents will be given a late card upon arrival
- Parents will be expected to sign children into school when arriving late and provide the office with a reason to explain

Attendance registers are completed in line with Department for Education regulations and are monitored daily by the school's administration team. Attendance data is reviewed to identify pupils who may be causing concern or who show emerging patterns of absence or lateness.

Staff responsible for completing registers are expected to remain alert to unusual or concerning attendance patterns and to report these promptly to the administration team. Where concerns are identified, these are escalated to the attendance lead and, where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead or headteacher, in line with safeguarding procedures.

Concerns are followed up by the school's attendance lead, and where necessary, further action is taken in collaboration with the local authority or other relevant services, in accordance with statutory guidance.

AUTHORISED / UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Pupils are expected to attend school for 190 days per academic year, unless there is a valid reason for absence.

Absence is classified as:

- Authorised absence: approved by the school in line with statutory guidance
- Unauthorised absence: not approved by the school

Decisions regarding authorisation are made consistently and in line with the most recent Department for Education guidance.

Brownlow Fold School records attendance and absence in line with the latest Department for Education guidance and statutory attendance regulations. Decisions about whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised are made consistently, fairly, and in the best interests of the pupil, taking account of the individual circumstances of each case.

AUTHORISE ABSENCE

Absence may be authorised where the school is satisfied that there is a genuine and unavoidable reason for the pupil not attending school. This may include:

- Illness or where a pupil is prevented from attending due to unavoidable circumstances
- Leave of absence granted by the headteacher in exceptional circumstances
- Absence for religious observance recognised by the religious body to which the pupil's parent or carer belongs
- Family bereavement or other significant family circumstances
- Attendance at an interview or examination for admission to another school or educational provision
- Circumstances where the local authority has not made suitable transport arrangements for a pupil entitled to free school transport

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Absence will be recorded as unauthorised where the school is not satisfied that the reason for absence is acceptable or where required procedures have not been followed. This includes:

- Family holidays or leave of absence taken during term time without the school's permission
- Absence where no explanation is provided, or where the explanation is considered unsatisfactory
- Pupils kept at home to care for siblings or to undertake domestic responsibilities, except in exceptional circumstances
- Absence for shopping or leisure activities during school hours
- Absence for special occasions that are not considered exceptional, such as birthdays

N.B: Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours wherever possible

Lateness is recorded differently depending on when a pupil arrives and the reason for the lateness.

LATENESS BEFORE THE REGISTER CLOSES

If a pupil arrives after the register opens but before it closes:

- The pupil is marked late
- The session is still counted as present
- This is recorded using the late code (L)
- Parents are expected to sign pupils in on the inventory system in office entrance.

This is not an absence, but repeated lateness must still be monitored and followed up, as it can indicate wider attendance concerns.

LATENESS AFTER THE REGISTER HAS CLOSED:

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed:

- The pupil is recorded as absent for that session
- This is recorded as unauthorised absence using the unauthorised late code (U)
- Parents are expected to sign pupils in on the inventory system in office entrance.

This is because the pupil has missed the majority of the session.

Unauthorised absence may result in further intervention, including referral to the local authority, in line with statutory guidance

HOW TO REPORT ABSENCE

Reporting a child's absence promptly and accurately is essential. Parents and carers have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child receives a full-time education through regular school attendance.

When a child is absent, the school must be informed of the reason for absence so that it can be recorded correctly as either:

- **Authorised absence**, where the reason is accepted (for example, genuine illness), or
- **Unauthorised absence**, where the reason is not accepted (for example, an unapproved holiday).

Unauthorised absence may result in further intervention in line with statutory guidance, including early support, involvement of the local authority, and, where appropriate, enforcement action.

If a pupil is absent and no explanation is provided, the school has a safeguarding duty to investigate the child's whereabouts. This is to ensure the child is safe and not at risk of harm, neglect, or exploitation. Where necessary, the school may take further action in line with safeguarding procedures.

Regular attendance is vital for a child's learning, wellbeing, and social development. Missing school can result in gaps in learning and difficulties with progress and engagement.

REPORTING ABSENCE AT BROWNLOW FOLD:

Parents and carers must inform the school **on the first day of absence** by one of the following methods:

- **Telephone:** 01204 333 511
 - Press **option 1** to report a pupil absence
 - Press **option 2** to speak to the school office
- **Email:** office@brownlow-fold.bolton.sch.uk

Parents and carers are expected to continue to contact the school **daily** during any period of continued absence, unless otherwise agreed.

PROCEDURES FOR FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE

- Parents and carers are expected to inform the school on the first day of absence and to maintain contact if the absence continues, providing a reason for the absence.

- Attendance registers are completed in line with Department for Education regulations and are monitored daily by the school's administration team to identify pupils who may be causing concern or who show emerging patterns of absence or lateness.
- First-day contact is made by the school where a pupil is absent and no reason has been provided, to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing.
- All communication regarding absence or lateness, including telephone messages, is accurately recorded in line with attendance recording requirements.
- Where a pupil shows patterns of absence or lateness, the school will offer early support, which may include discussion with parents and carers, meetings, and agreed action plans to remove barriers to attendance.
- An Early Help Assessment may be considered where attendance concerns indicate wider needs, to ensure the child and family receive appropriate support from the school and, where necessary, other agencies.
- If attendance does not improve despite appropriate and timely support, the case may be escalated to the school's attendance lead and referred to the local authority or relevant services, in line with statutory guidance.
- A penalty notice may be requested from the local authority only where appropriate support has been offered and attendance has not improved, or where the absence relates to an unauthorised holiday. In line with the national framework, a minimum of 10 sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence must be reached before a penalty notice can be considered.
- Any formal notices issued by the school or local authority will be completed in accordance with local authority procedures and national guidance.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

There is no automatic right for parents or carers to take children out of school during term time.

In line with statutory guidance, leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and the decision rests with the headteacher. Parents and carers must submit a leave of absence request in advance, using the school's request form, before any holiday is booked.

When considering a request, the headteacher will take account of the individual circumstances of the case, which may include:

- The pupil's attendance history
- The age of the pupil and their stage of education
- The timing of the request, including whether it coincides with assessments or examinations
- The nature and purpose of the request, including whether the circumstances are exceptional
- Any relevant family or compassionate circumstances

If leave of absence is not granted and the holiday is taken, or if the pupil remains absent for longer than agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Unauthorised holidays may result in the school requesting a penalty notice from the local authority, in line with the national penalty notice framework. A penalty notice may be issued where the legal threshold for unauthorised absence has been met.

The school will always aim to work with families and communicate decisions clearly, while ensuring that pupils' education, wellbeing, and continuity of learning remain the priority.

PENALTY NOTICES

Penalty notices are issued in line with the national penalty notice framework.

- A minimum of 10 sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence must occur before a penalty notice can be considered
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent 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 in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution.

Penalty notices are not a first response and will only be considered once appropriate support and intervention have been offered, unless the absence relates to an unauthorised holiday.

SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE PUPILS

Additional support will be provided for pupils who are vulnerable, including those with:

- Special educational needs or disabilities
- Mental or physical health needs
- Social, emotional, or family-related difficulties

Where appropriate, the school will work with health professionals, the school nurse, and multi-agency partners, with parental consent.

Pupils unable to attend school due to medical needs may be referred to the Multi-Agency Medical Panel for additional support

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

In line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance, Brownlow Fold School promotes good attendance through a whole-school culture that values attendance, prioritises early support, and builds strong relationships with pupils and families.

The school recognises that attendance improves most effectively when pupils feel welcomed, supported, and engaged in their learning, and when families are confident that the school will work with them to overcome any barriers to attendance.

Brownlow Fold School promotes good attendance through:

- A welcoming, inclusive school environment where pupils feel safe, valued, and know that their presence in school matters. Pupils are made aware that they will be missed if absent or late and that appropriate follow-up will take place.
- Positive and trusting relationships with pupils and families, built through regular, open, and supportive communication.

- A broad, balanced, and flexible curriculum that meets pupils' needs and supports engagement, ensuring learning is meaningful and accessible for all pupils.
- Regular communication with parents and carers through newsletters, meetings, assemblies, and events to reinforce the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Regular collection and analysis of attendance data to identify patterns, emerging concerns, and pupils who may require early support. Attendance data is used to inform practice, guide intervention, and support continuous improvement.
- Early intervention and targeted support for pupils experiencing attendance difficulties, including reintegration support following periods of illness and the provision of work where appropriate.
- Recognition and celebration of good and improved attendance, used carefully and inclusively to motivate pupils and encourage engagement, while ensuring that incentives do not disadvantage pupils with additional needs or circumstances beyond their control.
- Staff training and leadership oversight, ensuring attendance is understood as a shared responsibility and that approaches are consistent across the school.
- Regular oversight by senior leaders, including review meetings to identify and support pupils causing concern, and reporting on attendance to the governing body to ensure accountability and strategic improvement.

The school is committed to promoting attendance through support, consistency, and collaboration, recognising that strong attendance underpins pupils' learning, wellbeing, and long-term success

ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES AND RECOGNITION

In line with statutory guidance, Brownlow Fold School uses attendance incentives and recognition carefully to promote positive attitudes towards attendance and punctuality. Incentives are used to encourage engagement and improvement and are not a substitute for early support or intervention where attendance difficulties arise.

Attendance incentives are designed to be:

- Inclusive and accessible to all pupils
- Focused on improvement as well as high attendance
- Supportive rather than punitive
- Low cost and proportionate, ensuring sustainability

TYPES OF ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

The school may use a range of incentives to promote good attendance and punctuality, including:

- Class-based recognition, such as additional playtime or choice activities, for classes demonstrating strong or improved attendance
- Individual recognition, including certificates or praise, to acknowledge improved attendance or punctuality
- Positive communication with parents and carers, such as phone calls or messages, to celebrate improvement
- Punctuality recognition, to encourage pupils to arrive at school on time
- Whole-school or class displays that promote the message that every day in school matters

Where used, incentives will:

- Recognise effort and progress, not solely perfect attendance
- Avoid disadvantaging pupils with medical needs or other barriers to attendance
- Be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain fair, effective, and appropriate

The school's approach to attendance incentives supports a wider culture of high expectations, belonging, and collaboration with families, ensuring that attendance improvement is driven by early identification, targeted support, and positive relationships.

STAGED APPROACH TO TACKLING POOR ATTENDANCE

Brownlow Fold School adopts a graduated, supportive approach to improving attendance, in line with statutory guidance. The focus at every stage is on **early identification, understanding barriers, and working in partnership with families**. Progression through stages is flexible and based on **patterns of attendance, emerging concerns, and individual circumstances**, rather than fixed attendance percentages.

STAGE 1: UNIVERSAL SUPPORT (WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH)

This stage applies to all pupils and focuses on promoting positive attendance habits.

At this stage, the school will:

- Promote a welcoming, inclusive school culture where attendance is valued
- Communicate clear attendance expectations to pupils and families
- Monitor attendance and punctuality daily
- Use attendance data to identify early patterns of concern
- Celebrate good and improved attendance through inclusive recognition

Example indicators at Stage 1 may include:

- Occasional absence due to illness
- Isolated late arrivals
- No ongoing pattern of concern
- Good engagement from pupils and families

Most pupils' attendance concerns are resolved at this stage through strong relationships and clear communication.

STAGE 2: EARLY INTERVENTION AND TARGET SUPPORT

This stage is used when a pupil shows emerging patterns of absence or lateness.

At this stage, the school will:

- Contact parents and carers to discuss attendance concerns
- Meet with families to understand barriers to attendance
- Agree short-term, achievable actions to improve attendance
- Provide practical support, guidance, or signposting where appropriate
- Monitor progress closely and maintain regular communication

Example triggers for Stage 2 may include:

- A noticeable pattern of repeated absence or lateness over time
- Regular late arrival affecting learning
- Increasing illness-related absence without clear improvement
- Parent or pupil concerns about anxiety, wellbeing, or routines
- Early signs that attendance may be declining

Intervention at this stage aims to prevent attendance concerns from becoming persistent.

STAGE 3: INTENSIVE SUPPORT AND MULTI-AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

This stage is used where attendance does not improve despite earlier support, or where concerns are more significant.

At this stage, the school may:

- Escalate concerns to the school's attendance lead and senior leadership
- Develop a more formal attendance action plan
- Consider an Early Help Assessment to coordinate wider support
- Work with the local authority and other relevant agencies
- Refer to specialist services where appropriate

Example triggers for Stage 3 may include:

- Continued absence or lateness despite agreed support
- Complex or multiple barriers to attendance
- Poor engagement with earlier interventions
- Concerns about safeguarding, wellbeing, or unmet needs
- Medical, mental health, or family circumstances significantly affecting attendance

Where necessary and in line with statutory guidance, enforcement action may be considered, including referral to the local authority or requesting a penalty notice. Enforcement is not a first response and only follows sustained support.

SAFEGUARDING AND VULNERABLE PUPILS

At all stages:

- Attendance concerns are considered within a safeguarding context
- Pupils with additional needs, medical conditions, or vulnerabilities receive appropriate and proportionate support
- Decisions are made based on individual circumstances and recorded accurately

REVIEW AND MONITORING

Movement between stages is informed by:

- Attendance patterns over time
- Engagement with agreed support
- The effectiveness of interventions
- Reviewed by senior leaders and governors

The school remains committed to working flexibly and collaboratively with families and partners to ensure every pupil is supported to attend school regularly. Attendance data and the impact of interventions are reviewed regularly by senior leaders and governors to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

Our Staged Approach to Improving Attendance

Stage 1 UNIVERSAL SUPPORT

All Pupils

What we do

- Daily monitoring
- Clear expectations
- Inclusive environment
- Communication
- Celebrate attendance



Illness



Late



No pattern



Engaged

Attendance Concern Identified? —

No
Continue Support ✓

Yes
Move to Stage 2 🏠

Stage 2 EARLY INTERVENTION

Targeted Support

What we do

- Contact Parents
- Meet & discuss
- Set Actions
- Provide Guidance
- Review Progress



Contact
Parents



Meet &
discuss



Set
Actions



Provide
Guidance



Review
Progress

Yes
Maintain & Review ✓

No
Move to Stage 3 🏠

Stage 3 INTENSIVE SUPPORT

Multi-Agency Help

- Attendance Plan
- Outside Agencies
- Specialist Support
- Escalate Concerns



If Needed

Yes
Step Down Support ✓

No
Consider Intervention ⚖️

Safeguarding at All Stages



Safety First



Support for Pupils



Individual Focus

ATTENDANCE CODES

Brownlow Fold School uses attendance and absence codes in line with Department for Education regulations. Accurate use of these codes supports safeguarding, ensures consistent data reporting, and enables early identification of attendance concerns.

Code	Meaning (School Use)	Statistical Meaning	Notes
/	Present (morning)	Present	Attended whole session
\	Present (afternoon)	Present	Attended whole session
B	Educated off site (not dual registration)	Approved educational activity	Includes alternative provision
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence	Used sparingly and with clear evidence
D	Dual registration (attending another establishment)	Approved educational activity	
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	
F	Do not use	—	This code is no longer used
G	Family holiday not agreed or days in excess	Unauthorised absence	May contribute to penalty notice consideration
H	Family holiday agreed (exceptional circumstances)	Authorised absence	Only where leave is formally approved
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence	Evidence may be requested
J	Interview	Approved educational activity	
L	Late before register closes	Present	Monitored for patterns of concern
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence	Appointments should be outside school hours where possible
N	No reason yet provided	Unauthorised absence	Temporary code, must be followed up
O	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Not covered by another code
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity	
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	Usually for public examinations
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence	
U	Late after register closes	Unauthorised absence	Counts as a session of unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity	
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity	
X	School closed to pupils	Attendance not required	

Code	Meaning (School Use)	Statistical Meaning	Notes
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	
Z	Do not use	—	Obsolete code
#	School closed to pupils and staff	Attendance not required	
!	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	
*	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	
-	No mark recorded	No mark	Must be avoided and corrected promptly