



Attendance Policy and Procedures

Agreed by Management Committee

Chair of Management Committee

Mr Philip Taylor

Signature:

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Legal updates may precipitate changes

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Attendance Policy and Procedures

Our Principles

Attendance and punctuality are key to progress and success and we do all we can to maximise student attendance. We handle attendance issues with particular sensitivity and understanding because all our students have health needs and our approach is to tackle and resolve quickly any problems that affect school attendance.

We cannot expect our attendance record to compare well with that of mainstream schools since our students are with us because of medical and health needs. We do not therefore set improvement targets but we underline the importance and benefits of good attendance and punctuality and our expectation that they will attend regularly and on time.

We recognise the key role that parent/carers play in securing good attendance and our approach is based on forging strong school-home links wherever we can. We adapt our strategies to individual needs to encourage students to attend and welcome and make full use of support from the Education Welfare Service where we have concerns about students.

The current picture

Attendance rates have steadily improved over the last 4 years. Average attendance to date of all pupils at the end of the Summer term 2019 was 81%.

Our procedures

Monitoring and tracking

As a small school our procedures for tracking and recording absences are simple:

- students sign in at reception
- morning register is closed at 9.30 and after that students are late
- the administrator checks absences against individual timetables
- Senior Leadership Team is notified of absences
- attendance is input to SIMS daily
- SLT scrutinise attendance every 2 weeks and analysis every half term.
- attendance data is sent to Brent Local Authority in regular census exercises

Absences

All our students have health needs or medical conditions and we have to consider absences case by case. Where there are absences that have not been notified or other causes for concern we may use one or more of these measures:

- letter to parent/carers warning of our concern
- meeting with parent/carers and student
- referral to the Education Welfare Service
- multi-agency meeting

to agree a strategy for improving attendance.

Parent/carer involvement

Parents/carers are our key ally in securing good attendance and have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly. They agree in signing our Home/College agreement to:

- contact us by 9.00 am if their child will be absent
- send a letter or medical certificate to explain the absence
- arrange dental or other appointments outside lesson time except for emergencies
- not take holidays with the child in term time

Improving attendance

We motivate good student attendance by ensuring that all students feel supported and valued. Link tutors play a key role in promoting good attendance for all students through daily link tutor sessions, and once a week focused student discussion. They also liaise with parents/carers on a weekly basis giving praise and feedback to encourage improved attendance. SLT also address attendance during the 6 weekly reviews and discusses next steps with parents/carers and students.

Incentives are:

- weekly certificates for students with 90% attendance and 100% punctuality
- half termly certificates: 100 % attendance Platinum, 95% - 99% Gold, 90% to 94% Silver and 80% to 89% Bronze.
- Half termly gift vouchers of £10 for 100% attendance and 100% punctuality and £5 for 95% attendance and 95% punctuality.
- Attendance percentages are measured on each pupil agreed individual timetable
- attendance reward trip at the end of each term to motivate students to improve and make further efforts in coming to school.

For school phobic students we have creative approaches: these have included early morning wake up calls, purchasing new alarm clocks for students, on occasions where funding allowed – taxis to collect students from home if parent/carers could not help and staff collecting students in the school minibus.

All staff drive the message that through better attendance comes the reward of improved grades and progress. Students also develop greater resilience and anxieties are reduced.

External support

Where our contact with students and parent/carers does not result in better attendance and we have cause for concern we refer to the Education Welfare Service whose officer visits our school regularly to support our initiatives with letters, direct contacts or meetings or with other agencies that can help.

Home tuition arrangements

Arrangements for students taught in the home are no different in principle. Home tutors register absences for each lesson and contact the attendance officer, on the day, if a tutee fails to attend a lesson without prior arrangement. This information is input to the electronic management system. Persistent absences could lead to withdrawal of home tuition and a Brent Front Door or Educational Welfare Service referral.

Holidays during term times

The law does not entitle parent/carers to take children on holiday during term time. Unless they are deemed exceptional and authorised in advance by the Head teacher, holidays in term time are unauthorised and may result in legal action against the parent/carer.

School trips

If a student is not able to participate in a school trip they are still required to attend school where alternative provision is arranged for them.

Further information

[School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities](#)

[School attendance parental responsibility measures Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police](#)