ATTENDANCE POLICY

2019/2020

School	**BEDALE HIGH SCHOOL**
Headteacher	**TOM KELLY**

Named personnel with designated responsibility for this policy

Academic year	Designated Senior Person	Nominated Governor	Chair of Governors
2016/17	Tony Rawdin	Gerry Price	Gerry Price
2017/2018	Tony Rawdin	Gerry Price	Gerry Price
2018/19	Tom Kelly		J Reed/S Ingram
2019/20	Alison Knight		J Reed/S Ingram

Policy Review dates

Review Date	Changes made	By whom	Date Shared with staff
Feb 2020	Checked for updates to LA policy – NA. Updated 5.4 and 6.0 to reflect latest practice in school.	Tom Kelly	9.3.2020

Date Ratified by Governors	Review Date
October 2020	November 2021

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1. Aims

Bedale High School school aims to meet its 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

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

At BHS we believe that good attendance is a crucial part of ensuring that pupils can achieve their potential and develop strong 'work-ready' habits, in preparation for life after school. Our definition of 'Good Attendance' is 95% or above.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- 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. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.25pm (Yr 10 and 11) and at 1pm (Yr 7-9).

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/Carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). This should be through a telephone call to school. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. But medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence may be requested if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, or where there are repeated absences due to reported illness.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorized.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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. Parents should provide a written note to their child's form tutor, in advance of the appointment.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

Pupils who are needlessly late will be issued with a detention by the Pastoral Team. Pupils who are repeatedly late may be placed on report for punctuality and attendance.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

The school will report on pupils' attendance every time parents receive a written school report through the year. Parents can also request a copy of their child's attendance certificate at any time.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances', for example family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion and in line with Local Authority guidance.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

- 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

Please see the NYCC School Attendance Guidance for other examples of term time absences such as term time holidays, which are not a valid reason for authorised absence (unless they meet the specific criteria as laid out within the LA guidance).

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

1. Regular form time focus on importance of attendance, supported by key messages and frequent attendance assemblies.

2. Year 6 Transition – target poor attenders in advance. Have meeting with parents before they arrive to lay out expectation and put support in place.

3. Use Parent Evenings to focus on attendance. Selected parents to make appointments with Head of Key Stage or SLT to evaluate impact of poor attendance and draw up Individual Attendance Plans.

4. Celebrate good attendance: issue certificates for improved attendance as well as 100% attendance every term and termly reward event.

5. Notices for students and parents emphasising the importance of attendance.

6. Regular updates and reminders in the Headteacher's weekly email.

7. Utilise form tutors as first point of contact and in combatting the "odd day" attitude, combatting the "time off for minor illness" attitude and emphasising the negative impact of making avoidable medical appointments in term time.

8. Provide Form Tutors with attendance data for their groups

9. Work with external support agencies such as Early Help Services

10. Adopt the Local Authority guidance procedures and fast track process where appropriate.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents should then call on each day of the absence.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider initiating the local authority fast track attendance procedure.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee and appropriate actions will be taken to support improvements in the pupil's attendance.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

In school, we update out Attendance Tracker on a weekly basis and review our actions in a fortnightly attendance meeting. Where possible, we adopt an approach of early intervention. If a pupil's attendance continues to worsen, we initiate monitoring periods, PANEL meetings and other actions from the local authority guidance documentation.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer and Support Staff

The attendance officer and support staff:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level

- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher

- Works with external partners to tackle persistent absence

- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Form Tutors

Form Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office through entering it promptly onto SIMS.

7.5 Office Staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system, and keep the Attendance Officer informed.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the person on SLT with responsibility for attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding 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
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
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