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# ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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Approved by	Local Governing Committee
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## 1. Policy Statement

*We want all our students to be everything they can be and everything they are meant to be – to be able to live life in all its fullness (John 10.10).*

We are committed to ensuring that students, parents and carers understand the absolute importance of 100% attendance at school. Absence from school has a detrimental effect on a student's academic progress and evidence has shown it is the greatest determinant of underachievement at all phases. Poor attendance may also be an indicator of other issues that need resolving either inside or outside school. Absence from school may mean that a young person is more vulnerable to risks associated with safeguarding such as sexual and criminal exploitation, including county lines activity. We therefore make working with students and their families on attendance our top priority. We will work tirelessly to create a school that students want to attend. Great attendance will always be an indicator of our success.

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- The Education Act 2011.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).
- Working together to improve school attendance (August 2024)
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and latest amendment 2016.

This policy relates to other policies and, in particular, the following:

- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Missing Student Policy.

## 3. Objectives of this policy

- To outline our strategies for promoting good attendance and punctuality at Brian Clarke.
- To explain procedures for attendance.
- To detail procedures in place for dealing with poor attendance.
- To explain the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in supporting attendance and punctuality.

The target attendance figure for all students is 100% attendance at school. Studies have shown that students who attend less than 95% of the time are less likely to achieve five grade 4s and above at GCSE, opportunities for progression are reduced and future life chances restricted. Every day your child is in school means they are safe, learning and achieving. For these reasons, we monitor attendance patterns with vigilance.

At Brian Clarke we reward excellent attendance and punctuality through our celebration assemblies, and letters home.

Through the MyChildAtSchool (MCAS) App parents/carers are able to monitor their child's attendance and punctuality daily.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent days	Equivalent session	Equivalent weeks	Equivalent lessons missed
95%	9 days	18 sessions	2 weeks	54 lessons
90%	19 days	38 sessions	4 weeks	114 lessons
85%	29 days	58 sessions	6 weeks	174 lessons
80%	38 days	72 sessions	8 weeks	228 lessons
75%	48 days	96 sessions	10 weeks	288 lessons
70%	57 days	114 sessions	11.5 weeks	342 lessons
65%	67 days	134 sessions	13.5 weeks	402 lessons

#### 4. Reporting absence

When a student is absent for example because of illness, parents/carers must telephone the school that same morning before 8.10am. Parents/carers need to report the absence to the Senior Pastoral Officer for their child's year group, via the student absence line (Tel: 0161 785 5085, Option 1).

If the absence exceeds five days, supporting medical evidence is required.

##### 4.1 Students who are late

Late to school is defined as students not being in registration when the register is taken. Registers close 30 minutes after the start of the school day. If a student arrives after registration has closed, then an unauthorised absence code of 'U' will be applied to the register. We expect that all students are on site no later than 5 minutes before the official start time so they can be prepared and organised for the day.

Lateness (for no valid reason) results in a same day detention in line with the behaviour policy. Parents and Carers are notified of their child's late arrival via MCAS and the setting of this detention.

If a student's lateness becomes habitual we will ask parents to attend an Attendance and Punctuality Panel. Fixed Penalty fines will also be used when students are persistently late.

##### 4.2 Appointments

Only emergency appointments for dentists, opticians and doctors should be made during school hours. Routine appointments should be made out of school hours. Evidence for any appointment will always be asked for and brought into school prior to the event, or alternatively by emailing information prior to the event to [info@brian-clarke.org](mailto:info@brian-clarke.org)

##### 4.3 Holiday leave of absence

Holidays must not be taken during term time. School holidays are published a year in advance. Government legislation states that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances which make time off in term time unavoidable.

Parents needing leave of absence for exceptional circumstances should apply in writing to the Headteacher. The exceptional reason should be outlined in detail and evidenced. Holiday cost, climate and availability will not be considered as exceptional circumstances. We may look at other factors when deciding whether to authorise an absence request including the student's record of attendance and whether they will miss any examinations.

Parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absence for their child. These remain on their child's record and will be monitored. If the absence extends to 10 sessions (5 school days) or more, a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) will be issued by the Local Authority.

#### 4.4 Religious leave of absence

Christian holidays are already covered by the school's holiday pattern. Eid will also be built into the school's annual calendar.

Requests for absence on any other days set aside exclusively for religious absence by the religious body for which the parent(s)/carer(s) belong (e.g. Purim) must be made in writing to the Headteacher. Permission is granted at the Headteacher's discretion and only for those days set apart exclusively for religious attendance. If granted, these absences count against the pupil's attendance in line with national guidance. Pilgrimages will not be authorised during term time.

#### 4.5 Persistent Absence (PA)

Any student who has an overall attendance of 90% and below is placed in the persistent absence category.

Any student who is PA will be monitored and put on an action plan. The Senior Pastoral Officer will meet with students and their families whose attendance causes concern. Where necessary, home visits are made. In situations of persistent truancy, a parent/carers may be fined, however working with families to eradicate barriers to attending school will always be our goal.

Updated National legislation around attendance and fines was introduced from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024. Under the National rules, all schools are required to consider a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences in England will be £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered by the Local Authority.

#### 4.6 Other requests for absence

Requests for absence for acting, modelling, sporting engagements or other commitments/interests should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher and will be considered individually considering the impact of absence on a student's progress. Absences are unlikely to be unauthorised during or just before exam periods.

Part time employment cannot be accepted as a reason for non-attendance at detention or failure to do homework. Parents are reminded that no child under the age of 13 may be employed and that for children of 13-16 full details must be sent to the Local Authority by the employer within four days. For any queries contact your Local Authority.

#### 4.7 Unexplained/ unexpected absences

If we have not had contact from parent/carers to inform us of a student's absence by 8.25 on the first day of absence we:

Day 1	Contact parents/carers by telephone to confirm a student's absence, the reason for this absence and the expected date of return. This takes place between 8.25 – 9.25
Day 2	If a student is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a student's parent/carers on day 1 a further attempt to contact parents is made
Day 3	If a student is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a student's parent/carers a member of our Pastoral Team will undertake a home visit to find out the nature of the absence

We will continue to contact all known numbers for the student until we make contact with parents/carers or establish that the student is missing.

If we are unable to obtain a satisfactory explanation for a student's absence, they are considered missing from education (CME). The school will work with the Local Authority and other partners as appropriate to find out the reason for the student's absence and get them back into school as soon as possible.

Where this is not possible the student will be off rolled after 20 days of non-attendance. Further information about this can be found in the school's Missing Student policy.

## 5. Working with students and parents when there is an attendance concern

Brian Clarke operates a traffic light system in relation to school attendance.

<b>Green</b> No concerns	<b>Intervention</b>
97% +	Praised for punctuality and good attendance
<b>Yellow</b> Concern	<b>Intervention</b>
95%-96.9% 8-10 days	Form tutor to contact home to discuss strategies for improving attendance or supporting students if their absence is unavoidable Followed up in writing by Senior Pastoral Officer (SPO) Head of Year and Senior Pastoral Officer monitor attendance for 1 month
<b>Amber</b> Risk of underachievement and safeguarding concerns	<b>Intervention</b>
93% - 94.9% 10-14 days	Parents/carers and student invited in for a meeting with Head of Year and/or Senior Pastoral Officer / Attendance Officer to examine reasons for absences. Attendance targets set and strategies agreed between home and school to ensure met. Followed up in writing by SPO/ Attendance Officer If attendance improves this will be celebrated.
<b>Red</b> Extreme risk of underachievement and safeguarding concerns	<b>Intervention</b>
Below 92.9% 14+ days	Parents/carers and student invited into school to attend an Attendance Panel consisting of the Deputy Headteacher, SPO/Attendance Officer and a representative from LA Education and Attendance Service (where available). If poor attendance is not for medical reasons (there is no medical evidence) the following are considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast Track to attendance intensive support programme signed and agreed by home and school</li> <li>• Enforcement. If parents fail to ensure their child attends regularly the school will work with the Education and Attendance Service to explore legal methods of enforcing school attendance including penalty notice/prosecution.</li> </ul>

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

All stakeholders play a vital role in ensuring students are attending school regularly and are punctual to school. Below documents the key responsibilities of each stakeholder at Brian Clarke.

	<b>Role and Responsibility</b>
Students	Attend school every day unless prevented by a specified illness or unavoidable circumstance. Be punctual to school and to lessons. Inform their tutor in advance if there are any reasons which might prevent them from coming into school. Follow the correct procedure for informing a member of staff if they begin to feel unwell during the school day/need to leave site.
Parents	Provide the school with up-to-date home and emergency contact details. Ensure your child attends school every day and turns up on time. Contact the Senior Pastoral Officer for your child's year group on the first and each subsequent day of absence, unless a definite return date is known. Contact the school whenever any problems occur that may affect your child's attendance or performance in school. Cooperate and work with the school if your child's attendance or punctuality is unsatisfactory.
Tutors	Keep an accurate attendance register. Praise students for punctuality and good attendance. Liaise with students, parents and the Senior Pastoral Officer as appropriate in matters relating to attendance.
Senior Pastoral Officer	Ensures all student absences are correctly logged on the attendance registers (in conjunction with the tutor and class teacher) for the Year group to which they are assigned. To be the initial point of contact for parents reporting an absence for the relevant year group. To provide early contact with parents when a student fails to attend school without providing a good reason. To maintain an overview of the attendance of the students in their year group and provides timely reports for tutors, the Head of Year and Senior Leadership Team. To praise and celebrate attendance and punctuality through the school's rewards systems and celebration assemblies for their year group. To offer appropriate support around improving attendance in relation to the school's traffic light system for students in their year group.
Head of Year	Maintains an overview of the attendance of the students in their year group and communicates matters of attendance and punctuality to tutors. Praises and celebrates attendance and punctuality through the school's rewards systems and celebration assemblies for their year group. Offers appropriate support around improving attendance in relation to the school's traffic light system for students in their year group.
Attendance Officer	Oversees whole school attendance and punctuality. Advises the school on strategies to promote the regular attendance of all students and assist with the implementation of agreed strategies. Updates school records, analyses attendance data and provide reports to the senior leadership team and other professionals. Offers appropriate support around improving attendance in relation to the school's traffic light system for students across school. Makes contact with the families in response to allocated referrals through home visits and/or meetings in school. Liaises with the Local Authority. Prepares the appropriate paperwork and present information as required to enable the school to meet its obligations and statutory responsibilities. This will include requesting penalty fine notices, and, if appropriate, the completion of Early Help referrals.
Headteacher	Ensures the policy is implemented consistently across the school and for monitoring school level absence data. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring attendance and the issuing of fixed penalty notices where necessary.
Governors	Monitors attendance data on a termly basis and holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Appendix 1: DfE Attendance Codes September 2024

<b>Present Codes</b>	
/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	Sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip
W	work experience
<b>Absent Codes</b>	
<b>Authorised Absences</b>	
C	exceptional circumstances
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)
<b>Unauthorised Absence</b>	
G	holiday (not agreed)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Z	pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (eg holidays, insets and polling station days)