Attendance Policy

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Mission Statement
Realising God Given Potential

The Bishop Wand School Commitment to Attendance

1. Statement of Principles

We will work together to create and maintain a successful and happy community where individual worth is celebrated and recognised.

The staff of The Bishop Wand School (hereafter known as the School) is committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, students, governors and the Local Authority, to providing a school which serves the community.

Regular attendance is key to achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters i.e. staying healthy, enjoying and achieving, keeping safe, contributing to the community, and social and economic well-being. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a school, we will encourage parents/carers to ensure that their children achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

2. Rights, Responsibilities and Roles

All students must:

• attend school regularly,
• attend school punctually,
• attend appropriately prepared for the day,
• discuss promptly with their form tutor/class teacher/Head of Year (HoY), any problems that may affect their school attendance.

All parents/carers will:

• encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities,
• ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day,
• ensure that they contact the school on the first day of absence or, if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school,
• contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school,
• notify the school immediately of any changes of contact details,
• notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
• whenever possible, parents/carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.

The School will:

• provide a welcoming atmosphere,
• provide a safe learning environment,
• provide a sympathetic response to any student’s or parent’s concerns,
• keep regular and accurate records of morning and afternoon attendance and punctuality,
• monitor individual student’s attendance and punctuality,
• contact parents/carers when a student fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence,
• follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Note that although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the School can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to illness or medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body will be requested,
• encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition,
• regularly inform parents of the percentage attendance of all students,
• make initial enquiries regarding students who are not attending regularly,
• meet regularly with the Inclusion Officer to monitor and support School attendance and punctuality,
• refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Inclusion Officer. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Education Welfare may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order,
• meet the requirements of the UN Convention – The Rights of the Child – by ensuring that whenever possible, students are consulted in all the decisions that relate to them.

3. School Organisation

In order for the School's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

In addition, the School has the following responsibilities.

**Headteacher, Governors and designated member of School staff with overall responsibility for attendance must:**

• ensure adoption of the whole policy.
• ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided.
• initiate a scheme for contacting parents/carers on the first day of absence.
• ensure that key staff have time-tabled periods for liaison and follow-up work with the Inclusion Officer and appropriate access to attendance data.
• consult and liaise closely with the Inclusion Officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay,
• work in close collaboration with the Inclusion Officer during their half termly register analysis.
• institute an attendance award scheme with assemblies, certificates and rewards,
• ensure that attendance percentages/graphs are displayed around the School and to set whole school attendance targets.
• monitor and evaluate attendance with the Inclusion Officer.
• inform the Inclusion Officer of all children removed from school roll or deemed to be Children Missing Education.
• inform the Inclusion Officer of all students that stop attending school with no explanation or reason with 10 school days following unsuccessful attempts to establish
the student’s whereabouts.

- inform the EWO of all students attending alternative provisions, either full time or part time.

**School Attendance Officer must:**

- operate a scheme for contacting parents/carers on the first day of absence,
- contact parents/carers if contact has not been made with the school to explain a student’s absence,
- produce weekly absence and punctuality records for HOY and form tutors,
- run a monthly return and store appropriately,
- run a monthly analysis for the member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with overall responsibility for attendance,
- arrange meetings for key staff for liaison and follow-up work with the Inclusion Officer and appropriate access to attendance data,
- consult and liaise closely with the Inclusion Officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay,
- work in close collaboration with the Inclusion Officer during their half termly register analysis.
- represent the school at meetings with parents if the concern is attendance related.

**Heads of Year must:**

- oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually.
- liaise with the SLT attendance lead regularly.
- reinforce good practice at year group meetings.
- reward good and improved attendance.
- share the form tutor’s concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the EWO.

**Class teachers/form tutors must:**

- complete registers accurately and punctually at the start of the day and every lesson throughout the day,
- follow up any unexplained non-attendance.
- inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance/HoY of concerns,
- be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the HoY.

**4. Students Leaving During the School Day**

- Students are not allowed to leave the School premises without prior permission from the School.
- Whenever possible, parents/carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents/carers are requested to confirm in writing the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time and whether the student is being collected or will make their own way to their destination.
- Students must sign out on leaving the School and sign back in on their return.
- Where a student is being collected from the School, parents/carers are requested to report to the School office before the student is allowed to leave the site.
If a student leaves the School site without permission their parents/carers will be contacted. Should the School be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the students as a missing person.

5. **Punctuality/Lateness**

Punctuality to school is crucial, and registration at the beginning of the day with a student’s tutor is one of the most important periods in the day. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual’s learning and to that of the other students in the class. It is paramount therefore that all students arrive at School on time.

- Registration takes place at 8.35 and students who arrive after 8.40 (i.e. five minutes later) will be recorded as late to School.
- If a student is late during registration they must report to their form tutor and be recorded as late and by how many minutes.
- If a student is late after registration they must sign in at the main school office and the time recorded.
- Registers close at 9.30 and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence for the half day session and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority.
- Persistent lateness by a student will be dealt with through school detentions by the form tutor/HOY and may be referred to Education Welfare.

6. **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform the School as soon as possible. A student will not be removed from the School roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the School and starting the next,
- The address of the new school,
- A new home address if appropriate.

The student’s School records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the School has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Local Authority Tracking Officer and Education Welfare.

7. **Holidays/Leave of Absence**

- The school holiday dates, external exam dates and INSET days are published a year in advance.
- Family holidays/leave will not be authorised. Only in exceptional circumstances will leave in term time be authorised.
- Where family leave in term time is of exceptional circumstance (family holidays do not fall into this category) a leave of absence application form must be requested from the Headteacher’s PA and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the School governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the student’s previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed 10 school days in any one academic year.
- If a holiday is taken without prior authorisation by the School, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Inclusion Officer will be notified.
Penalty Notices

The Headteacher, under Government Guidelines will request Surrey County Council to issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution for each parent/carer for each of their child’s unauthorised absence from School and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

- £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child’s regular school attendance and are failing to engage with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the School or Inclusion Officer.

Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term time for 5 days or more without the authority of the Headteacher, each parent/carer is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents/carers had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised.

Pupils identified by police and Inclusion Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

Late arrival after the close of registration on 5 occasions during a half term where the pupil’s attendance falls below 90%. The lateness will be recorded in accordance with the ‘Registration and Lateness’ section of this policy.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence/family holiday taken in term time, parents/carers will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

8. Truancy Patrol

When a student comes to the notice of a Truancy Patrol, the student’s pattern of school attendance is investigated. If there are unauthorised absences in the preceding 4 months, a warning letter may be sent to the parent/carers. If there are further unauthorised absences during the subsequent 15 school days, a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent/carer.

If there is no significant improvement in attendance in the 3 subsequent weeks, a Penalty Notice will be issued. Again, the Penalty Notice fines are as follows:

- £60 (per parent, per child) if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.
- if the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.
9. **Failure to Ensure Regular School Attendance**

Education Welfare may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent/carers who are failing to secure their child’s regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or EWO. Before a Penalty Notice is issued, parents/carers will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

10. **Analysis of Data**

- Each month the following data will be collected and analysed in order to assess performance and trends:
  - whole school attendance rates,
  - numbers and proportion of persistent absentee pupils,
  - rates of unauthorised absence,
  - attendance/absence rates for particular cohorts and groups (year groups, gender, ethnicity, Special Educational Needs (SEN), Free School Meals (FSM), Looked After Children (LAC), etc.).

11. **Attendance Targets**

2019 – 2020 Target 96.5%

12 **Registration Codes - Attached**

**Glossary**

SEN – Special Education Needs  
FSM – Free School Meals  
LAC – Looked after children  
HOY – Head of Year  
INSET – In-service education and training