



Attendance Policy and Procedure

Last reviewed on: 11/2022

Next review due by: 11/2023

RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

When Was the Plan last Updated?		
Date	Name	Detail (changes made)
November 2022	Laura Rzepinski	New legislation and procedure added

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Policy Statement

Bents Green School is committed to maximising the achievement of all students irrespective of race, gender or disability. Regular attendance and good punctuality are vital to educational achievement and social integration at school. Bents Green School is committed to working with parents/carers and students to ensure that each student benefits from the academic, personal and social opportunities available to them during their years with us.

This will enable each student to gain access to appropriate post 16 opportunities and equip them with the skills needed for a fulfilling adult life.

The student, however, is dependent upon the adults in their life to get them to school regularly and on time. Bents Green School will work with parents/carers to establish good habits to improve attendance and work to develop 'self' responsibly in students. The school operates within a framework of local school, including special schools.

We are, therefore, committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parent/carers.

Aims of the Policy

- Clear procedures encouraging students to achieve their maximum potential by maintaining good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring parent/carers and students are informed about the procedures for attendance and encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and governors understand the procedures
- The commitment to allocate resources to support the policy
- Addressing attendance and inclusion issues in the curriculum
- To recognise and reward students who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year

Legislation

This policy takes account of the following legislation:

- DFE Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance - May 2022
- Children missing education Statutory guidance for local authorities - September 2016
- Keeping children safe in education 2022 Statutory guidance for schools and colleges - 1 September 2022
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England September 2022.
- SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL ATTENDANCE POLICY WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE SEPTEMBER 2022

- Sheffield city council WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AUGUST 2022
- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

At Bents Green School each staff member is responsible for promoting good attendance and creating a supportive environment for both students and parents/carers.

Good communication with parents/carers is vital. Attendance will be continuously monitored, and intervention / support developed where barriers are identified.

- **Laura Rzepinski & Aileen Hosty – Co-Headteachers**
- **Elena Drayson - Assistant head (Behaviour and Wellbeing)**
- **Adrian Symonds - Assistant head (Behaviour and Wellbeing)**
- **Karen Taylor and Clare Gratton – Office Managers**
- **Thea Potter, Liza Sampson, Jo Burke, Nicola Lambert – Year Team support**
- **Alex Walker – Westfield Hub Manager**
- **Brittany Milnes – Learning Mentor**
- **Cathy Varley – Dedicated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
- **Vicki Proctor – Local Authority Attendance Officer**

Co-Headteacher

- Has overall responsibility for attendance within the school
- Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues
- Liaises with the other officers of the Local Authority to implement attendance strategies
- Works with the Assistant heads/learning mentor to implement targets, review statistics and amend the policy as necessary
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster
- Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of Children Looked After by the Local Authority
- Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education

Governors

- Maintain an overview of attendance through reports provided by the Headteacher
- Have a named governor for Attendance
- Attend School Attendance meetings as necessary

Assistant heads/learning mentor

- Maintains an overview of attendance and manages the day-to-day implementation of attendance plans and strategies
- Liaises with the Co-Headteacher to produce and evaluate attendance statistics
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster

Class teachers

- Accurately mark registers using appropriate codes and return to the school office (if manual registers are used) promptly following registration, in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2001.
- Attach any notes received to the register for the attention of office staff
- Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a student
- Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school
- Record any attendance issues on CPOMS

Responsibilities of the Tutor Team (TA's)

- To be involved in multi-agency meetings as needed to support children and their families in improving attendance issues
- To promote an ethos of good attendance and punctuality with parents and students
- To ensure that information provided by parents regarding absence and attendance is communicated via Cpoms.
- When covering for a teacher ensure that procedures for completing registers are undertaken.
- Record any attendance issues on CPOMS

Office staff/Learning Mentor

- Receive, update and maintain accurate class registers in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2001.
- Maintain SIMS attendance database and update on a weekly basis
- Regularly liaise with Sheffield Council Transport to aid efficiency of their service and Bents Green School students

Learning Mentor

- Provide reports from SIMS to governors, Headteacher and other school staff, Local Authority officers as requested
- Provide relevant information to Local Authority officers making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality

- Attend attendance reviews in school
- Maintains an overview of attendance and manages the day to day implementation of attendance plans and strategies
- Liaises with the Co-Headteacher to produce and evaluate attendance statistics
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster

Safeguarding team

- To track students' attendance where there are safeguarding concerns and ensure appropriate action is taken in line with the schools safeguarding procedures / individual student plans / school attendance and children missing from education guidance
- To be the link person for contacting home regarding attendance where this is deemed to be the most appropriate procedure
- To be involved in multi-agency meetings as needed to support children and their families in improving attendance issues

Parents/Carers

- To contact school if their child is absent to inform us of the reason for the absence
- To inform school in advance, by telephone or letter, of any medical appointments which need to be taken in school time. Parents should also provide school with a copy of any appointment letters.
- To make every effort to take holidays during school holiday periods
- To request and complete a holiday request form for any planned absences from school
- To try to arrange medical appointment out of school hours where this is possible
- To promote and encourage good attendance
- To notify school of any concerns or difficulties you have with getting your child to attend
- To support your child to attend school by working cooperatively with school and other agencies where needed; by attending meetings and following agreed actions
- To support their children to be ready punctually for collection by transport

Partnership

What the school expects of our students

- That students attend regularly, on time and ready to learn
- That students are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment e.g. P.E. kit
- To report to Reception should they arrive after registration time
- To tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school

What the school expects of parents/carers

- To fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day
- To contact school on the first day their child is absent for any reason before 9.30am
- To arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times wherever possible, and to obtain an Authorised Absence Pass from the school if unavoidable
- To arrange holidays out of school time. Further guidance is offered under the section **Term time requests for Exceptional Leave** later in this policy
- To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school
- To provide a note, signed by the parent/carer, when the child returns to school explaining the reason for absence. This will be filed and may be produced if requested by the Local Authority

What parents/carers and students can expect from the school

- A broad, balanced education that is dependant on regular attendance at school
- Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school, and regular encouragement and recognition.
- Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
- First day contact with parents/carers when absence is unexplained
- Prompt action when a problem has been identified
- Liaison with officers from the Local Authority to assist and support families where needed
- Regular communication with parents/carers
- In supporting good attendance, the school will work in partnership with the student, parents / carers and wider professionals including MAST, Social Care and Health professionals.

Procedure

Registers are a legal document, care must be taken to ensure registers are marked accurately. Attendance of all students is monitored and evaluated regularly using the following procedures:

Registration

- Registration closes each morning at 9.30am and each afternoon at 1.20pm.
- Students arrive from 8.55am, any absence reported to transport will be noted and checked by office staff.
- Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) on SIMS in the register for each student present and an absent mark (N) for any student that is absent. Any notes received will be communicated for checking by office staff. All registers are completed on SIMs, an online registration platform. These are monitored closely.
- Any comments or information linked to an absence will be noted on SIMS.

Responding to lateness

- Students arriving in the classroom after registers have closed are deemed to be late. The office is alerted where their N mark is amended to L and their name and reason for lateness recorded on SIMs.
- At 9.30am and 2pm the student is deemed to be Late/absent. Any student arriving in school after these times will be marked U. In case of emergency the register shows the student is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance.
- If the late is due to school transport the lateness will be authorised, school will monitor these instances.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late.

Bents Green at Westfield School

Students' attendance is populated on Westfield SIMS. Each site has their own Year Team Support and attendance is scrutinized in the same way as attendance at Bents Green School. Westfield Hub students are discussed with Local Authority Attendance Officer and are subject to the same interventions and support as other Bents Green Students.

Students who attend external placements

For students who attend external placements and travel to the venue independently, the supporting TA should contact school by phone to confirm their attendance with the phase year team support, to enable the appropriate mark to be entered in SIMS. Or the Year Team Support will contact external placements if the student is not supported.

Responding to absence – criteria for requesting support from the Multi Agency Support Team (MAST)

- Home/school contact has not prompted an improvement in attendance
- Poor overall attendance (e.g. below 90%) and no mitigating circumstances or acceptable reasons for absence provided to school
- If attendance continues to give cause for concern strategies will be considered and steps taken in an attempt to improve attendance and punctuality. This could include home visits from school staff, meetings in school with other professionals if deemed appropriate
- When a student has not attended for 10 school days the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the Local Authority.

Children Missing from Education

DSL/Co-Headteacher is the nominated member of school staff to liaise with the Local Authority's Children Missing from Education Team. Students who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures (**See policy *Children Missing from Education***)

Children in Public Care

Elena Drayson/ Adrian Symonds is the co-ordinator who liaises with the Local Authority's Children Looked After team. CLE students will be set up as an Attendance Group on SIMS and their individual attendance will be checked each half term.

Rewards and recognition

Students will be recognised on an individual basis for their improvements in attendance by school staff.

Partnership with parents/carers

It is vital that parents/carers are involved in promoting good attendance and punctuality

- Regular attendance information is given to parents/carers e.g., by newsletter, individual letter, parent evenings.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make contact with school to discuss any issues impacting on their child's attendance or punctuality.
- Any concerns or problems raised by parents/carers will be responded to quickly and sensitively by the school.

Authorising Absence

Only the Co-Headteacher may authorise absence.

- Even when a parent/carer provides an explanation of absence the Co-Headteacher will decide whether to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.

Absence may be authorised if:

- The student is too ill to attend school
- The student is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- The student is absent on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent/carer belongs
- The school at which the student is registered is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority.
- The student is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- There is a close family bereavement
- The student has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence
- Leave of absence is granted by the Co-Headteacher under exceptional circumstances

Absence should not be authorised if:

- No explanation is offered by the parent/carer
- The school is not satisfied with an explanation offered

- The student is staying home to look after parents, siblings or the home
- The student is absent on special occasions e.g. birthday
- The student is absent on exceptional term time leave for longer than agreed by the Co-Headteacher
- The student is absent on holiday without agreement under the exceptional leave guidance
- The student is absent unnecessarily e.g. taken shopping, for a haircut

Requests for term time exceptional leave

Parents/carers wishing to take a student out of school for a holiday should be actively discouraged. Any leave during term time can only be authorised by the Co-Headteacher under *exceptional circumstances*.

If parents/carers wish to apply for term time leave under exceptional circumstances a request form must be completed by the parent/carer, clearly stating what the exceptional circumstances are, and given to the Co-Headteacher for consideration no less than 20 days prior to the requested leave begins.

The school will inform parent/carers in writing, within 10 days, whether the leave has been authorised (it should be made clear why a decision has been made and the criteria used should be re-iterated).

Please see Sheffield Council [Exceptional leave during term time](#) policy for full guidance

If an unauthorised holiday is taken consideration could be given to issuing a [Penalty Notice \(see guidance\)](#). At the Co-Headteacher's request the Local Authority will issue the Penalty Notice and inform the school of the outcome.

It is essential that both the Local Authority and the school be consistent so that there can be no allegations of bias or favouritism. If it is seen that the policy is not being applied consistently the Local Authority will not be able to apply a Penalty Notice.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by Co-Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.