



Attendance Policy

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Reviewed by: R.Cleaver

Approved by Headteacher: Yes

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Attendance Policy

"Regular school attendance has always been important. Without it the efforts of the best teachers and the best school will come to nothing. Education provides a means of advancement for all young people. Pupils need to attend regularly to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in law. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places children at risk and, in some cases, it can result in pupils being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour." (DfE)

Our mission

- Barr's Hill School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.
- It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students.
- Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance
- If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

Aims

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence.
- To acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance.
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school.

Objectives

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.

- We will work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued.
- We will send a clear message that if a student is absent, she/he will be missed.
- We will work with all members of the school team plus any relevant outside agencies to develop and maintain the whole school attendance policy.
- We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.
- Regular information will be sent to parents and students informing them of attendance rates and related issues.
- We will promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence.
- We will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by the school Leadership Team and the School Governors.

Roles and Responsibilities

The school is responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all students who are on the school's admission roll.

Procedures

- Registration occurs each morning and begins at 8.45am and ends at 9am. Students not in their tutor rooms at 8.45am in the morning receive a late mark. If a student is late a 1 hour after school detention will be issued the same day as lateness occurs.
- Subject teachers are responsible for ensuring an accurate register is taken during every lesson.
- Students will be reminded about the importance of punctuality and lateness results in sanctions being set.
- First day contact between parents and school will be made via text and followed up with a phone call where necessary.
- Staff are supplied with clear guidance on what is authorised and unauthorised absence following DfE guidelines.
- Any emerging attendance concern/problem within a Hub will be discussed and action planned within the weekly 'Overcoming Barriers to Learning' (OB2L) meeting. Here further action is decided upon involving both internal and external agencies.

Leave of Absence

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Head teachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The Head teacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.

Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Coventry City Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 (1) of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Persistent Absenteeism

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance falls below 90% at any time during their school life. Absence at this level is detrimental to a child's education. The school may decide that medical evidence, for instance: Doctor's notes, is required to prove illness is legitimate in certain circumstances.

All students whose attendance have fallen to 85% or are at risk of moving towards the PA will be monitored rigorously through the school 'tracking procedure'.

Support and action towards all PA students are automatically reviewed on at least a weekly basis.

Supporting and re-integrating students on long term absence

Pastoral Leaders alert Subject Leaders about long term absence and parental requests for work to be set which can be done at home. Subject Leaders organise setting work, leaving it for collection and the marking of returned work.

Students who have been absent long term and who need to catch up on school work may spend a negotiated amount of time in the Student Support Centre, or in a HUB, doing work set by Subject Leaders and managed by the Pastoral Leader with support from the Inclusion team. Some students returning after long term absence will be considered for an alternative curriculum involving fewer subjects and maybe some study time in the support centre until they are able to integrate fully into the mainstream curriculum. Students who are school phobic or who have undergone recent crisis will be supported as appropriate.

Working practice

The role of the Head teacher/Governors

- Ensure the attendance policy is implemented.
- Complete attendance figures for the Local Authority and the DfE.

Role of the Assistant Head teacher responsible for Attendance

- Advise on and implement whole school strategies for improving attendance.
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.
- Hold regular meetings with the DSL and Children and Family workers from the Local Authority's Education Entitlement Service.
- Liaise with HUB Leadership teams.
- Co-ordinate attendance target groups.
- Monitor whole school attendance schemes and rewards.
- Present attendance figures to the School Leadership Team and Governors.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are fully trained in procedures that relate to attendance.
- Monitoring progress towards targets. Evaluation of the impact of the Attendance Policy and planned work identified in the School Improvement Plan.

HUB Directors

- Ensure early intervention is in place to support.
- Meet with HUB Leadership teams on a weekly basis to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitor HUB Attendance and support with strategies to improve poor attendance and celebrate good attendance.
- Liaise with Assistant Head teacher responsible for attendance.
- Monitoring progress towards targets. Evaluation of the impact of the Attendance Policy and planned work identified in the School Improvement Plan.

Pastoral Leaders

- Work with form tutors to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern: all unexplained absences to be followed up.
- To ensure that all registers are up to date.
- Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns.
- Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents, CFFW and outside agencies.
- To promote good school attendance by setting targets and award 'good/improved attendance' certificates as appropriate.
- To ensure that students who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integration back in to school upon their return.
- To ensure that 'CAFs' are opened as necessary to support children in attending school regularly and on time.

- To liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection as necessary.

Role of the Form Tutor

- As the first point of contact with students, tutors are crucial in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Form/call teachers take registers using SIMS lesson monitor.
- Watch out for patterns in a student's attendance/punctuality, investigate all absences.
- Display attendance data and attendance information on notice board in tutor room
- Attendance figures discussed with tutor group on a weekly basis
- Ensure that pupils update their personal attendance (Student Planner) and work with individual students to set personal attendance targets (Weekly basis).
- All lateness to be monitored and discussed with individual students.
- Report to the Pastoral Leader all students whose attendance/punctuality is raising cause for concern.

Role of the Parent Carer

Section 444(1) of the EDUCATION ACT 1996 states that 'IF a child of compulsory school age who is registered student at a school fails to attend school regularly at the school the parent is guilty of an offence'.

- Parent/person with parental responsibility has a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends the school regularly and on time.
- Parents should support the school by avoiding, if possible non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school time.
- Parents DO NOT have an automatic right to take their child out of the school for a holiday or any other period of extended leave during term time.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence and if possible indicate day of return.
- Only the school within the context of the law can authorise absence this does not oblige the school to accept the reason for the absence.
- All unexplained absences will be investigated and parents will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.
- Attend meetings about their child's attendance; support the school in responding to concerns regarding attendance.
- Parents who fail to fulfil their responsibility can expect legal action: this may include Penalty Notices/Fast Track to Prosecution/Parenting Orders.

Students

- All students are expected to be on the school site by 8.40am appropriately prepared for the day.
- At 8.45am students should be in their registration room or at their assembly gathering point.
- Students who arrive after 8.45am must report to student reception: their time of arrival at school will be recorded by the member of staff on duty.
- All students late without a valid reason will be expected to attend a 60-minute detention.
- Students are expected to remain in the school all day and will not be allowed to leave the school site without permission.
- Poor punctuality is not acceptable: students who consistently arrive late for the school day disrupt learning and miss out on valuable teaching time.
- Truancy from the school is taken very seriously and parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity. Students who truant from lessons will be expected to make up the time they have missed and usually on the same day.

Working with the Police upon Truancy

The school will cooperate fully with the West Midlands Police. The named person for the Police to contact is the School Designated Safeguarding Lead. They will inform the Police of training days or other days when the school needs to close in term time. The school operates a student pass system to authorise students who need to be off site.

Role of the Family Support Worker

- To meet with the Assistant Head teacher Attendance, DSL and the allocated Children and Family worker to review intervention across the school.
- To support College teams by working with families and outside agencies to work towards improving targeted students' attendance.
- To oversee the Children's and Families cases (CAFs) open within the school and to monitor their effectiveness.
- To carry out home visits when required.
- To liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection as necessary.

Role of the Children and Families Support Service

- To meet regularly with the Assistant Head teacher for Attendance to examine the effectiveness of attendance interventions.
- To communicate regularly with the Pastoral Leaders to ensure CAFs and other intervention are in place.
- To support in home visits when required.
- To work with the school and families to create family support plans as necessary.
- To support the school in ensuring legal cases are taken forward as necessary.

Penalty Notices

The school may issue 'Penalty Notices' in respect of unauthorized absence in accordance with guidelines set out by Coventry City Council. A Penalty Notice will be issued if a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorized absence in any 5-week period.

Penalty Notices may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed term period or permanent exclusion.

Penalty Notices are fines of £60/£120 imposed on parents. The Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences (DfE Nov, 13)

There is no right of appeal against a Penalty Notice.

Prosecution: Aggravated Offence

The school may proceed with referring cases to the Local Authority, Education Entitlement Service, when attendance has not improved (after school-based interventions) and the absence is / becomes persistent (PA), for consideration for prosecution under Section 444 (1A) – the Aggravated Offence.

Working with other Agencies

Poor school attendance can be result of difficulties, faced by a child or family, and a cause of other problems such as exclusion: students with low levels of attendance tend to have other complex issues therefore a coordinated approach by a number of agencies can assist these students and their families. Regular referral meetings with outside agencies are held to support the co-ordination of service provision and to build on good practice.

The Governors of Barr's Hill School take the issue of behaviour very seriously and to this effect, have adopted this policy.

