



BEECHVIEW ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

October 2023

Statutory	Yes - Website
Review Date	Annual
Reviewed By	Headteacher/Governors

Introduction

At Beechview Academy we believe that good attendance and punctuality are essential if a child is to achieve their full potential. Frequent absence or lateness disrupts pupils' learning which leads to them missing key concepts and thereby hampers their progress. Encouraging good attendance and punctuality helps to prepare pupils for their adult life and the responsibilities of full time employment. We seek to support parents and pupils in enabling them to attend school regularly and to arrive on time. We have a dedicated Welfare Team who will support parents and if needed will carry out a home visit.

The school acknowledges and celebrates those pupils who have good attendance and are punctual. There are several ways in which we do this:

- *Children with termly attendance of 95-100% are celebrated in school and in our newsletter.*
- *Certificate is issued weekly for the "Best Class Attendance"*
- *Those children that achieve 100% attendance at the end of the academic year will be invited to attend a celebratory activity.*

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2022) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures . These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census , which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfill expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Deputy Headteacher)

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office [by 9.00am daily].

3.6 School [admin/office] staff

School [admin/office] staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Welfare Lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance where required

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am.
- The register for the second session will be taken after lunch.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school [admin/office] staff

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should email or call the school office to inform them of any appointments in advance supplying evidence of appointments where necessary. However, 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.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

RECORDING LATENESS

The school gates open at 8.40am each morning and close at 8.45am. Children that arrive after the gate has closed must report to the school office. Children that arrive late will need to be signed in by the parent/carer and the minutes late will be recorded on SIMs. This code will also have an effect on a child's overall attendance as it is classed as unauthorised absence. It is therefore important that children arrive on time for school each day to ensure they are not receiving unauthorised marks on their attendance record. Children are to be collected at 3.15pm, if a child is collected late this is also marked on their attendance record.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Direct teaching starts at 8.45am, meaning that if a child arrives for school late, they will be missing important aspects of their learning which the class teacher will **not** cover again. Children arriving into the classroom late not only impact negatively upon their own learning, but also disrupt the learning of the entire class.

The Attendance Officer will monitor punctuality and letters will be issued to parents if this becomes a regular occurrence.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

The expected level of attendance for a primary school pupil is **95%** and above. Beechview Academy has an electronic register system which is able to run off each pupil's individual attendance record at any given time.

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit if it is deemed necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

Attendance figures are monitored weekly at the school and if it is seen that a child's attendance percentage has dropped below 95% the parents/carers will be contacted to inform them an informal monitoring period has begun. After 3 weeks a further attendance check will take place and if the child's attendance has not improved during this period, parents will receive a letter informing them that their child's attendance has become a cause for concern. The Attendance Officer then follows the Government's guidance on improving school attendance and parents will be invited to attend a Support Meeting. If after a further 3 week monitoring period the attendance does not improve, the case will be referred to County.

TIPS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE

- Good habits start early in life, so even before your child starts school, establish good routines, such as reading before bedtime and going to bed on time
- If your child is off school, you must let the academy know why and tell them when they can expect your child back
- Make all appointments for the doctor, dentist, optician etc after school hours, or during school holidays if possible
- Take an interest in your child's school work and offer support with homework
- Attend parents' evenings to discuss your child's progress
- Make sure your child understands the benefits of regular attendance at school
- Do not let your child stay off school for a minor ailment
- Take all holidays during the school holiday periods
- If possible attend Breakfast Club to help with punctuality

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels for example, during parents evenings and as part of school reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be "exceptional circumstances". A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the School Office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 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 take into account:

- 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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

As a school we promote good attendance through:

- A developed and maintained school culture and ethos with regard to the benefits of high attendance
- Attendance statistics given on fortnightly newsletter
- Awards given for attendance in celebration assembly
- Breakfast club availability
- Gates open at 8:40am and children are in class at 8:45am to complete SODAs (Start of the day activities) and intervention groups where necessary
- Welfare team to support families and parents

- half termly welfare meetings where attendance is always on the agenda

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfEs school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the Headteacher and Attendance officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour for learning policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	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
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
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 local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or part closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day