Pupil Attendance Policy

Level 2

Date Adopted: **January 2023**

History of most recent Policy changes (must be completed)

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
29 Sept 2020	Appendix 6	Addition of coronavirus guidance	DfE Guidance
24/11/2022	Appendix 6	Removal of coronavirus guidance	
	Appendix 1	Addition of attendance flow chart	
16/12/2022	7.3.4	Addition of actions for late marks	

1) Statement of Principle

In the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust, we believe that attendance and punctuality at our Academies is vital to the wellbeing and future prospects of all our pupils. Attendance and punctuality are intrinsically linked to our Trust's strategy for raising achievement. This policy provides the framework within which all staff, parents, pupils, carers and external agencies can contribute to the development and maintenance of a learning environment where high attendance and excellent punctuality is the "norm".

2) Aims

- To improve the overall percentage attendance and reduce unauthorised absence.
- To reduce the number of students who are persistent absentees (PAs).
- To establish a clear system for maintaining full attendance and excellent punctuality and clearly communicate this to all Trust staff, pupils and parents who are all working to agreed routines and standards;
- To develop a culture for learning environment across the Trust where pupils are encouraged to attend regularly and to be punctual because pupils feel valued members of the Academy community and that they are safe and secure;
- To put in place an effective and efficient administration system for monitoring and intervening with issues relating to attendance and punctuality;
- To offer pupils and parents/carers good support, advice and guidance on the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

3) Objectives
3.1 For Pupils:-

- To ensure that pupils maximise their learning potential by taking responsibility for achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To support their fellow pupils and thereby their Academy in winning awards that relate to attendance and punctuality.
- To follow the Academy procedures for dealing with attendance and punctuality.

3.2 For Parents and Carers

- To be fully supportive of the Academy with regard to attendance and punctuality as part of signing up to the Home-Academy Agreement.
- To support the Academy and their child(ren) by not requesting absence for holidays during term time and minimising where possible all other authorised absence, for example, dental appointments during the school day.
- To follow the Academy procedures for dealing with attendance through making contact with the Academy on the first day of absence and where this is not possible, ensuring that they contact the school office as soon as possible.

- To read and follow the guide (Appendix 1 Academy Guidance on Attendance for Parents and Carers) for parents/carers which details all our expectations and procedures regarding attendance and punctuality.

3.3 For Teachers/Learning Tutors

- To act as role models by being punctual to every lesson/registration.
- To take the register at the beginning of every registration period in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.
- To deal with any unauthorised absence from lessons, monitor the daily attendance statistics and deal with suspected truancy as detailed in this policy.
- To take responsibility for dealing with issues of attendance and punctuality in relation to their class.
- To encourage their pupils and tutees to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality through monitoring and reinforcing the need for high levels of attendance and excellent punctuality.
- To assist in reintegrating any of their pupils after a period of prolonged absence.

3.4 For Senior/Year/Phase Leaders

- To raise the profile of good attendance and monitor the attendance of pupils within their Year/Phase.
- To be responsible for regular liaison with the appropriate lead on Attendance and / or EWO regarding poor attendance of pupils and issues related to poor punctuality.
- To liaise with parents as appropriate in response to attendance, punctuality and truancy issues; attending panel meetings as appropriate.
- To ensure that teachers/ tutors in their Year/Phase fulfil their duties regarding attendance and punctuality and to take appropriate action when this does not occur.
- To ensure that the Academy reward system in relation to attendance and punctuality is used effectively within their Year/Phase.

3.5 Administration Support

- To ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Academy's computerised registration systems for attendance and punctuality. For example, processing registers, preparing and distributing attendance data.
- To liaise with teachers/senior leaders and establish reasons for absence including telephone calls to parents/carers on the first day of absence, letters and arranging home visits.
- To assist in following up poor attendance and punctuality, for example, organising attendance panel meetings with parents/carers and external agencies, arranging home visits, ensuring that pupil contracts and targets are agreed and monitored.

3.6 For the Academy Leadership Team

- Through Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance, to co-ordinate and monitor the policy and procedures for attendance and punctuality throughout the Academy.
- To raise the profile and importance of attendance and punctuality, for example, through assemblies, newsletters and appropriate reward systems
- To analyse and act swiftly in response to report data on attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that the learning environment on offer to pupils, through the curriculum, personalised learning, behaviour policy and reintegration procedures, create the foundations for excellent attendance and punctuality and low levels of fixed term exclusions.
- To ensure that Academy expectations in regards to this policy on attendance and punctuality is communicated clearly to all stakeholders.

3.7 For the Local Board

- To regularly review and agree the Attendance and Punctuality Management Policy, in line with this policy.
- To annually agree attendance targets.
- To take a lead role in supporting the Academy in the implementation of its approach to attendance and punctuality especially in our response to parents in supporting unauthorised absence.

4) Absence

Under Section 7 of the Education Act (1996), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child(ren) attends the Academy on a regular and full-time basis. Every half day absence has to be classified by the Academy as either authorised or unauthorised. The Academy must record the reason for any half day absence. Unauthorised absence such as truancy will lead to sanctions being taken against pupils or in exceptional cases, extended periods of unauthorised absence may lead to legal action being taken against parents.

Under normal circumstances, the only reason a pupil should miss any lessons is if they are too ill to attend. This is an example of an authorised absence, ie, pupils have missed a morning or afternoon session for a valid reason. Unauthorised absences are those, which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. This includes keeping students away from lessons unnecessarily, truancy and absences, which the Academy considers to have not been properly explained.

The Education (Pupil Regulations) 2006 and the DfES Circular 10/99 state that a leave of absence can only be granted at the discretion of the Local Board/Principal.

The Local Board/Principal should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Local Board/Principal

must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Local Board/ Principal will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Local Board/Principal's discretion. Only in exceptional cases shall more than ten days be granted in any one year.

5) Procedures for Registration

Each Academy should set out its policy and procedures for registration and ensure that all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the procedures. These should include how to report sickness absence or apply for leave of absence, when a pupil will be marked as 'late' and the consequences of this.

6) Punctuality/Truancy

It is vitally important that all staff are punctual to ensure that pupils understand that lateness is not acceptable. Year / Phase/Senior leaders must reinforce the importance of punctuality and attendance when communicating with pupils and parents.

Procedures for dealing with lateness and truancy should be set out in the Academy's Attendance Policy and Procedures document

7) Strategies for Ensuring High Attendance and Excellent Punctuality

Senior Leaders at each Academy should take overall responsibility for encouraging and rewarding publicly high attendance and excellent levels of punctuality. This will commonly be achieved through assemblies and reward schemes. These may include certificates or other rewards for 100% attendance.

7.2 First Day contact and Dealing with absence

Attempts should be made to contact any parent/carer on the first day of absence and establish the reason for absence. A telephone call can substitute for a note but the authenticy of the caller must be established. Where contact has not been possible, this must be followed up. Information regarding pupil absence must be recorded against the relevant pupil's record, including any attempts to contact the parent/carer.

A list of all outstanding absences should be regularly reviewed and reasons for absence pursued.

7.3 Attendance Support

Attendance and punctuality should be regularly monitored by senior leaders and the local Board.

Where students are likely to have a period of long absence, for example from a period of illness, then arrangements should be made for appropriate work to be sent home and marked when returned. Class teachers should also ensure contact is maintained eg through class dojo.

Where there is a significant pattern of absence, the Lead for Attendance should:
- Involve the EWO in developing strategies for intervention.
- Attend as relevant, weekly panel meetings to discuss any students causing concern regarding attendance and punctuality.
- If attendance falls below 85%, work with the EWO in convening a "Persistent Absence, (PA)" attendance panel meeting, involving parents, in establishing targets for attendance and punctuality along with strategies for support in successfully reintegrating students back into the Academy.
- Students with attendance between 85% and 90% should also be tracked and the appropriate intervention taken, for example, a meeting with parents. Patterns should also be analysed to detect any condoned absence or suspected periods of truancy.
- For attendance between 90% - 95%, staff should play an active role in advocating the importance of full attendance to both pupils and parents.
- If the attendance is longer than a period of ten continuous days and is treated as unauthorised absence then key agencies should be informed.
- All steps should be taken to ascertain the student's whereabouts and documentation should be kept on this process.
- The LA must be further informed if the student's absence is continuous for a further 10 days if whereabouts are unknown and all contact has failed.

In a small minority of cases, referrals may have to be made to the LA, for example, where parents are unwilling and failing to comply with the agreed action plans as a result of a panel meeting. This may lead to the issue of a fixed penalty notice and possible court action being taken if the LA involvement does not lead to the student returning to the Academy.

7.4 Warning Letters and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)

The Trust believes that when avenues of supportive intervention such as telephone calls, meetings with parents and any home visits have been used and there has been no improvement in attendance then we will use the legal avenues that are open to us. The Trust encourages Academies to use the following:-

7.4.1 Leave of Absence

As stated in Section 4, the Academy does not support any holidays requested during term time. If a request is made for a leave of absence and this is not approved and the student does not attend during the stated period then a fixed penalty notice could be issued upon the student's return.

7.4.2 Students with less than 90% attendance (with unauthorised absence)

Students who have less than 90% attendance with any period of unauthorised absence within a 6 week period will receive a warning letter from the Academy. This letter will state the student's overall attendance percentage and that if there is no improvement in attendance, normally within the subsequent 2 week period then a meeting with parents will be arranged.

7.4.3 Late for the Academy day L code, and after registers have closed – use of the U code)

Students who arrive at the Academy after 9.30am are registered as "late after the registers have closed" and this is recorded as a U, which is an unauthorised absence for the am session. Any parent/carer of a student who records more than 5 U codes in any one half-term a meeting will be arranged. This will be preceded by a warning letter to the parent/carer after the 3rd U is recorded in the Academy register informing of the consequences of reaching a 5th U in the register.
Any parent/carer of a pupil who records more than 5 lates (L) in a half-term will receive a letter asking for them to get their children to school on time. If the parents record 10 lates in a half-term, a meeting will be arranged to discuss the situation.

7.5 Reintegration Programmes

If a student has had a period of absence for longer than five days then the class teacher/form tutor may choose to instigate the reintegration programme. This will involve the class teacher/tutor supporting their pupil in reintegrating back into Academy life. It will involve a series of support meetings initiated by a first meeting that explains the programme to students, discusses subject issues and sets agreed targets. This is then developed through further support meetings over a period of two weeks after the date of return. The completed form will then be placed in the student's file. The form is in Appendix 3.

7.6 Reintegration through the Guidance manager

Following a period of prolonged absence, a student may be referred to the EWO or other appropriate person depending on the level of support required. A meeting will take place with the parent/carer and student to discuss a reintegration programme. Consideration will be given to a reduced timetable initially to ensure a smooth reintegration.

8 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Senior Leaders of the Academy will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through analysis of attendance data and reports. Patterns of lateness or absence should be identified and action plans generated. These could include reviewing any related policies and procedures such as Student Voice/Council in working with students to generate

strategies to improve punctuality. Comparisons will be made across the Trust and where appropriate actions to improve attendance and/or punctuality will feature in Academy Improvement Plans.

Appendix 1 – Easton CE Academy Procedure

REGISTRATION

- **TEACHERS - Registration is from 8:45 - 9:00 and from 1.00-1.30pm**
- Registers must be completed by 9.00am and 1.30pm pupils should be registered as (/) or (N) no other codes should be entered
- **OFFICE -** will ensure all registers have been completed and updated to SIMS by 9.10am and 1.30pm

AUTHORISED LATE

- **TEACHERS - Registration in class closes at 9:00**
  - Any children arriving after 9:00am will be sent to the school office with their parent.
- **OFFICE and HHSW-** All pupils that arrive at school between 9.00am and 9.30am must be registered as (L) using the entry sign system and escort children to class.
- **HHSW-** Will monitor pupil lateness weekly and respond appropriately to this.

UNAUTHORISED LATE

- **OFFICE- Unauthorised lates begin at 9.30am**
- Staff will ensure that pupils arriving after 9.30pm are signed in using entry sign and will record on SIMS time of arrival and escort children to class.
- **HSSW-** Will monitor unauthorised lates and respond to this appropriately

ABSENCE

- **OFFICE:** All pupil absences should be reported by 9.30am and 1.30pm
- Between 9.00am and 9.30am staff will record all reported absences on SIMS including the absence voicemail box, reported absences list and pupil absence emails. At 9.30 am the office staff will print an unexplained absences report and hand it to HHSW.
- At 1.30pm the office staff will run an unexplained absences report and ensure all children have returned to class from lunch- in the event children have been sent home due to illness or left school to attend a medical appointment- office staff will ammend the code on SIMS. If there are children who have not returned to class and have not been signed out of the building the office staff will go to the classroom and make enquiries into where the pupil is. If children are not found then the office staff will immediately notify a member of the safeguarding team who will follow this up.

CHILD MISSING IN EDUCATION

- **HSSW and office staff**
- First day unexplained absence- absence enquiry phonecall home will be made
- Second day unexplained absence- absence enquiry phonecall home again, and also a text message
- Third day unexplained absence- Phone calls to all contacts on pupil profile and home visit where possible
- Fourth day unexplained absence- home visit with letter
- Fifth day unexplained absence- Pupil tracking referral to the education welfare service

Appendix Two – Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings
For use with the am and pm roll call.

Code	Description	Statistical meaning	Physical meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole school
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole school
@	Do not use	Unauthorised Absence LATE FOR SESSIONS	
B	Educated off site	Approved educational Activity	Out for the whole session
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
D	Dual registration	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
E	Excluded	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
F	Extended family holiday agreed)	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence	Out for the whole session
H	Family Holiday agreed	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
L	Late	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	Out for the whole session
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence	Out for the whole session
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
R	Religious Observance	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session
S	Study Leave	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session
U	Late after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session

W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
X	DCSF: School closed to Students	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
Z	Do NOT USE	Authorised Absence	Out for the whole session
!	DCSF X: Non-compulsory school age abs	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
#	School closed to Students and staff	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
*	DCSF Z: Student not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
-	All should attend/ No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session

Appendix Three – Example Reintegration Form After Prolonged Absence

Student Name and Home Group			
Phase Leader		**Guidance Manager**	
Date of First Absence		**Date of Return to the Academy**	
Details of outstanding work	**brief outline of the work missed:**		
Targets (including priorities) set with students	1. 2. 3.		
Meeting 1	**Outcomes**		
Meeting 2 5 days later	**Outcomes**		
Meeting 3 10 days later	**Outcomes**		
Meeting 3 15 days later	**Outcomes**		

Guidance Manager's Signature_____ Student signature _____

EWO's Signature _____ Parent/Carer's signature _____

Appendix 4 Example Application for Leave of Absence

Please read the following information before you complete the request.
As you aware it is the policy of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust not to allow any holiday or extended leave during term time. However, if you wish to request leave of absence you need to read the following advice and complete the form below.
This form must be completed as early as possible before the requested leave of absence.
Each request for absence will be considered individually and we will take into account:

- The student's previous attendance history;
- The time of the year regards any public or internal examinations;
- Attendance and punctuality in the current academic year;
- The nature of the request and whether any other requests have been made.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued should a student take leave of absence without permission.

Full Name of Student: Class:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Reason for request for leave of absence:
Intended dates of absence:
Name of parent/carers: Signature: Date:

For Office Use only:
Form to be submitted to Principal along with Attendance Certificate
Agreement given Yes/No
Appropriate letter to be prepared for return to parent/carer and given to Vice Principal for signature.
Signed: Date:

Appendix 5 HOW MUCH SCHOOLING HAVE YOU MISSED?

100% ATTENDANCE MEANS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

99% = 2 days missed of the school year (4 sessions missed)

98% = 4 days missed of the school year (8 sessions missed)

97% = 6 days missed of the school year (over 1 school week)

96% = 8 days missed of the school year (16 sessions missed)

95% = 10 days missed of the school year (2 school weeks)

94% = 12 days missed of the school year (24 sessions missed)

93% = 14 days missed of the school year (28 sessions missed)

92% = 16 days missed of the school year (over 3 school weeks)

91% = 18 days missed of the school year (36 sessions missed)

90% = 20 days missed of the school year (4 school weeks)

89% = 22 days missed of the school year (44 sessions missed)

88% = 24 days missed of the school year (48 sessions missed)

87% = 26 days missed of the school year (over 5 school weeks)

86% = 28 days missed of the school year (56 sessions missed)

85% = 30 days missed of the school year (6 school weeks)

70% = 1½ days missed per week (12 weeks missed per year)

60% = 2 days missed per week (2 days missed almost 4 months)

50% = 2½ days missed per week (19 weeks missed)

40% = 3 days missed per week (19 weeks = over ½ a school year missed