



Attendance Policy

July 2015



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This attendance policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Date of last review: July 2015

Date of next review: July 2016

Introduction

Children and young people need to attend school regularly and be equipped to learn. The latter, including punctuality is a precondition of social inclusion and a prerequisite to effective learning. Irregular school attendance is a contributory factor in social exclusion and underachievement. Pupils who fail to attend school regularly are more likely to be the victim of crime themselves or to become exposed to offending behaviours by others. Children should attend the school in which they are registered, on time.

Whole School Involvement/Partnerships

In order for this policy to be effective it is essential that 'Attendance and Punctuality' become 'the focus of all stakeholders in the academy'.

Teachers, school administration staff, children, Parent's/Carers, Governors, SENCO and School Nurse Team. Including Local Authority Admissions, Exclusions, Attendance Improvement Officer and Nottingham City Council Education Welfare Team inc. MARAC.

Also, we aim to forge an awareness of this policy with Medical Staff Administrators (Doctor and Dentist Reception), Housing, Neighbourhood Team, Police, and Schools IT for SIMS input.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal/Senior Vice Principal/Attendance & Safeguarding Team

- To ensure legal requirements are being met with regard to attendance.
- To be responsible for the operational management of the attendance policy.
- To remind staff at the beginning of the academic year about the contents of this policy and correct procedures for completing registers.
- To discuss attendance at new intake events for parents and children who are admitted to the school part way through a term.
- To have systems in place to ensure that authorised and unauthorised absence is analysed, class by class, each half term.
- Send letters home to parents/carers including those child/ren missed more than 10% of their educational entitlement during the previous half term.
- To follow up individual pupils, classes or year groups and analyse attendance data to identify trends, which can then enable the school to target their efforts.
- To refer cases to the Attendance Improvement Officer or EWS as necessary.
- To discuss with class teachers any individuals who are not attending regularly.

Governing Body

- To be aware of The Bulwell Academy Attendance and Punctuality Policy.
- To be aware of the school target for attendance.
- Have a designated Governor responsible for monitoring and support the school with attendance.
- Perform their duties as critical friends within governors meetings.

Attendance Officer

- Attendance is recorded electronically on the 'Sims Attendance module.'
- Every individual's attendance is monitored for irregular patterns and absences; refer to Attendance & Safeguarding Manager as necessary.
- Produce attendance reports as requested.
- The Bulwell Academy use the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines when making decisions whether to authorise or unauthorise absences

Parents

- To send their child to school every day and on time.
- To send their child to school ready to learn and with necessary equipment e.g. PE kit.
- If the child is ill, to inform school or to respond to School Comms/personal call providing a reason every day of absence.
- If it was not possible to provide a reason on the day of the child's absence, to send a note into school explaining child's absence.
- To work with school to maintain good attendance/or to improve attendance.
- Please note : only the school can authorise absences not the parent, based on the evidence provided

Vice Principals/Year Managers

- To monitor and detect pupils whose attendance falls below the national average parameters.
- Liaise with parents/carers and attendance team to resolve any possible issues.
- Report concerns to Safeguarding/Attendance Team as necessary.

Tutors/Class Teachers

- To ensure that pupils attend school regularly it is important that class teachers monitor their register to detect any absence patterns that are emerging and report any concerns to the Year Manager/Attendance Team.
- To communicate verbal messages from parent/carers to the attendance team.
- To work to raise the level of enjoyment and commitment to learning among children, making them want to come to school.

The Law

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the 'parent' is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude.

Compulsory school age is defined as beginning from the age of five when a child should attend school from the start of the term commencing on or after their fifth birthday.

Section 444(1) if a child of compulsory age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school; the parent is guilty of an offence. You may be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale: A MAXIMUM FINE OF £1000

Section 444(1A) if in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to do so; they are guilty of an offence. You may be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale: A MAXIMUM FINE OF £2500 or IMPRISONMENT FOR A TERM NOT EXCEEDING THREE MONTHS or both.

Recording attendance

Registers must be completed by teacher or staff supervising classes at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session and for all other lessons is a requirement. Registers should be completed using the electronic system and the appropriate attendance codes entered within the first 10 minutes of the lesson. On occasions when this system is not in operation paper registers should be taken. After roll call, the list of absentees together with the class code should be sent directly to the attendance officer.

Teachers and staff supervising classes need only use the following codes:

- / Present in lesson/form period
- N No reason yet provided for absence from lesson/registration
- L Late for lesson

If you have marked a pupil absent and they then arrive late, please ensure that you amend the N to L (entering how many minutes late).

Unforeseen absence

Parents are asked to notify the academy on the first day of their child's absence. Systems are in place for this information to be dealt with by the attendance officer or via student support. Pupils bringing in an absence note on their return to the academy should give it to their tutor who should sign it and pass it to the Attendance Officer.

Known absence

Attendance codes for any known absence from the academy will be entered by the attendance officer. Staff should not amend or overwrite any absence codes that have been entered.

Medical and dental appointments

Parents should, where possible, arrange medical and dental appointments for their child out of academy hours.

On occasions when appointments must be kept during academy hours, an appointment card or letter from the parent must be brought into the academy by the pupil concerned and shown to the attendance office. Only half a day's absence will be authorised for a medical appointment. Therefore, pupils must make every effort to attend the academy in the morning or return to the academy in the afternoon.

Extended Leave of Absence

Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. If your child needs to be absent for 'exceptional circumstances', you should write to the Principal in advance requesting permission.

Other authorised absences

Codes for educational visits and approved sports activities will be entered in advance by the attendance office. It is the responsibility of the trip/activity leader to:

- Obtain the necessary permission for the pupils to be out of the academy through trips and visits procedures.
- Provide the attendance office with list of pupils involved in advance of the trip/activity.
- Share details of the trip, indicating which pupils are involved with all staff and areas in the academy.
- Confirm with the attendance office the names of absentees prior to departure.

Pupils attending interview should follow the procedure used for medical appointments, on this occasion, providing the attendance office with a copy of the letter inviting them to interview.

The attendance office should also be informed about details relating to any other approved pupil absence by the member of staff responsible for organising that provision, for example work experience; education off site.

Lateness

The school day starts at 8.30am and registers close at 8.40am. It is school policy to record a late mark, together with the number of minutes late. Whilst we recognise that, in some instances, late arrival stems from unavoidable circumstances, staff are required to take action if there is no valid reason for lateness.

Any pupil arriving late for class will be issued with a detention unless, of course, the member of staff considers the reason given by the child is valid. If a colleague delays a pupil to the extent they are likely to be late for their next lesson, they must provide the pupil with a note. Any pupil who is late for school more than twice in a week will be issued with a 10 minute detention. Any pupil who is late for school 3 times in any one week will be issued with a 30 minute detention.

If a pupil is persistently late to School (5 times within a 4 week period) then the Academy may choose to issue a penalty notice (please see appendix A)

Late gates are in operation daily.

Giving permission for a pupil to leave class

Staff may give permission for a pupil to leave class. Valid reasons include: to use the toilet or to report to another colleague. The teacher or member of staff responsible for supervising the group must give the pupil a note so that the pupil can demonstrate they have authorisation when challenged.

Investigating absence

Parents are expected to inform the academy every day of their child's absence from the academy, if the academy does not receive notification, the attendance office will telephone or text to query the absence. Two days will be authorised for general illness using the World Health Organisation guidelines. A letter explaining the reason for the absence should be provided on the child's return. On the 3rd day of an absence a message will be sent to parents advising that if absences are to be continued to be authorised evidence will be required.

Every day tutors will be given an attendance return for their form group for the previous day. This will also include details of lateness. Tutors should then ensure they promote good attendance and have contact with parent/carers regarding any unexplained absences or concerns. Tutors will be supported by Year Managers and Vice Principals for Year Groups.

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) ordinarily becomes involved with cases where a child is classed as a persistent absentee and prosecution is being considered.

The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. This adds up to missing almost half a term. These are called "Persistent Absentees" by the Government, whatever the reason for their absence. Special procedures may be applied to children at risk of falling into this category. (Please see Appendix A)

Supporting the successful return to school of children who have been absent

Any child who has been absent due to short term illness will be expected to return to class and make up the work missed.

A child who is absent for a longer period of time due to illness or exclusion will be given appropriate learning materials by their class teachers and also receive direction on how to access other relevant learning resources through the school website and internet.

Further support for students during and after long term absence may include:

- Arranging full time off site provision in accordance with the Regulations (exclusion only), liaising with the Inclusion Team.
- Developing personalised strategies in discussion with parents, these may include renegotiated timetables, alternative curriculum opportunities or flexi-schooling. This needs to take into consideration students with special educational needs, liaising with the Inclusion Team.

Elective home education

Parents may elect to home educate at any stage up to the end of compulsory school age. Parents who choose to educate their children at home must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including bearing the cost of any public examinations. Parents must also ensure that their children receive suitable full-time education for as long as they are being educated at home.

When a parent is thinking of deregistering their child from school to home educate, the academy's attendance officer in liaison with the relevant member of senior staff should explore fully with the parents the full implications of taking their child off roll. This will also include a 3 way meeting with the Local Authority.

The school will delete the child's name from our admission register upon receipt of written notification from the parents/carers that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school. However, schools should not wait for parents to give written notification that they are withdrawing their child from school before advising their local authority. The Bulwell Academy will make a return to the local authority as soon as the ground for deletion is met and no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. Parents/Carers will also be copied into the notice to the local authority.

Making referrals to the Education Welfare Service

The academy will refer to the education welfare service when the following has taken place:

- A phone call, a discussion with pupil or parent, or a request for a letter to be sent.
- First day of absence call.
- First warning letter
- Second warning letter
- Parent will be invited to attend an "Attendance Planning Meeting" with the Attendance & Safeguarding Manager and Year Manager.

If there is no improvement after the above action the academy will review the case and when appropriate refer to the education welfare service for prosecution.

Attendance and persistent absence targets

Pupils that have persistent absences will be targeted by a year group support structure, where each mentor will track on a day to day basis in order to manage and improve attendance.

Pupils with attendance of 95% + Form tutor

90% – 95% Vice Principal and Year Manager for each Year Group/Attendance Officer (PA)

80% – 90% Attendance Team

The above structure should ensure that the government target of 10% persistent absence should be contained and met.

Analysis of attendance data

The SIMS system enables easy access to pupil level and aggregated attendance data. This information is used:

- To track individual and group attendance.
- To highlight underachievers who are also poor attendees.
- For strategic planning.
- Managing attendance issues more effectively.

Attendance in the sixth form

As with pupils of compulsory school age, attendance procedures apply to the sixth form students, including the marking of class registers. Commensurate with their age, sixth form students are expected to take greater responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality.

In particular, sixth form students should:

- Register for all timetabled lessons/tutor periods.
- Sign out at sixth form reception when leaving the academy and then, if necessary sign back in.

Bulwell Academy Persistent Absentee Attendance Flow Chart

Tutors - Monitor Students **100% - 92%**
First Day Contact – Community Attendance Officer
Truancy Call – Attendance Officer by 11am daily



Tier 1 – Early Intervention

Student hits **92%** with unauthorised absences - Attendance Officer will issue a 1st Warning letter & review over a period of 7 days.

Student fails to improve - Attendance Officer will issue a 2nd Warning letter & review over a period of 7 days.



Tier 2 – Persistent Absentee (PA) 90% & below with Unauthorised absences

Year Managers / Vice Principals / Attendance Team are to hold PA allocation meeting.

Allocated case worker would be expected to carry out:

- **Student Interview / RAGGED Timetable / Parent Meeting as statutory**



Failure to Improve

Attendance Team will hold a **CASE REVIEW** to discuss the next step:

- **PANEL MEETING** – Parent / Attendance Team / Agencies
- **PROSECUTION** – Penalty Notice 1st Offence / Court 2nd Offence and further Offences thereafter

Attendance Improves

Monitoring to continue weekly until they have removed themselves from the PA Database & are back with the tutor lists