



BLENHEIM  
SCHOOLS

# Attendance Policy

Policy Folder: Safeguarding

## Attendance & Punctuality Policy

### **Named Personnel with designated responsibility for Attendance:**

SLT responsible for Attendance and School Attendance Champion	Thomas Muskin
SENDCo	Julie Boddington
Year 7-8	Drew Brierley
Year 9-11	Karen Shardlow
Year 12 and 13	Chris George

### **Rationale**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Quinton House School aims to work together with parents/guardians to ensure that all children and young people registered at Quinton House attend both regularly and punctually in order that their development and achievement are maximised. It is our aim that every student understands the importance of attending regularly and is working towards achieving a 100% attendance rate.

This policy is written in line with Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance 2024 and promotes the principles of:

1. Expect (high standards of attendance)
2. Monitor (data to identify patterns at individual and cohort level)
3. Listen and Understand (proactively work with students and parents)
4. Facilitate support (remove barriers and implement systematic support / use of early help where necessary)
5. Formalise support (use of attendance contracts or supervision orders)
6. Enforce (statutory intervention when all other avenues have been exhausted)

This policy highlights the importance of attendance in the education of our children. Quinton House School is committed to working towards our attendance targets. We encourage parents to contact the school where a student's attendance is of concern and will always address individual needs to the best of our ability. In return we expect the support of both parents and children in achieving the best possible levels of attendance that we can. The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and governors to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend every day that the school is open except when statutory reasons apply.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.



<b>Attendance (%)</b>	<b>Days absent</b>	<b>Weeks absent</b>	<b>Hours of learning missed</b>
95%	9 days	2 weeks	<b>45 hours</b>
90%	19 days	4 weeks	<b>95 hours</b>
85%	29 days	6 weeks	<b>145 hours</b>
80%	38 days	8 weeks	<b>190 hours</b>
<b>Attendance (%)</b>	<b>Days absent</b>	<b>Weeks absent</b>	<b>Hours of learning missed</b>
75%	48 days	10 weeks	<b>240 hours</b>
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	<b>285 hours</b>
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	<b>335 hours</b>

There are strong and proven links between student attendance and educational achievement. Attendance of less than 95% (i.e. absences of 9.5 days or more out of the 190 student days in the school year) has been shown to compromise student attainment. At 90% attendance students miss the equivalent of almost 4 weeks education (19 days) and only 10% of students who are persistently absent from school achieve 5 9-4 grades at GCSE.

### Parents'/guardians' Responsibilities

- Parents/guardians have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis
- Parents/guardians should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness, they should contact the school as soon as possible on the first morning of absence. This should be completed on Blenheim connect or by telephone to main reception.
- Only the school can authorise an absence, based on the explanation provided by the parents/guardians. Should parents/guardians fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the school will record such absence as unauthorised until a reason is provided.
- Parents/guardians should ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of morning registration. If a student arrives after 8.40am they should enter the site through Senior reception. Students arriving late will be coded as late to school (L). Morning register legally closes at 9:15am, any child arriving after the closing of the register will be recorded as a code of U which is 'late after registration is closed' for that session which will impact on the student's attendance rate.



- To provide additional evidence as and when requested to support attendance.

## School Responsibilities

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress
- The school must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, at 8.30am and once during the afternoon session at 2pm. Registers close at 9.15am and at 2pm. For morning registration, any child arriving after **8.45am** but before **9.15am** will be recorded as a code of L which is 'late before registration is closed' and any child arriving **after 9.15am** (the legal closing of the morning register) will be recorded as a code of U which is 'late after registration is closed' for that session which will impact on the student's attendance rate.
- Teachers will complete registers within the first 10 minutes of a lesson.
- All members of staff are encouraged to contact parents/guardians when they are concerned about a student's attendance. Staff should record their concerns with the Head of Phase.
- Should a student be absent the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register.
- The school employs a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
  1. Regular class teacher input about the importance of attending to be shared in tutor time and daily lessons
  2. Unexplained absence will be followed up on the first day with a phone call home.
  3. Students (Parents/guardians) who are on the Persistent Absence list and under Child in Need or Child Protection proceedings will have daily telephone calls
  4. Attendance data will be monitored each week by the Headmaster and Phase Leaders.
  5. If attendance becomes a concern this will trigger intervention strategies which will ultimately, if not remedied, result in a referral to EIPT (Education Inclusion Partnership Team) and possible legal intervention
  6. Where attendance falls below 90% and all appropriate interventions have taken place, the case will be discussed with EIPT.
  7. Quinton House School is mindful of students absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and aims to provide additional support.
  8. Staff understand the individual needs of students and work in partnership with the student and family to put in-school support in place. This will also include working with the Local Authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available.) This approach will require regular review to ensure support is successful and to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.



9. Positive attendance is celebrated in school assemblies and recognised by form tutors.

### **Authorised and unauthorised absences**

Absences can only be authorised by the school. Legitimate reasons for absence include the following:

- Sickness. This generally occurs in a block of time over a continuous period; it is desirable that a student's attendance shows unbroken weeks (i.e. those where the student is marked present on all ten sessions); students should not have more than one or two broken weeks during an academic year. Regular broken weeks are a cause for concern and will be followed up by the school.
- Medical or dental appointment. (Wherever possible, these should be arranged outside of school hours) If the appointment takes place in school time, then evidence of the appointment will need to be seen.
- Days of religious observance (maximum of 4 days)
- Exceptional family circumstances, e.g. bereavement, or as agreed by the Headmaster
- Approved sporting activity or regulated activity
- Taking part in regulated performance or employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary or time limited part time timetable.

### **Education Off-site:**

As well as the above leaves of absence, all schools can also allow students to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings:

- To attend an offsite approved educational activity. (For full details see Code B)
- To participate in an approved sporting activity. (see Code P)
- To attend an educational visit or trip arranged by the school. (see Code V)
- To attend work experience. (see Code W)

### **The following absences will not be authorised:**

- Holidays
- Visiting relatives abroad
- Family days out
- Looking after siblings or sick relatives
- Staying at home to await a tradesman or delivery
- Birthdays or family celebrations
- Missing the bus
- Shopping



### **Attendance Targets and Data**

- Quinton House School attendance target for the academic year 2025-2026 is 96%. This target takes into consideration the medical needs of some of our students.
- As part of this process a PA (Persistent Absentee) Register will be maintained and regularly reviewed.
- Where a student's attendance falls below 95%, we will identify these students "at risk" of persistent absenteeism and will implement strategies to address this.
- A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more across the Academy year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will be doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/guardians' fullest support and cooperation 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/guardians will be informed of this immediately.
- Quinton House School will conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This will include analysis of students and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.

### **The role of the SASS (Northamptonshire County Council – School Attendance Support Service)**

- SASS works as a last resort strategy in school to reduce levels of unauthorised absence and promote whole school attendance.
- When there is a grave concern about a student's attendance and after several steps for support no improvement is recorded (without acceptable reason for this), the school has a duty to consider a referral to the SASS.
- The SASS acts on behalf of the Local Authority in enforcing a parent/guardian's duty to ensure their child receives an appropriate education.
- In enforcing attendance, the SASS has a variety of powers to help them ensure that children are properly educated:
  - a. School Attendance Orders - Penalty Notices - Education Supervision Orders - Prosecution Parenting Orders
  - b. The Education Act 1996 section 444 states that "if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence".



## Holidays in term time

- Taking holidays in term time will affect students' academic performance as much as any other absence and will bring a child's attendance percentage down. We expect parents/guardians not to take children away in the academic year and remind them that there is no automatic entitlement to take leave of absence during Academy time
- When a leave of absence is unavoidable and only in extenuating circumstances, parents/guardians will be asked to write to the Headmaster.
- Any applications for leave of absence must be made at least 4 weeks in advance via the holiday request form available from the school. A decision will be made at the discretion of the Headmaster. In deciding, the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

If a child is taken out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions) (90.00%) over a period of ten weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local authority for consideration of legal action. This could include:

- A Penalty Notice payable up to £160 fine (if paid within 28 days) without further reference to you for a penalty notice this warning is valid for 12 months.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment."

## Attendance procedure

Quinton House expects all students to achieve between 98 and 100% attendance.

- Attendance of 98 – 100% is rewarded.
- A student with attendance below 95% will be placed on monitoring by the Pastoral Team.
- A letter will be sent to advise parents/guardians. The case may be referred to the Phase leader, who will continue to monitor attendance. Parents/guardians will be contacted, and intervention strategies may be implemented as appropriate.
- If no significant improvement is made at this stage, parents/guardians/students will be required to complete and sign a parenting contract. Failure at this stage may result in referral to the Education Inclusion Partnership Team who may take more formal action.

## Notices to Improve

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or



have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support. This will include:

Details of the student's attendance record and details of the offences.

- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period.
- A clear timeframe for the improvement period of between 3 and 6 weeks.
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

### **Registration procedure**

Quinton House School is responsible for keeping accurate records of attendance. The School will contact parents with any concerns we have regarding a student's attendance and will work with parents, where necessary, to make improvements.

- The school must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, at 8.30am and once during the afternoon session at 2pm.
- Students not present to answer their names will be marked absent if no explanation has been received.
- Any student who arrives after 8.40am without a valid reason will be marked as late; likewise, any student who arrives after 2pm.
- Any student arriving after 9am, without a valid reason, MUST sign in at Reception. They will be marked as late. Legally, 'late' counts as an absence and parents have been prosecuted for regularly failing to get their children to school on time.
- School sanctions will be issued to students who are late: a behaviour point will be issued and recorded on iSAMS
- Two late marks to lessons in a day will result in a lunchtime detention on the following day.
- Multiple lateness in one week is likely to lead to a further sanction.
- Attendance is monitored daily by the Administration team, who record the reason for the absence, provided that a written explanation or phone message has been received from home.
- Contact with the school must be made each day of absence before 8.30am.
- If no explanation is received, we must assume that the absence was unknown to the parents/guardians or was not valid, and therefore, unauthorised. This will be followed up on the day by the administration team.



- If a child is unwell, parents are asked to let the school know by phone before morning registration on the FIRST day of absence, giving some indication of the medical condition and probable length of absence, and each day of absence thereafter.
- If a pattern to absences is noted, the school will contact parents/guardians. If there is a school-based difficulty, the school will seek to remedy it. If there is an out of school problem, the school will offer support and access to other services as appropriate. In all cases the school will help the student to re-establish him/herself into the usual pattern of school life.

### **How can parents help?**

- Inform the school promptly of any absences:
- Using Blenheim Connect or telephoning the main school reception
- Do not allow your son or daughter to stay away from school unless absolutely necessary.
- Inform the school if your child needs to leave the school site during the school day or will be late to registration due to an appointment. No child is allowed to leave the premises without prior consent from parents/guardians.
- If your son/daughter seems reluctant to come to school and you suspect a problem at school, contact us sooner rather than later.
- Do not 'condone' an absence by providing an excuse which may be covering a problem. We are partners in your child's education, and by sharing a problem we may be able to solve it.
- We do not consider any problem to be trivial: we try to act to solve a problem as soon as we know about it.
- Organise non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours.
- Ensure a child arrives on time.
- If a child walks to school, ensure s/he leaves early enough.

### **How will school help?**

As a school, we will:

- Contact home on day 1 of absence if no message has been received from home.
- Contact home over any unexplained absences.
- Follow up promptly any concerns that parents pass on to us that may be affecting their child's attitude to, or wellbeing in, school.
- Involve the Pastoral teams to help students re-integrate into school after illness or other individual circumstances as necessary.
- Regularly and consistently remind students of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Reward good or improving attendance and action any concerns promptly.

## Appendix 1

### Absence and Attendance Codes

The following codes are the codes used by school to analyse attendance data:

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Statistical meaning</b>	<b>Legal meaning</b>	<b>Affects attendance negatively</b>
/ or \	Present	Present	Present	NO
B	Educated off site	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
C	Leave of absence – exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence	Absent	Yes
C1	Participation in regulated activity	Authorised absence	Absent	Yes
C2	Part time timetable (Temporary)	Authorised absence	Absent	Yes
D	Dual registration	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
E	Exclusion	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
I	Illness	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
J1	Interview	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
K	Attending education provision arranged by the LA	Present (if attending)	Attending approved educational activity	NO
L	Late (before registration closes)	Present	Present	NO
M	Medical/dental appointment	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
N	Reason not yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES
O	Absence in unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES

P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
S	Study leave (public examination)	Authorised absence	Absent	NO
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence	Absent	YES
U	Late (after registration closes)	Unauthorised absence	Absent	YES
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity	Attending approved educational activity	NO
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in attendances	Absent	NO
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in attendances	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	NO
Y1	Unable to attend as transport normally provided is unavailable	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of premises being closed	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO
Y4	Unable to attend due whole school premises being unexpectedly closed	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO



Y5	Unable to attend as student in criminal justice detention	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO
Y6	Unable to attend due to public health guidance	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO
Y7	Unable to attend due to other unavoidable cause	Not a possible attendance	Absent	NO
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in attendances	Student not registered at the school	NO
#	Planned whole school closure	Not a possible attendance	Not collected for statistical purposes	NO

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence.





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