



Brian Jackson College Attendance policy

Staff Responsible: Head Teacher
Review Date: Annually

The Brian Jackson College regards regular attendance as essential to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all pupil, and that regular attendance at the college is necessary to promote better life chances. The college's ethos encourages pupil to feel that their presence is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late.

There is a clear link between good attendance and high standards. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and every child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

This policy sets out the principles and guidelines by which we seek to raise attendance, improve punctuality, to raise levels of achievement and to maximise opportunities both in school and in later life.

KEY POINTS

- Registered pupils of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school.
- The aim of the school is to expect regular attendance (8.30am – 2.30pm), even when we recognise the problems of individual families and pupils.
- Lateness is subject to sanctions.
- Where a pupil is absent without prior permission an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming the absence will be treated as unauthorised.
- Parents should not take pupils on holidays in term time. Parents taking holidays in term time may be subject to penalty notice unless there are exceptional circumstances and with Headteacher's permission.
- Even where absence is authorised, the school will be alerted to emerging patterns of absence, which may seriously disrupt continuity of learning.
- In promoting regular school attendance, the school works closely with the dual registered schools or directly with the local authority for those pupils who are single registered. Where outside agencies are involved with pupils, the school also works closely with these agencies to better support pupils school attendance. This may also include working directly with the attendance and pupil support service.

Parents/carers responsibilities:

Parents and those with parental responsibilities are required to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education to enable them to access all educational opportunities which will allow them their best possible outcome post 16. This means that they are responsible for ensuring that pupils attend and stay at school unless alternative arrangements for their education are made. They are also responsible for informing schools of any absence as soon as possible, ideally on the first day of absence. They should state the nature of the illness and when the child is expected to return to school.

Telephone calls, text messages, letters or personal contacts are acceptable. We state our attendance policy at parents' inductions, in the prospectus and at other opportunities, e.g. when letters are sent home.

Brian Jackson College ensures that parents are:

- Reminded of their statutory duties
- Aware of College requirements as regards notification of absence
- Regularly kept up to date with their child's attendance
- Supported to increase their child's attendance
- Notified when their child has not arrived in school with no reason for absence given
- Involved where attendance contracts are put in place
- Notified if concerns are brought to the attention of the dual registered school or the attendance and pupil support service

Registration:

Pupils are marked present or absent on an attendance register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Absences are registered as authorised or unauthorised.

Registers are kept accurately as they may be used in evidence in cases where parents are being prosecuted for school attendance offences.

Consistency of registration practice is vital. All staff within the school operate to the same rules.

Attendance and Pupil Support:

Local Authorities (LAs) are charged in law with enforcing school attendance, Kirklees LA can apply to the courts for an education supervision order and, where necessary, they can prosecute parents of pupil who do not attend school regularly. Maintained (dual registered) schools are informed daily of attendance.

All continuous absences of more than two weeks are reported, and reports are made on those pupils who fail to attend regularly, except where such absences are covered by a medical certificate.

If the child is educated off site, then the child's dual registered school is informed of the absences.

Categorising absence:

Parents can be prosecuted under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure their child's attendance at school with the following exceptions:

- The pupil was absent with permission from an authorised person within the school
- The pupil was ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause which is evidenced
- The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious group to which the family belongs

There are also some exceptions for the pupil of travellers.

Notes from parents/carers: Only the school can approve absence **not parents/carers**. The school does not have to accept the parents' offered explanation as a valid reason for absence. If there are doubts about the explanation offered, or where there is no explanation, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Illness, medical and dental appointments: Such absences are considered authorised providing that the school is satisfied that the illness, appointments etc. are genuine. A medical appointment is not expected to be more than a half day session.

Lateness: Lateness is discouraged. Registers are kept open for a reasonable time; School opens at 8:30am and registration closes at 9:30am. Where pupils miss registration and fail to provide an adequate explanation they will be marked as unauthorised absence for the session. If a child arrives late after registration this must be noted for the purposes of emergency evacuation.

Special occasions: Whether or not an authorised absence can be granted for this category will depend upon the circumstances. A request must be made to the Headteacher.

Family bereavements: The school responds sensitively to requests for leave of absence to attend funerals or associated events. Such absences are usually authorised. Where a pupil is absent for more than the agreed period, early contact is made with the family and may result in an unauthorised absence.

Days of religious observance: An offence is not committed where the absence results from participation in a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.

Traveller pupil: Travellers are protected from prosecution if they can show that the nature of their trade requires travel from place to place and that the child has attended school as regularly as possible. Also, where the child has attained the age of six years and has made at least 200 attendances during the previous twelve months.

Public performances: Leave of absence may be granted to participate in an approved public performance. If the pupil is then absent from the performance, then this will constitute unauthorised absence.

Off-site activities: These fall into two categories, school directed e.g. educational visits and individual activities, e.g. music examinations. School activities will normally be registered as absent. Such

absences will be classed as authorised. Where the activity is of a more individual nature, the school will usually authorise absence.

Excluded pupils: Where a pupil has a fixed term exclusion, he or she will remain on the school roll. This will be treated as authorised absence. If a pupil has been permanently excluded his or her absence should be authorised until after review. If the exclusion is confirmed, he or she should be removed from the school roll.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absences thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are closely tracked and monitored, and attendance contracts are put in place. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to a parenting contract and offer of support which will set clear targets and expectations. All PA pupils are automatically made known to their dual registered school where applicable and may result in a referral to the attendance and pupil support service. Persistent absence may result in a penalty notice being issued.

Absence procedures: (see flow chart)

If a child is absent parent/carers must:

- Contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence.
- Or parents/carers can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with them.

If a child is absent school will:

- Telephone or text parents/carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them.
- Invite parents/carers into school to discuss the situation with our attendance panel if a child is persistently absent.
- Inform the dual registered school where applicable which may result in a referral to the attendance and pupil support service if attendance falls below 90%.
- Send 3 and 5 day absence letters to parent/carers outlining actions which will be taken by the school
- Implement an attendance contract which will be completed with the parents/carers and child

If a student has attendance 90% or below, an attendance letter will be sent to the parent/carer (see appendix 1). Attendance will be monitored by the school, if absences continue this may result in a referral to the Local Authority (see appendix 6) and possible penalty notice.

Holidays in term time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking pupils away in term time. There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school to go on holiday.

The law states that 10 days in a school year may be granted under exceptional circumstances. **This is always at the discretion of the Headteacher.**

Parents/carers wishing to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time must complete a Holiday Request Form or send a letter to request permission from the headteacher before booking the holiday. The form is available from the school office. (See appendix 5)

Parents/carers must understand that by taking pupil out of school they are making a choice to miss out on part of their child's education.

If parents/carers take their child out of school on a holiday which has not been authorised by the headteacher they may receive a penalty notice which is £60, per parent, per child which rises to £120 if you don't pay within 21 days. If you don't pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted (under Section 444 of the Education Act) for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. You will receive a separate summons for this which will give you notice of the time and date of the court hearing.

You must pay the whole of the amount owing in one payment - you cannot pay in instalments and you cannot pay part of the penalty notice.

If the penalty notice is not paid in 28 days, and it has not been withdrawn, parents/carers potentially face prosecution from the local authority where the maximum penalty is £2500.

Attendance and pupil support service

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any attendance problems. This will usually resolve the attendance problems, but if difficulties cannot be sorted out this way, the school may refer the child to the attendance and pupil support service. Parents/carers may wish to contact the Attendance Pupil Support Office themselves to ask for help and advice on 01484 221919.

Summary:

All staff at the school are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and families to ensure that educational potential is met and that high levels of attendance is also met. Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to make sure that their child attends school regularly and on time. The school has a duty to identify pupils who are not attending regularly and, with the support of the Local Authority and dual registered schools where applicable, take necessary action.



Attendance procedure flow chart

1st, 2nd, 3rd day absence – phone call/text message to parent/carer, reason for absence obtained, return date

No response

Contact made and child back in school. No further action required

Dual registered schools/outside agencies informed and 3-day absence letter
See appendix 2

**Pupil returns with satisfactory explanation from parent.
NO FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED**

Pupil does not return and no response from parent on 5th day of absence-
5day absence letter to be sent. See appendix 3

Pupil returns. Attendance contract put in place. Possible APSO involvement and possible parenting contract put in place.

School to continue to monitor attendance for maximum of 4 weeks, any further absences will be unauthorised

Meeting not attended- Final warning letter sent-
See appendix 4

Local Authority involvement, refer to attendance and pupil support service and possible CME referral

Penalty notice

Child Missing from Education?

If a child is missing from school for 5 consecutive days without response from parent/carer to school, follow CME referral.

For further guidance on CME please refer to the DfE statutory guidance policy.

**PUPILS ATTENDANCE
90% OR BELOW**

Attendance letter 1
See appendix 1
Letter sent to parent/carer
School to monitor attendance for a maximum of 4 weeks- Dual registered school informed where applicable

No further absences
School to continue to monitor attendance for a maximum 4 weeks to support pupil

Further absences – attendance letter 2
See appendix 2
Attendance letter 2 sent to parent/carers inviting them to a meeting in school with the Inclusion Manager and Dual registered school where applicable

Parent/carer attends meeting in school

Student and parent/carer contract put in place. School to continue to monitor student progress for a maximum of 4 weeks, any further absences will be unauthorised.

Parent/carer did not attend meeting and did not contact the school

Contact Local Authority
See CME guidance

Further absences – contact local authority
See CME guidance

No further absences

Penalty notice

Penalty notice

Child Missing from Education?

If a child is missing from school for 5 consecutive days without response to school, follow CME guidance
For further guidance on CME please refer to the DfE statutory guidance policy.



Appendix 1

1st Letter

College Heading/ Address/logo

Dear [parent name]

I am writing to you regarding concerns about your [son/daughters] attendance. [Childs Name] attendance is currently at only [percent] and as you will be aware this is below the colleges minimum requirement. As [Childs name] attendance has fallen below the legal requirement [he/she] will be placed on daily attendance monitoring for a maximum of 4 weeks. I would appreciate your support and cooperation regarding this monitoring and hope that you will encourage [Childs name] to attend regularly. I have arranged a meeting on (Date/Time) to put this contract in place and outline the expectations over these 4 weeks.

If there has not been a significant improvement after this time a meeting will be arranged for yourself and [Childs name] where the initial attendance contract will be reviewed and a parenting contract put in place which may then result in legal proceedings being put in place. Should this matter be referred to court please be aware that you do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in Court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.

If you have any questions about your [sons/daughters] attendance, then please contact the college and ask to speak to our attendance officer.

Yours sincerely

Jacqui Green
Head Teacher

Appendix 2

1st standard letter

College Heading/ Address/logo

Dear Parent(s)

Re: Attendance at (School name) – (Pupil name) (DOB)

I am concerned about the attendance of your child (name). I have enclosed a copy of his/her attendance certificate for you to see.



If pupils are to make good progress in school and achieve good outcomes then it is important that they attend regularly and punctually. A minimum expected attendance at this school is 95%. As you can see, your child's attendance is currently (y)%.

In order to discuss this further and to consider whether there is any support we or another service may be able to offer we would like to invite you to a meeting at school on (day/date/time).

If this date or time is not convenient please contact the school to rearrange.

I hope this will be a positive meeting where we will have the opportunity to improve your child's attendance with support from school.

Yours Sincerely

Jacqui Green
Head Teacher

Appendix 3

Dear

Re: Attendance at (School name) – (Pupil name) (DOB)

You were recently invited to a meeting at school to talk about improving (pupil name)'s attendance. Unfortunately you did not attend this meeting and did not contact school to discuss this.

(Pupil's name) attendance remains a cause for concern. For your information I have enclosed a copy of your child's current attendance certificate. A further meeting has been arranged for (day/date/time).

It is important that you co-operate with efforts to improve (pupil name)'s attendance if legal proceedings are to be avoided. I have enclosed an information leaflet "Regular School Attendance – Advice and Information for Parents and Carers" which advises you of the legal penalties that can apply for failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

We should like to avoid referring to Kirklees Council to request legal proceedings and hope that you will now co-operate with efforts to meet to discuss the situation.

Should this matter be referred to court, please be aware that you do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in Court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.

Yours Sincerely



Jacqui Green
Head Teacher

Appendix 4

Final warning letter regarding possible legal proceedings -

Dear

Re: Attendance (*Pupil name*) (*DOB*) Year

Unfortunately you have failed to co-operate with recent efforts to meet with you to discuss your child/children's attendance.

It is now our intention to ask the Local Authority to start legal proceedings against you under Section 444(1) (or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 as you are failing to ensure the regular school attendance of your son/daughter (name).

Before making this request I am prepared to offer you one last opportunity to discuss this matter at a meeting with (name of school personnel), at (venue) on (date and time). If this date and time is inconvenient please contact (name) at the above office to rearrange a mutually convenient time. If you do not attend this meeting without good reason then the matter will be referred to the Local Authority for prosecution.

Should this matter be referred to court please be aware that you do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defense if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in Court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.

Yours Sincerely

Jacqui Green
Head Teacher

Appendix 5



Holiday Request Form

This form has been designed to clarify the process of holiday requests. The school is expected to comply with Government guidance by the DfE (Department for Education), and the LEA (Local Education Authority)

Pupil Name			
Date of birth			
Any other school age pupil?	Name	School	
	Name	School	
Dates of travel			
Total amount of days absent from school			
Does the holiday overlap with beginning or end of term?	YES: <input type="checkbox"/>	NO: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please state the reason for your travel			
The following questions are outlined within the DfE expectations			Yes No
<i>Is the request due to exceptional circumstances, such as:</i> Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education; and			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
A family needing to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis. If yes, please give details:			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Each request can only be judged on a case by case basis, you will receive a reply from the school in writing.

Person submitting application:
Signature:

Relationship to child:
Date

