



BOWER PARK
ACADEMY

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

SEPTEMBER 2023

The application of this policy and procedure ensures that no employee receives less favourable treatment on grounds of sex, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status, civil partnership status, age, race, colour, nationality, national origin, ethnic origin, disability, part time status or trade union activities.



Key Principles

The aim of Bower Park Academy attendance and punctuality policy is to enable the academy to provide a consistent approach that is clear to all governors, staff, pupils and parents. Good attendance at the Academy is the single most important factor in ensuring that children and young people have the best possible education and life chances. Attendance is strongly linked to achievement, and it has been proven that students with good attendance achieve significantly better than their peers. In addition, students with good attendance are more likely to develop lasting friendships and feel happy at the Academy and are less likely to be drawn into unhealthy or antisocial behaviour. Early intervention and student/family support sits at the heart of our approach to raising levels of student attendance.

Bower Park Academy is dedicated to delivering engaging lessons so students want to learn and dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework. This policy considers all the non-statutory and statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education. This policy should be read in conjunction with the ELAT Behaviour and Attendance policy.

The Senior Attendance Champion: Mr K Camy: 01708 730244

kcamy@elatschools.co.uk

Target

Bower Park Academy has set an attendance target of 95% for all students and strive to be at least in line with the national average. 95% attendance equates to no more than 10 days of absence. We aim to safeguard the welfare, health, social and emotional development of our students and maximise their potential by ensuring these excellent rates of attendance remain consistent throughout the academy year.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/Carers

- Fulfil their legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends every day and is on time
- Work closely with the academy to overcome any issues which may affect attendance
- Inform the academy of reasons for absence on the first day of absence by 8.30 at the latest
- Arrange for doctor, dentist or opticians' appointments to be made outside the academy day wherever possible
- Provide medical evidence for absences of 5 days or more or when requested
- Be fully supportive of the academy with regard to attendance and punctuality
- Attend attendance review meetings



Students

- Attend the academy every day and on time
- Inform their parent/carer if there is a reason why they may be absent
- Speak to their Tutor/Head of Year/ SGM/other trusted adult if they are experiencing difficulties at the academy or at home which may impact on their attendance
- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn

Governing Body

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant academy policies and information to parents and staff
- Review the attendance policy regularly and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow it to function effectively
- Appoint a link governor to work with the Vice Principal with responsibility for attendance to ensure that data is monitored effectively, and action is taken where necessary
- Ensure that all legislation is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to all stakeholders
- Allocate time at meetings to discuss and monitor progress in relation to attendance
- Review academy procedures for collecting and storing admissions and attendance data

Vice Principal with Responsibility for Attendance: Mr K Camy

kcamy@elatschools.co.uk

- Coordinate with the governing body to report and discuss absence rates and strategy
- Communicate absence and punctuality policies and procedures clearly to parents, students and staff
- Liaise with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance
- Teach students about the value of high attendance and the possible consequences of poor attendance
- Work with Heads of Year, Support and Guidance Managers, Form Tutors and the attendance team to ensure that all students receive the most effective support to maintain and improve their attendance
- Ensure that registration and monitoring systems are monitored and working effectively
- Support the attendance team to monitor attendance and communicate with parents where appropriate



Education Welfare Officer (EWO): Mrs R Varyah and Mrs J Anderson

rvaryah@elatschools.co.uk and andersonj@elatschools.co.uk 01708 730244 Ext 4362/Ext4368

- Analyse statistics and check for patterns of absence across the academy
- Identify students whose attendance is a cause for concern and take appropriate action to help them improve
- Coordinate the collection of medical evidence where necessary
- Liaise with Heads of Year, Support and Guidance Managers (SGMs), Form Tutors and external agencies such as Children's Services to ensure all families receive the most appropriate support
- Contact parents by telephone, letter and through face-to-face meetings to maintain high levels of communication around attendance and punctuality issues
- Work particularly with families and students whose attendance falls below 90% (persistent absentees)
- Produce and monitor attendance contracts for pupils who are persistently absent
- Where necessary conduct formal legal meetings and prepare paperwork for fixed penalty notices or prosecution where legal action has been determined to be the best possible course of action to improve attendance
- Undertake home visits to support families as appropriate

Attendance Officer: Mrs M Begum

attendance@elatschools.co.uk 01708 730244 Ext 4202

- Monitor register completion and attendance levels throughout the academy on a weekly basis
- Coordinate first-day absence contact with parents. An alert is sent after registration closes in the morning, informing parents that their child has not registered.. Parents have the opportunity to respond to this message by email or text. Any unauthorised absence is addressed within the first 5 days.
- Assist the EWO and VP to monitor attendance and enforce absence and punctuality procedures
- Produce data to be used by Tutors, SGMs, Heads of Year and the attendance team
- Produce unauthorised absence lists for the pastoral teams and monitor responses
- Send attendance letters to parents of students whose attendance falls below the academy target
- Prepare paper registers for use in the event of unforeseen circumstances such as IT failure



Heads of Year (HOY)

- Assist the attendance team to monitor student attendance
- Meet with the attendance team regularly to discuss students who are a cause for concern
- Organise rewards, badges and certificates for students with excellent attendance
- Meet with and monitor students whose attendance falls between 80% and 91% to discuss barriers to attendance and produce an action plan for improvement

Year group	Head of Year	Support and Guidance Manager
Year 7	Mr T Blair tblair@elatschools.co.uk	Mrs K James kjames@elatschools.co.uk
Year 8	Mr L Sherwood lsherwood@elatschools.co.uk	Ms T Roberts troberts@elatschools.co.uk
Year 9	Mrs R Mughal rmughal@elatschools.co.uk	Mrs G Evans gevans@elatschools.co.uk
Year 10	Mr K Mayhew kmayhew@elatschools.co.uk	Mrs S Lucas lucass@elatschools.co.uk
Year 11	Mr L Fleischer lfleischer@elatschools.co.uk	Mrs C Whitcombe whitcombec@elatschools.co.uk

Form Tutors

- Mark registers during tutor time
- Refer attendance concerns to the relevant Head of Year/SGM
- Discuss attendance regularly with tutees and deliver resources and activities produced by the attendance team



- Follow up unauthorised absences as required
- Meet with and monitor students and parents (where appropriate) whose attendance falls between 91% and 95%
- Call parents for students whose attendance falls between 91% and 95% or for students with persistent lateness
- Celebrate students whose attendance is above 95%

All Staff

- Complete all lesson registers on SIMS or Edulink accurately within 15 minutes of the start of each lesson
- If a student is late for a lesson then amend the register accordingly
- Ensure that teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance
- Deliver engaging lessons so students want to be in lessons and value learning
- Report any safeguarding concerns to the appropriate officers
- Report any truancy concerns immediately on Edulink
- Inform Attendance Officer immediately if a student is not in a lesson and is with a member of staff
- Take an active approach to discussing and promoting the importance of good attendance with parents at parent's evenings and with students in lesson time where appropriate

Procedures

- **Timings of the school day** – the school day begins for students at 8:30. Students are expected to be on site by 8:25 at the latest. School finishes at 2.55pm and students will not be allowed to leave before this time without advanced permission.
- **Absence reporting** – parents are expected to telephone the school (01708 730244) on the first day of absence and on each subsequent day to provide the reason for the student's absence. A reason should be provided for the absence.
- **Unauthorised absence** – if no valid reason is provided for an absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences will be followed up immediately by the year team and may lead to legal action if unresolved.
- **Minor illness** -students are expected to come to school if they are physically able. This means that they will still be expected to come to school with minor coughs/colds/cramps/ stomach pains or headaches. Parents/carers should use their judgement to decide if an illness requires time off school and may find it useful to consider if it would be appropriate for them to take time off work with a similar ailment. If parents are unsure, they should send students into school and ask them to visit their Support and Guidance Manager if their condition deteriorates during the school day.
- **Sending students home** – the academy will only send students home where it is considered necessary by a first-aid trained member of staff. Students who feel unwell should visit their year team office and speak to their Support and Guidance Manager. **Students should not contact home themselves.** If a



parent arrives to pick up a student who has not been seen by a Support and Guidance Manager, they will be asked to wait in reception until the student can be evaluated by a first aid-trained member of staff and given permission to leave the academy. This is to safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of our students.

- **Medical evidence** - where a student is absent for 5 days or more or the EWO has asked for medical evidence to be submitted, this should be done as soon as possible after the student returns to the Academy. Medical evidence may consist of appointment cards, letters from a GP or hospital consultant, or prescriptions.
- **Medical appointments** – students have 175 non-school days in a year, medical appointments should be made outside the academy day whenever possible. If it cannot be avoided, the student will be expected to attend for the remainder of that day.
- **Holidays during term time** – these will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised term time absences may result in fixed penalty notices or prosecution. Where there are exceptional circumstances such as the death of a close family member, permission should be sought from the Principal in advance, using the Exceptional Leave of Absence Request form (appendix 1).
- **Applying for time off school** – parent completes the Exceptional Leave of Absence Request paperwork (appendix 1) and send in to the attendance officer (Mrs M Begum).
- **Lateness** – students arriving to tutor time after the register is taken at 8:30am will be given a late mark by their Form Tutor or on the gate by a SGM. This will result in a 20 min ‘late on the day’ detention. Students who arrive on site after 8.45am will have to get a late mark by the EWO at the front of the academy in our reflections suite. If there is not a good reason for the lateness, an unauthorised mark will be issued. Students who are persistently late will be monitored by the pastoral team. Students who arrive after 8.30am will be issued a 20-minute late detention on that day. If they arrive late two times or more in a week, they will receive a 60 minute detention with Head of Year on the following Monday. Alternatively, parents can email attendance@bowerpark.co.uk if they there is a valid reason for a student to be late.
- **Persistent absence** – if a student’s attendance falls below 90%, they are classed as persistently absent. In such cases the Academy Education Welfare officer will contact parents/carers to try and resolve the problem. If this is not successful, the child may be referred to Children’s Services and legal action may be taken.
- **Religious observance** - Bower Park Academy recognises that there may be times when students of different faiths observe religious events that fall outside of the academy holidays. Authorised absences will be allowed at these times. Parents/carers should notify the academy in advance of such occasions wherever possible.
- **Children missing in education (CME)** - If after 10 days of absence the Academy is unable to ascertain the whereabouts of a student, we will refer their details to the Local Authority and work with them to try and locate the student. If the child’s whereabouts cannot be traced, after 21 days of continuous unauthorised absence they will be removed from the academy roll and the Local Authority will continue to try and trace them.



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- **Rewarding students for excellent attendance** – students will be recognised in the pastoral rewards assemblies with certificates.
- **Attendance initiatives** – the Academy organises an annual rewards trip and pizza lunches for students with improved attendance. Year Teams will also organise termly rewards trips where excellent attendance is part of the eligibility criteria.
- **Truancy** – Any student who truants a lesson or part of a lesson will be issued with a same day detention after school.

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals in line with the production of new legal guidelines and regulations and its effectiveness evaluated through the academy's usual monitoring and evaluation cycle.

When a student is unable to attend the academy because they are complying with clinical and /or public health advice, the academy will offer them access to remote education. The academy will monitor the engagement with this activity.

If you are concerned about your child attending the academy, please contact the Head of Year or Support and Guidance Manager.



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APPENDIX

- 1. Attendance Contract**
- 2. Exceptional Leave of Absence Request**
- 3. Procedures**



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BOWER PARK ACADEMY ATTENDANCE CONTRACT

NAME:	DOB:
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YEAR GROUP:	Date of meeting:	Review date:
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Present:

Background Information



Discussion points regarding attendance:

Action Points Agreed:

■ *EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:*

- *Student will arrive at the academy by 8.30 a.m. each day*
- *Parent will inform the Academy on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon the student's return*
- *Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absenceStudent that may incur*
- *Are there any issues preventing student from attending regularly?*
- *Does the student have medical evidence*

Current attendance:	
Attendance target:	100% (a time limited target may help)
Timescale for improvement:	

Date/Time for Review Meeting:	
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I can confirm that this attendance contract is agreed by all present.



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Signed:

	Parent / Carer
	Student
	Academy Representative
	Agency



Request to authorise absence from the Academy due to exceptional circumstances

The academy is only able to authorise absence from learning in exceptional circumstances. In making a request for an authorised absence from the academy, you will need to explain why the circumstances are exceptional.

Please note: There is no general right to authorise absence for a family holiday. If you take your child out of academy without permission the absence will be unauthorised and we will consider legal action.

The academy will adhere to the guidelines set out in the DfE Guidance on ‘Working together to improve academy attendance’ found out: **Working together to improve Academy attendance** (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Section A – To the Headteacher

Student Name:	
Student Form:	
Date of Request:	
To be authorised as absent from the academy from/to:	
If your child has siblings that are also applying for a leave of absence, please enter their name and academy:	

Section B – Reason/s for this absence request

Please explain why you are applying for an authorised absence and the circumstances which make your application exceptional and therefore, the leave cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks holiday your child has from the Academy. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event, please confirm the date of the event and explain your travel arrangements.

Please provide supporting documentation as evidence for your request.

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Section C – Parent / Carer Information

I am the parent/carer with whom the student normally resides. The information I have given on this form is correct.

Signature:	
Date:	

Section D – For academy use only

Complete as appropriate:

Current attendance:	
Request approved	
Further discussion needed with parent/carer	
Request denied	

PLEASE NOTE:

This leave of absence form serves as a Penalty Notice Warning letter to parent/carers. Any unauthorised absence during this period of time, may be subject to a penalty notice for non attendance being issued. A penalty notice is £60 per parent, per child for each 5 days' absence.



Threshold	100% - 95% Attendance	95%-91% Attendance	80% - 91% Attendance	Below 80% Attendance
Staff Responsibility	Head of year / SGM / Form tutor	Form Tutor	Head of Year	Education welfare officer / Assistant Principal
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 100% attendance certificates and badges ■ Excellent attendance certificates (97-99%) ■ Achievement points ■ Rewards ■ Prizes for excellent and 100% attenders ■ Participation in reward events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meeting with student ■ Barriers to attendance discussed ■ Strategies for improvement suggested including short term monitoring reports ■ Contact home if appropriate ■ Referral HoY /EWO as appropriate ■ Parental meeting ■ Support through pastoral team to implement targets ■ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meeting between student and head of year ■ Barriers to attendance and strategies for improvement discussed ■ Contact home to inform of concern and discuss action plan ■ Parental meeting ■ Targets set and reviewed ■ Referral to EWO/SLT as appropriate ■ Referral to external agencies as appropriate ■ Referral to external agencies as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Formal decisions meeting involving parent/carer, EWO and AP ■ Home visits ■ Review of previous actions taken to improve attendance ■ Home- Academy attendance contract completed and signed ■ Attendance contract reviews ■ Referral to education welfare as appropriate ■ External agency support where required ■ Fixed penalty warning ■ Fixed penalty notice ■ Prosecution ■ MARF completed for educational neglect



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