



Attendance Policy

Date of Policy	September 2020
Date of Next Review	September 2023
Staff Responsible	Assistant Headteacher
School/Governor Policy	Community Committee

Glossary of terms

AIM – Attendance Improvement Meeting (4 week plan)

PA – Persistent Absence = Below 90%

LG – Leadership Group

AH – Assistant Head

PSHE – Personal Social Health Education

YL – Year Leader

Introduction and Philosophy

At Barnwood Park Arts College we believe that education is a life-long process. Students are entitled to, and benefit from, our educational provision and that this entitlement can only be realised by regular attendance. Barnwood Park is committed to sending a clear message to parents and students that school attendance is a legal responsibility and that unnecessary absence will be challenged and where appropriate unauthorised. An ethos designed to enthuse, encourage and foster self-esteem is a vital contributory factor toward the achievement of the school's targets on attendance and punctuality. Barnwood Park is committed to placing the highest possible priority on attendance and the development of an effective strategy to ensure that all students in our school display the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality and that any factors which may impede full attendance are identified and acted upon as soon possible.

Irregular attendance undermines the student, school and the community as a whole, impairs student's academic progress and may place them at risk of involvement in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour. At Barnwood Park we believe that regular school attendance and student achievement are inseparable

Statutory duties

“The parent (and/or carer) of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and

b) to any special needs they may have,

... by regular attendance at school ...”

(Education Act 1996 Part1, Section 7)

Aims

The aims of this policy on attendance and punctuality are to enable maximum student attendance by encouraging parents and carers to encourage their children to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by regular and punctual attendance at school and:

1. To establish and maintain a high level of attendance- (Target currently 96%)
2. To reduce the levels of persistent absence (below 90% attendance)
3. Raise the profile of attendance and make it a priority for staff, students, parents/carers and governors.
4. Ensure attendance procedures are effective and consistent.
5. Ensure the marking of registers is completed accurately, consistently, reliably and within agreed timescales. Attendance data will be used to provide an effective monitoring system and to inform practice and target resources.
6. Develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data in order to target attendance related issues.
7. To identify students and groups of students whose absence is giving cause for concern and target resources to work toward the resolution of any difficulties being experienced.
8. To promote an effective whole-school approach to the management of attendance where each member of the school community, including staff, governors, parents/carers and students is aware of their roles and responsibilities and makes an effective contribution.
9. To provide a safe and achieving environment that students want to be part of.

Encouraging Good Attendance for All

The attendance aims of Barnwood Park can only be achieved if every member of the school community plays his/her part. Every child has the right to high quality full time education which provides an appropriate curriculum which is designed to encourage students to want attend school. This will only be accomplished if relationships are positive; the school is happy, safe, secure and a stimulating environment in terms of learning and teaching.

Expectations

In order for the philosophy of this school to effectively work in practice, several expectations are placed upon all those involved:

Our expectations of Students

- Attend school every day and on time.
- Arrive on time for all lessons and be appropriately prepared for the school day.
- Inform a member of staff of any problem that may hinder their attendance at school.
- Be equipped and ready to learn.
- ALL Students arriving after 08.50 **MUST** report directly to Attendance Manager who will be located in the Hub until 9.15 and her office after that (*please note Covid amendments at end of this policy). If a student is late twice in one week they will receive an after school detention lasting one hour.

Our expectations of Parents/carers

- Ensure their children attend school regularly, on time and well prepared for the school day.
- Contact the school whenever their child is unable to attend school –preferably on the first day of absence. Contact should be made using the Attendance Line number or the school’s Attendance e-mail which can be found in the student planner as well as on the school website. **ALL** absences should be explained either by phone, e-mail or by letter upon the students return.
- Keep in regular contact with school and inform the appropriate member of staff if any problem occurs which may hinder their child’s regular attendance, discipline or behaviour in school.
- Attend meetings in school to discuss their child’s attendance and/or punctuality when necessary.
- Whenever possible avoid routine medical/dentist appointments during the school day. However, should this be unavoidable (Hospital or consultant appointments for example) ensure students are in school either prior to, or after, the appointment.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.

Our Expectations of the School

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early and sensitive contact with parents/carers when a student is absent where no appropriate reason has been provided.
- Early and sensitive action on any problem notified to us.
- Reward good and improved attendance and punctuality of all Students.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to Students returning after absence.
- Procedures for reintegration may be implemented at depending on circumstances and/or length of period of absence.
- Regular evaluation of attendance procedures by Leadership Group and school governors.
- Work towards ensuring all students feel supported and valued. Send a clear message if a student is absent that they will be missed.

Our Expectations of School Governors

- Place a regular item on the agenda of meetings for the Governing Body to review attendance. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and governors will play an active part in the whole school community.
- Governors, in conjunction with the Head Teacher will help set realistic but challenging targets for improvements in school attendance.
- Governors monitor attendance strategy

Guidelines for the Implementation of the Whole-School Attendance Policy

Subject Teachers

- Ensure that registers are accurately completed and sent within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson/session. If, in rare circumstances, the electronic register cannot be taken, a register **must** be done on paper and sent to reception as soon as possible
- Ensure that all students within lessons are able to access the learning through a range of teaching and learning strategies in line with the school's Learning and Teaching Policy.
- Ensure that underachieving students within each class are identified and inform Subject Leaders and Form Teachers. This will enable the school to identify those with the potential to become poor attendees.
- Identify, within each lesson, any students who clearly should be present in the lesson but are not. Please inform reception as soon as possible.

- Monitor carefully the attendance of individuals within a class and alert the relevant subject or Faculty Leader and the appropriate Form Teacher/Year Leader where patterns of non-attendance are detected.
- When a student is known to have truanted from your lesson, the teacher in question should follow this up by making sure they have caught up the missed work. They would normally do this through the setting of a detention; equivalent to the time missed.
- Ensure that appropriate work is set and marked for long-term absentees and those on long-term exclusions, so that the return to school is made as easy as possible.
- Ensure that those who return from long-term absence are provided with appropriate support to enable them to access the learning within the lesson.
- Welcome back students from long-term absence in a professional manner, avoiding reference to the absence in front of other students.
- Actively discourage any adverse comments about the absence from other students within the class.

The Subject Leader/Faculty Leader

- Monitor attendance within your subject/faculty area and follow up anomalies between levels of attendance in different classes.
- Promote good practice in the reintegration of absent students and setting of work for long term absence or excluded students.

The Form Teacher

Legal requirement

- Ensure that registers for morning sessions are accurately completed and sent by 8.50am
- Registration starts at 8.40pm and closes 10 minutes later. The registers must be marked correctly. Take action to request absence notes from returning students and remind them daily if notes are not forthcoming.
- Keep Attendance Manager up to date with reasons for absence as identified within absence notes by placing them in the form folder each morning.
- Encourage high attendance through constant reinforcement of individual and class targets and through encouraging students to want to be the best attending form in the Year/House.
- Monitor attendance within your form and display weekly attendance figures.
- Use short-term attendance reports and targets where you feel there is deterioration.

- Liaise with your Year Leader/Attendance Manager as early as possible where there are issues of attendance with individual students, groups within the form or the whole form.

Attendance Manager

- Monitor carefully the attendance of students within House/Year, taking note of any patterns amongst students from particular groups, particular times of the week or particular subject areas. Inform Leadership Group and the Assistant Head (AH) responsible for attendance of any identified patterns. Using the data put students into the traffic light system (see below)
Students will be "divided" into 4 groups – Red, Amber, Green and PA. Attendance issues identified with a new Y7 intake will be done as part of the primary visits – evidence suggests that poor attendance patterns are established before students arrive in secondary school.
Green Group: Attendance over 98%
Amber Group: Attendance between 95% and 97.9%
Red Group: Very poor attendance – 91%-94.9%
Persistent Absence: below 90%.
- Liaise with the AH to decide upon those students on whom resources should be focused.
- Liaise with the AH to ensure that students with poor attendance (those in the PA group) are receiving appropriate levels of support.
- Monitor the attendance rates of forms within the Year/House, taking action alongside form teachers where particular forms are identified as having poor attendance.
- Monitor particularly closely the attendance of Persistent Absentees, those with deteriorating levels of attendance, and those at risk of disaffection.
- Foster a positive attitude to school attendance within the Year/House through assemblies, the form noticeboards and constant reinforcement with student thus encouraging a spirit of healthy competition between forms and individuals.
- Liaise with subject teachers to ensure that appropriate work is set for long-term absentees and those excluded from school.
- Work with the Core Inclusion Team to identify ways in which long-term absentees can be reintegrated effectively.
- Liaise with parents/carers on matters related to their child's attendance. Input could include calling meetings to discuss students at risk of being poor attendees.
- Discuss with AH the implementation of sanctions where there have been instances of truancy, whether from individual lessons or whole days.
- Keep form teachers informed of action taken in relation to particular students.

- Ensure that parents/carers who wish to take students out of school during term-time are contacted and the potential consequences explained.
- Operate attendance text messages and personal first day calls for all students prioritising parents/carers of students with unsatisfactory attendance or where truancy is suspected
- Administer the registration system, noting where registers have not been completed or have not been completed accurately and taking appropriate action with the individual member of staff.
- Ensure that the school's official registers are in line with legal requirements and that any anomalies are reported to LG.
- Use attendance data to identify students in the PA, Purple, Red, Amber and Green Groups (see section on Traffic light groups).
- Work with Core Inclusion Team (CIT) and SENDCO to identify students for support and close monitoring.
- Investigate instances of suspected whole-day or lesson truancy and take appropriate action, including making initial contact with parents and informing the relevant Year Leader.
- Keep in contact with long-term absentees and liaise with CIT to ensure that effective reintegration strategies are used, identifying "catch up" needs.
- Contact parents where absences have remained unexplained.
- Liaise with AH and use attendance data to identify students for Attendance Improvement Meetings (AIM or referral to LA for fixed penalty notices).
- Regularly meet with the AH responsible for Attendance and ensure that details of action are provided for the relevant stakeholders.
- Liaise with staff regarding targeted students to improve attendance through parental contact, attendance reports, short-term targets and rewards. Particular attention will be paid to students with attendance below 95% and those falling into the Persistent Absentee category <90%.
- Identify and prepare cases for referral to the LA and for cases where court action is required.
- Work with AH to involve, when appropriate, outside agencies with individuals and groups of students.
- Take part in targeted intervention work directed at groups of poor attendees.
- Administer the attendance rewards systems, liaising closely with YL and AH.
- Collaborate with AH to investigate reports of illegal juvenile employment.
- Provide weekly data on Attendance for Form Teachers, YL's and Assistant Head Teacher (including subject/Faculty leaders as required at other times).
- Liaise with Attendance Prefect

Assistant Head in Charge of Attendance

- Take overall responsibility for developing Attendance Policy within the school.
- Organise and take part in Attendance Panels as required.
- Provide line management for the Attendance Manager and ensure that there is good communication with all parties.
- Liaise with AH (Data) who by using attendance data will analyse progress for patterns of poor attendance amongst particular year groups or other groups of students and take action to address any anomalies.
- Oversee the efficient running of the Registration system and take action where registers are not being completed accurately.
- Organise parent support events on attendance.
- Take a lead in promoting the need for good attendance through assemblies, PSHE and work with staff and students.
- Decide upon any initial action to be taken to encourage good attendance with regard to new admissions.
- With the rest of LG, actively discourage parents from taking students out of school during term-time.
- With the Transition coordinator and Year Leader for Yr 7, identify any Year 6 students for targeted support on attendance at transition from primary school.
- Present attendance data to Leadership Group, Governors, Local Authority etc.

Education Entitlement and Inclusion (EEI)

Under the recent county changes the Education Welfare Service have been amalgamated with other departments and now form the new Education Entitlement and Inclusion (EEI). This new team involves an Support and Challenge Adviser (SCA) who will work with the school to ensure that the school;

- Carries out duties with regard to statutory intervention in cases of irregular school attendance.

Managing Lateness

- Registers are marked in accordance with the above and if a child is marked late before registration closes the register shall be marked with the coding "L". The number of minutes late will be recorded on the electronic folder. The school will implement discipline measures in respect of a child who is continually late.
- Where a child attends school and is late after registration the register has **closed** shall be marked with the coding "U", this represents an unauthorised absence.

- Students who are persistently late after registration has closed and have been marked with the coding “U” may be referred to the Local Authority and may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100.

Managing Holidays

The Local Authority, in consultation with Headteachers, has produced a model Attendance Policy for consideration by schools, which contains the following basic principles:

- Regulation 8 (3) and (4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 applies in respect of each and every child who is a registered pupil at the school.
- NO child shall be permitted to take term time leave unless it is deemed exceptional circumstances. These may be granted at the Headteacher’s discretion.
- It is the parent’s/Carers obligation to apply to the school for leave of absence and if granted the school will write to the parents confirming the absence has been authorised, The register should be marked with the coding “H” if the absence has been authorised, or “G” if unauthorised (see below).
- Where leave of absence is taken without the school’s permission the register should be marked as unauthorised absence and referred to the Local Authority who may consider a Fixed Penalty Notice (see above).
- As a multi-cultural school we recognise the importance of the observance of religious festivals and therefore, for example, will allow one day for “Eid Ul Adha” and one day for “Eid El Fitr” the registers shall be marked with the coding “R” (Leave of Absence for religious observance in respect of other denominations will be granted on application, following advice taken from the relevant advisory authority). This will still be recorded as an absence albeit an authorised one.

When looking at applications for holiday during term time schools may consider the following factors;

- A visit involving family overseas may have an entirely different significance than the normal association with a “holiday”
- Such visits may be very important in terms of the child’s identity and self-esteem as they grow up.
- Parents/carers may feel that the reasons for the visit, e.g. family illness, bereavement, family business, maintaining family contacts etc., and the distances involved, climate at time of year and high costs may dictate the available choices to parents/carers.

Schools will explain that

- Advance permission from school **MUST** be sought before booking the trip.
- The absence period **MUST** be planned carefully with the school. (Research has demonstrated that students who miss school for six weeks may fall behind in their school work by a full term).
- The effects of any term time absence will be damaging to the child's continuity of learning and will in all likelihood impact on examination results.

Managing Reintegration

- From time to time it is necessary to reintegrate students back into school who have been experiencing problems and the school will decide if this is appropriate or not.
- Where this is agreed the student Support Mentors (SSM) and/or the CIT will play an integral part in managing any reintegration.

Managing Illness through the School Day

- If a student is unwell, she should report to Reception.
- If a student requires first aid they should report to reception (or send a message to reception) for their condition to be assessed. If necessary, parents/carers will be informed for the student to be collected from Reception: this decision must be made by the Attendance Manager, appropriate YL or LG. Students are not allowed to make their way home, but must be collected by an appropriate adult; the student 'white slip' system will be maintained in respect of illness. All students who are being sent home for illness **MUST** be collected by a named contact or representative of the named contact.
- Parents/carers will still be required to complete an absence form/write to the school with regards to the reason as to their child's absence.
- In exceptional circumstances, emergency services may be contacted if there is any delay in the parents arrival at school or in the interests of the welfare of the child, when parents will be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Education off School Site

- On occasions, students may be involved in educational activities away from the school site, such as sport, residential visits, work experience, college link courses, field trips, etc. If students fail to attend education off site it is still deemed as school

absence and the register will reflect as to whether any absences are authorised or not. The circumstances of which may be referred to the Local Authority.

Strategies that will be used to improve attendance are seen in the table below
(Green, Amber, Red and Persistent Absence)

Strategy	PA – Below 90%	R – 90% - 94.9%	A – 95% - 97.9%	G – 98% +
Attendance Improvement Meetings (AIM)	X			
Short-term targets monitored by the Attendance Manager/AH. This will be monitored using the standard Attendance Improvement Meeting paperwork (and later AIM review paperwork).	X			
Referral to the LG for discussion.	X			
For some intervention sessions students will be invited to attend intervention sessions. They would begin with some intensive input and then perhaps meet once a month.	X			
First day personal calls will be prioritised by the Attendance Manager	X			
Support for reintegration after absence – the Attendance Manager will liaise with relevant school staff as appropriate.	X	X	X	X
Rewards for students exceeding their individual targets.	X	X	X	X
Referral to Local Authority	X			
Referral to AH.	X	X		
Early parental meeting with the Attendance Manager and/or Assistant Head I/C attendance	X	X		
Short-term individual targets monitored by the Attendance Officer.	X	X	X	
Progress Review Panel. Student, Attendance Officer and YL where appropriate and Parents/Carers will be invited. This can be convened as and when needed to deal with individuals.		X	X	
Form Teachers and YL's monitor attendance carefully – and use short-term attendance reports where they feel there is deterioration.	X	X	X	X
First Day Texts / personal calls by Attendance Manager.	X	X	X	X
Access to rewards system for those meeting or exceeding targets.	X	X	X	X
Element of competition between forms and year groups to remain.	X	X	X	X
Rewards for forms exceeding targets.	X	X	X	X
PSHE programme	X	X	X	X
Assemblies – especially to launch the new policy.	X	X	X	X
Attendance meetings for advice to parents.	X	X	X	X

Rewards

When schools make attendance a high profile issue there is usually a positive reaction from pupils in terms of raised attendance and improved punctuality.

(Improving Attendance and Behaviour in Secondary Schools, Ofsted, 2001)

Sustaining this profile and the momentum generated requires systems that acknowledge good half termly attendance through awards in assemblies and through the House system. As a school we also display positive attendance messages around our school, use verbal encouragement and acknowledgment of improving attendance as well as contacting parents/carers, e.g. good news postcards, phone calls or letters home.

- The school recognises the need to reward school attendance and a number of strategies will be employed to achieve this to reflect:

a) Weekly Attendance

b) Termly Attendance

c) Annual Attendance

d) Punctuality

These will form part of the Year/House competition as well as generating Prize draws, certificates and other rewards for individual students or best attending form during a particular term.

COVID-19 AMENDMENTS:

Due to the current guidance on Covid 19 and how schools have been advised to operate we have found it necessary to make some temporary amendment to this policy:

1. Students arriving late to school are no longer going to report to the Attendance Manager, as this would corrupt the Year group bubbles established in school. Until further notice students who arrive late to school should go straight to their first lesson and be registered there.
2. Students who are absent from school due to testing positive or if they are shielding to protect someone at home they will be coded differently although we have yet to receive guidance on how this may affect their attendance.

3. If a student displays symptoms but tests negative, current guidelines (as at 1st September 2020) says they should return to school as soon as possible.
4. Whilst our school target remains at 96% it may prove difficult to measure against local/national statistics due to the effects of Covid-19 across the country

PLEASE NOTE THAT CURRENT GUIDANCE REGARDING COVID -19 MAY CHANGE AND THEREFORE THIS POLICY MAY BE SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE CHANGES.