Attendance, Punctuality & Truancy

Aims

- To ensure each pupil achieves his educational potential
- To achieve the highest attendance of all the East Riding Secondary Schools and Academies
- To achieve an overall school attendance of 95%
- To ensure that all unauthorised absences and lates are processed and followed-up by staff and that suitable action is taken 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.

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 procedure 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 LA/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
- Efficient organisation and procedures

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 inform the Attendance Clerk of any absences.
- To be vigilant in identifying and recording, explaining and passing on information regarding unjustified reasons for absence to the Learning Coordinator (LCO) (see DCFS Regulations, Section 199 Education Act 1993 on Categorisation of Absence).
- To monitor and promptly report to School Social Worker (SSW)/Attendance Team (AT) as absent, those students who are known truants, school refusers, on the Child Protection Register, having family problems, etc 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. Head of House (HoH) involved if absence notification is outstanding

Procedure if a student is truanting from lessons

Attendance is checked lesson by lesson by the Attendance Clerk. The Attendance Clerk checks with the office, makes a telephone call home, and informs the HoH.

The subject leader informs the HoH immediately on the BM system/yellow information form if truancy is suspected.

Action ensues.

Attendance Clerk will contact parents by phone and inform or involve the SSW/AT.

Persistent offenders will be counselled by HoH and/or passed on to the SSW/AT for further action.

SLT becomes involved at the next level, if there is no improvement.

Procedures if a student returns after a period of truancy

Action is appropriate to circumstances.

There should be a minimum after school detention for each hour of learning missed.
Procedures for Lateness

1. A student who arrives after 8.50 am or 1.30 pm is late. They are marked absent by the Tutor at registration or the subject teacher at the start of Period 4. They then have to go to the office to sign in the late book (recording their time of arrival) and then report to the Attendance Clerk, who reports their presence.

2. A student who turns up to registration after the 8.50 am or 1.30 pm bells is marked late (L), but should be instructed to turn up on time and given sanctions if appropriate.

3. A student who turns up after 9.20 am or 1.50 pm is marked late after the 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 HoHs, the students will be seen and sanctions will be applied if appropriate. This is a means of monitoring the system.

5. Students who are late 2 times in a 1 week period should automatically receive a detention to be administered by the Form Tutor. HoHs get weekly late mark sheets to discuss with Tutors. If persistent, the HoH 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. This information is recorded on a yellow slip and placed in the student’s file.

6. Persistent offenders with 10 lates over a 13 week period (after the close of registration) can be referred to SSW/AT 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 the late students can be checked present by Tutors.

Late Books: There should be a late book set up for each year 7-11, to record: student’s name, form, time of arrival and the reason for lateness. This should be made available for HoHs to check on a weekly basis.

Hoax Telephone Calls

If it is known the pupil rings from home pretending to be a parent, HoHs are to arrange a sanction and to inform the SSW/AT.
Post Registration Truancy

The Attendance Clerk and SSW/AT check registers/attendance and contact home to request return of pupil. The HoH is informed. If this applies to more than 10 sessions in 13 weeks, then a Fixed Penalty Notice can be sought via the SSW/AT.

Unjustified Reason for Absence

If a Form Tutor, after checking a note/telephone message, feels that the reason is unjustified according to DCFS Regulations (eg visiting Alton Towers), the Tutor should fill in the behaviour monitoring system/the yellow slip and refer to the HoH. The HoH, in consultation with the Tutor, makes the decision to contact the parents or to liaise with the SSW/AT.

Frequent Authorised Absences

1. A staff member is to fill in a yellow information slip and pass it to the HoH.
2. The HoH is to investigate, contact parents, or refer to the SSW/AT.

Students absent for more than 3 days without a message being received

The Attendance Clerk is to inform the Tutor/LCO/SSW/AT. Appropriate action is to be taken.

Parents requesting more than 10 days holiday in a school year (September to July)

Holidays taken outside term-time will be marked as unauthorised. Only the Headteacher has the authority to authorise parents taking their children out of school for unauthorised holidays risk a fixed penalty notice of £50 per child per parent.

Bullying

In cases of bullying, the student will be interviewed by a HoH of the SSW and appropriate strategies will be put in place.

Absence Notes/Telephone Messages

- Absence notes and messages in a student’s 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.

2. Lateness: if a student arrives after 9.20 am or 1.50 pm when the registers are closed, they are marked with a capital ‘U’ and require a note/telephone call from parents, if appropriate.

Exceptions to this include:

a. Public Transport difficulties (eg Wawne bus late)
b. Bad weather eg snow
c. Parent informing school beforehand (eg 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.

4. Shopping during school hours: absence will be classed as unauthorised.

5. Special Occasions: dependent on circumstances:

   a. The nature of the event
   b. The frequency, ie is it a one-off or likely to become a regular event?
   c. Whether advance notification was given – as a rule such notification will have been given where an event is of an exceptional nature.
   d. The overall attendance pattern of the student.

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence for special occasions.

6. Family Bereavement: the death of a family member can be traumatic and would be authorised absence.

7. Family Holidays.

8. Days of Religious Observance: a day set aside for religious observance would be authorised if they are not too frequent.

9. Interviews: a student can be authorised for interviews.

10. Excluded students are marked E: authorised absence.

11. Students attending student referral units: are marked authorised.

12. Students attending off-site visits: these would be authorised.
NB: If there are any doubts concerning the categorisation of absence then the member of staff should check with the Attendance Clerk, HoH, SSW/AT or SLT, who have copies of the DCFS Guidelines.

**School Phobia**

In instances where school phobia is suspected, the HoH should be informed on a yellow information slip. The HoH will assess the situation and involve parents, SSW/AT and the Education Psychologist, as deemed appropriate.

In cases of school phobia, a multi-agency meeting will be called with all interested parties (possibly including: parents, the student, SSW/AT, Educational Psychologist, Police, Health, SEN, HoH, Family Support Services 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**

Students will be expected to copy up missing work within a reasonable period of time.

Prolonged illness may, or may not, involve work being sent home. When students return to school the following procedures should be applied:

a. Form Tutor/HoH should welcome them back and act as support in liaison with subject teachers. HoH/Form Tutor should check that the student is fully reintegrated after 2 weeks.

b. Subject teachers should (bearing in mind the work load 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 HoH 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. Students should be welcomed back by Form Tutor and teaching staff without sarcasm or ridicule.
b. Students should be fully counselled by HoH, SSW, with reinforcement from Form Tutor.

c. HoH should follow-up after one week to see that the 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 notice board.

The Attendance Notice board

An attendance notice board will display the previous month’s attendance statistics, information concerning attendance and lates, celebration of full attendance, developments and news.

The Role of the Teaching Staff, Mid-Day Supervisors and Support Staff in regard to attendance

If any member of staff finds out about a student truanting from school, they should report the matter to the HoH asap, either verbally, on a yellow information slip or through the behaviour management system. The HoH 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 or lateness in lessons.
The Role of the Subject Leader

1. To counsel students concerning lateness/attendance problems.
2. To pass on information to the HoH via the 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 and reason for lateness.
- To check for hoax phone calls and pass suspicions to Tutors/HoHs.
- To make parents aware of unjustified reasons for absence if there is a query.
- To monitor students using illness as an excuse to leave school and to pass suspicions to Tutors.

The 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 SSW/AT/HoH via a yellow information slip regarding students receiving help from Learning Support who have attendance/refusal problems.
- To help plan and devise strategies for solving problems eg school refusal.

The Role of the Attendance Clerk

- To record data from the registers.
- To generate letters to parents at the HoH’s request regarding lates.
- To produce multiple week print-outs each week.
- To produce regular reports for the SSW/AT each week on all students with attendance below 85%. SSW/AT will liaise with HoH as needed.
- 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 SSW/AT, so that attendance records can be kept up-to-date and registers marked accordingly.
- To inform parents asap in regards to attendance problems.
- To liaise with SLT re holiday requests/penalty letters.
The Role of the Head of House

1. To follow-up unauthorised absence and lateness via letter or phone call. SSW/AT to record outcome so that records can be updated and put on file.
2. To liaise regularly with SSW/AT on all possible attendance problems and record these on yellow information slips.
3. To follow-up unjustified reasons for absence by letter/phone.
4. To issue certificates for full attendance.
5. 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.
6. To be involved in re-integration strategies for long-term absentees.
7. To be involved in reviewing strategies for improving attendance.
8. To counsel students with lateness or attendance problems.

The Role of the Student Support Administrative Assistant

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

The Role of the School Social Worker/Attendance Team (SSW/AT)

- To mentor certain students causing concern.
- To monitor all pupils with attendance of 85% and below, also lates recorded after registration is closed.
- To liaise with SLT/Senior EWO in case of court proceedings.
- To be aware of Child Protection issues.
- To inform the relevant personnel of meetings and problems with students.

The Role of the Senior Leader and 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 Behaviour and Attendance Partnership meetings, or training on attendance.
10. To oversee attendance certificates.
To oversee the attendance notice board.
12. To update the Attendance Policy & Procedures annually with the school.

The Senior Leader in charge of attendance is to liaise with HoH, the Attendance Clerk, Office and SLT to monitor process and enable smooth running. The Senior Leader in charge of attendance will receive weekly breakdowns 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 breakdown, individual student records etc).

The Role of the Senior Leadership Team – Attendance

1. To liaise with the Attendance Clerk, SSW/AT and HoH 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 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 to pass these to HoH for information/filing.
5. To sign Fixed Penalty Notice referrals/Headteacher certificates for court purposes.

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 the 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 sub-committee 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 SSW/AT

1. School is responsible for its own attendance figures.
2. To interpret and represent the school and its policies to parents (SLT).
3. To be an important source of information regarding home background.
4. To support families and students who are having difficulties.
5. To advise parents and students in regard to problems with attendance (AT).
6. To deal with complaints (SLT).
7. To help the HoH/Tutors to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised, by liaising with parents (AT).
8. To have regular meetings for the purpose of discussing cases, updating information and receiving referrals.
9. To be invited to all Student Support Team meetings.
10. To be available to students to discuss problems.
11. In conjunction with the HoH to identify cases of non-attendance requiring further attention.
12. To assess the circumstances which have led to the breakdown of attendance, looking to the causes and discuss these with staff, HoH and SLT.
13. To identify the issues underlying emotional and behavioural problems in partnership with the school/student/parents (AT).
14. To identify in conjunction with the school, students at risk of exclusion (AT).
15. To be involved in Pastoral Support Plans (AT).
16. To participate in Annual Reviews with students with Special Needs, as required (AT).
17. 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 (AT).
18. To be involved in the recognition of Young Carers along with the school (Young Carers are students looking after a parent or relative).
19. To inform parents of students’ weekly attendance for all those students being monitored.

The Role of the EWO

1. To support the school with Statutory responsibilities regarding attendance.
2. To work with those staff with designated responsibility for attendance to solve problems and improve attendance and absence.
3. To help parents meet their statutory obligation regarding attendance.
4. To help resolve parentally-condoned absence.
5. 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.
6. To be involved in re-integration programmes for long-term non-attenders/school refusers (AT/EWO).
7. To plan appropriate action to resolve attendance problems with the student/family/school and specialist agencies (AT)
8. To inform the school of changes of Policy or Procedures from the DfE regarding attendance.
Sixth Form Attendance

All Post 16 students are expected to **attend every** lesson and **tutorial** on their timetable. Their attendance is recorded on formal registers taken in every lesson by their subject teacher and in registration and tutorials by their personal tutor.

**Students are expected to:**

- Attend all timetabled subject lessons
- Attend all timetabled enrichment lessons
- Attend all tutorials and registration sessions (dependent on their personal timetable)
- Be punctual at all lessons, tutorials, assemblies and registrations
- Attend all the exams for which they are entered
- Inform the school in case of illness, and complete a Student Absence Form
- Attend supervised study sessions if a member of staff had indicated a concern in their subject area

**If they**

- Have persistent unauthorised absences in any of their chosen courses, they will be questioned as to whether they should continue with this subject and will undoubtedly be asked to leave that course
- Continually fail to meet agreed attendance targets for courses, tutorials or registration and fail to follow procedures as set out in this Learning Agreement, they may be asked to leave the Sixth Form

**For Examination Entry:**

**Students will be expected to have:**

- 85% attendance to be entered for examinations by the school
- 70-84% attendance students will be required to pay for their own examination entries

Student Attendance is monitored on a weekly basis by the Pastoral Managers at both schools. Attendance reports are sent home to parents on a half-termly basis.

This Policy is in line with the Child Protection Policy (reviewed August 2013)