

## University of Birmingham School Attendance Policy

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At the University of Birmingham School we refer to **Pupils** (who are in Years 7-11 and aged 11-16) and **Students** (who are in Years 12/13 and aged 17-18)

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The University of Birmingham School recognises the high correlation between achievement and attendance therefore, in order to achieve high levels of attendance there is a clearly defined process communicated to all stakeholders.
- 1.2 School attendance is subject to various Education Laws and this School Attendance Policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by The Department for Education.
- 1.3 We are keen that everyone aims for 100% attendance at school.
- 1.4 We would hope that parents and carers will help by:
  - a) not letting their son/daughter(s) take time off school for minor ailments;
  - b) arranging appointments and outings after school hours, or as late as possible in the afternoon, at weekends or during school holidays;
  - c) not taking holidays during term time.
- 1.5 The importance of good attendance is an integral part of our home-school agreement.
- 1.6 If we have a concern regarding a student's attendance we will notify parents and carers by telephone or letter
- 1.7 There are clear procedures for the reporting of absence (see below) and this policy is available as a paper copy on request on from the School Website.
- 1.8 The taking of holidays during the school terms is strongly discouraged.
- 1.9 The School's Management Information System (SIMS) system will used to monitor attendance at registration and lessons.
- 1.10 Attendance figures are reported annually and appropriate targets are set for the following year.
- 1.11 Attendance figures are monitored on a regular basis by the Senior Leadership and the Form Tutors.
- 1.12 We will work co-operatively with external agencies to deal with problems of irregular attendance.
- 1.13 We will keep accurate records of all exclusions and, in accordance with statutory guidance, report them to the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- 1.14 We take appropriate action to reduce the need to exclude pupils from our School.
- 1.15 We continue to monitor the attendance of 'Looked after Children', those from ethnic minorities, Pupil Premium Students, vulnerable students and those students with a, Education and Health Care Plan or SEN status.
- 1.16 Each year we will review our attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets.
- 1.17 These will reflect seek to achieve attendance figures above both national and West Midlands averages, and we aspire to equal Schools with the lowest absence figures nationally.

## **2 School Attendance**

- 2.1 In order to achieve high levels of attendance and promote learning, the Pastoral Team adhere to the following lines of action.
- 2.2 Procedures
  - a) The member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for each year group will monitor attendance.

- b) The Form Tutors will meet with their Senior Leadership Team to discuss any pupil or student who is of concern due to a poor attendance record.
- c) Prolonged absence without medical support will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service.
- d) The Senior Leader will investigate all cases where a student's attendance falls below 95% in any one half-term (this information is available from the computerised attendance information).
- e) The attendance of any student classed as a **Persistent Absentee** (attendance below 90% -as from 1 September 2015) is monitored every half term and strategies implemented to try and support the student to improve their attendance
- f) All holiday requests must be made directly to the Principal and such requests will be logged with the School Office and a copy of the acknowledgement letter, so that the appropriate entry can be made to the register.
- g) All holiday requests will be dealt with in accordance with Department for Education guidance i.e. it is at the discretion of the Principal and only for 'exceptional circumstances'.
- h) Form Tutors must mark the register accurately at the start of the morning Form Period and the Class Teacher at the start of the first lesson in the afternoon.
- i) If students miss a lesson without parental or staff permission, the Form Teacher will place them on full report until one complete week of good comments has been earned.
- j) The parents are informed of the truancy and asked to sign the report form daily, supporting the action we are taking in school. In addition, detentions can be given, especially if unsatisfactory comments are made on the report form.
- k) All staff promote high standards of punctuality and attendance in all year groups by being a good role model.
- l) 100% attendance will be recognised by the award of certificates at the annual 'Celebration Evening'.
- m) Parents and carers will receive communication regarding attendance at consultation evenings and via the School's Reporting System.

### 3 **Student (Sickness) Absence Reporting Procedures**

- 3.1 Any pupil or student who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised, unexplained, or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school).
- 3.2 Only the Principal or a member of the Senior leadership Team with the delegated responsibility to act on his behalf can authorise absence.
- 3.3 If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence **must** be recorded in the first instance as unexplained.
- 3.4 If the absence is still unexplained after a 2 week period, this will be changed to unauthorised.

#### 4 **Lateness**

- 4.1 Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.30 a.m.
- 4.2 Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked late unless there is an acceptable explanation (e.g. transport problems that can be verified).
- 4.3 In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.
- 4.4 Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others.
- 4.5 Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the Form Tutor will be arranged.
- 4.6 The afternoon registration will take place at the start of lesson 4 at 1.30 p.m.
- 4.7 Pupils arriving after the start of school but before 8.45 a.m. and 1.45 p.m. will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

#### 5 **First Day Absence**

- 5.1 If a child is absent, parents and carers should call the School on the first day, stating the reason for the absence.
- 5.2 A note or email should then be sent into School on the day the child returns explaining the absence.
- 5.3 If no contact is made by parents and carers explaining the absence on the first day, the School will try to telephone to secure an explanation.
- 5.4 Where the school is unable to make contact by telephone a letter or email will be sent.
- 5.5 If attendance falls below 95% over the course of a term a letter will be sent home by the Head of Year.
- 5.6 If attendance rate does not improve the Principal will liaise with Senior Leadership Team and Form Tutor who may contact the parents and carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.

#### 6 **Persistent Absence**

- 6.1 Either authorised or unauthorised.
- 6.2 A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment.
- 6.3 Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for (3 days) will be discussed with the School's Attendance Office. The school will record details of the action that they have taken.

#### 7 **Frequent Absence**

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.
- 7.2 In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent(s) or carer(s).
- 7.3 If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Health Adviser / School Nurse etc, if the problem appears to be a medical one.

## 8 **A Welcome Back**

- 8.1 It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils and students are made to feel welcome.
- 8.2 This should include ensuring that he/she is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils and students.

## 9 **Absence Notes**

- 9.1 Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year.
- 9.2 If there are attendance concerns that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

## 10 **Promoting Attendance**

- 10.1 The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.
- 10.2 The Home- School agreement is used in this way at the start of a pupil's education at the University of Birmingham School.

## 11 **Holidays During Term Time**

- 11.1 Term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed and will not be authorised as stated in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.
- 11.2 The school will only consider granting leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances** that are not related to holidays.
- 11.3 Parents/carers must write directly to the Principal for permission to take their child out of school during term time (at least **6 weeks** before an absence)
- 11.4 The 6 week time period is necessary in order for the school to give due consideration to the request.
- 11.5 If the request is denied the School will inform the parent and carer of the reason by letter or email.
- 11.6 If the parents or carers choose to continue with the planned absence holiday it will be taken as an unauthorised absence and could result in a penalty notice.
- 11.7 In the rare circumstance when the Principal is satisfied that there are genuine reasons for an absence, he will determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

## 12 **Penalty Notices**

- 12.1 Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority Officers, Principals and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school.

12.2 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27 February 2004 and have recently been amended in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

12.3 A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

If a minimum of 10 sessions or 5 school days of unauthorised absence are taken during the current term for:

- Overt Truancy;
- Parentally-condoned absences;
- Holidays taken in term-time. and;
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 8.45 a.m./1.45 p.m.)

### 13 **Attendance Targets**

13.1 The school will set attendance targets each year.

13.2 A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for overseeing this work.

13.3 ***For 2015-16 our school's attendance target is 95.0%***

#### 14 The Registration System and Absence Codes

The school uses the SIMS computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information

<b>Codes for use on SIMS Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
B	Educated Off Site – e.g. College
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
F	Extended Family Holiday
G	Family Holiday not agreed
H	Holiday
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registration closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointment or sickness absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Travellers Absence
U	Late after reg closed
V	Educational visit
W	Work experience
X	Non-comp school
Y	Enforced Closure