

# Attendance Policy

Birchwood Community Academy Trust

Policy owner (Name):	Mrs A Crompton
Policy owner (Job Title):	Pastoral Manager
Date of adoption:	25.9.17
Date of review:	June 2021
Date of next review:	July 2023

## Rationale

School attendance is subject to several education laws and this policy is written to reflect both this and the guidance produced by The Department for Education. Under the direction of the Education Act, parents or carers of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their child receives full time education, whether by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents or carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and those absences are classified as unauthorised. Depending on the circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under one such section of the legislation. Birchwood Community High School will register children in accordance with the Education (Learner Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

As a school we are committed to all children and receiving an appropriate, full-time education. The school actively promotes the link between the attendance and achievement of children. The responsibility for promoting attendance at Birchwood Community High School is a shared one. One shared between governors, staff, parents/carers and the student. As a school, we have one consistent message – 100% for all children.

## Purpose

- a. Safeguard all children as a part of our in loco parentis responsibility
- b. Improve the overall percentage attendance of all children at Birchwood Community High School
- c. Enable all children to make maximum progress

## Accordingly, the School will

1. Ensure that attendance and punctuality are a priority for staff, children, parents and governors
2. Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
3. Provide support, advice and guidance for children and parents
4. Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
5. Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data
6. Implement an effective system of rewards and sanctions
7. Promote effective partnerships with other relevant agencies

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8. Monitor and analyse individual, whole school attendance and the attendance of identified groups such as Persistent Absentees, current Free School Meals, Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs, Looked After Children, Talented, Able and Gifted and Young Carers
9. Follow the procedures as prescribed by the Local Authority in preparation for Fixed Penalty and legal action

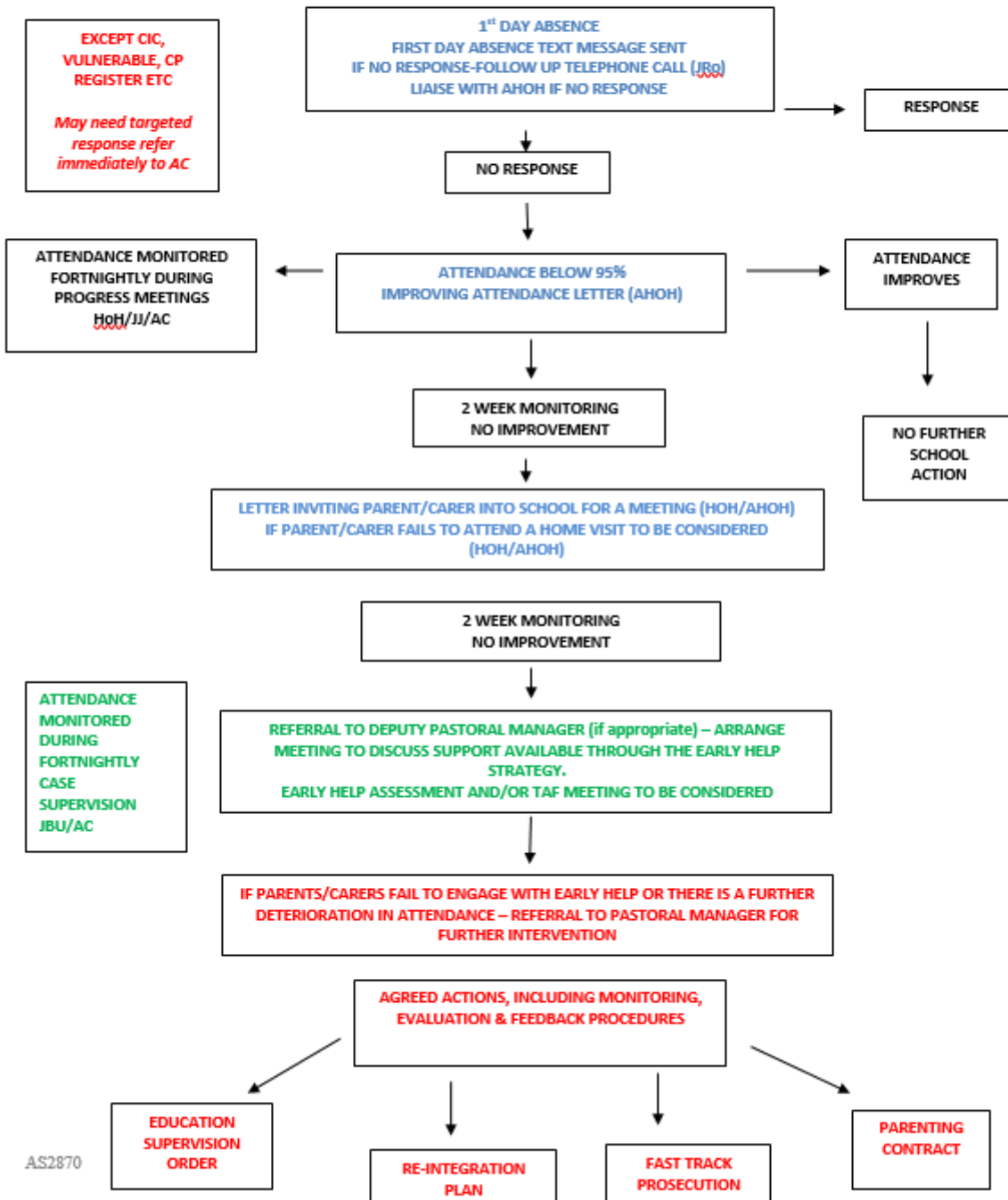
**Evaluation**

- Assess whether the implementation of this policy safeguards Birchwood's young people.
- Assess the degree to which the implementation of this policy result in rapid improvement of the attendance and thus progress of students.
- Data analysis. Whole school, School and College separately, PA, learner groups.
- Data trends and benchmarks which include local, regional and national comparison.

Appendix 1 – School Attendance Procedures

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1. Registration will be recorded by the use of computerised registration, SIMS. Statutory registers will be taken at 8.50am and 1.55pm (marked by the teacher in lesson 5) and registers will be taken at every lesson to monitor attendance.
2. Parents must contact the school absence line on the first day their child's absence to clarify the reason for the absence and an estimated date of return to school. If a date of return is not available, parents must contact the absence line daily to update school.



## **Appendix 2 –College Attendance Procedures**

### **Expectations**

1. All Birchwood College students must be on a full-time programme of study that comprises of at least 540 guided learning hours. All students are expected to attend college fully and punctually.
2. All Year 12 and 13 students are expected to attend an IAG and an assembly period on two days of the week, and therefore must register with their form tutor at **8.50am**. During one of the remaining three mornings, each student in Year 12 and 13 will have a scheduled one-on-one meeting with their form tutor and will also be required to register at **8.50am** on this morning.
3. On the remaining two days, students are required to sign in at the main College Reception before the start of their first lesson.

### **Daily Procedures**

4. Parents are expected to phone the College in the event of absence.
5. First day response occurs if any student does not register a reason for their absence.
6. In the case of an extended absence, reported by a parent, work will be collated for a student. In these instances, a doctor's note is required as proof of absence.
7. If a student has a planned absence, they should inform their form tutor and obtain a signed 'signing out slip' before leaving college. They must also inform the subject teachers whose lessons they will miss on that day. It is their responsibility to catch up on work missed during the lesson.
8. Any student entering or leaving the college site must sign in/out as appropriate at the main College Reception.

### **Attendance Interventions**

9. Good attendance will be celebrated within the college with students being rewarded half termly with vouchers.
10. If a student shows signs of underachieving, then study periods will be structured time within college, and students will not be permitted to sign in or out during the day. They will need to attend college from 8.50am – 3pm each day until performance has improved. This is at the discretion of the college leadership team.
11. Students whose attendance has fallen below 96% will receive an attendance letter in the post reminding them of the terms and conditions of the student contract. This letter will encourage students to improve their attendance or risk being placed on an attendance contract.
12. Students who are consistently late or have attendance below 90% will be expected to attend college from 8:50am until the end of the college day and will receive an attendance contract for a designated period of time. Failure to meet the targets of this contract may result in the student losing their place at Birchwood College.

### **Leave of Absence**

13. Leave will not be authorised during term time except in exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave during term time will need to be made in writing to the Head of College. Leave without prior approval will be unauthorised and will not be granted under any circumstance during the public exam period
14. Special leave will be granted for students who are attending university open days, and/or have their driving test. On these occasions, this request must be made in writing to the Head of College

## Appendix 3 – Attendance Improvement Interventions

100% - 97%

### Reinforcement and Acknowledgement

- Achievement Points awarded by Form Tutor

97% - 95%

#### Triggers:

- Broken Weeks
- Irregular Attendance
- Patterns of absence
- Truancy
- Deteriorating

### Phase One Intervention

- Form Tutor to discuss attendance with the student offer encouragement and praise.
- AHOH to telephone parents/carers to raise concern and offer support, record on the Attendance Intervention Spreadsheet.

95% - 90%

#### Triggers:

- Broken Weeks
- Irregular Attendance
- Patterns of absence
- Truancy
- Deteriorating attendance
- Non Attendance

### Phase Two Intervention

- Fortnightly review in Progress meeting
- Letter of concern sent to parents/carers with attendance register and academic impact sheet – AHOH

### Phase Three Intervention

- HOH/AHOH to arrange a meeting or home visit with parent/carer to offer support.
- Discuss with Deputy Pastoral Manager if collaborative work with external services or Early Help Intervention is needed

Below 90%

### Persistent Absence

### Phase Four – Persistent Absence Intervention

- Formal attendance meeting with Pastoral Manager
- Action plan for improving attendance agreed, consequences discussed
- No absence for medical reasons to be authorised without medical evidence
- Persistent Absence letter sent each half term
- Referral to LA Attendance Team for Fast Track Prosecution

## Appendix 4 – Recording Absence

Any young person who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised, unexplained or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unexplained. If the absence remains unexplained following First Day Response contact, the absence will be changed to unauthorised absence.

<b>Absence/Absent</b>	When a student does not arrive at school for a session (half day)
<b>Authorised absence</b>	These are attributed to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Illness</li><li>• Medical treatment</li><li>• Exclusions</li><li>• Attendance at court</li><li>• Religious observance</li><li>• Study leave</li><li>• Traveller absence</li><li>• Other approved circumstances</li><li>• Circumstances relating to Coronavirus (COVID19)</li></ul> These criteria are subject to change according to DfE Guidance
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Late (after registers closed)</li><li>• Family holiday</li><li>• Truancy</li><li>• Absences other than authorised ones for which no explanation has been given or an explanation has been given that is not accepted by the school</li></ul>

## Appendix 5 - Punctuality for School

Registration period begins at 8.45am and 1.55pm. Any learner arriving after 8.55am will be deemed to be late and the register marked **L**. To safeguard all children, the school gates will close promptly at 8.45am and reopen again for 3.00pm. Registers for the morning session will close at 9.30am. This is ten minutes after the recommended closure time and reflects the school's and student's reliance on the local public transport network. Any student arriving after this time, without an acceptable reason, will be marked **U** (an unauthorised absence).

*Our message:*

*Punctuality to school is important. If we are punctual it means that we have pride in ourselves, appreciation for the teachers that tirelessly plan our learning and it is business like, ready for the future. So the expectation is that everyone will be ready to learn for 8.50am. Birchwood is a busy place in the morning and afterschool. Because of this everyone needs to set off early and be prepared for the day ahead with the equipment that they need. Our expectation is that everyone will be on time every day.*

1. *Children who are late for the legal register in the morning will receive a 30 minute after school detention on the same day.*
  - a. *If you come in the front door you will be informed of the detention by a member of the Polaris Team.*
  - b. *If you come in when the gates are open and you are late for the register, your Form Tutor will inform you of the detention.*

### Procedures

	SLT, Polaris, Office Staff	Form Teachers
8.30am – 8.45am	A member of SLT will meet and greet Students at the entry gates	On route to Form following the warning bell
8.45am – 9.30am	A member of the Polaris Team will meet and greet Children at the Late Desk. If they arrive after 8.45am, they will be issued an after-school detention on the same day.	Any Learner who arrives after 8.50am will receive an after-school detention, Form Tutor to inform student.  Primarily, this is the consequence for those students who came into school before the gates shut but were slow getting to their Form
9.30 onwards	Office staff will register the student with a 'U' code because this is after registers have closed. AHOH/HOH will monitor students who receive a "U" code.	

## **Appendix 6 – Legal Framework for School Attendance**

Under the direction of the Education Act, parents or carers of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their child receives full time education, whether by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents or carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and those absences are classed as unauthorised.

### **Criteria for consideration for fast-track prosecution**

Pupil's attendance should be less than 90% attendance, the majority of absence should be recorded as **unauthorised absence**.

### **Interventions should include:**

- Letters
- Meetings in school with pupil and parent
- School action plan to include details of what support has been offered (e.g. reintegration plan, reduced timetable etc.)
- Evidence that parents have been informed of the absences and that these will not be authorised without medical evidence (e.g. appointment card from GP or medical certificate.)

Once the above has been actioned and no improvement in attendance has been achieved, the case can be referred to the Attendance Team for consideration for instigation of fast-track prosecution.

The Attendance Team Panel will meet to discuss the case. An Attendance Officer will then be allocated if sufficient evidence has been obtained or advice will be given regarding further interventions from school. You will be informed within 10 school days of the decision.

The 12-week fast track prosecution process will then begin. Failure to achieve an improvement in attendance during this period will result in legal action being taken

**Please contact your named attendance officer or Debbie Parlane (Attendance Team Manager) to discuss referrals Tel 01925 442917**



## Appendix 6 - Holidays in Term time

In line with Government directions, term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed and **will not be authorised** as stated in the Education (Learner Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The school will only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances that are not related to holidays.

### Procedures

1. Parents/carers must submit a written request to the Headteacher (at least 6 weeks before a trip) to request permission to take their child out of school during term time. The 6 week time period is necessary in order for the school to give due consideration to the request.
2. The Headteacher will ask the Pastoral Manager for information related to the application in order to make an informed decision. The 'Leave of Absence Request Form' will be completed within 48 hours and returned to the Headteacher.
3. In the rare circumstance when the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are genuine reasons for an absence, she will determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. The School will inform the parent/carer of the decision in writing.
4. If the request is denied, the Pastoral Manger will inform the parent/carer of the decision in writing.
5. If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned holiday it will be taken and will be coded as an **unauthorised absence** and could result in a referral to the LA Attendance Team.

## Appendix 8 – Procedures for registering and if a child is unaccounted for or absconds:

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Procedures for registering</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SIMS register is completed using either an Ipad or laptop</li> <li>2. Marked with a / for present or N if there is no pre-existing absence mark input</li> <li>3. Children unaccounted for, those who are marked in previously or with anomalous marks are flagged (by radio, a child messenger, phone or email) to On Call and/or Polaris Team</li> </ol>
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<b>On site or off site (sports hall)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Child is missing or unaccounted for or who absconds</b>	<p>If a child goes missing or is unaccounted for on the way to, from or during the lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As far as is possible the teacher makes reasonable enquires without compromising the safety of the other children in the lesson</li> <li>• The member of staff contacts the On Call/Polaris Team to notify them of the anomaly and they will organise a building sweep and contact the parents of the child. This will include contacting the Headteacher or their deputy and the emergency services as required</li> <li>• Feedback is provided to the class teacher if possible</li> </ul>
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## **Appendix 9 – Procedures for escorting children who are being educated at the sportshall**

<p><b>Off site: Movement to and from off-site facilities</b></p>	<p>If a child is late for school or the lesson for whatever reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They should always be escorted to the sports hall by the adult they are in the care of (Polaris Team, On Call staff or Office Staff)</li><li>• In the unlikely event that there is not an adult available to escort, then the child will be supervised on site. This may mean in another PE lesson, with a senior member of staff or in the Polaris Department</li></ul>
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