



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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## **Aims**

Bournville School is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at Bournville School, it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all students. Bournville School actively promotes good attendance and discourages unjustified absence. Bournville School recognises that promoting good attendance and punctuality prepares students for the disciplines of adult working life.

The overarching strategic approach to improving attendance and reducing persistent absenteeism, across all key groups, is captured by our following **5 principles**:

### **1. Policies and procedures**

Bournville School has in place robust policies and procedures informed by the latest guidance and research. This is supported by explicit, and clear, best practice handbooks ensuring consistency and clarity. These are regularly reviewed and updated. All elements of the DfE [‘Working together to improve school attendance’](#) guidance are used to inform best practice. We work in a collaborative and supportive way with the Local Authority and combine resources to support excellent attendance.

### **2. Personalisation**

Bournville School has a variety of different mechanisms of support available within its academies to promote good attendance through personalisation of an individual's needs. Each pupil will be supported on an individual basis tailored to their circumstances and that of their family. We will work with families and young people to identify any barriers of attendance to school and create a personalised plan of intervention. This will ensure good attendance, which will in turn support attainment and the student's wider wellbeing. In addition to the personalised support received from the academy, additional support may include collaboration with external agencies and/or the LA attendance support team where appropriate.

### **3. Practice We:**

#### **A) Expect**

Attendance matters - we aspire to high standards for all students and parents/carers and build a culture where all can be in the academy. Attendance is a priority across our Trust.

#### **B) Monitor**

Attendance data will be used to identify patterns of poor attendance and shared with parents/carers on a regular basis to ensure we can work together to resolve any issues.

### **C) Listen and understand**

We will work together with pupils and parents to understand barriers to attendance and look at how we work together to resolve this. We will treat all students and parents with dignity and build a positive relationship between home and the academy.

### **D) Facilitate Support**

We will help students and parents to access support that is available to overcome barriers, both inside and outside of school. This may include referrals to outside agencies, Early help or whole family plans.

### **E) Formalise Support**

Where voluntary support isn't working or being engaged with the academy staff and external partners will work with parents/carers to explain the consequences and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

### **F) Enforce**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, statutory intervention or prosecution will be enforced to protect the pupil's right to an education.

## **4. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

On occasion, a student with complex needs may have difficulties within the academy which impact on their attendance. There is still a legal responsibility for the academy to provide an education and for the parent/carer to ensure regular school attendance.

If a statutory assessment is in progress for an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP), it is expected that the student must still have full attendance throughout the process. Throughout the statutory assessment process, the attendance team should actively engage with the parent/carer to support them to ensure their child attends at their current school or to support alternative arrangements for education through the

Local Authority or Alternative Provision to ensure the student's education is not compromised. Appropriate and tailored support must be put in place to ensure the academy's legal duty is met and the student is receiving a suitable full-time education that meets their needs.

Once an EHCP is granted, the Local Authority will undertake a formal consultation with the school(s) the parent/carer chooses for their child. Consultation takes 15 school days and the student will remain on roll throughout that period. The child may then remain on roll or move to another establishment if parents wish to name another school.

## **5. Technology and Data**

Bournville School will effectively use technology and data systems to accurately communicate, track and monitor student attendance in order to promote the importance of school attendance and support families. We will use a range of technologies to communicate with parents and external agencies to ensure the continued promotion of the importance of school attendance.

Data systems will also be used to record and supply statutory returns to external agencies including the Department of Education.

## **6. Parental engagement**

Many cases of poor attendance are a direct result of a lack of effective engagement between parents and the school. This may be through parents not contacting the school – either to report and talk about the reason for their child's absence and to seek support, or not being aware of, or understanding, the Academy's expectations.

Research shows that effective engagement often leads to increased attendance and it can also be linked to higher academic achievement and to a positive effect on pupil's attitude to learning and on their behaviour.

Whilst it is the parent's responsibility to contact the school to report an absence and provide a reason, communication has to be a two-way process. Research has shown that using a range of tools has made communication between parents and schools more timely, efficient, and productive.

Even when an Academy has established an effective engagement strategy there are likely to be some parents who remain hard to reach and it is this group of parents who are often those that a school needs to have more contact with. Their reluctance to engage may be due to their own experience of school or because they have difficulty with communicating, for example their own low literacy skills, their understanding of the English language or cultural differences.

Intervention by interaction is a key priority and the school will support parents at all levels ensuring:

- increasing levels of communication dependent on need
- establishing trust
- support to remove barriers to attendance
- signposting to supportive agencies
- home visits
- allocation of mentors

- transport in exceptional circumstances
- parenting support

### **General standards for clarity**

- If a student is late to school (beyond 08:30am) will trigger a 30-minute detention.
- Excessive lateness (beyond 09:30) will trigger a 60 minute detention.
- If a student is late more than once in the same week, this will result in a 60-minute detention for each day.
- No non-emergency appointments to be booked before 15:00 during school term time (Monday-Friday).
- Punctuality review meetings to be conducted if a student triggers our monthly threshold without agreed authorisation.
- Medical evidence needs to be provided by a doctor or prescription not just a purchased medical related product.
- Medical evidence must be provided prior to the student leaving the school site if it is during school hours.
- Appointment cards must be provided on letter headed paper or email correspondence that can be traced back to the original sender.
- Parents are obliged to contact school or be available to be contacted by school on a daily basis if their child is not in school, with consistent updates necessary.

### **The following will not be accepted for student absences:**

- **The weather being too cold or hot.** If the weather is too extreme for school, the school will enact a whole school closure, otherwise students are expected to be in school.
- **Relationship breakdowns.** We have an excellent Pastoral team and we will help repair relationships and safeguard children, but falling out with peers is not a valid reason to refuse school.
- **Not having a car.** Parents / guardians are expected to arrange transport for their children to get to school punctually.
- **Not liking a particular lesson.** If a student finds a lesson challenging, we will support them.
- **“Not feeling 100%”.** Throughout the academic year it is inevitable that we will encounter days that we are slightly under the weather or “feeling pain”, we must show resilience and attend school when possible.
- **Holidays during term time.** Booking holidays during term time is unacceptable outside of extreme circumstances.
- **Not having correct uniform / footwear.** We will support students with this as much as we can, but ultimately parents / guardians must ensure their children have the correct uniform.
- **Booking doctor, dentist or optician appointments during school time. Unless it is an emergency appointments should be booked outside of school hours.** None-student related appointments are also not permitted for authorised absence, unless under extreme circumstances.
- **“Waking up late”.** Waking up late will not be authorised but you should ensure that your child gets to school as soon as possible in this instance.

## **Guiding Principles**

- The school emphasises that it is the responsibility of everyone in the school to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Bournville School needs to ensure that all its students access a full-time education which meets their needs and allows all to realise their potential.
- We will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered.
- We will work with students and their families to ensure every student has good attendance and punctuality.
- We will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- We will have an effective system of communication with parents/carers together with appropriate agencies to provide mutual information and support.
- We will continue to develop ICT-based attendance recording systems in order to provide accurate information and to use suitable tracking strategies to recognise any trends that can damage good attendance and learning.
- We will support all aspects of the Education Act 1996 and the Children's Act 2003: 'Every Child Matters' by implementing this policy in a consistent manner.
- We will have regard to the Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments will be made for young people.

## **What you can expect from Bournville School:**

- We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- We will work closely with parents/carers where a student's absence is cause for concern.
- We will support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
- We will support students returning to school after prolonged absence.

## **What Bournville School expects from Students:**

- To attend regularly and on time on those days that it is open, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To be punctual to all lessons
- To ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons and inform the Attendance Office (Academy / Reception) where appropriate if they are not able to be registered.
- To ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers are taken to the appropriate place (as determined by each individual academy).

### **What Bournville School expects from Parents/Carers:**

- To ensure their child attends the academy on those days it is open, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To ensure their child attends every day the academy is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- To avoid keeping their child away from the academy for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation (see below).
- To avoid arranging holidays during term time
- To immediately inform the Academy Attendance Office / Academy if their child is unable to attend (by 8.15 am where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return.
- Parents/carers should contact the Academy on each day of absence.

### **Registration**

- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session.
- Students are expected to arrive by 8.20am in order to be ready for the start of the form lesson at 8.30am (the official AM marks to be registered by 09:00, with the AM register closing at 09:30).
- Students leave school at 15:00 unless they are in Y11 completing their P6 lesson which is 15:00 16:00.
- Students are registered during tutor period AM and also at the start of every lesson of the day (PM marks to be registered by 12:30 Period 4).
- Students arriving after registers have closed will be marked as unauthorised absence unless medical documentation (prescription etc.) has been provided or in exceptional circumstances.
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1).
- Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in [‘School Attendance’](#) guidance published in May 2022 by the DfE.

### **Punctuality**

- Any student arriving late sign in at Reception in the first instance and then report to the attendance office where they sign in again giving their reason for being late.
- Students who are late twice a week are administered a detention of 30 minute. Every lateness is reported to parents daily.
- Unsupportive Parents/carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice or even prosecuted in the Magistrates Court.

### **Authorised/Unauthorised Absence**

Authorised absence is where the Academy has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the Academy can do this.

- Parents/carers should contact the Academy Attendance Office (by telephone or email) on the morning of absence (preferably before 8.15 am\*), giving a reason and an expected date of return.
- Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:
  - o looking after brothers/sisters/unwell parents/carers
  - o birthdays
  - o days out
  - o shopping trips
  - o family holidays where permission has not been granted (please note, family holidays during term time will not be approved).
  - o special occasions, where the Academy does not agree that the absence should be granted.
- Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where an appointment requires a student to take time out of school, parents/carers should ensure their child comes to school before the appointment, signs out and returns after the appointment. Confirmation of all appointments by way of appointment card, letter or electronic/ text confirmation must be provided for any absence to be authorised. If medical appointments are attended at the start of the day, causing the student to arrive late to the academy, confirmation of the appointment (as above) must be provided.
- Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a student's absence, the Academy will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise/unauthorise accordingly.
- An absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised.
- Parents/carers should not take their children out of school for holidays, days out, to attend sporting events, etc.

### **How we respond to Absence/Lateness**

- If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, the Academy will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence. Contact will be made via email or telephone call for contacts with parental responsibility. Parents/carers must reply either by email or by phone with a reason for their child's absence. The academy asks that parents/carers ensure that their respective academy has their most up to contact details at all times.
- If no response is received to any communication, the Academy will make every attempt to make contact which may also involve carrying out a home visit to parents/carers to fulfil our legal duty to establish the whereabouts of their child. Unexplained absences may be followed up by text, letter or email.
- Where a student's absence is a cause for concern, the academy has a clear procedure that it uses to improve attendance. Contact and support may be by any or all of the following:



telephone, letter, meeting in school, home visit, formal attendance monitoring, involvement of the Local Authority.

- Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated despite intervention, legal action may be issued in line with each relevant Local Authority's Code of Conduct.

### **Persistent/ Severe Absence**

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and cooperation to tackle this. Any student whose attendance has reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via:

- An action plan to improve attendance will be created which may involve referrals to other agencies alongside meetings between relevant Academy staff and parents/carers.
- Where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by the Academy, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

### **Leave of Absence during Term Time**

Any absence interrupts the continuity of a student's learning. Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence, please refer to the Department for

Education for the latest guidance. **Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take students out of school for holidays during term time.** All requests for leave of absence are dealt with on a case by case basis and are always at the discretion of the Principal of the individual academy.

It is expected that a Request Form (or letter, depending on the academy) is submitted to the Attendance Office at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the request form. The Academy has the right to serve a Penalty Notice on parents/carers who insist on taking their children out of school without authorisation. Penalties require **each parent to pay a fine of £80 per child** if paid within 28 days or **£160** if paid after 28 days. Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates' Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any student taking leave of absence without prior notification to the Academy. Punctuality is also punishable via penalty notices. If a child has over 8 lates in a month without an agreed exception, this can also accrue an £80 penalty notice.

**NB** There may be a localised difference depending on the Local Authority protocols.

## **Re-integration following Long-term Absence**

Where a student has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness, the Academy will:

- Welcome the student back to the Academy and value their return
- Provide support for the student in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the Academy.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
- Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.
- Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate
- Nominate a key member of staff to monitor and review the student's return.

## **Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality**

- It is the belief that all students are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is engaging and personalised to meet their needs. The curriculum is monitored and revised on an annual basis so that it meets the ability needs of all students.
- Students are regularly informed of their attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve.
- Good and improved attendance and punctuality will be promoted and rewarded. NB students who have medical issues or their attendance is impacted by significant events will not be omitted from academy praise and reward systems.
- Students, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Academy Attendance Office at any time to discuss their child's attendance.
- Regular meetings may be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to re-integrate back into the Academy.
- Effective links are made with primary schools to facilitate the smooth transition to Bournville Academy.

## **Attendance Data and Targets**

- The target for all students is to strive for 100% attendance. Only by achieving full attendance can students expect to achieve their full potential.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the Academy's attendance practices and interventions.
- Individual student data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention.
- Attendance data is provided on a termly basis to the Academy Association
- Attendance data and persistent absence data is communicated to the Local Authority.

- Each academy will use a Cumulative Attendance Tracker to monitor attendance on a daily and weekly and Year to Date (YTD).

### **Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority**

- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure their child receives a suitable education.
- Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent who fails to ensure their child attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.
- The Academy works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.
- All sanctions are used to improve attendance and punctuality and reduce absence.

### **Staff Roles and Responsibilities:**

All members of the Academy have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

#### **Subject teachers**

- Welcome and value the attendance of all students to lessons.
- Will ensure all students are accurately registered.
- Will ensure that students know the register is being taken.
- Will identify student absence from lessons and take appropriate action.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

#### **Tutors**

- Will discuss absence and attendance weekly with students.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will work with identified students, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets.
- Will ensure that all absence notes or verbal messages are sent to the Attendance Office.

## **Pastoral Leads and Heads of Key Stages**

- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly, by use of the weekly Cumulative Attendance data.
- Will discuss absence and attendance concerns with students.
- Will contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified.
- Will support students to improve their attendance.
- Will promote attendance through assemblies
- Will identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will work with other members of staff to share information and support students and their parents/carers to improve attendance

## **Attendance Teams/Attendance Office Staff / Reception ●**

Will monitor registration on a daily basis.

- Will receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding student absence.
- Will contact parents/carers regarding student absence.
- Will receive a Cumulative Attendance report from the data manager which is disseminated to Pastoral Leads, Heads of Key Stage and any other relevant staff on a weekly basis.
- Will discuss attendance concerns with parents/carers and liaise with relevant members of staff.
- Will take the lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the Academy, including improving attendance and reducing persistent absence.
- Will provide data to the Principal, Senior Leaders and the Academy Association on a regular basis.
- Parents should contact our attendance Manager daily to discuss day to day attendance. Our attendance

Manager is S Mc Cormack for secondary (email: [s.mccormack@bournville.fmat.co.uk](mailto:s.mccormack@bournville.fmat.co.uk), Tel: 0121 4753881) and A Bharj for primary ( email: [a.bharj@bournville.fmat.co.uk](mailto:a.bharj@bournville.fmat.co.uk), Tel: 0121 4753881)

## **The Principal and Senior Leaders, including the Academy Association**

- Will ensure that the Academy attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Will ensure the whole Academy ethos promotes excellence in attendance and punctuality.
- Report to the Academy Association on attendance
- Monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision of educational experience.
- Utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning
- Our designation senior leader responsible for attendance is our Vice Principal for Behaviour and Attitude, Mr R J Mullings (email: [r.mullings@bournville.fmat.co.uk](mailto:r.mullings@bournville.fmat.co.uk), Tel: 0121 4753881)

## **APPENDIX 1**

**DfE ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS** (adopted September 2006, and amended Feb 2013 and Sept 2015, Nov 2016, Sept 2018, Sept 2024)

<b>Present Codes</b>	
/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	Sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip
W	work experience
<b>Absent Codes</b>	
<b>Authorised Absences</b>	
C	exceptional circumstances
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)

<b>Unauthorised Absence</b>	
G	holiday (not agreed)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Z	pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (eg holidays, insets and polling station days)