



Blue Coat Church of England Academy

Attendance Policy

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Ratified by the Governing Body on:		
	Signature	
Principal	<i>DJ Smith</i>	D Smith
Chair of Governors	<i>Parker</i>	L Parker
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Contents

1. Aims.....	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. School procedures	3
3.1 Attendance register	3
3.2 Unplanned absence	4
3.3 Medical or dental appointments.....	4
3.4 Lateness and punctuality.....	4
3.5 Following up absence.....	4
3.6 Reporting to parents.....	5
4. Authorised and unauthorised absence	5
4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence	5
4.2 Legal sanctions	5
5. Strategies for promoting attendance	5
6. Attendance monitoring	5
7. Roles and responsibilities	6
7.1 The governing board	6
7.2 The Principal	6
7.3 The Attendance Officer	6
7.4 Teachers	7
7.5 Reception staff	7
Appendix 1: attendance codes.....	8

Attendance policy

[Colossians 3:23-24](#)

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting 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. We will build strong relationships with families, listen to, and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.

We believe that students cannot learn if they do not attend school

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 are required to keep an attendance register, and all students 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 student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.40pm

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents 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 8.40am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). Parents can contact the school reception on 01922 720558

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

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 student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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

A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Punctuality is tracked by the Heads of Year and students will be expected to sit a 30-minute detention for lateness with the Head of Year or Success Centre staff. If they are late more than twice in a week, they will complete a Head of Year detention of one hour.

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. Parents will be contacted the same day as the absence to determine the reason. Contact may be made through text or via telephone. A home "keeping in touch" visit may be made where a student has been absent for four or more days, regardless of the student's attendance record. The visiting Officer will have identification and may ask to see the student.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Parents will receive a copy of their child's attendance on their school written report each year. Parents will be contacted by the school or the Education Attendance Officer if concerns arise about attendance.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

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 student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision

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 per parent per child, 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 student 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 will prosecute the parent.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

The following are used to promote good attendance and punctuality:

- Awards for outstanding/or improved attendance
- Half termly year group competitions
- Termly and half termly rewards for 100% attendance
- Rewards trips throughout the year
- Annual prize giving

6. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Officer monitors student absence daily.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health

If a student's absence is unauthorised, we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a student's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving the School Attendance Officer from the Local Authority.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-level absence data is collected regularly 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.

7. Roles and responsibilities

Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual students and families. The school will use data to target attendance and punctuality improvement efforts to students, student cohorts and student groups who need it most. Staff will work with both students and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. The school will particularly target persistent absence, including the use of regular home visits, parental meetings, personalised support plans, mental health provision and may seek to involve the Safeguarding and SEND teams and where necessary may make referrals to services and organisations outside of school that can provide additional assistance.

The school will consider legal sanctions and may use fixed penalty notices if attendance falls to unacceptable levels and the school believes it has exhausted all avenues of support or if the students and / or family does not engage fully with the process. The School Attendance Officer will be involved at the earliest stage of the attendance process to ensure regular keep in touch visits are made and to advise the school regarding next steps and avenues of support at every stage.

Whilst every student has the right to a full-time education, the school will also consider the specific needs of certain students and their families, who have specific barriers to attendance. The school will make reasonable adjustments and review whether additional support is required, in line with the schools' obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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 and Principal

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 students and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Works with the Local Authority's School Attendance Officers 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 Teachers

Class teachers and form tutors are responsible for recording attendance and punctuality on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Reception staff

Reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

Contact details for attendance:

If you wish to report your child's absence, please contact the **school reception on 01922 720558** or contact your child's Head of Year to discuss the matter in more detail. Please contact them on:

Mrs Cockayne st-cockayne-g@bluecoatacademy.org

Mr Pittaway st-pittaway-l@bluecoatacademy.org

Mr Hendy st-hendy-l@bluecoatacademy.org

Mr Wrighton st-wrighton-r@bluecoatacademy.org

Ms Owen has strategic responsibility for school attendance within school and can be contacted via school reception and at postbox@bluecoatacademy.org.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student 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 student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student 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 student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day