

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### **Definitions**

1. 'Parent(s)' includes guardian(s) or any person who has parental responsibility for the pupil or who has care of him/her.
2. 'Is to', 'are to' and 'must' are obligatory. 'Should' is not obligatory but is good practice and is to be adhered to unless non-compliance can be justified.

### **PREAMBLE**

1. Staff and governors strongly believe that in order for pupils to be successful, they need excellent attendance. Good attendance is inextricably linked to good pupil behaviour and effective teaching and learning. Moreover, regular attendance and punctuality at school is important for the future prospects and well-being of pupils. To this end, all pupils' attendance is to be monitored carefully and action taken should problems arise.
2. **Education Act 1944.** 'Every parent of every child of compulsory school age has a duty to ensure that they receive efficient full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, either by regular attendance at school *or otherwise*'.
3. **Objectives.** The objectives of this Policy are to:
  - a. Promote good attendance and punctuality.
  - b. Ensure all members of Bishop Wordsworth's School (the School) community understand their role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
4. **Roles.** The School seeks to work in cooperation with parents to encourage regular attendance within the School. There are clear roles for all involved in good attendance – pupil, parents, tutor, subject teacher, Heads of School, Pastoral Support Officer, SENDCO, School Nurse, Education Welfare Service (EWS), Leadership Team and the link Governor.
5. **Attendance & Punctuality.** The School seeks to encourage good attendance and punctuality through tutorial work and assemblies.

### **POLICY**

6. Pupils are required to attend school in accordance with current legislation.
7. During the term time the official opening time of school each weekday is from 8.40am to 3.50pm. Parents are expected to inform the School of the specific reason for non-attendance by telephone, e-mail or via Insight on the first day of absence and every day of absence thereafter. Sixth form students can inform the Sixth Form Office of their own absence. The School reserves the right to request a signed letter from a parent to confirm the reason for absence.

### **REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME**

8. Leave of absence during term time may not be granted unless in exceptional circumstances: absence for family holidays is specifically not permitted.
9. Parents are reminded that any requests for leave of absence should be made within the terms of the Home-School Partnership Agreement and that there is good evidence for a direct link between attendance and educational attainment and progress.

## **PROCEDURE**

10. The Attendance Register is to be taken by the tutor at the beginning of each morning and in the afternoon is completed automatically from lesson monitor data from the lesson immediately after lunch. Pupils are to be marked as present or absent. A receptionist is to telephone the parents of any pupil who arrives in School later than 25 minutes after the registration bell to find out the reason.

11. Lateness is to be recorded with a distinction between lateness before and after registers close (authorised and unauthorised) (see Annex A). Registers are to be open for morning registration from the first bell until the end of registration, after which registers close and pupils are to be marked as late (unauthorised absence). Afternoon registration is to be open for the duration of the period directly after lunch.

12. Class teachers are to record and follow up any absence from lessons.

13. Registers are to be checked daily by the Receptionist.

14. A receptionist is to telephone the parents of any pupil who is absent for whom an email, a telephone call on the 'absence' line, an 'Insight' notification or other acceptable notice has not been received 45 minutes after the start of the school day to find out the reason for absence.

15. Once the reason for the absence has been established the appropriate symbol is to be inserted in the Register (see Annex A). The Receptionist is to complete appropriate codes for absence. If no valid reason can be given for absence it is to be recorded as unauthorised.

16. If there is reason to believe that a pupil may be truanting, the circumstances are to be investigated immediately by the relevant Head of School (or their deputy).

17. Pupils who truant are to be punished through use of an appropriate sanction.

## **RECORDING**

18. The Register must show whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. For the symbols used to record presence or to distinguish between the categories of absence see Annex A.

19. The number of sessions and number of absences for the appropriate period are to be recorded on reports and published through Insight.

20. A receptionist/ Attendance Admin Officer is to use data recorded in the registers to produce information on authorised and unauthorised absence for Years 7-11 to be analysed by the Headmaster every half term (except for the second half of the Summer term). A report is presented to Governors annually in July.

## **SUPPORTING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

21. Reception staff are to produce monthly reports for Heads of Lower, Middle School and SENDCO of pupils with less than 90% attendance. Normally, if attendance drops below 90% for a period of time the tutor, relevant Head of School or their deputy is to contact parents to discuss any issues that may be affecting their son's attendance and any strategies to help improve this. The negative effects of this poor attendance on the pupil's curriculum and social integration is to be discussed and the tutor is to continue to work with the pupil to improve attendance. Tutors and Heads of School are to record all interventions with the family that have been taken in order to improve attendance.

22. The School may request medical evidence of illness when attendance falls below 90% and may convene either a School Attendance Meeting or a Medical Personal Education Plan meeting, to which the parents are to be invited, in order to elicit all

factors affecting the pupil's attendance. Clear objectives should be set as part of the meeting with the aim of ensuring that the pupil receives the educational provision to which he is entitled. If the family declines to attend the meeting the School is to hold the meeting without them. A review meeting is then to be held at a later date to assess if the objectives in the meeting have been met and, if they have not been, the matter is to be referred to the Education Welfare Service (EWS). From these meetings specific recommendations will be made with an agreed time scale.

23. As a last resort, the EWS has the option to prosecute parents who do not fulfil their duty to see that their children attend school regularly.

#### **24. Re-integration Procedures.**

- a. If a pupil has been absent for a prolonged illness, regular contact is to be maintained with parents and, where appropriate, work is to be sent home.
- b. Tutors are to be mindful of a pupil returning to school after prolonged absence and are to be available through tutor time to support them with catching up on their missed work and helping them to settle back into the School routine.
- c. Subject teachers are to be informed by the Head of School about a pupil's return to school and requested to advise pupils on what they need to catch up on and how best this can be achieved
- d. Subject teachers are to use Insight to communicate with parents about missing work and forthcoming deadlines.

#### **CHANGES IN LEGISLATION**

25. If, during the currency of this Policy, any statute or statutory instrument is enacted that adds to, modifies or is in conflict with any provisions of the Policy, then the Policy will be deemed to include any such statutory provision to the extent necessary to make the Policy compliant with that provision.

#### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

26. The Governing Body, advised by Leadership Team, will review this Policy annually.

27. This Policy was adopted by Governors on 23 May 1995 and last reviewed on (dates in ( ) indicates no change) 8.10.96, 18.2.97, 12.5.98, 11.5.99, 9.5.00, 8.5.01, 7.5.02, 1.7.03, 29.6.04, 28.06.05, 27.06.06, 10.07.07, 15.07.08, 14.7.09, 20.05.10, 13.06.11, (14.06.12), 9.4.13, 18.11.14, 10.11.15, (17.11.16), 02.11.17, 06.11.18, 01.03.20, 12.11.10

Annex:

A. Attendance Codes.

## **ATTENDANCE CODES**

### **Present at School**

- Λ Present
- L Late (before the register has closed)

### **Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity**

The absence of pupils taking part in supervised educational activities outside the school is recorded as 'approved educational activity'. This is equivalent to 'present' for performance table purposes. However, to avoid confusion in an emergency, schools should not record pupils who are off-site as present.

- B Off-site educational activity
- D Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- J At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- P Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience

### **Authorised Absence from School**

- C Leave of absence authorised by the school (to be recorded) (eg: Bereavement, agreed special occasion, performances, other approved absence not covered by other codes)
- E Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H Holiday authorised by the school
- I Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
- M Medical or dental appointments
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

### **Unauthorised Absence**

- G Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.
- N Reason for absence not yet provided
- O Absent from school without authorisation
- U Arrived in school after registration closed

### **Administrative Codes**

- X Not required to be in school / Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Y Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Z Pupil not on admission register
- # Planned whole or partial school closure