

BROOK STREET SCHOOL
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Headteacher Mr J Bursnall

Monday 16th December 2024

Important Information Regarding Attendance - Please Read

Dear Brook Street Parents,

The Government recently published new guidance around school attendance. It is important that you are aware that they expect schools and local authorities to take a much stricter approach to parents who fail to ensure good attendance for their children. As a result, Cumberland Council have employed 6 new attendance officers and school has put in place a new attendance policy. A full copy of the policy is available from our website but I have included some of the important information below. Please read this and ensure you understand it.

There is a new six-step approach to ensuring good attendance and punctuality for all pupils. I have outlined this below:

1. **EXPECT** – Good attendance (above 97%) is expected for all children
2. **MONITOR** – School should check regularly for patterns of poor attendance/lateness
3. **LISTEN & UNDERSTAND** – Speak with parents to identify any problems
4. **FACILITATE SUPPORT** – Work with families to secure good attendance
5. **FORMALISE SUPPORT** – Put in place binding expectations and support
6. **ENFORCE** – Where no other action is working, issue a fine or prosecution

Parents should be aware that whilst the first 5 steps of this attendance approach are the most important, there is an expectation from Central Government on local authorities, that where parents are not securing good attendance for their children, the **Council will issue a fixed penalty notice or prosecution**. This is already happening in Cumberland.

Our policy comes into force from 1st January 2025. Parents should be advised that:

- holidays during term time
- delayed return to school at the start of term or an early departure at the end of term,
- persistent lateness, and
- extended visits to home countries

are not generally permitted and may result in enforcement action.

There is a new National Threshold of **10 missed sessions in 10 school weeks**, that will trigger a concern and may trigger enforcement action. This equates to 5 school days.

As part of this policy, **all requests for an absence** from school **MUST** now be made using a leave of absence request form. This form can be found on the school website or available from the school office. Letters or emails will no longer be accepted or responded to. I have included a copy of the form with this letter so that every family has access to it.

Please see on the attached sheet your child's current attendance and if applicable their current time lost due to lateness. It is important that you are aware of this and take any steps required to support better attendance at school for your child. If your child currently has an attendance of below 90% you should expect to be contacted by our attendance officers in January.

As always please do contact school if you have any questions or require any clarification.

Can I also take this opportunity to remind you that Brook Street School starts again on Monday 6th January 2025.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Bursnall', written in a cursive style.

Jonathan Bursnall
Headteacher