



Bradfield School

Attendance policy

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Equates to:



2 Introduction

Bradfield School believes that attendance and punctuality is the key to the success of our pupils and their ability to benefit from all the opportunities available to them in school. This will then enable them to strive for success and achieve their potential for their future.

We aim to support students in becoming well rounded and resilient adults who can make a positive contribution to the wider school community and society in general.

We expect every pupil to aim for 100% attendance during an academic year and believe that this can be achieved by school, home and students working closely together to identify and overcome barriers to consistent attendance and good punctuality. For example, if your child's attendance is 95%, this equates to 9 days off school each academic year.

2.1 Why is good attendance important?

There is a clear link between good attendance and achievement alongside the development of social, emotional and personal skills. Regular nonattendance will affect a student's ability to understand the teaching and damage their chances of going on to the next steps of their choice post 16.

If students regularly miss school, their presence in lessons following absences can affect the learning of others due to the disruption of teaching routines.

It can also become a vicious circle as students feel that they fall behind in working through the curriculum when they miss lessons and their confidence can fall due to lost learning opportunities.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

2.2 Other factors to consider

Young people need to attend school regularly to benefit from the routines and disciplines that need to be taught to enable them to become successful adults in society.

Regular school attendance is necessary for us to fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities and support their wellbeing should there be any risks of harm to the child.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and Bradfield school are committed to promoting the safety, welfare and life opportunities for all children.

Failure to attend school on a regular basis will be considered a safeguarding issue.

3 Aims of the Policy

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Ensuring that all staff and governors understand attendance procedures.

- Ensure that all stakeholders understand the escalation and support measures for pupils with persistent absences.
- To recognize and reward pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year.

4 Legislation and Guidance

The 1996 Education act requires that:

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school.
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their child to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who are absent for more than 10 days without explanation.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Staff taking registers

All staff who are responsible for taking registers must do so within the first 5 minutes of the start of form time/lessons. Registers must be taken accurately and timely and failure to do so will result in a discussion with Senior Leadership.

If a student has been marked present in the previous lesson but fails to attend their next lesson, staff must mark them as N. After 15 minutes the Attendance Officer will run a report of all N marks each period and pass these details to the Support for Success staff to pursue. SFS staff will check the classroom to confirm the student is not present and they will then sweep the corridors/toilets to confirm whether the child is still in school.

If the child is found and returned to the lesson, the staff member in the classroom must amend the register with L if the student has been truanting or / if there is a valid reason for their initial absence.

If after the SFS staff have tried to find the student and are not able to, SFS staff must contact the member of Senior Leadership who is on duty to decide whether a call home to inform parents needs to be made and update CPOMS so that the safeguarding team can follow up.

If a student is in school and known to be in a meeting, the staff member responsible for the meeting must contact Bradfield Attendance so that the attendance Team can amend the mark to AM.

If the student has been taken to the reflection room, the member of staff on duty there must let Bradfield Attendance aware immediately so that a mark of AR can be entered.

Accurate registers are essential to ensure effective safeguarding.

5.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher, not parents, is responsible for deciding whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised at Bradfield School.

They will work closely with The Attendance and Welfare Manager to decide which concerns of persistent absence are submitted to the Inclusion and Attendance Team at the Local Authority for advice and possible legal action.

5.3 Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance

The Asst Head will work closely with The Attendance and Welfare Manager to confirm that school and home are working closely to improve persistent absences

5.4 Form Tutors

- Form tutors are the first people to contact when you have any concerns about your child, including attendance.
- Form Tutors will be constantly reviewing, promoting and rewarding good attendance.
- Form tutors will ensure that accurate registers are taken during form time.
- Form tutors will speak to their tutees if their attendance drops below 96% to offer solutions to any issues preventing excellent attendance.
- Form tutors will contact parents/carers if the attendance continues to drop.
- If the percentage of attendance goes below 90, Form tutors will ask the Head of Year to become involved.

5.5 Heads of Year

- Heads of Year will be constantly reviewing, promoting and rewarding good attendance.
- Heads of Year will ensure that accurate registers are taken during form time.
- Heads of Year will speak to their students if their attendance drops below 96% to offer solutions to any issues preventing excellent attendance.
- Heads of Year will meet with students and call home to offer support if attendance drops below 90%
- Heads of Year will contact parents/carers if the attendance continues to drop.
- If the percentage of attendance goes below 90, Form tutors will ask the Head of Year to become involved.

5.6 Bradfield Attendance Team

The Attendance Team consists of the Attendance Officer and the Attendance and Welfare Manager.

The Attendance Team will:

- Amend Bromcom to reflect absences reported by parents before the cutoff point of 8.30. Parents may still call after this time and registers will be updated but you may receive a reminder text if your call isn't received before this time.
- Send reminder texts for students do not have a present mark and for whom we have had no reason for absence from home.
- Make follow up phone calls for students who do not have a present mark and whose parents/carers have not reacted to the reminder text.
- If school is unable to contact home to explain the reason for absence, a mark of unauthorized absence will be made.

- The Attendance team will challenge any reasons which do not justify an absence in line with this policy.
- The team will monitor persistent absences and will send letters out on a termly basis with confirmation of the attendance percentage so that we can work together to increase this and overcome any barriers to good and consistent attendance (for students whose attendance is under 85%)
- The team will report concerns of low attendance to Senior Leadership.
- The Attendance and Welfare Manager will liaise with the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance to discuss cases where the Headteacher may want to consider taking legal action and imposing fines for families who will not engage with support offered.
- The Attendance and Welfare Manager will work with families and outside agencies to support positive attendance to school.
- The Attendance and Welfare Manager will visit students at external providers once a half term to ensure that the provision is a positive experience for both sides. This included students who are attending provisions such as Becton (unless the child is in a residential placement)
- The Attendance and Welfare Manager will make a home visit for students who haven't been in school for 5 days and for whom we have been unable to make contact with home.
- The Attendance and Welfare Manager will conduct a safe and well check for students who have been missing from school for 10 days to offer support and keep a strong connection between the student and school.
- If a student hasn't attended school for 20 school days and Bradfield is unable to contact home, this will be referred to the Children Missing from Education Team at the Local Authority and the student could lose their place at school.
- The Attendance and Welfare Manager will make a safe and well check if this is requested by staff where appropriate.

5.7 What Bradfield expects of parents/carers

Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents/carers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorized absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

- Parents are expected to contact school on the morning of an absence. If parents leave a message, we ask that they leave the name and form of the student and full details of the absence, before 8.30 if possible. Please call 0114 2363861 ext. 1003.
- If the absence continues, we ask that parents call in every morning unless the expected length of the absence is known, for example a hospitalization.
- If a student's attendance is below 85%, parents/carers are asked to provide medical evidence of the necessity of nonattendance before school are able to authorize this.
- If there is a reason for the absence that the Attendance Team can support in overcoming, please email attendance@bradfield.sheffield.sch so that we can work with the student and family.

6 Absences and Coding

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time, if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion.

All applications for leave of absence must be made in advance. In making a decision, the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually. Parents/carers who do not request term time leave and take their child on 'unauthorised leave' could be liable for a fixed penalty notice and/or prosecution and even potentially lose their place at the school.

Requests for exceptional term time leave must be made at least 20 school days in advance of any arrangement being made. This will allow sufficient time for the request to be considered by the school. The request must be made in writing (letter or email) by the parent/carer using a Request for Term Time Leave form. Please complete and return these forms to attendance@bradfield.sheffield.sch.uk.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

The team will call home to confirm whether the absence is authorised and a follow-up letter will be sent.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments where an appointment cannot be made outside of school hours.
- Pupils attending on a reduced timetable

Religious Holidays - Bradfield School acknowledges and rejoices in the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends, and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. We believe it to be reasonable that no more than two days absence be designated for a religious celebration and that a maximum of three days in any academic year will be granted for religious observance.

For example we would expect students who practice the Muslim faith to take 2 days for Big Eid and one day for little Eid.

Unauthorised absences include (but not limited to)

- Students whose attendance is below 85% without medical evidence of the need for an absence.
- Minor illnesses such as mild headaches, fatigue, period pains.
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which have not been fully explained.
- Truancy.
- Birthdays.

6.1 Planned absence

Pupils must sign in /out at reception if they arrive after 8.30am and leave before 2.55pm and may only do this with parental permission, if this is not received school will call home but will not allow a child to leave school early without this communication.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. If the medical appointment is in the morning, we expect the child to return to school in the afternoon periods, and if the appointment is in the afternoon, we would expect your child to attend school in the morning periods.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

6.2 Lateness and punctuality

A school day is split into two sessions AM & PM

Lates - If a pupil arrives after 8.35 am they will be marked as late for the am session if a pupil arrives late for their period 4 session they will be marked as late.

Absence - If a child is not present during the period four register and does not arrive late, they will be marked as absent for the pm session.

Form tutors and Heads of year may call or arrange a meeting with you to discuss a pupil who is regularly marked as late at the start of school day or to their lessons. We will endeavor to work with pupils and parents/carers where genuine reasons for lateness are identified. Such as being a 'young carer'

6.3 Reporting to parents

Parents/carers will be able to monitor their child's attendance by:

- Speaking to their child's Form Tutor or Head of Year

- Using the MCAS application issued to all parents once on role with Bradfield school.
- Parent/carers can request a copy of their child's attendance certificate at any time by contacting the attendance team

6.4 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, **each parent** must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

7 Strategies for Promoting Attendance

7.1 Identifying the barriers

When meeting with pupils and family members, we will capture what is going well, what we are worried about, what are the next steps. For each of these three areas, we will think about the child's education, health and care needs. By breaking it down into these areas we will be able to see the dominant factors which prevent this child from being in school every day on time. We will identify the most appropriate next steps. We will involve the most appropriate agents which may include Early Help, Attendance & Inclusion or parental support programs. For children with identified health issues, the school will consult with the local authority and consider using the GP protocol.

7.2 Strategies we will use to promote whole school attendance.

- Share a clear vision for attendance underpinned by high expectations
- Whole school approach – every staff member has a role to fulfil in improving attendance.
- Ensure good internal communication/meetings encompassing safeguarding, SEN, behaviour, attendance to facilitate robust APDR (Assess, Plan, Do, Review response)
- **Follow a graduated approach for our irregular attenders to ensure we assess why they are not** attending regularly,
- To create a plan to support improvement in attendance. To implement this plan and review it to assess if improvements have been made.
- To work with the local authority Attendance & Inclusion Team
SheffieldInclusion&attendance@sheffield.gov.uk
- Ensure that the pupil and family feel that they have been supported by the school and key staff.
- Routinely apply a robust system that includes incentives, rewards, and consequences ensuring that all the systems are inclusive and appropriate for all pupils.
- To support pupils who may attend sessions not on the school site at an approved provider or with an educational professional.
- To celebrate attendance in Form Time, Celebration assembly, rewards postcards and letters home.

Bradfield School collects and stores attendance data, and it may be used for the following internal purposes:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils

- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as needing intervention and support

Parent/Carers Contact Details:

It is imperative that the school has up to date contact details for all parent/carers. It is the parent/carers responsibility to keep the school informed of current contact details.

8 Being Notified that a Child has a Medical Condition

Some pupils have medical conditions which may prevent them from attending school. When the school is notified that a pupil has a medical condition, the process outlined below will be followed to decide whether the pupil requires an IHP (Individual Health Plan). If a pupil does not have a IHP then the school will consult with the local authority and consider using the GP protocol.

If an IHP is in place, the school will make every effort to ensure that arrangements are put into place within 2 weeks, or by the beginning of the relevant term for pupils who are new to our school.

Parents will:

- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs
- Be involved in the development and review of their child's IHP and may be involved in its drafting
- Carry out any action they have agreed to as part of the implementation of the IHP, e.g. provide medicines and equipment, and ensure they or another nominated adult are contactable at all times

Pupils

Pupils with medical conditions will often be best placed to provide information about how their condition affects them. Pupils should be fully involved in discussions about their medical support needs and contribute as much as possible to the development of their IHPs. They are also expected to comply with their IHPs.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
AR	Student attending the Reflection room	
AM	Student in school, not in lesson but in a known meeting	
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)

O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day