

Attendance, Punctuality and Truancy

Aims

- To ensure each pupil achieves his educational potential.
- To achieve the highest attendance of all the East Riding secondary schools.
- To achieve an overall school attendance of 95%
- To ensure that all unauthorised absences and lates are processed and followed up by staff and the EWO takes suitable action if required.
- To be preventative with regards to attendance and punctuality.
- To monitor persistent absentees below 85%.

Role of the School

‘All schools should see the maximising of attendance rates as one of their key tasks’ - Section 199 Education Act 1993. Recent legislation has placed more responsibility back onto schools to be accountable for their own attendance.

Schools have a statutory duty under section 175 Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This can only be fulfilled through effective registration systems and active, whole school monitoring of pupil absence, in order to support and promote regular school attendance.

Beverley Grammar School has a whole school attendance policy, which sets out how attendance is managed and what monitoring systems are in place. This is actively supported by every member of staff and endorsed and monitored by the governing body.

One governor is elected to take a lead responsibility for attendance issues. Other governors may also play a more active role in monitoring individual cases.

Beverley Grammar School operates a first day absence procedures to ensure that parents are aware when their child is not in school.

Registers

These are legal documents that could be used in a court of law, as data for reports, for leavers references, for Educational Authority/National Statistics, and data for publication in the school prospectus.

Registration

The time in the day when two elements of an effective school come together:

- the welcoming process
- the efficient organisation and procedure

Together these two elements can ensure the accurate keeping of attendance registers and create a climate in which students feel their attendance is important and appreciated.

The Role of the Form Tutor

- To collect and date absence notes/telephone messages from parents. To consistently follow up and chase students who do not bring notes a.s.a.p. and report to the LCO.
- To be vigilant in identifying and recording, explaining and passing on information regarding unjustified reasons for absence to LCO. (See DCFS Regulations Section 199 Education Act 1993 on Categorisation of Absence).
- To monitor and promptly report as absent those students who are known truants, school refusers, on Child Protection Register, or having family problems, thus ensuring students do not drift into prolonged or frequent absence, without having the force of the system being brought to bear.
- To welcome students back whatever their attendance or behaviour problems.
- To be proactive rather than reactive.

Procedures for Absence

Option for circumstances where a student is absent from school

- i. Form tutor checks unauthorised absence list at Friday tutor meeting.
- ii. LCO involved if absence notes are outstanding.

Procedure if a student is truanting from lessons

Attendance is checked lesson by lesson by Attendance Clerk

Attendance Clerk checks with the Office, makes a telephone call home, and informs LCO.

Subject Leader informs the LCO immediately on a pink slip if truancy suspected.

Action ensues.

Attendance Clerk will contact parents by phone and inform/involve the EWO.

Persistent offenders will be counselled by LCO and/or passed on to SLT for further action.

Procedures if a student returns after a period of truancy

Action appropriate to circumstances.

There should be a minimum afterschool detention for each hour of learning missed.

Procedures for Lateness

1. A Student who arrives after 9.45 a.m. or 2.15 p.m. is late. They are marked absent by the tutor at registration. They then have to go to the office sign in the late book

(recording their time of arrival) and then reports to the Attendance Clerk who records their presence.

2. A Student who turns up to registration after the 8.55 a.m. or 1.25 p.m. bells are marked late (L), but should be instructed to turn up on time and given sanctions if appropriate.
3. A Student who turns up after 9.45 a.m. or 2.15 p.m. is marked late after registers have been closed (U). They should be directed to the office to sign in the late book - recording their time of arrival.
4. The Attendance Clerk will keep a record for each year group and these will be checked weekly by LCO's, students seen and sanctions applied if appropriate. This will also be a means of monitoring of the system.

The late books will be necessary for Fire Drill and should be brought out to check with registers by the secretary.

5. Students who are late 3 times in a three week period should automatically receive a detention to be administered by the Form Tutor. LCO's get weekly late mark sheets and discuss with tutors. If persistent the LCO will then send a standard letter form (see appendix) or telephone parents. Persistent offenders who do not respond to Form Tutor sanctions will be placed in detentions.
6. Persistent offenders with 10 lates over a 13 week period (after close of registration) can be referred for a fixed penalty notice.

Procedures for the Office regarding Lateness

A student who is late will come to the office to get signed in.

Fire Procedure

In the event of a fire the 'Late Books' need to be taken out with the registers so that late students can be checked present by tutors.

Late Books

There should be a late book set up for each year (Years 7 - 11) to record: Student's name, Form, Time of arrival, and Reason. This should be made available for LCO's to check on a weekly basis.

Procedures for Specific Problems

Forged Notes

Form tutor fills in a **Pink Slip** with note stapled to it. LCO interviews student and gives suitable sanction + contacting home. LCO may fill in **EWS R2** form and request EWO to visit. If this applies to more than 10 sessions within 13 weeks, then a Fixed Penalty Notice can be sought through the LCO.

Hoax Telephone Calls

Office staff to fill in **Pink Slip** and pass to LCO. The student is then interviewed by the LCO, a sanction is applied, parents contacted and **EWS R2** Form filled in to involve EWO if necessary.

Post Registration Truancy

Attendance Clerk checks registers/attendance and contacts home to request return of pupil. The LCO is informed and EWS R2 form may be completed. If this applies to more than 10 sessions in 13 weeks, then a Fixed Penalty Notice can be sought through the EWO.

Unjustified Reason for Absence (see section 2 above).

If a Form Tutor, after checking a note/telephone message, feels that the reason is unjustified according to DCFS (regulations (e.g. visiting Alton Towers), the tutor should fill in **Pink Slip** and pass it to the LCO. The LCO, in consultation with the tutor, makes the decision to contact the parents or liaise with the EWO through form **EWS R2** if required.

Frequent Authorised Absences

- a. Staff member to fill in a **Yellow Slip** and pass it to the LCO.
- b. LCO to investigate, contact parents, or refer to the EWO via **EWS R2** form.

Students absent for more than 3 days without message being received

Attendance Clerk to inform tutor/LCO/EWO. Appropriate action to be taken.

Parents requesting more than 10 days holiday in a school year (Sept-June)

Excess holiday days are to be marked unauthorised in register. If 5 days extra are requested the LCO is to apply for a fixed penalty notice and parents will receive an automatic £50 fine.

Bullying

In cases of bullying, the student will be interviewed by a LCO or School Social Worker and appropriate strategies will be put in place.

Absence Notes/Telephone Messages

- Absence notes and messages in a students planner are recorded by the Form Tutor, the register is amended electronically. Any absence notes are then passed to the Attendance Clerk.
- Telephone messages are taken by the Office and passed to the Attendance Clerk who amends the registers electronically.

Guidance on Categorisation of Absence

Parental condoning of unauthorised absence can become a serious problem. Only the school can authorise absence (not parents) even if a note or telephone call is received.

1. Illness, medical and dental appointments, if the tutor is satisfied of their genuineness, would be **authorised**. If there is a doubt then further information can be required before it is authorised. (see 5e).
2. Lateness (see 5f above)

If a student arrives after 9.45 a.m. or 2.15 p.m. when the registers are closed, they are marked with a 'U' and require a note/telephone call from parents if appropriate.

Exceptions to this include:

- a. Public transport difficulties (e.g. Wawne bus late).
- a. Bad weather e.g. snow.
- b. Parents informing school beforehand (e.g. dental/medical appointment).

Nb. See fixed penalty notices.

3. Minding the house - looking after brothers or sisters.
In the vast majority of cases this would be **unauthorised** absence (See 5e).
The school may, in very exceptional circumstances, treat the absence as **authorised**.

4. Shopping during school hours.
Absence would be classed as **unauthorised**.

5. Special Occasions

This depends on circumstances:

1. The nature of the event
2. The frequency, i.e. is it a one off or likely to become a regular event.
3. Whether advance notification was given - as a rule such notification will have been given where an event is of an exceptional nature.
4. The overall attendance pattern of the student.

The tutor needs to use their discretion.

If the tutor is satisfied the absence can be **authorised**, if not, it is **unauthorised**.

6. Family bereavements.

The death of a family member can be traumatic and would be **authorised absence**.

7. Family holidays.

Leave of up to two weeks (10 days) can be recorded as **authorised**.

Only in exceptional circumstances may the amount of leave granted exceed (in total for the year) more than two weeks (10 days).

No parent can demand, as a right, leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday.

Parents should write to the Headteacher to ask for permission for leave in excess of two weeks.

If parents take the student away for more than two weeks (10 days) the absence should be treated as **unauthorised**. Nb. See fixed penalty notices.

No holidays in Years 10, 11 and the 6th Form will be authorised from September 2009.

8. Days of Religious Observance.

A day set aside for religious observance would be **authorised** but not if they become too frequent.

9. Interviews

A student can be **authorised** for interviews.

10. Excluded students

These are marked **authorised**.

11. Official Study Leave

These are marked **authorised**.

Days taken off unofficially are marked **unauthorised**.

12. Students attending student referral units.

These are marked **authorised**.

13. Students attending offsite visits.

These would be **authorised**.

14. N.B. If there are any doubts concerning the categorisation of absence then the member of staff should check with the LCO, EWO or SLT who have copies of the DCFS regulations.

School Phobia

In instances where school phobia is suspected the LCO should be informed in writing on a yellow slip. The LCO will assess the situation and involve parents, the EWO and the Education Psychologist as they deem appropriate.

In cases of school phobia a multi-agency meeting will be called with all interested parties (possibly including:- Parents, the student, EWO, Education Psychologist, Social Services, Police, Education, Health, SEN, LCO and SLT) as appropriate. The

aim of the meeting will be to discuss and arrive at suitable strategies to address the situation.

Reintegration of Students Back into Class

Following illness or exclusion, students should be reintegrated back into the curriculum.

Following Illness

For short periods of illness (up to 1 week) students will be expected to copy up work missed in a reasonable period of time (maximum 2 weeks).

Prolonged illness may or may not involve work being sent home.

When students return to school the following procedures should be applied:

- a. Form Tutors/LCO should welcome them back and act as support and liaison with subject teachers. LCO/Form Tutor should check that student is fully reintegrated after 2 weeks.
- b. Subject teachers should (bearing in mind the workload imposed upon the student from many subjects);
 - i. Welcome student back (without sarcasm or embarrassment).
 - ii. Try to provide photocopy of missing notes.
 - iii. Get student to use the LCO to photocopy from another student's book.
 - iv. Allow time for copying up.
 - v. Offer advice and assistance.
 - vi. Take the situation into account in Tests and Effort Scores.
 - vii. Try to reduce homework load until student is fully reintegrated.

Following Exclusion, Truancy, Counselling Etc

It is very important that the student is encouraged to adopt a positive attitude towards school and is assisted in settling back in.

- a. Student should be welcomed back by Form Tutor and teaching staff without sarcasm or ridicule.
- b. Student should be fully counselled by LCO with reinforcement from Form Tutor.
- c. LCO should follow up after 1 week to see that student is settled and reintegrated.
- d. The same guidelines outlined above should be applied by all staff.

Problems with the Registration System

All problems with these procedures should be addressed directly to the Attendance Clerk/SLT in charge of Attendance.

Symbols used in Registration

Full details are to be found on SERCO.

Full Attendance Certificates

Each term a velum certificate will be awarded to all students having full attendance. These will be presented during assembly early in the next term.

At the end of the year, in the penultimate week, a special certificate will be awarded to students with full attendance.

Names will be displayed on the Attendance noticeboard.

The Attendance Noticeboard

An attendance noticeboard will display the previous months attendance statistics, information concerning attendance and lates, celebration of full attendance, developments and news.

The Role of the Teaching Staff, Midday Supervisors and Support Staff as regards attendance

If any member of staff finds out about a student truanting from school they should report the matter to the LCO on a **pink or yellow slip**. The LCO will then involve the tutor and follow up the report.

The Role of Subject Tutors

1. To take a register each lesson.
2. To ascertain if absences are genuine.
3. To check patterns of absence/lateness in lessons.

The Role of the Subject Leader

1. To counsel students concerning lateness/attendance problems.
2. To pass on information to LCO via referral system.
3. To apply suitable sanctions.

The Role of Office Staff - Attendance

- To take telephone messages from parents and pass to the Attendance Clerk. (A recommendation has been made by the DCFS that a duplicate pad be used so that if messages are lost, or if parents say they phoned, a check can be made).
- To record late students in the book provided and record time & reason for lateness.
- To check for hoax phone calls and pass suspicions to Tutors and/or LCO's.
- To make parents aware of unjustified reasons for absence if a query.

- To monitor students using illness as an excuse to leave school and pass suspicions to tutors.

Role of Learning Support - Attendance

- To assist identified students who have been absent for some time to catch up with missed work.
- To assist students struggling with certain subjects if this is likely to lead to truancy.
- To assess students having difficulty with attendance or who are truanting from certain lessons who may be having specific learning problems.
- To liaise with the EWO/LCO, via **Pink & Yellow Slips** regarding students receiving help from Learning Support who have Attendance/Refusal problems.
- To help plan and devise strategies for solving problems e.g. school refusal.

The Role of the Attendance Clerk

- To record data from the registers.
- To generate **letters** to parents at the LCO's request regarding lates.
- To produce multiple week print outs each week.
- To produce regular reports for LCO/EWO (Every week) on all students with below 85% attendance.
- To produce yearly registration sheets for student files.
- To follow up same day absence.

To inform Form Tutors of students who are truanting from lessons following information received from staff, attendance records, parents, or the EWO, so that attendance records can be kept up to date and registers marked accordingly.

To inform parents a.s.a.p. with regards to Attendance problems.

The Role of the Learning Co-ordinator

1. To follow up unauthorised absence and lateness via letter or phone or via EWO as necessary and to record outcome so that records can be updated.
2. To liaise regularly with EWO on all possible attendance problems.
4. To fill in **EWS R2** Forms when an official response is required from the EWO.
5. To follow up unjustified reasons for absence via letter/phone or EWO.
7. To issue certificates for full attendance.
8. To have a working knowledge of the Administration and Attendance programmes on SERCO so that they can become proactive in seeking information on students or classes.
9. To be involved in reintegration strategies for long-term absentees.
10. To be involved in reviewing strategies for improving attendance.
11. To counsel students with lateness or attendance problems.
12. To use sanctions, in line with sanctions policy, as appropriate.
13. To keep the EWO informed of exclusions or those at risk of exclusions.
14. To inform the staff of attendance problems.

15. To fill in applications for fixed penalty notices.

The Role of the Student Support Administrative Assistant

- To receive data on full attendance each term and generate certificates for full attendance.
- Update attendance noticeboard monthly.
- Obtain 100% attendance reports.
- Issue certificates yearly.

The Role of the School Social Worker

- To mentor certain students causing concern.
- To meet weekly with EWO to discuss attendance problems.
- To inform EWO of meetings & problems with students.
- To keep EWO informed over Child Protection issues.
- To organise Connexions Multi-agency meetings.

The Role of the Senior Leader of the Student Support Team

1. To be responsible for attendance in the school.
2. To assist and oversee the Student Support Team in carrying out its duties.
3. To be available for **consultation** with staff and for referral of persistent problems.
4. To be responsible for the policy, procedures and operation of the Student Support Team regarding Attendance.
5. To ensure smooth running of SERCO, to resolve administration problems.
6. To have a working knowledge of the administrative and attendance programme on SERCO.
7. To involve outside agencies as necessary.
8. To ensure there is a focus on attendance in the SPACE programme.
9. To attend the Education Authority Behaviour and Attendance Partnership meetings.
10. To oversee attendance certificates.
11. To oversee the attendance noticeboard.
12. To update the Attendance Policy and Procedures annually with the school and EWO.

Senior Leader in charge of Attendance to liaise with LCO's, Attendance Clerk, Office and SLT to monitor process and enable smooth running. The Senior Leader in charge of Attendance will receive weekly break-downs of students who are unauthorised absent or unauthorised late of longer than two weeks duration from the attendance clerk. They will also receive a monthly percentage attendance figure and termly full attendance statistics. Other statistics will be available on request (Form by form break-downs, individual student records etc.)

The Role of the Senior Leadership Team - Attendance

1. To **liaise** with the Attendance Clerk, School Social Worker and Learning Co-ordinator over problems in operation/greater efficiency of the mechanisms and procedures involved in recording and supervising attendance.
2. To monitor, evaluate and review the success of the system.

The Role of the Headteacher – Attendance

1. To **inform** the Governors of attendance levels as a performance indicator of the school.
2. To **oversee** and link with the SLT and Deputy in Charge of Advice and Guidance as regards progress of systems and mechanisms including computerised registration.
3. To regularly **inform** parents of the DCFS policy and School policy regarding attendance.
4. To **record**, in writing, details of interviews/phone calls, with parents/students and pass to LCO's for information/filing.
5. To sign Fixed Penalty notice referrals/Headteacher certificates for court.

The Role of the Governors - Attendance

1. Governing bodies have legal responsibilities, both directly and indirectly, in regard to attendance. They can contribute to the climate of a school that is keen to achieve improved rates of attendance by asking for information on statistics and trends and remembering to celebrate good attendance as well as supporting staff in making greater efforts to solve problems.
2. Governors can, for instance, be **involved** with certain students who have poor attendance and assist in monitoring them to help them improve.
3. They can form a subcommittee for the purpose of monitoring attendance and become actively involved in ways of improving it.
4. To sit on Attendance Panel Meetings as requested.

The Role of the EWO - Attendance

1. To support the school on behalf of the Education Authority in carrying out its legal responsibilities as regarding attendance.
2. To work with those staff with designated responsibility for attendance to solve problems and improve attendance. (Any EWO working in isolation would be ineffective as regards their role in promoting regular attendance).
3. The EWO is not responsible for the school's attendance figures.
4. To interpret and represent the school and its policies to parents.
5. To be an important source of information regarding home background for schools.
6. To support families and students who are having difficulties.
7. To advise parents and students with regards to problems with attendance.
8. To act as an advocate on behalf of the Education Authority in dealing with complaints.

9. To help parents and the Education Authority to meet statutory obligations regarding attendance.
10. To help LCO/Tutors to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised by liaising with parents.
11. To help resolve parentally condoned absence.
12. To instigate legal proceedings via:
 - a. Magistrate court - under Section 444 (1) or Section 444 (1a) of the 1996 Education Act.
 - b. Family Proceedings Court under Children's Act 1989 (Section 36) to apply for an Education Supervision order.
 - c. Fixed Penalty Notices : Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 – EWO to submit application for fixed Penalty Notices requested by schools, signed by the Headteacher).
 - d. Parenting contracts : Education Act 1996 & Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 Section 19.
13. To follow up referrals from LCO's made via **EWS Referral forms**. Only LCO's or the Senior Manager of the Pastoral Team can refer students directly to the EWO. Form Tutors cannot and should fill in a pink slip to the LCO.
14. To have regular weekly timetabled meetings with LCO/School Social Worker of the Student Support Team for the purpose of discussing cases, updating information and receiving referrals.
15. To have access to the minutes of Student Support meetings and to be invited when attendance issues are discussed.
16. To be involved in re-integration programmes for long-term non-attenders/school refusers.
17. To be available for students to discuss problems during the days the EWO is scheduled to be in school.
18. To identify, in conjunction with LCO's/School Social Worker, cases of non-attendance which require further attention.
19. To assess the circumstances which have led to the breakdown of attendance, look into the causes and discuss these with staff, LCO's, SLT and School Social Worker.
20. To plan appropriate action to resolve attendance problems with the student/family/school and specialist agencies.
21. To identify the issues underlying emotional and behavioural problems in partnership with the school/student/parents.
22. To identify, in conjunction with the school, students at risk of exclusion.
23. To be involved in Pastoral Support Plans.
24. To participate in annual reviews of students with special needs as needed.
25. To work closely with the Student Support Team in Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the mechanisms and procedures for monitoring, recording, and improving attendance and produce action plans for improvement.
26. To be involved in the recognition of young carers along with the school. (Young Carers being students looking after a parent or relative).
27. To inform parents of student's weekly attendance for all those students being monitored.
28. To inform the school of changes of policy or procedures from the DCFS. regarding Attendance.

Sixth Form Attendance

In the Sixth Form we have high expectations of our students' attendance throughout the Joint Sixth. We expect our students to attend every lesson and be registered when they are on site. Students should not organise Dental, Medical appointments or Driving lessons at times when they have a timetabled lesson. If a student knows in advance that he/she will be absent they must inform their tutor and complete a yellow absence slip and put in post box in the 6th Form Common Room or outside the Head of Sixth Form's Office.

Attendance figures for lessons and tutorials will be recorded on reports and references.

Sixth Form Subject staff should take a register every lesson via SERCO (this will change during 2009 to a joint sixth database). Absence information is updated on a weekly basis by EMA Co-ordinators at both schools.

Any patterns in absence can thus be quickly detected. In the event of inappropriate absence students are counselled and parents contacted.

Absence problems are shared between the two schools, via the EMA Co-ordinators, on a weekly basis, and copies of absence updates are passed between schools.

Sixth Form Registration

Students are off the premises of their 'home' school for a significant proportion of their time, and this can make communication difficult. To solve this problem students must attend registration regularly and promptly.

- Students are expected to attend registration at 8.55 a.m. and 1.15 p.m. **EVERY TIME THEY ARE ON SITE.**
- Students arriving late or leaving early, or not officially registered for any reason, **MUST** use the signing in/out book located in the common rooms at both schools.
- Attendance at registration will be reported as a total out of 3 per week at each school (Y12 -Monday, Wednesday a.m. and Thursday at BGS; Tuesday, Wednesday p.m. and Friday at BHS Y13 being the reverse of this.)
- Home Study – Students will be allowed to study at home during their free study time if they so wish, however, students are strongly encouraged to make use of study facilities available at both schools whenever possible.

Example : A student registering at BGS on Monday a.m., Wednesday a.m., Thursday a.m., Thursday p.m., but not Monday p.m. (because of home study) would be credited with 3/3 for attendance that week.

- Rooms are available at each site for Private Study lessons. These are:
At BGS - The Common Room, Study Room and Library
At BHS - The Common Room, Library and SF5

Copies of Form Lists are available for registration in the event of a tutor being absent. These should be returned to the Head of Sixth Form.

Comprehensive information about Sixth Form attendance rules and EMA, can be found in the Sixth Form Learning Agreement.

Appendix - Standard Letter Forms.

This Policy is in line with the Child Protection Policy.

Reviewed July 2010

Letters

1. Dear.....

From our records was absent on the following dates:
..... for which no note or telephone call has been received.

We would be grateful if you could return the reply slip provided on this letter.

If no reply is received then this absence will have to go on your son's record as unauthorised.

Yours

3. Dear Mr & Mrs

Your son was absent from school on

Can you please confirm the reason for absence, sign and return this slip to school with your son.

Thank you.

Signed Form Tutor

Illness

Medical/Dental

Holiday

Religious

Other - Please
specify :

Signed

5. I am writing to inform you that registered on and disappeared from the site. This will have to be recorded on your son's record as an unauthorised absence.

I am sure that you will wish to discuss this with your son and explain to him how his attendance record could affect his future education and employment.

If you need to discuss the matter further please contact the office for an appointment.

Etc.