

Barnwell School

Attendance Policy



Adopted by the Governing Body – July 2011

Reviewed – January 2016

To be reviewed – January 2018

Attendance for Learning Policy

Policy Statement

At Barnwell School, we want the whole school community – students, parents, staff and governors to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality because good attendance helps the young people in this school community to maximise their learning. This policy will support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality. We believe at Barnwell School that good school attendance assists children and young people to achieve the following five outcomes:

- To be healthy
- To stay safe
- To enjoy and achieve
- To make a positive contribution
- To achieve economic well-being

The legal requirement for attendance at school

Section 7 of Education Act 1996 states

Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age
The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full- time education suitable

a) to his age, ability and aptitude and

b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

Target-setting and monitoring

In November 2010, the Department for Education issued the following information to schools and local authorities about Attendance Targets from 2012.

The Department...remains firmly of the view that unnecessary absence is unacceptable and must be prevented and tackled by schools.

The Department therefore expects all schools and local authorities to continue focusing on overall absence, particularly unauthorised absence and persistent absence. Absence will continue to be monitored closely via the pupil level school census.

The quality of teaching and learning judgement relates to attendance because, however good the teaching, it does not benefit pupils if they are not present.

Expectations

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents and students. Each of these groups need to understand the expectations which the policy makes of them.

1. The School

- Barnwell School will provide a safe learning environment. All staff are responsible for this, and procedures are monitored and reviewed by senior staff (by Assistant Head responsible for student safeguarding, and School Business Manager, liaising with colleagues on senior team).
- The School will ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis. Form-staff and Heads of College/Year work with the Attendance co-ordinators, and procedures are monitored and reviewed by senior staff (Assistant Head, responsible for attendance liaising with colleagues on senior team)
- Barnwell School will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality. Responsibility for this lies with all staff, crucially form-teachers and Heads of College/Year and Attendance Officer, and procedures are monitored and implemented by senior staff (Assistant Head, responsible for attendance) and AIO.

2. Parents

- Parents are expected to ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- Parents will inform school on the first day of absence, of the reasons for their child's absence from school. For known absences a note in the planner in the absence page or a letter will be required. Alternatively for known or unexpected absence the student attendance line must be called:
(01438) 761430 Redgrave College Admin
(01438) 761420 Hoy College Admin
(01438) 761410 Ennis College Admin
(01438) 730876 for East Campus (Yrs 10 and 11)
(01438) 744416 for Sixth Form
or a message sent via absence email (absence@barnwell.herts.sch.uk)
- Parents will not arrange family holidays during term-time
- Parents will maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary
- Parents will ensure that school are informed of any changes of contact details

3. Students

- All students are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually
- Students must remember to hand any note/show the relevant page of their planner, giving reasons for absence to their tutor or Head of College/Year
- Students are expected to be ready to learn

Doors Open

Breakfast Club opens at 8.00am and students may arrive from 7.45am. Students should not arrive before 7.45am.

Registration

Students are expected to be in school by 8.35am. Form period is 10.15am. Registers are taken by teaching staff in all lessons. The afternoon registration is taken at the start of Session 3 at 1.20pm. The Attendance Officers on each campus are responsible for checking that all registers are marked in accordance with DFE guidance.

Following up Lateness

Any student who arrives after 8.35am must sign in at Reception with a time and a reason. The names of students arriving late will be passed by Attendance Officer and duty-staff and collated on a list for Heads of College/Year. We implement a late policy for Years 7,8,9,10 and 11 whereby students late to school without a valid reason earn themselves a detention on the next day given by Heads of College/Year.

Absences

Notification must be provided for all absences from school, by email or telephone or letter to the Attendance Coordinator, or a note in the student's planner when the student needs to leave campus during the day, and signs out at Reception. Notification is kept electronically. Absences are only authorised by designated staff within the school (members of the senior team liaising with Assistant Head with overview of Attendance). It is the school and not the parent who authorises absence. The school may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided. The school will normally only accept a parent, guardian, carer or social worker giving valid information.

Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments (although these should be made, whenever possible, outside school hours)
- Designated days of religious observance (but not days before/after for travelling)
- Exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement
- Older sibling's graduation
- Music or dance examinations
- Moving house

Absence will not be authorised for the following reasons:

- Shopping
- Looking after parents/siblings who are unwell
- Birthdays
- Holidays in term-time
- Funeral of distant relative involving more than one day of absence

Following Up Absences

If no reason for absence has been provided on the first day of absence, a parent of the student will be contacted via a telephone-call from the Attendance Coordinator as soon as practicable.

There is an escalation of school and AIO response to absence, depending on the level from stage 1 letters to fixed-penalty-notice warning letters, and ultimately court proceedings.

Parents whose children have more than 15% absence from school in any half-term will be contacted by the Attendance team who will work with the parents to bring about an improvement in attendance.

If the student's attendance does not improve sufficiently, the Assistant Head with overview of Attendance will refer the student to the County Attendance Improvement Officer as an open case.

Form tutors, Heads of College/Year and the Attendance Co-ordinators all work together to follow up absences. Form Tutors, Heads of House and the Attendance Co-ordinators liaise with the Assistant Head with the overview for Attendance to agree strategies for individual students. This may involve letters home, meetings with parents in school, involvement of Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) and home visits.

Where appropriate other professionals are informed and involved e.g. Social Workers, School Health Advisers etc.

In the case of a student likely to be absent for a long time due to illness a referral is made to ESTMA (Education Support for the Medically Absent) by the Head of College/Year in consultation with Attendance and Safeguarding staff.

In the case of students being taken off-roll to attend another school, it is the responsibility of the Attendance Coordinators and Data staff to complete the EWN1 form to alert Attendance and Pupil Support.

Students leaving and returning to school during the school day

Students should sign out and sign back in at Reception. The Attendance Coordinator will have responsibility of this list in the event of fire.

Truancy

The school works with all parties to reduce truancy. Computerised registers are taken for every lesson. Students who truant may be placed on an Attendance Report. For students who go home for lunch there is a standard lunch pass. Students who have permission to leave the school site will be issued with a standard pass stating the time of departure and expected time of return. Duty staff and midday supervisors monitor exit points.

First Day Response

The target group for First Day Response will change according to current attendance, year-group etc. The Attendance Co-ordinator/KS4 college Administrator will contact as many parents as practicable of students who are marked absent for whom we have no reason/explanation for their absence. On the second day of absence, any student for whom we still do not have a reason for absence will be targeted. Registers are updated by the Attendance Coordinator with First Day Response information.

Penalty Notices

At Barnwell School we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. Where a student has at least 21 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in a term -or equivalent length of time- (including unauthorised holidays) the Headteacher may decide to ask the LEA to issue a Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 per child per parent if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 per child per parent if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the penalty is not paid the LEA may prosecute the parents for their child's irregular attendance.

Rewards for Attendance

Barnwell School rewards good attendance. Certificates are issued to students with 100% attendance. College/YearAssemblies remind students of the advantages of good attendance, and foster an element of inter-House competition.

Integrated Working

Barnwell School will demonstrate full commitment to integrated working by

- Using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Sharing information
- Encouraging staff to take on the role of Lead Professional
- Working with other agencies and being part of 'teams around the family' (TAF)

Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

The school works in partnership with the allocated AIO to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school.

The Assistant Headteacher with the overview for Attendance meets regularly with the AIO and the Attendance Co-ordinator discuss individual students and agree strategies and actions. When attendance does not improve sufficiently and after discussion with the AIO the school will make a formal referral to Children, Schools and Families. Students and families who are open cases to the AIO will

receive intensive support and have clear targets to meet. Where this does not bring about the necessary improvements the AIO may seek to prosecute.

Publication of Information

Parents, students, staff and governors are informed of whole school attendance issues and statistics on a regular basis.

The school shares information on individual students' attendance as necessary with parents, students and staff. Whole school data is provided regularly to the DCSF and Local Authority.

Attendance is a standing item on the Agenda of School Governors' Meetings, and detailed reports are submitted half-termly by the Assistant Head with overview of Attendance.

New parents are informed of the School's ethos on attendance for the first time at a presentation during the New Intake Evening prior to the start of Year 7. Staff have access to the Policy electronically.

Policy to be reviewed January 2018