



**Beckmead College**

# **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

<b>ACADEMIC YEAR</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>ROLE</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW</b>
2025-26	Qudus Popoola	Head of College	July 2028



## **1. Introduction**

All children have the right to an efficient, full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability or any special need they may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.

Beckmead College takes its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils very seriously. It acknowledges that irregular attendance can disrupt continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement/low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the college.

Our ethos at Beckmead College is that the whole college community should take responsibility for attendance. Therefore, this policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of college attendance are aware and informed. We will work with a range of partners to ensure that we are doing everything we can to ensure that our pupils attend school full time. Any KS4 student not on a bespoke timetable must arrive between 8:35am and 8:45am to be marked as on time. Arrival between 8:45am and 9:05am will be recorded as late, while arrival after 9:05am will be considered Late After Registration.

## **2. Aims**

The aims of this Attendance Policy are to:

- a) Raise the profile of the importance of good attendance in line with Ofsted and Government requirements.
- b) Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- c) To improve punctuality.
- d) Promote opportunities to celebrate and reward children for attendance and punctuality achievements.

## **3. Guidelines**

### 3.1 Reasons for absence

Parents and carers are asked to contact the college office by phone or in person if their child needs to be absent from the college.

### 3.2 Authorised absences

Acceptable reasons include sickness, hospital appointments, dentist appointments, recognised religious holidays (1 day per holiday only) and funerals.

Medical appointments should be arranged outside of the college day, wherever possible. Where this is not possible, we would expect pupils to miss only part of the day.

### 3.3 Unauthorised absences

Unacceptable reasons include shopping, going to an appointment, visiting relatives, buying shoes, going for a haircut, parent/carer unwell (discretions may be considered where there is mitigating circumstance) and taking a holiday, for example, by acquiring cheaper flights outside of college holidays.

### 3.4 Holidays/Trips

The college supports the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents/carers from taking holidays during term time.

3.5 SLT can authorise absence (when there are exceptional circumstances).

## **4. Action taken when pupils are absent**

4.1 There are occasions when absence is unavoidable. These include:

- a) Illness.
- b) Medical or education appointments.

4.2 If a parent knows in advance of absence due to an appointment, the college office should be informed and the appointment card shown.

4.3 If a child is ill, the parent or carer should ring the college to inform us and in return present a written note explaining the absence. If your child is absent and has been prescribed medicine by the doctor, please bring the medicine or prescription into the college so we can photocopy it.

4.4 The parent or carer will be phoned and if there is no answer or no information has been received, and reasons noted, a text message or email will be sent on the first day of absence.

4.5 Letters will be sent to the parent or carers requesting an explanation of the absence. If no reply is received; the absence is counted as unauthorised. Two college weeks are allowed for responses after the letter is sent.

## **5. What happens if Attendance is unacceptable?**

5.1 The Headteacher reviews the attendance of all pupils regularly. If the attendance of a pupil falls below 90% the reasons for the absence are investigated.

5.2 The reasons for absence are discussed. If there are no extenuating circumstances the following procedure is instigated:

- a) The Headteacher will write to the parent or carer. The situation is reviewed at the next month's check.
- b) If no improvement is seen the Headteacher will request an appointment with the parent or carer. The situation is reviewed at the next month's check.
- c) If no improvement is seen the Headteacher will write again requesting an appointment and ask for medical certificates to be provided for each subsequent absence to be authorised.
- d) If the attendance does not significantly improve, a referral to our Educational Welfare Officer is made. In non-improving situations a penalty notice may be served

*(See Appendix 1 for further details of the issuing of Penalty Notices)*

5.3 If your child's attendance is unsatisfactory (below 90%) you are at risk of a referral to EWO and may be liable for a fixed penalty notice and or fast track court prosecution, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

## **6. Lateness**

6.1 The college day officially starts at 08.35am although college doors open at 8.00am

6.2 Pupils who arrive after 08.50am must sign in at the college via the main office.

6.3 Children who arrive after 08:45am will be marked as 'L' (Late) and the time of arrival will be recorded. The registers will formally close at 09:05am. Any child who arrives after this time will be marked as 'U' (unauthorised absence) for that morning's session, unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as an emergency incident that caused a traffic delay for example. The parents of any child registered with 5 U codes in any half term will be subject to the attendance procedures outlined below and could be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

6.4 The procedure for persistent lateness is the same as for absence – i.e. at 10% lateness the Headteacher or EWO will write to parents of the children to notify them that their child's punctuality is unsatisfactory. If there is no improvement over the following month then the following actions may be taken:

- a) SLT may request an appointment to meet with the parent/carer and punctuality targets will be set.
- b) If there are unacceptable improvements after a month, a referral to EWO is made.
- c) 'Cause for Concern' records for absence and punctuality are kept.

## **7. Punctuality Inspection**

We may also do sporadic punctuality inspections at the college gate.

## **8. How will this information be collated?**

A register of absence and punctuality referral is kept. SLT manages this register and reviews it regularly to decide necessary action.

## **9. Pupil absence and extenuating family circumstances**

If parents or carers need to remove their child from the college for any reason, they must complete a Term Time Absence Request form. No absences for holidays will be authorised, unless in extreme or exceptional circumstances. Permission for absence will only be given if there are extenuating circumstances. If the absence is not authorised, the parent or carer may be liable to a Fixed Penalty Notice.

## **10. Registers**

These are important legal documents and our teaching staff must complete them accurately and promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.

Children entering the college office after are late and should be marked as such, even if the register has not been taken yet.

## 11. Rewards

Beckmead College firmly believes that the best reward for good attendance is the learning they receive. However, we want to recognise those pupils who make a true effort to sustain excellent attendance and punctuality.

The class with the best attendance for the previous week is recognised and rewarded. The class with the best attendance for the half term are recognised and rewarded.

Children with 90%+ attendance are presented with a certificate at the end of the term. Further prizes and awards may be presented for attendance.

## 12. Fixed Penalty Notice

Government's new fixed penalty Notice (FPN) framework launch via the "Working together to improve attendance" in September 2024 it reinforces the *Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003* and Education Act of 1996. They were introduced to address poor school attendance and punctuality and are commonly known as Penalty Notices.

The new criteria for a FPN have both a 10-week period and a rolling 3-year duration that unauthorised absences are monitored

This means that for pupils with unauthorised absence from school (i.e. any absence not authorised by the school), their parents may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice of £80-£160. These Penalty Notices are issued to each parent for each child. The amount is £160 if paid within 28 days but reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay in full within the 28-day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

This is **in addition to existing legal sanctions** under the Education Act 1996, which allows for prosecution in the Magistrates' Court for failing to ensure a child's regular attendance at school.

### Payment:

1. Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.
2. Payment in full of the Penalty Notice discharges the parent's legal responsibility for the period of unauthorised absence outlined in the Notice and the parent cannot be subsequently prosecuted under any other enforcement powers for the period.
3. Any revenue arising from the issue of Penalty Notices will be retained by the LA to defray the costs involved in their issue or any subsequent prosecutions arising from non-payment.

### Non Payment:

Non-payment of Penalty Notices within the prescribed time limits will result in a prosecution under Section (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996 for the original offence of failing to ensure the regular attendance of the child/ren at school.