Attendance Policy

Beverley Minster CE Primary School

Approved by:	LGB	**Date:** 15th July, 2024
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1. Aims

Beverley Minster CE Primary School is committed to ensuring all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities and achievement for all. For pupils to gain the most from their time at Beverley Minster CE Primary School, it is vital that they maintain excellent attendance and punctuality and we are committed to supporting pupils and their parents and carers in sustaining this throughout their time at school. In doing so, we will:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Ensure that all students access full-time education which meets their needs and allows them to reach their potential.
- Strive to provide a welcoming, caring and safe environment where each pupil can engage in all opportunities offered
- Promote good attendance and punctuality and discourage unjustified absence
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Commit to building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Continue to emphasise that it is everyone's responsibility to improve attendance and punctuality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

This policy also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Expectations

3.1 What you can expect from our school

Our school will:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality and investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence
- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly through the provision of engaging learning opportunities that are appropriate to their needs
- Support pupils to secure good attendance and punctuality
- Work hard to build supportive relationships with pupils and their parents/carers
- Provide parents/carers with a clear statement of attendance on pupil's reports
- Work closely with parents/carers where pupil absence is a cause for concern
- Support pupils returning to school following prolonged absence
- Work closely with the LA Education Welfare Service and relevant external agencies
- Only remove a pupil from the school roll when they have legally left
- Inform the Governing Body of attendance levels as part of each KPI report
- Where required, provide information for the prosecution of parents/carers whose children do not attend school and who do not have a substantive reason

3.2 What we expect of our pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers regarding attendance are given to the class teacher
- Promptly come into school when either walking in or dropped off by parents

3.3 What we expect of our Parents/Carers

Where this policy refers to a parent/carer, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return

- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their children
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Work with the school where support to improve their child's attendance is being offered

4. Specific roles and responsibilities

4.1 Class teachers

All class teachers are responsible for:

- *Recording accurate details of attendance at the beginning of each day and at the beginning of the afternoon session.*
- *Marking pupils who arrive during registration as L (late) and those who arrive after the register has closed (30 minutes after the start of the session) as U (unauthorised absence)*
- *Passing information regarding absence to the administration office*
- *Speaking to every pupil on returning to school about the reason for their absence to ensure they are supported and given the opportunity to catch up with missed work*

4.2 School administrative staff

School administrative staff will:

- *Ensure registers are being completed and inform School Leaders (where there are persistent concerns)*
- *Call parents/carers (or make contact via message/email) before 11am where possible to establish the reason for absence*
- *Clear and enter absence notes, (ensuring correct codes are used) absence emails and phone calls re absence*
- *update and maintain pupils' personal data/contact details*
- *Make necessary amendments to MIS data*
- *Provide data to class teachers as required*
- *Provide data for Local Governing Body reports*
- *Provide data for the LA and DFE returns*
- *Provide individual attendance reports*
- *Provide data to the Headteacher as required*
- *Report any hardware difficulties to ICT systems managers*
- *Provide tracking data for attendance and punctuality as required*

4.3 Head Teacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Where necessary, issuing fixed-penalty notices

4.4 The local governing body

The local governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the trust's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteachers to account for the implementation of this policy

To support this, governors receive information about school attendance and absence rates at each local governing body meeting

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil 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 2 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.25 The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office on 01482 869947 or vi email on office@beverleyminsterprimary.co.uk

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 parent/carer will be notified of this in advance.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment using an 'Exceptional Absence Request Form' (to be obtained via the school office).

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 6 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- After 8.55am will be marked as late using the appropriate code
- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If we cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, we may contact police and other relevant local authority agencies
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer or social worker
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents/carers to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with consider further action as detailed in section 6.2 below

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be done once a year unless a child's attendance is causing concern and the school will contact a parent by letter in order to make them aware of the attendance level and offer support to improve attendance.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. An 'Exceptional Absence Request Form' should be completed which is accessible via the school office. The head teacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Physical or mental illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 5.2 and 5.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils 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 pupil is attending educational provision

6.2 Legal action to enforce school attendance

Local authorities and schools can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay the local authority £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

In line with statutory guidance (working together to improve school attendance) headteachers will decide whether it is appropriate to issue a penalty notice for any student where their attendance meets the national threshold for issuing a penalty notice

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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 pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

As stated at the start of this policy, The Education Alliance Board of Trustees is committed to building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school. With this in mind, they have agreed that Head Teachers will not issue penalty notices where they are of the view that:

- The parent/carer is working proactively with the school to improve their child's attendance
- Issuing a fine would be counterproductive.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

To support high levels of attendance, the school will continually monitor and act to improve attendance. Attendance data will be analysed half-termly by the school administration team. Where action is required this will follow a staged approach as outlined below.

Stage 0 - refers to the approaches taken to promote high attendance for all pupils across school. This involves continued monitoring of attendance to identify and intervene with attendance concerns early. Parents / carers of all pupils who are absent without reason, will be contacted on the first day of absence. Spotlight on Attendance - where a pupil's attendance falls below 95% parents/guardians will be sent a Spotlight on Attendance letter.

Stage 1 – where a pupil's attendance continues to fall following Spotlight on Attendance letter, parents/ carers will receive a Stage 1 letter to notify of monitoring and to support an improvement in attendance.

Stage 2 - parents/guardians will be sent a Stage 2 letter where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, inviting them to a meeting with the school. This meeting will be to discuss ways to support sustained improved attendance for the pupil.

Stage 3 – where a pupil's attendance does not improve, a Stage 3 letter will be sent out. An Attendance Action Plan will be put in place with targets for improvement. The Local Authority Education Welfare Officer may be contacted at this point, depending on the circumstances of absence.

Stage 4 – where a pupil's attendance does not improve and continues to fall and the targets set in the Attendance Action Plan have not been attained, a Stage 4 letter will be sent out. This will invite parents/guardians to an Attendance Panel Meeting with the Head Teacher or senior member of school staff and the Local Authority Education Welfare Office (EWO) to review the action plan and ascertain next steps under the guidance of the Local Authority.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level

- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the local governing body

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the Head Teacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full local governing body

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy

Appendix 1: Key School Contacts

Name	Role	Email
School office	Administrative	office@beverleyminsterprimary.co.uk
Mr L. Fletcher	Head Teacher	office@beverleyminsterprimary.co.uk
Mrs R. Smalley	SENCO and Pastoral Lead	office@beverleyminsterprimary.co.uk

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed

		unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays