



# Attendance Policy

**SIGNED - HILARY HOULT (GOVERNOR)**

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Ratification Date: -  
Review Date: -

**January 2018**  
**January 2020**





## Legislation

This policy takes account of the following legislation:

- School attendance; Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (November 2016)  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/564599/school\\_attendance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564599/school_attendance.pdf)
- School attendance parental responsibility measures; statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police (January 2015)
- Children missing education; Statutory guidance for local authorities (September 2016)
- Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England (2012)





## Rationale

The Government expects that:

Schools, colleges and local authorities:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence

Parents/carers:

- Perform their legal duty by ensuring that children of compulsory school age are registered at school and attend regularly

Students:

- Be punctual to school and to access their lessons

Bents Green secondary 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. Success at school can help the student gain access to appropriate post 16 opportunities and equip them with the skills needed for a fulfilling adult life.

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.

Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in school and students will be recognised and rewarded as such. Attendance will be continuously monitored and intervention / support developed where problems are identified.





## Aims of the policy

- To promote an ethos in which good attendance is expected and is the norm
- To promote, support and reward good attendance and punctuality
- To have effective systems of recording, monitoring and reporting student attendance
- To work closely and effectively with MAST to support students and families to improve their attendance
- To support and encourage parents/carers to enable their children to reach good attendance levels
- To be sensitive to the particular circumstances of students and their families and how these can effect attendance
- To inform all staff of the key roles and responsibility within the school
- To monitor and provide effective information on levels of attendance and punctuality
- To ensure a safe, secure school environment and curriculum which meets students' individual needs is in place to promote and enable good attendance





## Term Time Leave

*Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm. **Nov 2016 Guidance***

Bents Green adheres to Education Regulations 2006 (Pupil Registrations) which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. These regulations state that schools may not grant leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

All holidays taken during term time will therefore be deemed as unauthorised absences unless considered to be special or exceptional. Parents will be informed of the importance of their child attending school and of the need for holidays to be taken only during term time. This will be included in the school information given to parents at the beginning of each academic year.

Request for term time leave should be submitted to the Headteacher **20 days** in advance to enable the school to consider the request. All requests for leave during school time will be considered individually by the attendance coordinator in line with the recommendations by the National Association of Head Teachers.

Each application received will be reviewed as to whether circumstances are deemed to be special / exceptional. Individual student attendance data will also be carefully considered alongside the request.

In general, requests will be declined where the student's attendance is below 97% and where there is insufficient evidence of exceptional need. However, this statement will be approached with caution regarding students' individual circumstances





# Responsibilities

## Responsibilities of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for attendance matters

To oversee and monitor the work of the Attendance coordinator in school

### Responsibilities of the Attendance Coordinator (Deputy Head Teacher)

- To have strategic oversight of attendance matters in school
- To monitor, review and ensure appropriate implementation of attendance and punctuality policies across all school settings
- To monitor / analyse all attendance data termly and work with tutor teams to identify appropriate interventions (for all students who are persistent absentees (below 90%) and for those with lower than 93% attendance)
- To ensure attendance is promoted and rewarded in school
- To support and advise year team admin support, Safeguarding Team and Assistant Headteachers with regards to matters relating to attendance
- To ensure that all absences are recorded appropriately and in line with DfE guidelines
- To liaise with the MAST attendance officer to clarify any attendance issues in school
- To make decisions regarding absence requests for special occasions / holidays in line with DfE guidelines and school procedures
- To produce and supply attendance information to the Headteacher and governors
- To ensure all students in school have access to a full-time equivalent educational offer
- To coordinate liaison with other agencies, including health, MAST and social care, in order to identify appropriate Educational Provision and attendance
- To ensure single referrals are made to MAST for students for whom the main concern is attendance (and internal interventions have not been successful in improving attendance figures)
- To ensure that information regarding attendance, punctuality and absence is available to all parents
- To ensure year team admin support are aware of the students whose attendance information must be passed onto the safeguarding team / attendance coordinator urgently



- To identify / support reintegration packages for students previously missing from education
- To ensure the Local Authority is informed if a student is to be removed from the attendance register
- To provide attendance information to the Local Authority as required
- To liaise with medical professions for advice around attendance issues as needed

## **Responsibility of the Year Team Admin Support**

### **Daily Duties**

- To check that tutor teams have appropriately marked registers, that appropriate codes have been used and that unexplained absence is chased up with parents
- To contact parents on the first day of any unexplained absence.
- If parents / carers have not made contact – a text alert should be sent by 10am asking for a reason for absence. We will only change codes on SIMS once we have confirmation from a parent / carer why a student is absent. We will not accept messages via other student or via transport.
- If there is no response by 12pm, a telephone call should be made to ascertain a reason for absence. *See guidance on use of N code.*
- Ensure students on alternative provision have attended and marks inputted onto SIMS.
- When using a code other than present / must have a note added on Lesson Monitor. Notes must be factual and should only refer to accurate information
- Only Year Team Admin Support should change codes on SIMS. Staff should pass any information to the admin team –i.e. letters from parents.

### **Safeguarding students**

- To ensure that any unexplained absence is referred to the Safeguarding Team for a child who is looked after, on a child protection plan or a child in need.
- To ensure that on the third day of any unexplained absence for any student, where no contact has been made by the family, the Safeguarding Team is informed in order to ensure that procedures are followed to ensure that the child is safe and well
- To pass on concerns regarding student attendance to the safeguarding team / tutors as appropriate
- To notify Assistant Headteachers of any concerns regarding attendance / attendance procedures for students on alternative provision

## **Attendance Administration**

- To follow attendance monitoring protocols as set out in this document.
- To ensure that all requests for 'term time leave' are passed onto the DH and parents/ carers are informed of the outcome within 5 school days.
- To prepare paperwork for fixed term penalty notices
- To produce half termly attendance certificates for all students achieving 100% attendance for that half term
- To produce a half termly attendance certificate for the tutor group with the highest attendance score for each half term
- To produce end of year 100% attendance certificates

## **Role of the Information and Communication Officer**

- To create an attendance tracker that is updated weekly and made available to relevant staff.
- To provide attendance data each half term to Form Tutors for each class group
- To provide a data analysis of attendance by different groups including by year, gender, ethnicity, pupil premium and any other required by DH.
- To provide whole school attendance data each half term to SLT in readiness for reporting to Governors
- To ensure information about attendance data is made available to parents on through displays and on the school website
- To send out attendance concerns letters as required

## **Responsibilities of the Assistant Headteachers / Phase Leaders**

- To monitor the implementation of intervention plans across their phases with tutor teams
- To ensure that all students in their phase have access to a full-time educational offer
- To ensure that where students have alternative educational provision / timetables that full-time equivalent education is available to them
- To analyse attendance data for students with low attendance (less than 93%), looking for patterns and enabling timely intervention



- To be involved in multi-agency meetings as needed to support children and their families in improving attendance issues
- To liaise with other professionals, including MAST, social care and health
- To discuss Attendance at each child's Annual Review meeting
- To ensure that admin staff are aware of students on external placements and that the planned procedures for notifying attendance are in place and followed
- To support reintegration plans for students previously missing from education
- To regularly review, with the intention to increase, attendance arrangements for students on temporarily reduced timetables, ensuring that a full-time educational offer is in place for these students through alternative packages

### **Responsibilities of the 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
- To carry out 'Safe and Well' checks on the third day for any student and on the first day of unexplained absence for a child who is looked after, on a child protection plan or a child in need.
- Make referrals to the police / social care for any student where unexplained absence is a cause for concern and the student is 'at risk of significant harm'.

### **Responsibilities of the Form Tutor**

- To provide a safe, secure school environment and a curriculum which meets individual needs
- To promote an ethos of good attendance and punctuality with parents and students
- To keep an accurate, timely and up-to-date register of attendance following the agreed procedures and codes using SIMS
- To ensure that information provided by parents regarding absence and attendance is communicated to the year team admin support.
- To liaise with Assistant Headteachers where concerns are held/ raised about a child's attendance in school



- To ensure that students on agreed part-time timetables are provided with the agreed work to undertake at home
- To be involved in multi-agency meetings as needed to support children and their families in improving attendance issues
- To liaise with other professionals as needed to support student attendance in school
- To discuss attendance at each child's Annual Review meeting and parents consultation meetings
- To ensure that action identified in student's intervention plans are implemented fully
- To participate in student progress meetings working with Deputy and Assistant heads to identify appropriate action for individual students and their families to improve attendance

### **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 to the year group manager
- When covering for a teacher ensure that procedures for completing registers are undertaken



## Monitoring of Attendance

Pupil attendance is monitored by form tutor. Good attendance is promoted every day by staff and rewarded each half term. Form Tutors will question any absences and pass on any information to year support team.

## First Day of Absence Procedure

Communication is sent to inform parents of an unexplained absence before 10am each day. If no response provided, a phone call is made.

## Authorisation of absence

A satisfactory reason for absence is given to Year Admin Support Teams by phone call or email by parent/ carer and code updated on SIMS.

## Early Intervention

Attendance falls below school target and triggers an attendance concerns call followed up with a stage 1 letter to parents. Any school related concerns are identified and addressed by Tutor Teams and / or Safeguarding Team.

## Medical Evidence

Attendance becomes a cause for concern. Daily monitoring procedure put in place. Parents are contacted on each day of absence. A stage 2 letter is sent home. Parents have to provide medical evidence for school to authorise any further absences. Attendance meeting is held with Phase Leader.

## Fixed Term Penalty

Attendance concerns are discussed with MAST. Further periods of unauthorised absences will trigger a penalty warning letter in which any further unauthorised absences within 15 days will result in a fixed penalty fine.

## Bents Green Monitoring Attendance Systems

Form Tutors and Phase Leaders will promote the importance of good attendance and ensure tutors have regular updates on each group's attendance.

Year Admin Support will ensure all registers are accurate and updated daily.

Early identification and intervention of pupil and family need will be made via Tutor Team Meetings held each week with Safeguarding Team and Phase Leaders.

If attendance is less than 93% the school will take action to help improve student's attendance.

Individual needs and circumstances will be taken into account regarding decision to authorise absences.

Parents must request leave of absence in writing. Any request for holidays must be submitted to the Headteacher for consideration of exceptional circumstances.

All authorisation of absence will be monitored by Phase Leaders / AH. When attendance is a concern a staged response of action will be taken as follows:

- **Stage 1:** Attendance Monitoring
- **Stage 2:** Cause for Concern- request for medical evidence required
- **Stage 3:** Fixed Penalty Warning

Referrals to MAST will be identified via Attendance Monitoring meetings held each half term.

Quality assurance of attendance policy, procedure an accuracy of codes will be carried out each half term by the DH.

## Role of Parents and carers

Bents Green School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure:

***Under Section 444 of the Education act 1996 parents and carers have the responsibility for making sure that a child of compulsory school age receives efficient full time education suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs that they may have.***

It is a parent or carers responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence, before 9am.

If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Pupils are expected to be in school at 9am for registration. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Parents need to support their children to be ready punctually for collection by transport. Parents and Carers should inform school immediately of any unexpected delay to a pupil arriving on time to school. **If transport has been missed, parents / carers must ensure that students are able to come into school, or the absence will not be authorised.**

If your child appears reluctant to attend school please discuss the matter promptly with the Form Tutor to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Parents need 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.**

Parents and carers should try to avoid any term time absence including medical appointments that could be scheduled for outside the school day. Any requests for planned absences should be made at **least 20 days in advance.**

Parents and carers are encouraged to work with school staff to help address any issues that may be affecting a pupil's attendance. This may include working cooperatively with school and other agencies where needed and by attending meetings and following agreed actions

If attendance becomes a cause for concern, parents will be expected to provide medical evidence during any further absences.

## Responsibility of students

- ✓ To make every effort to be ready on time for school transport in a morning
- ✓ To come to school every day unless you are too ill to attend
- ✓ To talk to an adult in school if you have any concerns or worries about coming to school

## Attendance Codes

Code	Code Meaning	Statistical meaning
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
B	Off site educational activity	Present
C	Leave of absence authorised by school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration	
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
G	Term time leave unauthorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.	Unauthorised absence
H	Term time leave authorised by the school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registration closed)	Present
M	Medical or dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent from school without authorisation	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Present
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
V	Educational visit	Present
Y	School closure	Not counted
W	Work experience	Present



## Attendance Procedures

- All registers should be completed by tutor teams before the closing of registers at 9.30am and 1.05pm respectively
- **Year admin support team** will contact parents on the first day of absence for any unexplained absences and the explanation recorded in the comment box
- If alternative arrangements for home contact are in place (ie for safeguarding reasons) the year group managers will check to make sure the appropriate person responsible is making the required contact with home.
- Daily monitoring by the year team admin supports is made for any unexplained absences and missing marks. This is also reviewed weekly to ensure the attendance registers are complete and accurate. The Attendance Coordinator is consulted if clarity is required for attendance codes
- Staff must only use the official codes as listed above. If the reason is unknown N should be used until further information is received. **Tutor teams should not use any other codes in SIMS.**
- All staff should direct parents to fill in a **'Request for Term Time Leave'** if they are made aware of parental plans for holidays / absences. Parents should be reminded of the importance of attendance and encouraged to take holidays during school holiday periods wherever possible
- Students arriving in school after the close of registers must be registered on entry into the building. The receptionist must contact the relevant year team support to notify them of the student's arrival immediately
- Any student leaving school premises during a school session must sign out before leaving the building
- For **Bents Green at Westfield School** students' attendance is populated on Westfield SIMS. **The year team admin support spends time at Westfield each week and regularly runs attendance reports for analysis.** Attendance is scrutinized in the same way as attendance at Bents Green School. Westfield Hub students are discussed during half termly sessions with the MAST attendance officer and are subject to the same interventions and support as other Bents Green Students



- For **Post 16 students at Sheaf Training** attendance is populated on Bents Green SIMS. Confirmation is received daily via email from the phase year team support for Post 16 to enable comments/updates to be made by the Office Manager on SIMS
- For students who attend **alternative provision** 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
- For **students who attend school on a reduced timetable**, phase year team supports are notified by reception on their arrival/non-arrival to enable registration to be completed. Non-attendance procedures are followed as required. **Students on a reduced timetable will have an attendance education plan (PEA) which will be reviewed twice a half term.**

### **Monitoring, review and Implementation of the Policy**

Office staff are primarily responsible for the implementation of the attendance policy. **Quality assurance of attendance policy, procedure an accuracy of codes will be carried out each half term by the attendance coordinator (DH).** Any concerns regarding attendance procedures will be highlighted to the attendance coordinator (DH) in school. Training for staff will be developed as needed to ensure all staff in school are able to follow the given policies and procedures. The attendance policy will be reviewed each **Summer Term** by the attendance coordinator in conjunction with the office manager, year team admin support and governing body.