

Attendance and Punctuality Policy in Primary Schools

Model policy reviewed annually by the Bradgate Education Partnership Board, and was last reviewed: September 2018

School Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Local Governing Body of Church Hill Infant School on: 4th October 2018

Signature (Chair of Local Governors)

Print Name

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Church Hill Infant School seeks to ensure that all their students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her full potential. For students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and punctually. Any absence causes disruption to learning and should be avoided if at all possible. Improving attendance at *Church Hill Infant School* is the responsibility of everyone in our community – students, parents, governors and staff.

For academies who have children on roll who are below statutory school age, it is the view of BEP that these children fall under the ethos of this policy, as it is important to encourage excellent attendance at school for all our pupils.

AIMS

- To encourage and assist all students in BEP Schools to achieve excellent levels of attendance of above 96%
- For Church Hill Infant School, our target is 96.5%
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the academy including students, parents, staff and governors.
- To maximise attendance across the school population and reduce persistent absenteeism (below 90%). *Definition of Persistent Absence from “The Key for School Leaders”:*

Persistent absence threshold is 10%

*If a pupil's overall absence rate is **10% or higher**, he/she is classified as a persistent absentee.*

*Pupils are classed as persistently absent based upon their **individual** absence level, not by a comparison to a national threshold.*

See the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance on the 2017/18 school census, paragraph 5.8.8.

- To work together with parents/carers in both a supportive and challenging role to achieve high levels of attendance

STUDENTS

All students are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and to arrive on time. Morning registration will be taken at 8:50am and afternoon registration at 1:05pm Pupils arriving during registration will receive a late mark. Arrival more than 15 minutes after registers close will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- Come to school properly equipped and prepared to learn.
- Attend all lessons on time
- Not leave school site without permission from staff and signing out at reception.
- Talk to a member of staff if there is a problem causing them to miss school.

PARENTS/CARERS

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance at school in accordance with Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. They are expected to ensure that:

- Their child attends regularly and is punctual, properly dressed, equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- They inform the school of the reason for any absence by telephone call on each morning of absence. The school will then make the decision to either authorise or unauthorise the absence. If no reason is given the absence will be automatically unauthorised
- They know that they will not have holidays authorised during term time
- They make medical and dental appointments outside school time
- They give the school up to date information regarding diagnosed medical conditions which may affect attendance
- They provide the school with up to date contact details

THE ACADEMY

The Academy will:

- Strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

- Have a system of incentives and rewards to recognise the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise all young people who fall below the Department for Education (DfE) threshold of 90% attendance as Persistent Absentees are therefore a vulnerable group.

Registration

Registration is a legal requirement and creates an orderly start to the school day. Registers will be called promptly at 8:50 am and 1:05 pm. Pupils arriving after the registers are taken will receive a late mark. Any student arriving more than 15 minutes after registers close will in the register be marked absent.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

The Academy's registers will be coded in accordance with the Department of Education mandatory codes – see appendix A.

All absences must be explained by a parent or carer on a daily basis. The school will then decide whether or not to authorise the absence. The view of the Department for Education attendance expert is that “some think they're being a good parent by keeping their child off school, if in doubt send them to school. There is a difference between minor ailments and the sort of illness that warrants a day off.”

Some examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- A family day out
- A child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
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Any unexplained absence will be unauthorised.

Absence may be authorised due to:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances

If a student's attendance becomes a cause for concern the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence to substantiate their reasons before the absence can be authorised.

Holidays

The Bradgate Education Partnership Trust policy is that holidays in term time will not be authorised. Unauthorised absence of less than 5 days **may** be referred to Leicestershire County Council, and unauthorised absence of 5 days or more **will** be referred. A referral may result in Leicestershire County Council issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Exceptional Leave

The school recognise that there may be times when a student requires exceptional leave during term time for short periods of time. In these circumstances parents are asked to complete the 'Exceptional Leave Form' to request the absence. These requests will be considered by the Principal on an individual basis.

Exceptional leave will not be authorised during examination periods.

Procedures for following up absence/lateness

If a student is absent and no reason has been provided the school will contact parents and/or nominated emergency contacts, as part of the safeguarding procedure.

When a student is persistently late or absent without good reason and the School's efforts to effect change have been unsuccessful a referral may be made to our Education Welfare Officer for further action.

APPENDIX A

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
\$	Involved in other activity in school	Present

