

Policy Title: Attendance Management Policy	Reviewed: 15 th January 2024
School Section: Brontë House	Reviewer: SEC/KB
Audience: Bronte House	Revision: 1.0

Attendance Management Policy

Introduction

Brontë House recognises that a high level of attendance is an essential foundation to students achieving positive outcomes and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility.

DfE (Department for Education) Guidance "Working together to improve school attendance" lays out the importance of attendance, including legal aspects, that all parties should be aware of.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

(DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' Sept 2022)

Brontë House wants all of its students to aspire to 100% attendance and the support of parents and carers is vital in achieving this. Where a student's attendance falls below 90%, within the education sector, this is seen as 'persistent absence'.

The impact on progress is measurable. Evidence shows that a child's progress and attainment is adversely affected if their attendance falls below 90%; national statistics indicate that if a student's attendance drops below 90% at senior school, their GCSE attainment is likely to drop by an entire grade.

When a child is absent from school, there is a measurable impact on their learning. However, there is also, in many cases, an impact on the learning of other children as well. If teachers' time is spent preparing packs of work for children to take on holiday in term time, as is frequently requested by parents, then it is not being spent on the vast majority of students who have not been absent from school.

Of course, from time-to-time, children experience health challenges. We will continue to be supportive and sympathetic in these cases, working with the families concerned. We also understand that there are occasions where children and families are presented with exceptional opportunities that fall within term time and we will continue to exercise our discretion, through written representations to the Head, to authorise such absences.

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Woodhouse Grove School does all it can to prepare students for adult working life beyond school by promoting good attendance and punctuality and this begins in younger age groups at Brontë House.

1. Absence through Illness

Where a child needs to be absent from school due to ill health, parents are asked to:

- Adopt a sensible approach to illness. Only keep students at home where it is absolutely necessary. Using the guidance provided by the NHS "[Is my child too ill for school?](#)" can provide parents with useful information.
- Contact the school by telephone (01132502811) or email absence@bronte.co.uk informing the school of the reason for their absence, and if possible, the expected date of return.
- Produce medical evidence when requested (e.g., a doctor's note) to explain the reasons for prolonged absence or repeated absences.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify School if their child is going to be absent and the school expects parents to do so between 8am and 9am on the day of absence. If a student is not present for morning registration and the school has received no communication from home, a message will be sent via text to the parents by 10.30am.

2. Authorised Absence

The Department for Education has confirmed that schools, not parents, authorise absence. The main areas where the school will authorise absence are given below:

1. Illness

Where schools accept that a pupil is ill, they must authorise the absence but can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness.

2. Appointments

Dental and medical appointments are authorised absences but, where possible, such appointments should be made out of school hours.

3. Religious observance

In line with Local Authority recommendations, Woodhouse Grove School will afford children, regardless of their faith, up to 3 days of authorised absence per academic year for religious and cultural observance.

4. Exceptional circumstances / unavoidable causes

Authorised absence will be granted for compassionate reasons such as a serious family illness or bereavement.

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Advance permission for absence from School at any time will be given only for exceptional circumstances. If absence is necessary, all request should be addressed to the Head. **We respectfully request that parents adhere to school term dates and avoid booking holidays during term time.**

3. Unauthorised Absence

If a child is absent from School without a valid reason, this will be classed as unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence is viewed by the school as a significant issue.

Where parents decide to keep their child(ren) away from school without authorisation from the school, this will be classed as unauthorised absence; and will be recorded as such in the register.

4. Punctuality & Registration (Mornings)

Punctual attendance at school is essential for student progress. Children who are late for school miss valuable learning time and develop bad habits, resulting in their being unprepared for the world of work. If this becomes a recurring issue, parents will be contacted to seek support and collaborate in improving a child's punctuality.

All children must be present for registration with their Form Tutor at 8.25am. If a child misses morning registration with their Form Tutor, they must go straight to the School Office upon arrival in School to sign in.

Monitoring Student Attendance

At Brontë House, we recognise our duty to proactively manage and improve attendance. We fulfill this duty through daily attendance monitoring and by looking at patterns of absence over time.

Persistent absentees

The Department for Education has changed the definition of 'Persistent Absence' to deal with the reality of pupil absenteeism in schools and its impact on their learning. The Department has reduced the threshold at which a pupil is defined as 'Persistently Absent' to 10 per cent. (This is the equivalent to a child missing one day of school a fortnight.) Pupils whose attendance is below 90 per cent are now officially classed as 'Persistent Absentees' and as such the School is obliged to contact the parents if their child's attendance drops below that figure.

Attendance figures for all students will be reviewed on a half termly basis to ensure that patterns of absence are investigated, and intervention is put in place where concerns remain.

Stage 1

Attendance 90% - 85%

A member of staff will call or email parents to discuss recent absences and log the explanation on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System). If appropriate, an attendance improvement plan may be

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agreed, including any necessary support. Monitoring and attendance targets will be put in place. Additional support and / or sanctions applied as necessary.

Stage 2

Attendance between 85% - 70%

If the reason is clear and the parents/students are engaging with us (and, where appropriate, have provided a medical certificate), the pastoral team member will contact them to explore updates and review the support in place.

Where it is a new or ongoing concern, the members of the pastoral staff will arrange a meeting with the parents to explore factors impacting attendance and options for support. This will be recorded on CPOMS. The school will consider amendments to the child's academic and co-curricular programme at school.

Agreement of a high-priority attendance improvement plan. Monitoring and attendance targets put in place. Additional support and / or sanctions applied as necessary.

Stage 3

Attendance between 50-70%

In addition to the regular (at least half termly) recorded contact from a member of the Pastoral Team, a Designated Safeguarding Lead must complete one home visit per term. In these instances, we would explore internal support from the school and work with external support services where appropriate support can be accessed. Any meetings that take place would involve all relevant professionals, including pastoral staff from the school and parents to share updates and review ongoing support.

In addition to the actions outlined in Stage 2 & 3, careful consideration will be given to a pupil repeating an academic year. There may also be a review of the pupil's place in the school, in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

Where a pupil has been through Stages 1 to 3, then improved their attendance, only for it to decline again, it is at the discretion of the Head to decide which stage of the process the pupil should be placed upon, involving pupil and parents accordingly.

The Head will be given oversight of all pupils in stage 2 & 3.

Other relevant policies

This guidance should be read in conjunction with other School policies including the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Mental Health Policy, Behaviour Policy and Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND).

This policy also draws on specific guidance and material from the following publications:

- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) DfE May 2022

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- [Children Missing Education](#) (CME), DfE September 2016
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE), DfE September 2023