



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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1. Introduction

At Baysgarth School we believe that attendance is strongly linked to students' motivation and academic achievement. Poor attendance and punctuality threaten the rights of young people to an effective education. This Attendance and Punctuality Policy states the responsibility of the school, student and parent in securing good attendance and punctuality.

2. Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority

- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that Parents and Carers are responsible to ensure their child receives a suitable education.
- Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a Parent or Carer who fails to ensure their child attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.
- Baysgarth School works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that Parents and Carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Fixed Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.
- All sanctions are used to improve attendance and punctuality and reduce absence.

3. Aims of Policy

The aims of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy are:

- To ensure all students attend Baysgarth School regularly and punctually, in order to ensure they achieve academically and make the most of all opportunities offered
- Students whose attendance is a barrier to their academic success receives swift and targeted support in order to secure improvements.
- Strong partnerships between Baysgarth School and parents are needed to secure good attendance.

All leaders within Baysgarth School are relentless in their role to establish a positive learning climate, including outstanding attendance and punctuality. They are uncompromising in their expectations and challenge, where appropriate, colleagues, students and parents.

4. Principles

- The aim of Baysgarth School is to provide a safe and caring environment where every student can attend and engage with all opportunities offered.
- It is the responsibility of all staff, students and parents to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Students and families may require support with regards to attendance and/or punctuality, and the staff at Baysgarth School will endeavour to provide this.
- All students and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality will be challenged but support will be provided to ensure strong partnership working
- Students will be rewarded for good attendance and punctuality.
- Baysgarth School will endeavour to implement rigorous and robust procedures for attendance and punctuality, providing accurate information to Parents and Carers.

- Students who have been absent from school for a prolonged period will have a personalised support programme to positively reintegrate them back into school.
- Baysgarth School will support all aspects of the Education Act 1996 and the Children's Act 2003: 'Every Child Matters' by implementing this policy in a consistent manner.
- Baysgarth School will have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and reasonable adjustments will be made for students.

5. Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- We strive at Baysgarth School to ensure all students have a curriculum that is appropriate for their needs and which allows them to be successful. The curriculum is reviewed annually and the Inclusion Manager monitors the curriculum of students who have additional needs.
- Students are regularly informed of their attendance through tutor time and support is offered through their Tutor, Head of House or Attendance Officer, if attendance is below 95%.
- Students whose attendance is below 90% are supported by Baysgarth School's Attendance Officer to make the necessary improvements to their attendance.
- Attendance is celebrated every week in the Tutor power point and through regular attendance assemblies, where attendance is rewarded.
- Students, Parents and Carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- Parents and Carers are encouraged to contact the Attendance Officer at any time to discuss their child's attendance.
- Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to reintegrate back into Baysgarth School.
- Effective links are made with Primary Schools to facilitate the smooth transition into Year 7.
- Attendance will be reported to parents in line with the learning cycle reports.

6. Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of Baysgarth School have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

Students are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and on time;
- Be punctual to all lessons;
- Ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons (including intervention and 1-1 sessions) and inform Student Support if they cannot be registered for any reason;
- Ensure all messages and notes from Parents and Carers are taken to the appropriate place.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn;
- Ensure their child attends every day Baysgarth School is open unless, they are too ill to do so;
- Avoid keeping their child away from school for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation;
- Avoid arranging holidays during term time;
- Immediately inform the Attendance Office or Student Support if their child is unable to attend before the start of the school day, including the reason for absence and expected date of return. If no indication of a return date has been given, Parents and Carers should contact the school on each day of absence;
- On a student's return to school, an absence note should be written into a student's planner and signed.

Subject Teachers are expected to:

- Welcome and value the attendance of all students to lessons.
- Accurately register students within the first 10 minutes of each and every period including double lessons. Lesson registration is a vital element in tracking post-registration truancy and records will be used by the Education Welfare Officer in communications with Parents and Carers, and as evidence in legal proceedings.
- Accurately record lateness using an 'L' mark and entering how many minutes late a student is to the lesson and apply an appropriate sanction if necessary, as per the Behaviour Policy.
- Ensure that students know the register is being taken and the importance of this legal document.
- Identify student absence to lessons and take appropriate action using the school's Behaviour Policy, if appropriate.
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

Tutors are expected to:

- Discuss any periods of absence with students on their return and ensure any necessary information is passed to the relevant staff.
- Discuss attendance weekly with students and celebrate those students whose attendance is good or is improving.
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and raise these with the Head of House.
- Work with identified students, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets.
- Ensure that all absence notes or verbal messages are passed to the Attendance Officer.
- Discuss attendance with Parents and Carers at Parents' Evenings, as appropriate.

Heads of House are expected to:

- Monitor absence and attendance regularly, by use of the Weekly Data Sheet and ensure this is communicated weekly to update Tutors through meetings/briefings on school, house and year attendance and punctuality, and ensuring they are aware of House priorities.
- Provide targeted support for identified students, whose attendance is causing concern as per escalation procedure.

- Ensure attendance is a priority in all PSP's.
- Hold Tutors to account for the targeted work with individuals in order to secure improvements in their attendance and/or punctuality.
- Promote and celebrate attendance through assemblies.

Inclusion Manager/Learning Managers are expected to:

- Provide targeted support for identified students, whose attendance is causing concern as per escalation procedure.
- Ensure the weekly attendance for Looked After Children is monitored and interventions are planned through their Personalised Education Plan.
- Ensure attendance is a priority in all PSP's, EHA, CP and CIN Plans.
- Ensure all exclusions and isolation placements are communicated with the Attendance Officer

Student Support/Reception staff are expected to:

- Receive calls and messages from Parents and Carers regarding student absence and ensure these are inputted into the communication log and communicated with the Attendance Officer.
- Contact Parents and Carers regarding student absence, where necessary.

Attendance Officer is expected to:

- Lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the school, including improving attendance and reducing persistent absence.
- Ensure attendance is celebrated and rewarded on a regular basis.
- Ensure all registers are completed accurately and reliably, and inform Heads of Faculties and the Senior Leadership Team where there are persistent concerns
- Ensure all absence notes or holiday request forms are processed and recorded.
- Monitor daily and weekly attendance, absence and punctuality daily and implement appropriate attendance procedures.
- Provide a detailed weekly analysis of attendance and punctuality, which is shared with all Heads of House, Inclusion Manager, Learning Managers and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and liaise with the appropriate members of staff ensuring all information is communicated effectively.
- Provide targeted support for identified students, whose attendance is causing concern as per escalation procedure.
- Work collaboratively with outside agencies including the Local Authority, where appropriate, to improve attendance of individual students.
- Ensure the Education Welfare Officer has an active caseload and it is regularly reviewed for impact.
- Identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Hold Heads of House, the Inclusion Manager and Learning Managers to account for the targeted work with individuals, in order to secure improvements to their attendance and/or punctuality.

7. Registration

Registers are legal documents and can be used in legal proceedings as evidence. Therefore, staff are expected to complete registers for all timetabled lessons, interventions and tutor time accurately and within the first 10 minutes of the published start time.

The law requires the register to be taken twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. Students will be registered in their lessons by their class teachers. The morning register closes 30 minutes after the published start of the school day, after which students will be marked as an unauthorised absence, unless a satisfactory explanation has been received.

The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes. Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'Advice on School Attendance' published 2012 by the DfE.

8. Punctuality

Baysgarth School places great importance on the need for punctuality in attending school and all lessons:

- The school gates close at 8.25am.
- Any student arriving after this time should enter through reception and report to the Attendance Officer with their reason for lateness.
- The student's planner will be stamped and/or a late slip given.
- If no satisfactory explanation has been provided, the student will be issued an attendance detention at break-time on the same day. Failure to attend this detention will cause the consequence to be escalated through the school's Behaviour Policy.
- When a student arrives late to a lesson, staff should request the student's planner/late slip to ensure they have reported to the Attendance Officer. If the student fails to produce the evidence of lateness, On-Call should be contacted to investigate and advise on the consequence.
- Repeated punctuality issues will be referred by the Attendance Officer to the necessary staff.

9. Leaving the School Site

Any Key Stage 3 or 4 student who leaves the school premises during the day should go to Student Support where an 'Authorised Absence Pass' will be given, which gives permission for the student to be off the site. Parental/official verification for the reason for leaving the site will be sought/looked at before pass is given. The Authorised Absence Pass must be shown if a student is challenged outside the school by the Police or the Education Welfare Service.

10. Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where Baysgarth School has given approval for absence in advance, or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents and Carers may not authorise absence; only the school can do this.

Parents should immediately inform the Attendance Officer or Student Support if their child is unable to attend before the start of the school day, including the reason for absence and expected date of return. If no indication of a return date has been given, Parents and Carers should contact the school on each day of absence. A note in the student's planner should be provided with details of the absence on their return signed by a Parent or Carer

Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours, wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. Should Baysgarth School require evidence of a medical appointment, a medical evidence letter will be sent to Parents and Carers.

Following an explanation from Parents and Carers regarding a student's absence, Baysgarth School will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise or unauthorise, accordingly.

11. School Procedures for Dealing with Absence

- If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a Parent or Carer to explain the absence, the school will contact Parents or Carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact Parents and Carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence. Contact will be via an automated message. Parents and Carers are then encouraged to contact the school directly to discuss the issue with the Attendance Officer.
- The school asks that Parents and Carers ensure that the school has the most up to date contact details at all times.
- If no parental contact has been possible through text or phone, a letter will be sent requesting information regarding the absence and requesting Parents and Carers to contact the school directly.
- All absence notes will be retained.
- Where a student's absence is cause for concern, the school will write to Parents or Carers and/or invite the Parents or Carers into school or visit Parents or Carers at home.
- Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated, despite intervention, the Fast Track to Attendance process will be followed. Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued in line with each relevant Local Authority's Code of Conduct.

12. Persistent Absence

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 15% of their schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason (student's attendance is below 85%). Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need Parents' and Carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Any student whose attendance has reached the Persistence Absence threshold, or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention.

Where Parents and Carers fail to cooperate with support and strategies provided by Baysgarth School, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

13. Leave of Absence during Term Time

Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence; please refer to the Department of Education for the latest guidance.

Parents and Carers are strongly urged not to take students out of school for holidays during term time. Even where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that:

- Your request will not be authorised during exam periods (these could be throughout the year).
- Your request will not be authorised during the month of September.
- Your request will not be authorised for any student in Year 11, 12 or 13.
- Your request will not be authorised if your child's attendance is below 95%.
- Your request will not be authorised if your child has unauthorised absences.
- Your request will not be authorised where a previous holiday has been taken.
- Your request will not be authorised where there are coursework deadlines or controlled assessments (these could be throughout the year).

It is expected that a Holiday Request Form is submitted to Student Support at least four weeks in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the Holiday Request Form. The Attendance Officer will then consider the circumstances and the school's decision will be communicated in writing to the Parent or Carer.

Baysgarth School has the right to serve a Fixed Penalty Notice on Parents and Carers who insist on taking their child(ren) out of school without authorisation. Fixed Penalty Notices require each parent to pay a fine of £60 per child if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days (with effect from September 2013). Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any student taking leave of absence without prior notification to the school.

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors	Signed: _____ Head Teacher
Date: _____	Date: _____