

Attendance Policy



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Attendance Policy

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1.0 Introduction

This policy is written in accordance with and complies with Part 3, paragraph 17 of The Education (Independent School Standard Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations and School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, November 2016.

“The 1996 Education Act states that it is the parents’ responsibility to ensure that their child receives efficient full time education.”

Bestwood Village School is an independent day school for pupils aged 7-16 who have an autism diagnosis. A high number of our pupils have experienced disruption to previous education and some have not attended school for a considerable amount of time prior to joining the school. A considerable number of our pupils have are diagnosed with ASC and as part of a co-morbid diagnosis extreme anxiety. This impacts on their ability for form relationships and engage in routine and structure. Bestwood Village School offers a full time education package appropriate to the needs of the students which takes into account an informal curriculum with foundations built are the Equals framework National Curriculum and a wide range of functional and enterprise experiences. A strong student-centred approach ensures that education, care and clinical support are intrinsically linked. This benefits all students, while regular meetings ensure learning targets remain appropriate.

2.0 Local School Context

Bestwood Village School is an Educational Establishment that caters for students and young people aged from 7-16. All students attending the school have an Autism diagnosis and are working significantly below their age-related expectations. Educational, Health and Care plans are in place to inform the provision planning to ensure that students are able to progress towards and meet their highly individualised and educational goals. In addition to their autism diagnosis, many students also have additional associated diagnosis', or medical considerations, such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD) or Epilepsy.

3.0 General

Encouraging Good Attendance

Prior to attending Bestwood Village School, attendance at school for some of our pupils has been disrupted. Some pupils have missed considerable amounts of schooling which has impacted on their

ability to build relationships and resulted in low self-confidence and low self-esteem. Once placement is agreed, the school will work closely with parents and carers to establish an appropriate route into school. Some children may be able to readily access a full-time timetable, other pupils may require a transitional plan. This plan is personalised to the needs of the child taking into account key factors including information from the EHCP, additional needs and/or related conditions including trauma and anxiety that may be school related.

We will also consider the duration of missed learning. A high number of pupils at Bestwood Village School have not attended school for a considerable amount of time.

Transitional plans are agreed with all stakeholders and are reviewed regularly. From induction into placement, the school places high emphasis on regular attendance for all pupils. This is extremely important where pupils have missed education and have gaps in their knowledge.

Encouraging Good Punctuality

Students are encouraged to attend school on time to begin the learning day. The ability to be punctual is a life skill and assists students with structure. Good punctuality is a key quality to develop for future education and employment. However, it is important to recognise, due to the particular students educated at Bestwood Village School and taking into account their complex needs that students will have difficulties with routines and at times flexibility in timings needs to be exercised, therefore transition to, from and around the school needs to be carefully planned. The intention is for all sessions to start on time, but at times student's functioning and processing time effects their ability to keep their routines to normal expectations.

Where persistent lateness is observed this will be discussed as part of a multidisciplinary team with the aim of supporting students to develop routines to enable good morning routines. Parents/carers are asked to notify the school if their child is going to be late for any reason, this allows for teachers and their teams to be made aware and this can be factored into planning the students learning for that day.

Attendance is monitored weekly by the safeguarding and pastoral team with multidisciplinary meetings taking place for any concerns identified.

Attendance is shared with parents via termly progress reports.

Students are also awarded for their attendance;

- Gold 100% Attendance – 500 sleuth points
- Silver above 97% attendance – 400 sleuth points
- Bronze above 95% attendance – 300 sleuth points

4.0 Procedures for reporting absence

When a student is absent, it is important that the school is informed. If students do not arrive at the school, staff have no way of knowing where they are or if they are safe. Parents/Carers are provided with information when their child starts school which gives details of our opening times and telephone numbers so that we can be contacted. School term dates are sent out annually and are available on the school website.

Parents are asked to:

- Make every effort to contact the Pastoral Team as soon as possible on the first day of their child's

absence. A message can be left on the school answering system: 01158561799

- If their child is going to be absent for some time, they should ensure the school is regularly updated.
- Ensure their child attends school regularly. On the first day of absence the school will telephone if the parent/ carer has failed to make contact. If we are unable to make contact, then a welfare home visit will be made by a member of the pastoral and safeguarding team.

In exceptional circumstances the Head Teacher can authorise leave of up to ten days in any one school year. Prior notice must be given. If the student stays away from school after this authorised period, the school register will be marked as an unauthorised absence. This will remain on the student's record. In cases of continued absence, the parent should inform the school at the earliest opportunity.

In making the decision whether to grant term-time leave for a student, the Head Teacher will consider:

- The age of the student
- The duration of the leave
- The student's attendance record
- The student's ability
- Previous term-time leave

There are times during a school year when a student may experience particular problems if leave is taken, such as:

- During exams or tests
- During the first year at a new school
- At the beginning of a new term

5.0 Attendance Monitoring

School attendance is monitored by the pastoral team who is part of the school's leadership team. The pastoral team will work closely with parents to support and encourage good attendance. This involves wider work with the child and families including meetings, home visits and remote support calls.

The Pastoral Team meet on a weekly basis to identify students who may be in need of additional support to improve their attendance. This is then also discussed in the weekly leadership team meeting. Pupils with improved attendance are also highlighted and recognised with rewards and certificates.

6.0 The admissions register

The young person's details need to be entered into the School admissions register and accompanying information filed. The young person will be shown around the school and introduced to the staff and other young people. An individual timetable will be discussed, taking into account of the young person's age, aptitude and ability. This gives particular information about pupils who are currently registered as attending our school. The register will comprise information that is compliant with regulations set out in the education (pupil registration) (England) regulations 2006, the admission

register will contain:

- Name (inc middle names) Surname First
- Date of Birth
- Year Group
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Name and Address of all with PR
- Parent/Carer with whom learner resides
- Emergency Contact Numbers (Social Worker)
- SEN Y/N
- LAC Y/N
- EAL Y/N
- Pupil Premium
- LA - Funded
- LA - Referred
- Date of Admission
- Previous School
- Leaving Date
- Any Re-admission Date to Bestwood Village School
- Leaving Date to Bestwood Village Park School

The register will be printed on an annual basis and retained for a period of 3 years.

7.0 The Attendance Register

The Attendance Register is maintained in accordance with School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (November 2016) Attendance codes are taken directly from legislation.

The School is required to ensure that the attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day – once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Our School values attendance at school and students who complete 100% attendance each term will be celebrated during the end of term celebration assembly and awarded with a 100% attendance certificate and sleuth points. Parents will also be sent a letter of appreciation for their support in their child achieving 100% attendance.

Each pupil must be marked on the register in one of the following categories:

- Present
- Engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site (approved by the Head Teacher and supervised by a person approved by the Head Teacher, including sporting activities, educational visits or residential trips)
- Absent
- Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of the school site or part of it)
- Taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the head teacher or a person acting on their behalf, unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause, observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs)
- Taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken, the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established)

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent/carer/guardian writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from our school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent. The school keeps accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of five years.

8.0 Non-School Attendance

At Bestwood village School, we understand that many of our students have come from failed school Places and this could have a traumatic impact on the student, causing anxiety and potential refusal to attend school. Under these situations the Head Teacher and pastoral team will work together with parents and care givers to offer a strategy to help that student feel that they are in a place where they are able to attend. This might mean that a transition timetable will be used to support, with a gradual reduction of this over the duration of the term. After non-attendance at school for a period 10 or more consecutive days the absence will be reported to the local authority.

Bespoke and part-time timetables might be considered to support children that have returned to school after a prolonged period of absence.

Prosecution for non-attendance at school always be the last option considered at Bestwood Village School, we will endeavour to work with parents and students to find a solution to get the child back into school. When the school have exhausted all options to support a family unit get a child back to school, prosecution might be considered. This will be carried out on an individualised case and in consultation of the local authority and the family.

Attendance Flow Chart

95% and above - Green attendance - No further action required



90-95% - Amber attendance - Phone call to gain further understanding of situation and offer support.



90% - Attendance plan produced - (see examples of overviews / support offers – Specific to child) – Regularly reviewed until attendance improves.

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