

# Attendance Policy

Senior Leader Review Lead : Deputy Head, Curriculum

Attendance Working Group: Senior Deputy Head, Heads of Key Stage,  
Attendance Officer

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Chair of PDW Committee: Gill Towell



## Introduction

Sir William Borlase's Grammar School is committed to safeguarding all members of the school community. Attendance is a key indicator in safeguarding and enables us to support vulnerable students, including those at risk of going missing in education. The 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. Excellent attendance supports academic learning and personal development through full engagement in the school's culture, ethos and opportunities. Through our Attendance Policy, we have in place a robust system for monitoring attendance and will act to address absenteeism with parents/carers and pupils, promptly to effect change and identify any safeguarding issues arising. At Borlase we value all our students and we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

Excellent attendance is implicit in the school's values and is essential in maintaining the orderly environment necessary for effective teaching and learning. Students, parents, school staff and governors share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School are maximised. 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.

### 1. We aim to:

- 1.1. promote good attendance (>95%) and reduce absence including persistent absence (attendance <90%)
- 1.2. convey to students, staff and parents that excellent attendance and punctuality contribute significantly to a student's chance of fulfilling their academic potential and personal development.
- 1.3. identify when individual absence gives cause for concern and act early to address patterns of absence which are detrimental to student learning and safety.
- 1.4. work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued by encouraging excellent school attendance.
- 1.5. recognise the individual needs of students – for example, those with additional educational/ medical/ social 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. This includes days where enrichment, extra curricular or other activities are organised as part of the school's wider education.

### 2. Working in Partnership with the Law & Legal Sanctions

- 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 has stated that no term time holidays may be granted. If holiday leave is taken during term time this will be viewed as undermining the good order and discipline of the school and undermining the child's learning; sanctions may be applied.
- 2.5. The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.
- 2.6. If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
- 2.7. Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.
- 2.8. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:
  - The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
  - One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
  - Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
  - If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.
- 2.9. 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.

## 2.10. Links

- 2.10.1. Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- 2.10.2. Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- 2.10.3. Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- 2.10.4. [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- 2.10.5. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

## **2.11. We expect that all our students will:**

- 2.11.1. Take pride in good attendance and punctuality, arriving at school on time for registration and for all lessons. School Registration in the morning takes place at 8.40 a.m and at 2.30pm in the afternoon.
- 2.11.2. If late, arriving after 8.40 a.m. they should sign in via the Electronic Inventory System. If students arrive after 9.10am without a legitimate reason, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence for the morning session.
- 2.11.3. For agreed absence/ appointment, collect an EXEAT from the school Attendance Officer and sign out via the EIS in Reception. Refer to 2.12.4 and 2.12.5 for details of planned absences.
- 2.11.4. For exceptional unplanned and legitimate requests to leave school the parent will be contacted and the student should collect an EXEAT from the Attendance Officer to sign out with the parents permission.
- 2.11.5. Sixth Form Students signing out at lunch-time must follow the Sixth Form signing in/out process. Not doing this is likely to result in loss of this privilege.
- 2.11.6. Year 13 students are allowed to leave school for the period 5 lesson slot if they do not have a lesson or timetabled support session.

## **2.12. We expect that parents/carers will:**

- 2.12.1. Ensure that their child attends school regularly and is punctual.
- 2.12.2. Provide an alternative means of transport to school if the School transport fails to arrive under reasonable weather conditions.
- 2.12.3. For unplanned absence - notify the school by 8.00 a.m. on the first and subsequent days of absence via the school Attendance Officer [absence@swbgs.com](mailto:absence@swbgs.com)/ 01628 816545 (email for sixth form [sixthformabsence@swbgs.com](mailto:sixthformabsence@swbgs.com)). The school will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. The school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.
  - 2.12.3.1. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.
- 2.12.4. For Planned Absence (non school related) - request permission from the Headteacher a month in advance (unless exceptional circumstance) for a student to attend an unavoidable appointment (ie medical, driving tests, music exams) using the Request for Absence form available online in the parent section of the school website. If the event is "outside" school - e.g. selection for national representation in a sport not played at school, this is often unavoidably a short notice request which the Headteacher will consider as soon as it can be sent.
- 2.12.5. For Planned Absence for unavoidable medical appointments arranged at short notice notify the school Attendance Officer by email on [absence@swbgs.com](mailto:absence@swbgs.com) or [sixthformabsence@swbgs.com](mailto:sixthformabsence@swbgs.com) before 8.00am on the day of the appointment.

- 2.12.6. For Planned Absence (school related) Where a student is taking part in a school activity, such as representing the school in sport or a competition, the Headteacher and relevant teachers are informed and the Head approves the absence with the teacher.
- 2.12.7. Refrain from taking their child on holiday during term time.
- 2.12.8. Seek support from school with attendance if they need help, by contacting the Head of Key Stage/SSO/Attendance Officer
- 2.12.9. Where attendance is highlighted as a significant concern, work with the school pastoral teams to identify barriers and any wider services that are provided.

### **3. Attendance Roles at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School**

At Sir William Borlase's Grammar School there is a whole school responsibility for monitoring and improving Attendance with specific roles for individual staff.

#### **3.1. The Attendance Officer/Duty Attendance Officer will**

- 3.1.1. Check and ensure that all registers are completed every morning and afternoon.
- 3.1.2. Email or send a runner to any staff member where a register is not completed, copying in the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance.
- 3.1.3. Contact parents in a timely manner on the first day of absence if a pupil is absent from school and there has been no explanation from the parent / guardian.
- 3.1.4. Follow up any unexplained absences with parent/ guardian (after the child has returned to school) within 5 days.
- 3.1.5. Inform Head if refused leave of absence has been taken.
- 3.1.6. Highlight to the Head of Key Stage/DSL if the pupil has been absent for two days without explanation. If the school has not been able to make contact with the student and parent for 10 school days, the school would follow the DfE advice on Child Missing in Education process.
- 3.1.7. Monitor the attendance of vulnerable students or those for whom attendance is a significant concern and liaise with the relevant Head of Key Stage and DSL who discuss individuals in pastoral meetings with DSL.
- 3.1.8. Work with other members of staff, through procedures for sixth form supervised study registration and lunchtime school entry and exit procedures, to ensure that students can be accounted for at all times.
- 3.1.9. On a half termly basis, monitor the attendance of students identifying where individual students' attendance falls below the acceptable level (90% - 7-11); (85% 12-13); share this information with Tutors, Heads of Key Stage, the DSL and the Deputy Head Teacher responsible for attendance.
- 3.1.10. Send letter 1A to parents of students whose attendance falls below (90% 7-11), (85% 12/13) unless the Head of Key Stage or DSL has highlighted a known concern/ or attendance agreement they are currently working with.

- 3.1.11. Monitor the attendance of those students whose parents receive letter 1A for three weeks to identify improvement. Parents of students whose attendance improves would be sent a letter to recognise this. Where attendance does not improve, parents are contacted by the Head of Key Stage; this can be further escalated to the DSL then Deputy and Headteacher.
- 3.1.12. Monitor lateness of students daily and put in detention those that are regular offenders. At the end of each half term review regular offenders, to work with head of years and if no improvement apply appropriate sanctions to those students.
- 3.1.13. Sends letters to parents weekly for those who are late 3 or more times to inform them of the sanctions given. These are recorded on their SIMS record.
- 3.1.14. Liaise with the Deputy Head, Curriculum, on changes to attendance advice from DfE and Bucks.

**3.2. The Data Manager will:**

- 3.2.1. Provide regular weekly attendance and punctuality data to the DSL, Deputy Head Curriculum and SLT, Heads of Year / Key Stage and Tutors.
- 3.2.2. Enter Attendance Data in the Orders Reports for Parents.
- 3.2.3. Produce Attendance Data for Governors, via the Assistant Headteacher for the Headteacher's Report.

**3.3. The Tutor will:**

- 3.3.1. Be a good role model for students by arriving punctually for registration.
- 3.3.2. Remind students of the need for good attendance and punctuality.
- 3.3.3. Keep an accurate and prompt register in tutor time using SIMS, entering the correct codes.
- 3.3.4. Praise students appropriately for good attendance and punctuality.
- 3.3.5. Implement appropriate sanction for poor punctuality / attendance of tutor time.
- 3.3.6. Inform the school Student Support Officers/ Head of Key Stage if they become concerned about a student's absence or punctuality.

**3.4. Academic Teachers and Cover Staff will:**

- 3.4.1. Be good role models for students by arriving punctually for lessons.
- 3.4.2. Remind students of the link between good attendance / punctuality and attainment.
- 3.4.3. Record attendance to lessons accurately using the SIMS electronic registration system and check for internal truancy. Email/ send a message to the school Attendance Officer/Student Support if there is an unexplained absence. If this is a RED Safeguarding student a student must be sent to Reception or a call made to Reception.
- 3.4.4. Follow up lateness to lessons in line with School Behaviour Policy using SIMS.

- 3.4.5. Inform the Head of Key Stage if they become concerned about a student's absence or punctuality.

**3.5. The Heads of Key Stage will:**

- 3.5.1. Promote good attendance and punctuality within their own Key Stage (supported by their KS Teams).
- 3.5.2. Monitor attendance and punctuality in the Key Stage, using the data supplied by the Attendance Officer and Data Manager.
- 3.5.3. Follow up concerns expressed by tutors/academic staff about a student's absence or punctuality.
- 3.5.4. Contact and work with parents / guardians to discuss concerns about attendance and punctuality.
- 3.5.5. Discuss with the DSL/Assistant Head Pastoral & Personal Development - concerns about attendance and punctuality in regular weekly meetings.
- 3.5.6. If they have a student whose attendance is being monitored for a specific reason - e.g. severe absence/long term medical issue/ on an IHCP/ reintegration plan, take responsibility for or allocate a named member of the team to take responsibility for that child. E.g. DSL/ Health and Wellbeing Lead/ SENco. They liaise with the AO on a daily/weekly basis as appropriate.
- 3.5.7. Work with other appropriate agencies, eg County Attendance Team, to improve attendance and punctuality.
- 3.5.8. Arrange for work to be provided for excluded students and long term absentees.

**3.6. The DSL will:**

- 3.6.1. Monitor the attendance and punctuality of all students for whom absence and punctuality is a concern from the regular data provided by the Attendance Officer.
- 3.6.2. Support the Heads of Key Stage in working with students who have poor attendance, taking responsibility for the follow-up of named students of concern.
- 3.6.3. Liaise with the Attendance Officer and Heads of Key Stage regarding strategies for improving attendance of students.
- 3.6.4. Understand the county and national guidance on monitoring and reporting poor attendance and its implications for safeguarding.
- 3.6.5. Support and the work of the Heads of Key Stage in liaising with the appropriate agencies E.g. County Attendance Team, Social Care to improve attendance of students who are of concern.
- 3.6.6. Alert the Headteacher and Deputies to patterns and individuals of concern.
- 3.6.7. Make a Child Missing in Education referral- in discussion with the Headteacher.

**3.7. Health and Wellbeing Lead**

- 3.7.1 Monitors attendance of allocated low attendees and students who are dual registered in alternative provision.

- 3.7.2 Communicates regularly with parents/ carers of these children.
- 3.7.3 Supports allocated children with regular meetings to support wellbeing/health and updates their IHCP.
- 3.7.4 Discusses these students in regular meetings with Heads of Key Stage, SENco and DSL; follows up with external agencies - medical/ County Attendance as agreed with DSL and KS Leads.
- 3.7.5 When qualified as DDSL, attend CP/ Safeguarding meetings for allocated children.

### **3.8. Heads PA**

- 3.8.1 Receives requests for Leave of Absence from parents and presents to Head Teacher. Records Decisions and informs parents and the Attendance Officer.

### **3.9. The Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum will**

- 3.9.1. Lead review the Attendance Policy.
- 3.9.2. Set annual targets for improving attendance and report these to the Head Teacher and the Governors.
- 3.9.3. Monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the whole school and analyse the data for the governors via the Headteacher's Report.
- 3.9.4. Identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with attendance from summary and historic data to support Heads of Key Stage.
- 3.9.5. Support the work of the Attendance Officer by following up any registers that are not completed accurately with the relevant member of staff if they have not responded to the Attendance Officer.
- 3.9.6. Support the work of the Attendance Officer by following up any registers that are not completed accurately with the relevant member of staff if they have not responded to the Attendance Officer.
- 3.9.7. Keep up to date with DfE and Bucks guidance on Attendance

### **3.10. The Headteacher :**

- 3.10.1. Ensure implementation of this policy at the school.
- 3.10.2. Ensure monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- 3.10.3. Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- 3.10.4. Issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- 3.10.5. Meet with parents as part of the escalation process if a student's attendance does not improve as a result of AO and HOK communication.
- 3.10.6. Annually Review and agree the Attendance Policy.



- 3.10.7. Agree and monitor annual attendance targets with the Assistant Head responsible for Attendance.
- 3.10.8. Consider applications for leave of absence and feedback the decision via her PA.
- 3.10.9. Support the DSL and HOKs in working with the County Attendance Team where students have poor attendance, including long-term medical issues.
- 3.10.10. Support the DSL in pursuing referrals made to CMIE. ([childrenmissingeducation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)) if the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her for 10 school days/If the family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (student file) has been requested by another school.

**3.11. The Governors will:**

- 3.11.1. Review and agree the Attendance Policy at Committee Level.
- 3.11.2. Monitor attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis at LGB Meetings.
- 3.11.3. Holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Contact Details:

Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance: Louise Walder, Deputy Head, Curriculum  
[lwalder@swbgs.com](mailto:lwalder@swbgs.com)

Attendance Officer/Duty Attendance Officer: Dean Stevens/Janet Goodman [absence@swbgs.com](mailto:absence@swbgs.com)  
or [sixthformabsence@swbgs.com](mailto:sixthformabsence@swbgs.com)

All other contacts please email [parents@swbgs.com](mailto:parents@swbgs.com) with your query