Brickhouse Primary School

Attendance Policy

Updated for DfE statutory guidance: Working together to improve school attendance, July 2026

Policy owner	**Headteacher: Nyoka Lawrence**
Attendance lead	Miss K Gaymer
Attendance officer / administrator	Mrs S Hill
Safeguarding link	Mrs C Newby
Date updated	July 2026
Review date	July 2027, or sooner if guidance changes

Headteacher commitment

Attendance is not administration. Attendance is safeguarding, belonging and achievement. Brickhouse will build strong relationships with families, act early when patterns emerge, support barriers properly and escalate where absence remains unresolved. Every child should be in school, on time, safe, known and learning.

1. Principles and aims

- Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success and establish positive life habits.
- Regular attendance helps pupils build friendships, develop social skills and become confident, independent learners.
- The school will promote good attendance and punctuality by working with parents/carers, pupils, governors, the local authority and wider partners.
- The school will encourage attendance through clear systems, first-day contact, accurate registration, monitoring, reporting and timely support.
- Attendance data will be used to identify patterns, vulnerable groups and pupils needing early help.

2. Law and national guidance

- DfE Working together to improve school attendance, statutory guidance, July 2026.
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance.
- Education Act 1996 and relevant attendance regulations.
- KCSIE 2026: absence can be a safeguarding indicator.

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice and duties to make reasonable adjustments.
- DfE guidance on attendance considerations for children with a social worker, 2026.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Headteacher	Sets culture, ensures statutory compliance, monitors attendance, reports to governors and ensures safeguarding links are clear.
Attendance lead	Monitors data, coordinates support, meets families, tracks action plans and escalates concerns.
Office / first-day calling staff	Complete registers, make same-day contact, update Arbor and alert leaders to concern.
DSL / DDSL	Leads where absence indicates safeguarding risk, severe absence, repeated unexplained absence or children missing education.
SENCo / pastoral staff	Support pupils with SEND, medical needs, anxiety, transitions and family barriers.
Governors	Review attendance data, challenge leaders and ensure systems are effective.

4. Local leadership structure to confirm

Function	Name
Headteacher	Nyoka Lawrence
Attendance Champion	Miss N Lawrence
Attendance Lead	Miss K Gaymer
Attendance Officer	Mrs S Hill
Attendance Administrator	Mrs S Hill
First-day calling	Office staff
Local Authority School Attendance Support Officer	Clare Loveridge
Safeguarding / Welfare / Pastoral Support Officer	Mrs C Newby

5. Registration, Arbor and attendance codes

Brickhouse uses Arbor electronic registration. Registers are legal records and must be completed accurately. All pupils must be marked present, attending approved activity, absent or unable to attend using correct DfE codes.

- / means present in the morning session.
- \ means present in the afternoon session.
- N means no reason yet provided for absence and must be followed up promptly.
- L means late before registers close.
- U means late after registers close and counts as unauthorised absence.
- B means approved off-site educational activity.

- Where a pupil arrives late, they must be signed in and added to the system for fire safety and safeguarding.

6. Punctuality and lateness

- The school actively discourages late arrival by setting a good example and supporting families to establish routines.
- Classroom doors open at 8:40 for Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils, and at 8:50 for Nursery children, unless local timings change.
- Late pupils must sign in through the office if doors are closed.
- Persistent lateness will be recorded, monitored and followed up with parents/carers.
- Where lateness causes lost learning or indicates wider welfare concern, the attendance lead and DSL will be informed.

7. First-day response and unexplained absence

1. Parents/carers should contact school on the first day of absence.
2. If no contact is received, office staff will make same-day contact.
3. Where contact cannot be made, school will consider vulnerability, previous concerns, sibling attendance, social worker involvement and safeguarding risk.
4. The attendance lead and DSL will be alerted where concern remains.
5. Home visits, emergency contacts, local authority advice or police welfare checks may be considered where a child may be unsafe.

8. Authorised absence

Only school can authorise absence. Parents/carers provide reasons, but school decides whether absence is authorised in line with statutory guidance.

- Personal illness, with medical evidence required for excessive or extended absence where appropriate.
- Medical appointment, with appointment card or evidence seen and retained where appropriate.
- Family bereavement.
- Conditions making attendance impossible or hazardous to health and safety.
- Religious observance where applicable.
- Travelling child absence in line with statutory guidance.
- Involvement in public performance or approved sporting activity.
- Other exceptional circumstances agreed by the Headteacher.

9. Unauthorised absence

- No explanation is provided by the parent/carer.
- The explanation is unsatisfactory, for example shopping or minding the house.
- Leave of absence or holiday is taken without prior consent, or where consent has been refused.
- Lateness after the register has closed.
- Special occasions or birthdays where the school does not agree that leave should be given.
- Looking after siblings.
- Headlice.
- Family holidays in term time unless exceptional circumstances are accepted.

10. Persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is attendance at or below 90%. Severe absence is attendance at or below 50%. Both require leadership oversight, family work and possible multi-agency support. Severe absence is a significant safeguarding and educational concern.

Stage	Action
Early concern	Class teacher / office notices pattern and speaks with family.
Emerging risk	Attendance lead reviews data, contacts family and agrees support.
Persistent absence	Formal meeting, written plan, targets, review date and partner involvement.
Severe absence	Senior leader and DSL oversight, multi-agency planning, local authority involvement and safeguarding review.
No improvement	Formalise support and consider notice to improve, penalty notice, education supervision order or prosecution in line with local authority procedures.

11. Working with families and barriers

The school will listen to families and seek to understand barriers before moving to statutory action unless immediate risk requires escalation. Barriers may include illness, anxiety, SEND, bullying, transport, housing, poverty, domestic abuse, bereavement, caring responsibilities, exploitation, online harm or parental difficulty.

- pastoral support, meet-and-greet or transition support;
- reasonable adjustments or SEND review;
- medical or healthcare planning;
- Early Help / Family Help;
- school nurse, CAMHS or health advice where appropriate;
- social care involvement where safeguarding thresholds are met;
- attendance plan with review date;
- breakfast club or practical routine support where available.

12. Attendance and safeguarding

Attendance is safeguarding information. Repeated absence, unexplained absence, lateness, children missing education, persistent absence and severe absence may indicate neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, mental health need, child criminal exploitation, caring responsibilities, bullying or other harm.

- The DSL will be informed where attendance creates safeguarding concern.
- Attendance will be discussed in child protection, child in need, Early Help and social worker conversations.
- For pupils with a social worker, attendance must be integral to professional conversations.
- For looked-after and previously looked-after children, school will work with the designated teacher and virtual school as appropriate.

13. EYFS, Nursery and Reception

Although compulsory school age begins after a child’s fifth birthday, regular EYFS attendance matters. Nursery and Reception routines support language, social development, belonging and later progress.

- Daily registers will be maintained for EYFS children.
- Parents/carers will be contacted on the morning of the first day of absence where no explanation is given.
- First-day calling, follow-up and home visits may be applied where safeguarding or welfare concern exists.

14. Penalty notices and statutory action

Penalty notices and statutory action will be considered in line with DfE statutory guidance, national thresholds and Sandwell local authority procedures. There is no statutory right of appeal against a penalty notice. Payment discharges liability for the offence for the period covered by the notice.

- Penalty notices may be considered for unauthorised term-time leave, persistent unauthorised absence or other cases meeting national and local thresholds.
- A penalty notice may be withdrawn only in prescribed circumstances, such as being issued to the wrong person, containing material error, non-payment leading to prosecution, or where statutory criteria are met.
- The school will work with authorised officers and the local authority to ensure notices are used fairly, lawfully and effectively.
- Where pupils move between local authority areas, Sandwell may liaise with the relevant authority about previous penalty notices.

15. Deleting pupils from the admissions register

Pupils will only be deleted from the admission register where statutory grounds are met. The school must make reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and safeguarding status where destination is unknown. Where pupils move school or local authority, the school must obtain the new school and address wherever possible and follow local authority procedures.

16. Monitoring, evaluation and governance

- Attendance data, cohort trends, intervention impact and local authority feedback will be reviewed by leaders and governors.
- Governors will review whole-school attendance at least termly.
- Staff training and INSET will include accurate registration, first-day response and attendance as safeguarding.
- Attendance reports will be shared with parents/carers where appropriate.
- Pupil voice and parent feedback will inform review.
- The school will use data to identify cohorts or groups with lower attendance than peers and act to improve attendance.

17. Parent communication

Parents/carers will be kept informed about attendance expectations through school communication, website, newsletters, meetings and individual letters. Where attendance is a concern, communication will be clear, timely, supportive and firm. Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss concerns early with the class teacher, attendance lead, pastoral team or Headteacher.

18. Staff quick route

If staff notice	They must
Regular lateness	Tell the attendance lead / class teacher and record the pattern.
Unexplained absence	Office follows first-day response and alerts attendance lead / DSL if concern.
Sudden drop in attendance	Class teacher and attendance lead check in. Consider safeguarding.
Persistent absence	Attendance meeting, written plan, review and leadership oversight.
Severe absence	DSL, senior leader and multi-agency response.
Possible child missing education	Immediate escalation to DSL, Headteacher and local authority route.

19. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance, Sandwell local authority procedures or school attendance practice changes.

Date	**July 2026**
Review	July 2027
Signed	Headteacher: Nyoka Lawrence

Sources used for 2026 update

- DfE Working together to improve school attendance, statutory guidance, July 2026.
- DfE Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance.
- DfE attendance considerations for children with a social worker, 2026.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Education Act 1996 and attendance regulations.
- Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice.