



Outstanding for All - Borlase and Beyond

Attendance for Learning Policy

Date Last Reviewed: September 2018

Next Review Date: June 2020

For Review by: LGB

Sir William Borlase's Grammar School Grammar School recognises the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality in order that students can maximise their potential in school, preparing them for the demands of adult life.

There must be commitment on behalf of all students, staff, governors and parents to uphold this high expectation. Excellent attendance is implicit in the school's values and is essential in maintaining the orderly environment necessary for effective teaching and learning. Every student should seek to attain maximum attendance and we expect all staff to take the same initiative in supporting good attendance.

It is important that students feel recognised for their attendance and the use of praise is encouraged.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DfE Guidance for School Attendance, Behaviour for Learning Policy and Appendix below Absence from School during Term Time Policy. These policies are published on the School website. Information about absence procedures/attendance can also be found in the students Homework diaries.

1. Principles and Aims of this Policy

- 1.1. We believe excellent attendance and punctuality are a priority in enabling students to make the most of their learning opportunities.
- 1.2. We are committed to regularly conveying this belief to students, staff and parents since excellent attendance and punctuality contribute significantly to a student's chance of fulfilling his academic potential and life chances.
- 1.3. We believe good attendance improves peer relationships, allows students to achieve their social potential and therefore contributes positively to the school community.
- 1.4. Students, parents, school staff and governors share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absence are kept to a minimum.
- 1.5. We will use robust and consistent systems for monitoring attendance/punctuality and we will intervene when individual absence or lateness gives cause for concern using a clear graduated policy We will work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued by encouraging, celebrating and rewarding good attendance for students in all year groups.
- 1.6. We will recognise the individual needs of students – for example, those with additional educational needs as well as those students who may become vulnerable through events such as bereavement, divorce and separation and may need additional support at such times.

The guiding principle of this policy is that every student should attend school every day as every day counts.

2. Working in Partnership with the Law

- 2.1. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.
- 2.2. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at that school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence introduced where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend school regularly, fails without reasonable justification to cause him to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444 (1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000).
- 2.3. It is clear from the law that parents risk prosecution if their child does not attend school regularly. It is important, therefore, for parents and the school to work closely together to overcome any problems which may affect a student's attendance.
- 2.4. Since 2014 the DfE have stated that **no term time holidays may be granted** and therefore requests for term time holiday will not be approved. If holiday leave is taken during term time this will be viewed as undermining the good order and discipline of the school and sanctions may be applied.
- 2.5. The school will work with the County Attendance Team (or other relevant external agencies) where attendance or punctuality does not meet the school's expectations. A County Attendance Officer may visit the school to support regular school attendance and to help remove any barriers which may be preventing a student from accessing the education to which he is entitled.

3. Expectations

We expect that all our students will:

- 3.1. Arrive at school on time for registration and for all lessons.
- 3.2. Sign in promptly at Reception if unavoidably late for school.
- 3.3. Sign out with Matron IF GIVEN permission to leave school for a parentally requested medical appointment or other reason agreed by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- 3.4. Collect an Exeat from Matron to be signed by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher if there is a legitimate need to leave school for a short period during the school day.
- 3.5. If a member of the Sixth Form, use the electronic Fingerprint registration system for signing in and out in line with guidance from the Head of Sixth Form.
- 3.6. Ensure absence notes / emails are sent to Matron / or the relevant Student Support Officer, if a member of the Sixth Form.

We expect that parents/guardians will:

- 3.7. Ensure that their child attends school regularly and are punctual.

- 3.8. Provide an alternative means of transport to school if the School Bus fails to arrive under reasonable weather conditions.
- 3.9. Telephone the school on the first and subsequent days of absence to inform the school via Matron or in the Sixth Form the Student Support Officer of their child's absence.
- 3.10. Provide a written explanation of their child's absence on return to school.
- 3.11. Request permission from the Headteacher in advance for a student to attend an unavoidable appointment (ie medical, driving tests, music exams) via the Request for Absence form available from Matron's office or online in the parent section of the school website - <http://www.swbgs.com/parents/index.php/day-to-day/reference-documents/>
- 3.12. Refrain from taking their child on holiday during term time.
- 3.13. Apply for the Headteacher to consider any leave of absence from school using the appropriate proforma (exceptional circumstances only) - see appendix below.
- 3.14. Contact the Matron or the Student Support Officer in the case of the Sixth Form, if there is a reason why their child may need extended absence from school.

Sir William Borlase's Grammar School will:

- 3.15. Write, implement and communicate an Attendance for Learning Policy.
- 3.16. Monitor and review the Attendance for Learning Policy every three years.
- 3.17. Set and monitor attendance targets and report these to Governors.
- 3.18. Implement the systems of rewards and sanctions for attendance.
- 3.19. Ensure good attendance and punctuality are central to the school ethos.

4. The Roles at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School

The Attendance Officer (Matron KS3/4; Student Support Officers KS5) will:

- 4.1. Check and ensure that all registers are completed every morning and afternoon.
- 4.2. Inform the member of SLT with responsibility for attendance of any registers that have not been completed.
- 4.3. Provide regular attendance and punctuality data to SLT, Heads of Year / Key Stage and Tutors.
- 4.4. Monitor the attendance of vulnerable students or those for whom attendance is a significant concern. Telephone parents if a pupil is absent from school and there has been no explanation from the parent / guardian.
- 4.5. Ensure that parents are contacted with any absences that remain unexplained at the end of each fortnight.

The Tutor will:

- 4.6. Be a good role model for students by arriving punctually for registration.

- 4.7. Remind students of the need for good attendance and punctuality.
- 4.8. Keep an accurate and prompt register in tutor time using SIMS.
- 4.9. Praise students for good attendance and punctuality.
- 4.10. Implement appropriate sanction for poor punctuality / attendance of tutor time.
- 4.11. Inform Matron / Student Support Officers and the Head of Year / Key Stage if they become concerned about a student's absence or punctuality.

Academic Teachers will:

- 4.12. Be good role models for students by arriving punctually for lessons.
- 4.13. Remind students of the link between good attendance / punctuality and attainment.
- 4.14. Record attendance to lessons accurately using the electronic registration system and check for internal truancy.
- 4.15. Follow up lateness to lessons in line with School Behaviour Policy using SIMS.
- 4.16. Inform the Head of Year / Key Stage if they become concerned about a student's absence or punctuality.

The Heads of Year / Key Stage will:

- 4.17. Promote good attendance and punctuality within his/her own Key Stage.
- 4.18. Ensure all Tutors and Teachers are familiar with and apply the policy consistently.
- 4.19. Monitor attendance and punctuality in the Key Stage, using the data supplied by the Attendance Officer.
- 4.20. Follow up concerns expressed by tutors/academic staff about a student's absence or punctuality.
- 4.21. Support the school by helping to implement rewards and sanctions for truancy and poor punctuality.
- 4.22. Contact and work with parents / guardians to discuss concerns about attendance and punctuality.
- 4.23. Inform and discuss with the Assistant Head - Attendance concerns about attendance and punctuality.
- 4.24. Inform and discuss any serious concerns with the Assistant Head Attendance.
- 4.25. Work with other appropriate agencies, eg County Attendance Team, to improve attendance and punctuality.
- 4.26. Arrange for work to be provided for excluded students and long term absentees.

The Assistant Head i/c Attendance will:

- 4.27. Monitor the attendance and punctuality of all students for whom absence and punctuality is a concern.
- 4.28. Support the Heads of Key Stage in working with students who have poor attendance.
- 4.29. Liaise with Heads of Key Stage regarding strategies for improving attendance of students.

- 4.30. Lead the work of the Attendance and Behaviour Working Parties in developing, implementing and reviewing the Attendance for Learning Policy.
- 4.31. Set annual targets for improving attendance and report these to the Head Teacher and the Governors.
- 4.32. Monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the whole school.
- 4.33. Support the work of the Attendance Officer (Matron and SSOs) by following up any registers that are not completed.
- 4.34. Support the work of the Heads of Key Stage in monitoring absence/attendance and implementing rewards and sanctions.

The Headteacher will:

- 4.35. Review and agree the Attendance for Learning Policy.
- 4.36. Agree and monitor annual attendance targets with the member of Assistant Head responsible for Attendance.
- 4.37. Present the Attendance figures to the Governors in the Headteachers' Reports.
- 4.38. Consider applications for leave of absence and feedback the decision to Matron/relevant SSO.

The Governors will:

- 4.39. Review and agree the Attendance for Learning Policy at the Academic Committee.
- 4.40. Review and monitor annual attendance targets at LGB.

Appendix: Absence from School during Term Time

It is the school's aim to sustain a very high level of attendance from all of its pupils. In line with guidance from the Department for Education (Regulations 2013), we therefore have the following policy with regard to Absence from School during term time.

1. Parents should not normally take pupils out of school during term time.
2. In **exceptional** circumstances, applications for absence may be made in writing to the Headteacher via the Request for Leave of Absence Form, normally one month in advance. "Retrospective" applications for such absence will not normally be approved.
3. Any request for absence for **exceptional circumstances** will be considered individually, taking into account the following factors:
 - 3.1. The age of the child.
 - 3.2. The time of year and length of proposed absence.
 - 3.3. The exceptional nature of the circumstances.
 - 3.4. The overall attendance pattern of the pupil.
 - 3.5. The child's stage of education, and progress; (in particular, absence at times that will affect progress towards public examinations at KS3, GCSE or A-level is likely to be disruptive, both to the individual pupil and to others in the class, and is therefore most strongly discouraged).
4. If the school does not agree to the absence and the pupil is absent from school then the absence will be considered unauthorised.
5. If parents keep a child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time will be recorded as unauthorised.
6. The school may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness.

The school will work in consultation with the County Attendance Team to ensure effective action in response to un-authorised absences.

Refer to:

- DfE Guidance for School Attendance.
- Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- Appendix Absence from School during Term Time Policy.
- These policies are published on the School website. Information about absence procedures/attendance can also be found in the students Homework diaries.