

Attendance Policy

Beckmead Family of Schools

January 2018

Date written/last reviewed January 2018

Date adopted by governors

Date of next review

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**PRINCIPLES**

There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement.

Regular attendance at school ensures that pupils can access a wide range of learning experiences and provides them with the best possible opportunity of making progress.

It also supports their social development in making constructive relationships with their peers and with staff. A history of good attendance is a valuable part of a supportive reference for pupils leaving school for college, training or work.

At Beckmead we take a sympathetic approach to the complex problems which often contribute to a young person having poor attendance. We will do everything we can to work with families and other agencies to alleviate these difficulties and enable improved attendance.

**AIM**

It is the School aim that at Beckmead all our pupils and staff should enjoy learning, experience success and develop their full potential. The aim of the Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils and staff. We will aim to improve attendance and punctuality for each individual pupil and where needed plan, deliver and evaluate individually targeted responses to poor attendance.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance and punctuality.

2. To recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and work with parents/carers and the school to address these.

3. To encourage pupils to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending school regularly.

**PRACTICE:**

**a) ATTENDANCE**

* Nurture Class leaders (Form tutors) mark the register morning and afternoon using SIMS. (See appendices for the registration times that vary according to the school site).
* Daily attendance is monitored by the SLT, and Lead of Post 16 provision and their team (at the College). Parents are asked to telephone before 9.30 am to explain any absence.
* Pupils who travel independently and arrive after registration should report to the school office and record the reason for their lateness.
* For pupils who are brought to school by their parents and arrive after registration, parents should report to the school office and explain the lateness.
* Pupils arriving after close of register will be issued with a “U” code unless authorised.
* Frequent “O” and “U” codes could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to each adult responsible for the pupil.
* When students attend offsite providers, the class team will check attendance and the office will complete the register as appropriate.
* Parents are contacted where pupils have failed to arrive and notice of their absence has not been received.
* If pupils are not present at the time of registration the pupil should be issued with a N mark. Once contact has been made with the parent or carer the reason for absence can be logged on SIMs.
* When the parent/guardian fails to report an absence two days in a row, and staff are unable to make contact on the phone, a home visit is carried out, where possible.
* Authorisation of absence in most circumstances requires a written note from parents/guardians.
* Unauthorised absences are followed up by either a phone call or a letter home.
* Persistent absence is reported to the Head of School and Family Engagement and Attendance Worker, for further action.
* When attendance continues to fall, the school sends a letter home inviting parent/carer for a meeting.
* Beckmead offers a range of services and support to promote regular attendance (e.g., family support “parent hub”, signposting to external, advice on transport)
* Employ Early Help measures supported by the Family engagement and attendance officer. This may include completing an Early Help Assessment.
* In the case of continuing concern over a pupil’s attendance, the Croydon staged intervention approach will be implemented.
* This may include legal measures (Fixed Penalty Notice).
* In severe cases of persistent absence, a pupil will be invited to a legal attendance meeting or in the case of sixth form; the pupil may lose their place.
* Staff must notify Croydon Council of CME (Children missing from education) for children who have not attended school for more than 10 consecutive days.
* Pupils who have 100% attendance will receive awards/rewards.

**b) LONG TERM ABSENCE**

* When pupils are absent, or likely to be absent, for more than one week on medical grounds, work will be set and marked by staff. Also on return to school, the pupil will be fully supported.
* In cases where extensive absence is accrued through intermittent absence, work will be set and marked by staff.
* Permission for family holidays, public performances and productions outside of school needs to be sought in writing from the Head teacher.

**c) MONITORING ABSENCE**

* Nurture Leaders (Form Tutors) monitor attendance of pupils in their class and refer any attendance concerns to Head of School.
* Heads of School monitor known pupils with persistent absence with the Family Engagement and Attendance Worker and take appropriate action e.g. have meetings with pupils, invite parents in for a meeting.
* At assemblies award certificates for excellent attendance are given to pupils.

**d) RECORDING ABSENCE**

* Parental Notes: authorisation of absence requires a written note from parents or carers.

Appendix A

**The Role of the Nurture Leader (Form Tutor)**

1. To mark the register at 8.45 am and 1.05 pm daily.
2. To return any notes regarding absence to the Office Administrator.
3. To monitor attendance and punctuality of pupils in the class.
4. To discuss attendance issues/ concerns with the pupil, for secondary and post 16 aged pupils.
5. To inform the Head of School of any attendance concerns.

**Role of Head of School/SLT**

* 1. To review attendance registers daily.
  2. To investigate student absences and carry out home visits when needed.
  3. To hold pupil cause for concern panel meetings with the school’s family engagement and attendance officer as required by each site.
  4. To monitor the progress of all pupils who have been referred to the Education Welfare Officer and liaise with the Executive Head.

**The Role of Post 16 Team (at Beckmead College)**

1. To prepare a weekly Persistent Absence list for Leader Post 16 and SLT.

2. To telephone home on a pupil’s first day of absence.

3. To follow up absences and address concerns with pupils, and agree on strategies to improve attendance.

4. To meet with Family Engagement and Attendance Worker to discuss attendance issues and review intervention.

**The Role of Parents**

1. It is the **legal** responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school daily and on time.
2. Parents should telephone the school before 9.30am on the first day of absence and provide information about the absence on the pupil’s return to school.
3. Parents should make sure the school has an up-to-date contact number for emergency contact.
4. To avoid holidays during term time and to inform the Head teacher at least a month in advance of any family holiday which needs to be taken in term time. Requests for holidays during term time should only be made in exceptional circumstances and last for no longer than 10 days. They must be agreed in advance at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Parents should request a holiday form from the school office and return it to school preferably a month before but at least two weeks before the start of the planned holiday.
5. To make medical appointments out of school time as far as possible.
6. Parents who fail to comply with attendance regulations may be referred to the Family engagement and attendance officer. The family engagement and attendance officer will contact parents/carers and offer support to the family to address issues around non-attendance. Non-engagement and continued deterioration in attendance may result in parent/carers being prosecuted and/or issued a fine for the pupil’s non-attendance.

**Role of the Family Engagement & Attendance Worker**

1. The Family Engagement & Attendance Worker aims to support and help the family of schools in improving attendance and punctuality.
2. They work in schools to identify appropriate ways to challenge poor attendance by providing support.
3. Where pupils are persistently absent, the Family engagement and attendance officer may carry out unannounced and announced home visits, offer support to improve non-attendance where appropriate, liaise with all professionals involved with the pupil/family and where necessary, refer to the local authority’s Education and Safeguarding officer whereby the prosecution route will be taken in an attempt to enforce school attendance.
4. To attend any necessary legal meetings with regards to attendance.

**The role of the Executive Head Teacher**

The Executive Head Teacher has overall responsibility for school attendance

1. To regularly review procedures for monitoring and responding to pupil attendance.
2. To report annually to the school’s Governing Body.
3. To annually review the school’s attendance policy.

**The Role of Governors**

1. To agree the principles of the school attendance policy
2. To ensure that all aspects of the attendance policy are applied consistently to all pupils, thereby promoting equality for all.
3. To promote good attendance as a responsibility of the whole school and its community.

**APPENDIX B**

Examples of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence

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| Authorised absences | Unauthorised absences |
| * Sickness * Medical appointments or treatment (eg. Dentist or CAMHS appointment) * Holidays *(if approved in advance by the Head Teacher.)* * Religious holidays * Family bereavements | * Shopping! * Birthdays! * Caring for a relative * Truancy * Moving house * Waking up late * Missing the bus |

**APPENDIX C**

**SIMS CODES for Beckmead**

**/ \ =** am pm

N = No reason given (issued when investigating absence)

O =Unauthorised absence (can only be issued by HOS)

L =Late after agreed time

B =Educated off site e.g. Sporting Chances.

I =Illness (written evidence is required)

C =Pupils on reduced programmes and other authorised absences

M =Medical appointments for dental, doctors, CAMHS (written evidence is required)

E =Exclusions

U (late after register closed, post 9.45am)

H (authorised holiday)

W (work experience)

P (approved sporting activity)

S (Study leave)

D (Dual registration)

R (religious observance e.g. Eid)

V (educational visit/trip)

**APPENDIX D: Registration Times and practice on different sites**

**Registration Times for Beckmead Monks Orchard, Chaffinch Upper and Beckmead College KS4**

* Morning registration is from 8.30-9.45.
* Afternoon registration is 12.50-12.55
* Year 12s at Beckmead College have the same registration times on a Monday and Tuesday. Their timetable programme varies the rest of the week.

**CLT Attendance Procedures**

**Registration**

* Registration will be completed by CLT manager and Teacher in charge each morning and afternoon, this is a legal requirement. Registers are legal documents and extracts from them could be used by a court of law.
* At Beckmead CLT, morning registration is from when the individual time table indicates e.g 10am to 10.15am.
* Pupils arriving 20min after the session has begun should report directly to the class teacher and record the reason for their lateness.
* Pupils who arrive 20 minutes after their session has started will be marked as late (register code L.)
* Afternoon registration is from when the individual time table indicates e.g. 1.00pm to 1.15pm
* Pupils who arrive 20 minutes after their session has started will be marked as late (register code L.)
* The CLT Manager / Teacher in charge will mark their registers each morning and afternoon ensuring that registers are completed promptly (e.g. In the morning 10.20am and 2pm in the afternoon depending on the agreed start times for individual pupils.
* Attendance for classes in afternoon registers is completed by a member of staff.
* If pupils are not present at the time of registration, the Teaching Assistant should call parents / carers to enquire about the absence, comments should then be logged on SIMS.

**Monitoring attendance**

**1st day**

Phone call home after 1st day of absence by Tutor/ TA/Admin to call Parent or carer and update SIMS.

**2nd day**

Letter or phone call home to parent by The Family Engagement & Attendance Worker, this is to enquire about the absence and to give the school and governments expectations of student’s attendance and to warn of possible consequences whilst offering support and advice.

**3rd day**

On the 3rd day of absence, we will consider early intervention measures, such as home visits, welfare checks possible completion of an Early Help Assessment.

**4th day**

Head of School to phone or to carry out a home visit to investigate absences.

NB: For CLT pupils, due to the nature of the pupils’ needs and their families, we initially take a more staggered approach to combat pupil absence. This is usually via an informal discussion and home visits, working with the pupil at home, depending on the circumstances of the pupil absence.

**Chaffinch Brook Lower Attendance Procedures**

* At Chaffinch Brook, morning registration is from 8.30-9.15am. Pupils come in on school transport which is only ever late due to traffic/incidents. A few children who are brought in by their parents and if they are late, they will need to come to reception as the gates are closed at 8.40 am. This procedure gives the school staff an opportunity to talk to the parent about lateness if necessary.
* Afternoon registration is from 12.55-1pm.
* If a pupil is not present at registration the teacher issues an “N” code. Comments are logged on SIMs by the teacher if they have prior knowledge of a reason for the absence. Teachers will only use the “M” code if they have been informed of a medical appointment and have written evidence.
* The admin assistant checks the SIMS register at 9.15 am and if any pupils are not present, they will make a call to the parent to enquire about the absence. The admin assistant will add comments as to the reason for the absence and the Head of School will decide if there is reason to authorise the absence or not.

**Bramley Bank Attendance Procedures**

* At Bramley Bank, registration will be completed by the Admin Team each morning and afternoon.
* Morning registration is from 8.45am to 9.45am.
* Pupils arriving after 9.15am should go straight to their class and report to the class team, who will share the reason for their lateness with the Admin Team. This is then logged on SIMS.
* Afternoon registration is at 1.30pm. Pupils who arrive after 1.30 will be given an L code.
* Afternoon registration is from 1.30pm.
* Class tutors / TA’s will mark their registers each morning ensuring that registers are completed promptly by (9.15am and 2pm). The Admin Team will collect the register and enter marks on SIMS promptly, by 9.30am.
* If pupils are not present at the time of registration, the Teaching Assistant / Admin Team should call parents / carers to enquire about the absence; comments should then be logged on SIMS and shared with the class team.

**Monitoring attendance**

**1st day**

Phone call home after 1st day of absence Tutor/ TA to call Parent or carer and update the Attendance Administrator and leave a note on SIMS

**2nd day**

Letter or phone call home to parent by Family Liaison Officer, this is to enquire about the absence and to give the school and governments expectations of student’s attendance and to warn of possible consequences whilst offering support and advice.

**3rd day**

On the 3rd day of absence, we will consider early intervention measures, such as Attendance Clinics and/or home visits.

**4th day**

Head of School to phone or to carry out a home visit to investigate absences, to confirm return or to collect a letter from parent in regards an absence.

**Tharreo House Attendance Procedures**

* Registration will be completed by senior teacher/head of school each morning and afternoon, this is a legal requirement. Registers are legal documents and extracts from them could be used by a court of law.
* At Tharreo House, morning registration is from 9.00 to 9.30am.
* Students arriving after 10.00am should report directly to the class teacher and record the reason for their lateness.
* Some students have an agreed part-time timetable to enable them to access a suitable curriculum. Times will be noted in their IBSP. Their attendance will be recorded when they arrive by SLT.
* Students who arrive 30 minutes after their session has started will be marked as late (register code L).
* Afternoon registration is at 1.30pm. Students who arrive after 1.45pm will be given an L code.
* The senior teacher/head of school will mark registers each morning and afternoon ensuring that registers are completed promptly.
* If Students are not present at the time of registration, a member of the class team should call parents / carers to enquire about the absence; comments should then be logged on SIMS and shared with SLT and class team.

**Monitoring attendance**

**1st day**

Phone call home after 1st day of absence by class team/SLT to call Parent or carer and update SIMS.

**2nd and subsequent days**

Phone call home by class team/SLT to call Parent or carer and update SIMS. If staff available, home visit to discuss the issues preventing attendance.

NB: For Tharreo House students, due to the nature of the students’ complex needs and family circumstances, we initially take a more staggered approach to combat student absence. This is usually via an informal discussion and home visits, working with the student at home or using other measures e.g. a part-time timetable, and will include speaking to other agencies working with the family.

**APPENDIX E**

Fixed Penalty Notices

Legal basis

Section 23 of the Anti-Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority officers, head teachers (deputy and assistant head teachers authorised by them) and the police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

The Education Penalty Notices (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27 February 2004. The issuing of penalty notices must conform to all requirements of the Human Rights Act and equal opportunities legislation.

The LA has the prime responsibility for developing the protocol within which all partners named in the Act will operate. Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities.

In law, an offence occurs if a parent fails to secure their child's attendance at school and that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under S444 Education Act 1996 or S36 Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate. Education Welfare delivers this LA responsibility.

The issuing of penalty notices will be based on clear threshold criteria which will need to be applied consistently and equitably across the borough's schools. Any person authorised to issue a notice in Croydon must comply with the guidance set out in the Local Authorities PN code of conduct (2011/2012).

Rationale

Parents and pupils are supported at school and LA level to overcome barriers to regular attendance through a wide continuum of assessment and intervention strategies. Sanctions of any nature are for use only where parental co-operation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem. Sanctions are never used as a punishment, only as a means of enforcing attendance where there is a reasonable expectation that their use will secure an improvement.

Use of Penalty Notices

The use of Penalty Notices will be evaluated by the Head of School and Head Teacher looking at each individual case and the factors involving poor attendance only after this process will a decision be made to use FPN’s.

Penalty Notices will only be issued for cases of unauthorised absence or in the case of pupils who are excluded from school and are found in a public place without good reason.

Penalty notices are more effective with less entrenched cases and will not be used for cases meeting the EWS referral criteria of 80% or less attendance, which often require investigation to ensure complex issues are identified and support offered prior to legal action being considered.

Only one notice per child will be issued to a parent in any academic year, with no restriction on the number of warnings issued. When a pupil meets the criteria for a Penalty Notice, each parent/carer responsible for the child is separately issued with a Penalty Notice. Each responsible adult should therefore be informed by the school in writing of the likelihood of such a consequence before a Fixed Penalty Notice Request form is completed. This gives the parent/carers the opportunity to remedy the situation and prevent such a consequence. If the adults responsible for the child live separately, then the relevant correspondence should be separately addressed giving each of them the opportunity to promote the pupil’s attendance. Please see Appendix C for an example of a Warning letter that can be sent from the school. Should the issue of a Penalty Notice fail to improve attendance, consideration will be given to a prosecution.

N.B. It is not a defence for the parent to say that s/he were unaware of the absences or the pupil being out unsupervised during an exclusion. Parents are expected to know where their children are on a daily basis and there is no duty, in law, on the school or the LA to advise them of their child’s absence.

Specific Conditions

Children Looked After: Croydon Council does not include Looked after Children in the Penalty Notice process. Where there are concerns over attendance with a child in Croydon Council or other Local Authority care, a review should be held to determine that appropriate provision is in place and whether changes need to be made to better engage the young person with their education.

Special Education Needs: For pupils in receipt of a Statement of Educational Needs and/or school action plus funding, an early review should be held before considering a Penalty Notice or other legal action. This is to determine that appropriate provision is in place and whether changes need to be made to better engage the young person with their education.

Where Penalty Notices may be considered

Poor School Attendance:

a) The pupil has 5 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in the 6 weeks (60 Sessions) prior to a notice being requested.

b) The pupil has been stopped on a School Attendance and Exclusion Sweep on more than one occasion, with no justified reason for absence.

Unauthorised Holidays taken during term time:

a) A holiday was taken in term time without the school’s consent and the request for a penalty notice was completed within 6 weeks of the date of their return. The Penalty Notice can only be issued under these circumstances if the pupil was also absent from school for 10 sessions or more within 20 weeks (200 Sessions) prior to the commencement of the holiday. These ‘absences’ also includes authorised absences.

Or

b) The school has already used its discretion in authorising one holiday for 10 sessions or more during the previous 12 calendar months, and a further unauthorised holiday has been taken during term-time. Again, the request for a penalty notice must be made within 6 weeks (60 Sessions) of the date of return.

In case of an Excluded Pupil

The pupil is found unsupervised in a public place during school hours during the first 5 days of exclusion without good reason. Good reason might include attendance at a medical appointment, YOT appointment or other appointment with a statutory or voluntary agency.

Legal practicalities

As of September 2012 the penalty of £60 is imposed, if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 42 days the LA must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice. This prosecution is for the offence of failing to secure attendance at school not for non-payment of the fine. Prosecutions are brought under S444 Education Act 1996. Withdrawal of the notice can only take place in very limited circumstances as set out in this code of conduct.

For further information about Penalty Notices, please refer to LBC’s LA Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, September 2012.