	Bridlewood Primary School	Last Reviewed December 2017
	Attendance Policy	Policy next to be reviewed December 2018
		Page 1 of 7

## Introduction

At Bridlewood Primary School we expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes in school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. The register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## Child Protection Procedures

This school takes very seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care.

“The welfare of the child is paramount.” Children’s Act 1989


All action is taken in line with the following latest legislation/guidance:

- South West child protection procedures (SWCPP) , [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)
- Section 175 Children Act 2002
- Safeguarding Children in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused
- Safeguarding children and Safer Recruitment in Education

We will follow procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of further guidance issued by the DfE and the Local Authority.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers in the school.

For more information refer to the school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

	Bridlewood Primary School	Last Reviewed December 2017
		Policy next to be reviewed December 2018
	Attendance Policy	Page 2 of 7

## Definitions

### Authorised Absence

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

### Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and the parent.
- The absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without a good reason, even with the support of the parent.
- If a child arrives late after the register, this is also recorded as an unauthorised absence.

### Irregular Attendance


- A child's attendance is classified as 'irregular' if it is between 90 and 95%. This is in line with the Local Authority's policies regarding attendance

### Persistent Absence

- Any attendance that falls below 90% is classified as persistent absence.
- When a child's attendance falls to these levels, the school will work with families to improve attendance, depending on the circumstances

### If a child is absent

- Parents should contact the school by telephone or email as soon as they realise their child is unable to attend that day. (tel 706830 or email [admin@bridlewood.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@bridlewood.swindon.sch.uk))
- When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record their absence in the register and the school office will then endeavour to contact a parent or guardian if no information has been received.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Bridlewood Primary School</p>	<p>Last Reviewed December 2017</p>
		<p>Policy next to be reviewed December 2018</p>
<p>Attendance Policy</p>		<p>Page 3 of 7</p>

- A parent who has not made contact by the time the child returns to school must send a note explaining reasons for the absence.
- A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if the child has a medical appointment.
- If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of the child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

#### Requests for leave of absence

- Parents do not have the right to take their children out of school for holidays during term time. Amendments to the 2006 regulations by the Department for Education make it clear that a Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances (see Appendix 1 – Request for Holiday Absence)

#### Long Term absence


- When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, or provide online learning opportunities so that they can keep up with their school work.
- If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repeated absence, the school will contact the support services, so that the arrangements can be made for the child to receive some tuition outside school.

#### Persistent Absence

- If a child has a repeated number of absences that fall below 90%, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem, depending on the circumstances. We aim to work closely with parents to improve attendance where possible. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the local authority support services (Education Welfare officer) who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- The governors, supported by the local authority, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.


#### Rewards for good attendance

- All the children who have 100% attendance at the end of the school year will receive a reward for attendance in our last assembly of the year.

	Bridlewood Primary School	Last Reviewed December 2017
		Policy next to be reviewed December 2018
	Attendance Policy	Page 4 of 7

### Monitoring and review

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine carefully the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absence in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the administrative officer immediately. If there is a longer term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher. The school will then endeavour to work with the parents/carers to improve attendance.
- The Headteacher will review attendance monthly and report to governors.
- This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually.

	Bridlewood Primary School	Last Reviewed December 2017
		Policy next to be reviewed December 2018
	Attendance Policy	Page 5 of 7

## Appendix 1

### Request for Holiday Absence

#### Principles

This policy has been discussed collaboratively by all Abbey Park/Nova Hreod Cluster schools in line with the new DfE Guidance.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

All schools within the cluster will adhere to this policy ensuring consistency across all schools and clarity of information to parents.

Any absence has a detrimental impact on a child's education. Absence can and should be avoided. 90% attendance is the equivalent of missing half a day of school every week. Children are required to attend 190/365 days per year, leaving 175 days during which holidays can be taken.

Head teachers are expected to uphold the law when parents request leave during term time and schools are required to be proactive in discouraging absence.

Parents of registered pupils have legal duty under the Education Act (1996) to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full time basis; children become of statutory school age the term after which they become 5 years old. Parents do not have an automatic entitlement to holiday during term time.

#### Requesting Holidays

Unauthorised absence i.e. absence not approved by the school, may incur a fine from Swindon Borough Council.


Families wishing to request an authorised absence must complete and submit a request form at least 2 weeks prior to families taking a holiday.

Holiday applications will not be considered more than 9 months in advance.

Holidays can only be requested by the parent/carer with whom the child resides.

#### Authorisation

Only in exceptional circumstances will holiday leave be authorised during term time.

	Bridlewood Primary School	Last Reviewed December 2017
	Attendance Policy	Policy next to be reviewed December 2018
		Page 6 of 7

**Examples of such exceptional circumstances include:**

- Bereavement within the immediate family i.e. child's parent
- Service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
- One off special events e.g. Family wedding, graduation

**Guidance states that headteachers should not authorise a request if:**

- It is during assessment week, National curriculum SATs or examination periods
- Overlaps with the beginning or end of a new term
- Is due to availability of cheaper holidays
- Is due to poor weather experienced in school holiday periods

**Unauthorised Absence**

Where the above exceptional circumstance are not met, holiday during term time will not be authorised. If parents still take their children out of school then the local authority may issue a fixed penalty notice. **This is £120 per parent per child** where the child resides with both parents (reduced to £60 if paid within 28 days)

We have also included a number of frequently asked questions regarding requests for absence:


**Frequently Asked Questions**

Q. My work means that I cannot take holiday during the school summer holidays. Can I take my children during term time?

**A. There are many opportunities other than the summer holiday period for family holidays. Please use the week long breaks at half term or the two weeks available at Christmas and Easter.**

Q. I like to add an additional day's holiday onto a half term break?

**A. The government guidance does not allow me to authorise leave in term time. Ofsted also look very poorly on this.**

	Bridlewood Primary School	Last Reviewed December 2017
		Policy next to be reviewed December 2018
	Attendance Policy	Page 7 of 7

Q. The children's grandparents have booked and paid for a holiday in term time. We have to go.

**A. Holidays in term time are against government guidance so I am unable to authorise it. Should you choose to go away at this time a penalty notice is likely to be served.**

Q. My children receive free school meals. We cannot afford a holiday except in term time.

**A. Holidays in term time are against government guidance, given the detrimental impact on learning. Should you choose to go away at this time a penalty notice is likely to be served.**

Q. My child has been invited to go away with Swindon Football Academy during term time. Will this absence be authorised?

**A. I consider this to be an educational opportunity but taking place off-site and am happy to authorise this.**

Headteacher

V Sammon