

Bedford High School

A Specialist Business and Enterprise College

Work Hard Be Respectful Take Responsibility



Attendance Policy

School Address	
School Contact Number	01942 909009

Document control

Current author	Rebecca Ramsden
Governing Committee	FGB
Electronic copies of this plan are available from	FROG VLN
Hard copies of this plan are available from	School Business Manager
Public sector equality duty guidance considered	Yes

Contents

1. Aims:	4
2. Legislation and guidance	4
3. Key Staff.....	5
4. School Commitment	6
5. Expectations and Daily Routines	10
5.1 Punctuality.....	10
5.2 Communication with parents	11
6. Absence monitoring	11
6. Attendance Barrier Identification and Intervention: Assess, plan, do, review (APDR)	15
6.1 How we promote excellent attendance	16
7. Monitoring arrangements.....	17
8. Links with other policies.....	17
Appendices.....	18
Appendix 1: Holiday in term time request form	
Appendix 2: Attendance codes	
Appendix 3: Attendance and absence data	
Appendix 4: CME Checklist and Referral Form	
Appendix 5: Attendance pathways	

1. Aims:

Bedford High School recognises that excellent attendance is essential to students' academic progress, achievement, wellbeing, and engagement in school life. Regular attendance enables students to maximise their potential, build positive relationships, and access the full range of learning opportunities and experiences available.

The school promotes a culture where excellent attendance is valued and recognised. Through effective monitoring, early identification, and timely intervention, we aim to remove barriers to attendance and support students to attend regularly.

This policy provides a clear framework for students, staff, parents, and leaders, and is underpinned by our commitment to equality of opportunity. The policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects current guidance and the evolving needs of our school community.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** and **School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures**. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- **Part 7 of the Education Act 1996** ('The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise')
- **Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996** 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'
- **Section 576 Education Act 1996** stipulates that for the purposes of Education Law, parent includes:
 - All biological parents, whether they are married or not.
 - Any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative.
 - Any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carers.
- **Part 3 of the Education Act 2002**
- **The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)**
- **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations**

3. Key Staff

Key Personnel			
Role	Name	Telephone	Email
Assistant Headteacher: DSL, DT Teacher for CLA students & Attendance Champion	Mrs R Ramsden	01942 909009	R.Ramsden@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Attendance & Safeguarding Officer	Miss N Quinn		N.Quinn@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Attendance Manager	Mrs C Smith		C.Smith@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Attendance Officer Attendance Admin Support	Mrs M smith Miss McEntee		attendance@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Pastoral Year Teams			year7team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year8team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year9team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year10team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year11team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
SEND/CO	Mrs A Duffy		A.Duffy@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Nominated Governor	Mrs L Hayes	N/A	

4. School Commitment

Bedford High School is committed to promoting excellent attendance and punctuality and recognises the positive impact this has on students' learning, progress, wellbeing, and wider school experience.

We will work in partnership with students, parents, and families to promote regular attendance, identify barriers early, and provide appropriate support where attendance is a concern.

The school aims for all students to achieve excellent attendance, with a whole-school attendance target of 96%. Attendance will be monitored effectively, and absences will be recorded, reviewed, and followed up promptly and consistently.

We are committed to creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment where students feel valued and supported. Where additional needs or barriers are identified, we will provide appropriate interventions, adjustments, and, where necessary, work with external services and partners to improve attendance.

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Setting clear expectations for attendance and providing support and challenge to school leaders.
- Ensuring that school leaders are fulfilling their statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the effective implementation of this attendance policy.
- Reviewing attendance data regularly and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance strategy and improvement actions.
- Supporting and challenging leaders to identify barriers to attendance and drive sustained improvement.
- Ensuring that staff receive appropriate training and support to fulfil their attendance responsibilities.

Identified governor for attendance, safeguarding and inclusion: Mrs L Hayes

Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective implementation of this attendance policy.
- Ensuring a named member of the Senior Leadership Team has oversight of attendance and that clear responsibilities are delegated.
- Ensuring attendance expectations are communicated clearly and regularly to students, parents, and staff.
- Ensuring attendance processes comply with statutory guidance and LA expectations.
- Ensuring appropriate support is provided for students experiencing barriers to attendance, including students with SEND.
- Ensuring effective communication with parents, carers, and relevant external agencies where attendance concerns arise.
- Holding leaders and staff accountable for improving attendance outcomes.

Assistant Headteacher for Safeguarding, Attendance and Inclusion (Attendance Champion): Mrs R Ramsden

The Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Leading the implementation of the whole-school attendance strategy and ensuring this policy is embedded effectively.
- Monitoring attendance data, identifying trends, and reporting findings to the Headteacher and Governing Board.
- Evaluating attendance processes and leading improvements where required.
- Establishing effective systems for monitoring attendance, punctuality, absence, and persistent absence.
- Working with all stakeholders to identify and address barriers to attendance.
- Developing targeted strategies and interventions to improve attendance and measuring their impact.
- Ensuring appropriate support, including early intervention and Early Help where appropriate, is available for students and families.
- Ensuring attendance concerns are managed in line with safeguarding procedures, including children missing education (CME) processes where required.
- Supporting staff through guidance, training, and professional development to fulfil their attendance responsibilities.

The Attendance Manager

The Attendance Manager is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of regular attendance and punctuality to stakeholders.
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality data, identifying concerns, and escalating issues where appropriate.
- Producing accurate attendance reports and providing analysis to support whole-school attendance improvement.
- Working closely with pastoral staff to implement attendance strategies and support students with attendance concerns.
- Coordinating attendance interventions, parental engagement and targeted support.
- Leading Early Helps relating to complex attendance barriers and working with external agencies where appropriate.
- Maintaining effective communication with all stakeholders.
- Implementing attendance escalation processes in line with school procedures and local authority guidance.
- Ensuring attendance records are accurate, timely, and compliant with statutory requirements.
- Coordination of home visits and welfare checks.
- Management of attendance support staff.

The Attendance and Safeguarding Officers

The Attendance and Safeguarding Officers are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of attendance and punctuality to students and families.
- Monitoring individual student attendance, punctuality, and absence patterns, identifying concerns and escalating where appropriate.
- Supporting students and families to overcome barriers to attendance through targeted interventions.
- Lead attendance-related Early Help support and working with families and external agencies where required.
- Contributing to multi-agency meetings and interventions for students with identified attendance, safeguarding, or welfare concerns.

- Working closely with the wider pastoral team to support vulnerable students.
- Coordinating parental engagement activities and maintaining effective communication with families.
- Ensuring attendance concerns are recorded accurately and managed in line with school safeguarding and attendance procedures.

The Pastoral Team

The pastoral team is responsible for promoting the importance of regular attendance and punctuality, ensuring attendance remains a high priority within each year group. The team works closely with students, families, staff, and external agencies to identify and address barriers to attendance.

Pastoral Managers & Raising Achievement Officers

Pastoral Managers and Raising Achievement Officers are responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance and punctuality data, identifying concerns, trends, and students requiring support.
- Coordinating and supporting form teacher attendance interventions.
- Managing individual and group attendance interventions and evaluating their impact.
- Working with students and parents/carers to identify and overcome barriers to attendance.
- Communicating with staff and external agencies to support attendance improvement strategies.
- Delivering attendance education through form time and pastoral programmes.
- Supporting attendance recognition, rewards, and appropriate consequences in line with school procedures.
- Supporting the implementation of punctuality strategies and interventions.

Form Teachers are responsible for:

- Completing registration accurately and promptly, using the appropriate attendance codes.
- Following school procedures when a student is unexpectedly absent.
- Promoting the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Delivering attendance messages and education through form time.
- Communicating with parents/carers regarding attendance and punctuality concerns where appropriate.
- Supporting the implementation of attendance and punctuality interventions.

Teachers and Support Staff

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive learning environment where students feel valued and supported.
- Promoting the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in lessons and across the school community.
- Modelling positive behaviours and high expectations regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Taking accurate and timely lesson registers, using the appropriate attendance codes.
- Identifying and reporting attendance concerns or patterns of absence in line with school procedures.
- Supporting attendance interventions and strategies where required.

Attendance Support Staff

Attendance support staff are responsible for:

- Monitoring daily attendance and punctuality, identifying and escalating concerns in line with school procedures.
- Contacting parents/carers regarding student absence and following agreed attendance procedures.
- Acting as a key point of contact for attendance-related queries from parents/carers.
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date attendance records on the school information system (e.g. Bromcom).
- Ensuring attendance information, absence reasons, and supporting documentation are recorded accurately and promptly.
- Supporting the implementation of attendance interventions and strategies.
- Assisting with attendance-related safeguarding checks, including supporting home visits where appropriate and under the direction of relevant staff.
- Communicating with external agencies, alternative provision providers, and other schools where required.
- Completing home visits and welfare checks as required.

Parents and Carers

Where this policy refers to a parent/carer, this includes:

- All natural parents, regardless of marital status.
- Anyone who has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Anyone who has day-to-day care of the child (including those the child lives with and who look after them).

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of regular attendance and punctuality with their child.
- Ensuring their child attends school every day, arrives on time, and is ready to learn.
- Ensuring their child has safe and appropriate arrangements to travel to and from school.
- Supporting their child to attend school in the correct uniform and prepared for the school day.
- Contacting the school before 8.00am on the first day of absence and providing updates where necessary, including an expected return date where possible.
- Remaining in communication with the school during periods of absence and responding to attendance-related contact.
- Working in partnership with the school and/or local authority to identify and overcome barriers to attendance, including engaging with support, interventions, and agreed plans.
- Seeking support at the earliest opportunity where attendance is a concern, by contacting the student's Pastoral Manager in the first instance.
- Providing at least two accurate and up-to-date emergency contacts for communication purposes.
- Arranging medical and other appointments outside of school hours where possible. Where appointments during the school day are unavoidable, appropriate evidence may be requested.
- Arranging family holidays outside of term time in line with school and statutory requirements.

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day and arrive on time.
- Attend all lessons and engage positively with learning.
- Follow the school's routines and expectations regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Speak to a trusted member of staff if they experience barriers that affect their attendance.
- Work with staff and families to improve attendance where concerns have been identified.

5. Expectations and Daily Routines

All students are expected to attend regularly and punctually. Regular attendance supports academic progress, wellbeing, positive relationships, and engagement in the wider life of the school. It also helps students develop the routines and skills needed for future education, employment, and independence.

Daily Attendance Procedures

The school maintains an attendance register for all students. Registers are taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session (Period 4).

At each registration point, students will be recorded as:

1. Present.
2. Attending an approved educational activity.
3. Absent.

The school will follow up all unexplained absences in order to:

- Establish the reason for absence.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken where required.
- Determine whether an absence can be authorised in line with statutory guidance.
- Apply the appropriate attendance code accurately on the school's electronic register.
- Identify whether additional support, intervention, or early help may be required.

Attendance registers are marked using the codes specified by the Department for Education (DfE) in Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

The school day begins at 8.30am and finishes at 3.05pm (Thursday Week 2 finishes at 2.15pm). Students are expected to arrive on site by 8.25am to ensure they are ready for the start of the school day.

The morning register is taken during form time at 8.30am and closes at the end of form time at 9.00am. The afternoon register is taken at the start of Period 4 at 12.30pm and closes 30 minutes later (Thursday week 2, the PM register opens at 12.00pm). Full details of the school day and daily routines are available on the school website.

5.1 Punctuality

Students can access the school site from 8.15am. Students are expected to arrive in school by 8.25am and be in their form room ready for the start of the school day at 8.30am. Breakfast items are available from the Bistro from 8.15am. Students arriving after 8.30am must sign in at the late entrance. Their arrival time will be recorded, and they will be marked as late on the attendance register.

Punctuality is monitored closely. Where lateness becomes a concern, the school will implement appropriate student interventions to aid improvement. Parents/carers will be

informed of interventions through Class Charts and/or direct communication with school staff and are expected to support agreed actions. Interventions may include sanctions such as same-day detentions in line with the school's behaviour procedures.

Students arriving after the relevant registration period has closed will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U code) for the affected session unless there is an appropriate reason and supporting evidence.

Persistent lateness has a negative impact on learning, wellbeing, and the learning of others. Where punctuality concerns continue, the school will work with students and parents/carers to identify barriers and agree appropriate support. If there is insufficient improvement, further action will be taken in line with the school's procedures and local authority guidance.

5.2 Communication with parents

Effective communication between home and school is essential in supporting students' attendance, wellbeing, and engagement in school life. If a student is absent, parents/carers must notify the school promptly in line with the procedures outlined in this policy.

Positive relationships with families and effective partnership working are essential in achieving the best outcomes for students. Parents/carers are expected to support the school by promoting regular attendance, punctuality, and engagement with learning.

The school is committed to providing clear systems, communication, and support to promote good attendance. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school at the earliest opportunity if they have concerns or if barriers are affecting their child's attendance.

Where concerns remain unresolved and there is a lack of engagement with support, the school may take further action in line with attendance procedures, local authority guidance, and statutory requirements, including the use of formal measures where appropriate.

6. Absence monitoring

Attendance data is monitored and analysed regularly, to identify concerns at an early stage and implement appropriate support. This approach enables the school to understand barriers to attendance and work with students and families to improve attendance outcomes.

Attendance monitoring includes:

- Weekly analysis of attendance codes and absence patterns.
- Regular analysis of persistent and severe absence data.
- Monitoring of specific cohorts and vulnerable groups, including students with additional needs, safeguarding concerns, or those known to external agencies.
- Identification of individual students requiring targeted support or intervention.

Attendance data is used to identify students who may require additional support and to inform strategies aimed at reducing persistent and severe absence. When addressing attendance concerns, the school will consider the individual circumstances of students and families, including any barriers that may affect regular attendance.

Attendance interventions may begin below 96%. Persistent and severe absence are not the only trigger for support.

Enforced school closure

If Bedford High School was forced to close for a period, we have the facility to operate an online virtual school. In such circumstances, children are expected to engage with ALL

activities when work is set. Procedures for online learning will be sent to parents as and when required.

Unplanned absence

The school has a duty to safeguard all students. School absence is a safeguarding concern. Any unexplained absence triggers immediate safeguarding consideration. Parents/carers must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day of absence by 8.00am, or as soon as reasonably possible.

Parents/carers should report absences by contacting the school attendance office on 01942 909009 (Option 4).

The school will consider absences due to illness in line with statutory guidance. Where the school has concerns regarding the reason for absence, parents/carers will be contacted and further information may be required. If the school is not satisfied that the absence is genuine, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be informed.

Where an absence continues beyond three school days, or where there are ongoing concerns, the school may request appropriate medical evidence. This may include appointment details, prescription information, or other relevant evidence. Medical evidence will only be requested where it is considered necessary and proportionate.

If a student is absent and the school has not received notification, attendance staff will contact parents/carers as soon as possible to gain a better understanding. If contact cannot be made, or an appropriate reason is not provided, the absence will be recorded in line with statutory attendance codes. Where further information is provided at a later stage, the school will review the attendance code if appropriate.

Parents/carers are expected to send students to school with minor illnesses, where they are well enough to attend. This may include mild cold symptoms such as a minor cough, runny nose, or sore throat.

Where a student's health needs result in ongoing or long-term absence, the school will work with the student, family, and relevant professionals to provide appropriate support. This may include reasonable adjustments, individual support plans, and arrangements to maintain access to education and support a successful return to school.

The school will follow relevant Local Authority guidance regarding the education of students with medical needs and ensure support is appropriate to the individual circumstances of the student.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Parents/carers are expected to arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible to minimise disruption to learning. Where an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, the absence will be considered for authorisation where appropriate evidence or notification has been provided in advance. Students should attend school before and/or after the appointment where possible and should only be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary.

If a student does not return to school following an appointment within an agreed timeframe, any additional absence may be recorded in line with statutory attendance guidance.

Parents/carers should notify the school of planned absences by contacting the attendance office on 01942 909009 (Option 4).

Requests for other term-time absence must be submitted as far in advance as possible and will be considered in line with the school's procedures and statutory requirements.

Following Up Absence

Where a student who is expected to attend school is absent, or stops attending, the school will follow up with parents/carers to establish the reason and ensure appropriate support and safeguarding action is taken.

The school will:

- Send an automated message each morning to notify parents/carers of an unexplained absence.
- Contact parents/carers if no reason for absence has been provided or if there has been no response to the automated message.
- Attempt to contact emergency contacts where required and take appropriate safeguarding action if concerns remain. This may include additional contact attempts, home visits, or liaison with relevant agencies such as Social Care or the Police.
- Determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised in line with statutory guidance.
- Apply the appropriate attendance code accurately and promptly once the reason for absence is established.
- Continue to follow up unexplained absences on each day of absence to ensure student safety and welfare.
- Liaise with relevant linked professionals, including a student's social worker or youth offending team officer, where appropriate.
- Offer support, advice and interventions to students and families where barriers to attendance have been identified.
- Consider further action where appropriate support has been offered but attendance does not improve or engagement remains a concern, including formal attendance measures in line with local authority procedures.

Approval for term-time absence

The school may authorise a student's absence from the school site where this is due to approved educational activities, attendance at another registered setting, or other circumstances permitted within statutory guidance.

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence during term time where the request meets the circumstances set out in the Department for Education guidance Working together to improve school attendance. These circumstances include:

- Participation in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
- Attendance at an interview.
- Study leave.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances.

Any leave of absence must only be granted in exceptional circumstances, as defined by DfE guidance. Each request will be considered individually, considering the specific circumstances, evidence provided, and the impact on the student's education.

Requests for leave of absence should be submitted as soon as the need is known and at least one week before the intended absence. The school's leave of absence request form is available on the school website. The school may request supporting evidence. Leave of absence will not be granted for family holidays during term time.

Other Reasons for Authorised Absence

Examples of reasons that may be authorised include (but are not limited to):

- Illness, including physical or mental health-related illness.
- Medical and dental appointments where attendance during school hours is unavoidable.
- Religious observance where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school may seek clarification where required.
- Absence relating to travelling families where the absence meets the criteria set out in statutory guidance and educational arrangements cannot reasonably be accessed.
- Absence due to a student being suspended or excluded where no alternative provision has been arranged.
- Approved Activities Not Recorded as Absence

The following activities are not recorded as absences as the student is receiving education or is otherwise approved not to be attending the usual school site:

- Off-site educational activities, sporting activities, visits, or trips arranged by the school.
- Attendance at another school where the student is registered (dual registration).
- Attendance at provision arranged by the Local Authority.
- Work experience placements.
- Other unavoidable circumstances preventing attendance, such as emergency travel disruption, lack of access arrangements, or school closure.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence may be coded as 'unauthorised' if:

- No reason for absence has been given.
- The reason provided is not accepted by the school as a valid reason for absence.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include, but not limited to:

- Shopping for uniform
- Hair appointments
- Birthdays
- Closure of sibling's school for INSET or other purposes
- Looking after siblings or escorting sibling to medical appointments
- Couldn't get in / tired due to travel / won't get up
- Absence related to pets
- The school has reason to believe that the student is absent due to a family holiday or leave of absence that has not been authorised.
- The absence occurs immediately before or after a period of term-time holiday without an approved reason. The school may request evidence, including travel documentation, where appropriate. (Travel documentation may be requested to confirm dates of travel.)
- A request for a leave of absence has been declined.
- A student arrives at school after registration has closed at 9.00am, unless there is an appropriate reason and the absence can be authorised.

Parents/carers should be aware that Bedford High School may contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in the current term with a view to issuing an Education Penalty Notice or other legal action. The Education Penalty Notice is issued individually to each parent/carer who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. The penalty is £80 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. Non-payment of the Fixed Penalty Notice may result in prosecution in the Magistrates court.

Application for leave of absence

The headteacher will not grant any holiday during term time unless it is deemed that there are exceptional circumstances.

The headteacher will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis. If parents/carers need to request a holiday in term time, they must request this in writing to the headteacher. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised days, then school may apply to the Local Authority for an Education Penalty Notice to be issued to each parent/carer.

The following **will not** be deemed to be exceptional circumstances (NB this list is not exhaustive):

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carer's working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member
- Change of holiday dates
- Family preference for holiday outside of busy season

A student's absence during term time seriously disrupts their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching on the days they are away but are less prepared for the lessons building on that teaching when they return to school. There is a consequent risk of under achievement, which we must seek to avoid.

6. Attendance Barrier Identification and Intervention: Assess, plan, do, review (APDR)

Every student has the right to access a full-time education. The school maintains high expectations for attendance and punctuality while recognising that some students and families may experience barriers which affect attendance.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school will seek to understand the reasons for absence and work collaboratively with students, parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify and reduce barriers.

The school will use an early intervention approach based on the principles of APDR. This involves identifying needs, agreeing appropriate support, implementing interventions and reviewing impact.

Assessment will consider the views of the student and parents/carers, alongside relevant academic, pastoral, safeguarding and SEND information. Where appropriate, support may include attendance interventions, reintegration support, pastoral support, reasonable adjustments and involvement from external agencies. Where attendance difficulties continue, the school will review the effectiveness of support and consider further action, including additional specialist advice where required.

The school recognises that attendance difficulties may be linked to SEND, including social, emotional and mental health needs, anxiety-related absence or other barriers to accessing education. Where SEND is identified or suspected, attendance support will be considered through the graduated approach and in partnership with the SENDCo. This may include:

- targeted attendance support
- reasonable adjustments
- reintegration planning

- pastoral or wellbeing support
- specialist advice or assessment where appropriate

Where a student has an EHCP, attendance concerns will be reviewed alongside the provision and outcomes specified within the plan to ensure barriers to attendance are addressed. In line with the Equality Act 2010, the school will make reasonable adjustments where a student's disability or additional need affects attendance. Adjustments will be proportionate, reviewed regularly and aimed at supporting access to education.

The school expects all students to attend regularly and will work to ensure that attendance expectations are applied alongside a commitment to inclusion and removing barriers to learning.

6.1 How we promote excellent attendance **Expect, Monitor, Listen and Facilitate Support**

High expectations for attendance and punctuality are communicated regularly to students, parents/carers, and staff. Clear systems are used to monitor attendance, identify concerns, provide support, recognise improvement, and address absence through supportive interventions.

This includes:

- Providing a universal offer of attendance education, advice, guidance, and support.
- Communicating expectations, routines, and procedures clearly to new and existing students and families through transition events and regular communication channels.
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality data to identify concerns at an early stage.
- Recognising positive attendance, punctuality, and improvement, alongside implementing appropriate and supportive interventions where attendance concerns arise.

Barriers to attendance can be complex and individual. We encourage open communication with students and parents/carers to understand concerns and identify appropriate support. A range of strategies and interventions may be used to address barriers to attendance. Examples of support strategies are outlined within the Attendance Pathways document (Appendix).

Formal Support and Escalation

Where attendance remains a concern despite appropriate support and intervention, the school will work with students and families to review barriers and agree next steps.

Where support has been offered but attendance does not improve, or where there is limited engagement, the school may progress to formal attendance procedures and consider further action in line with statutory guidance and Local Authority processes.

Examples of strategies and escalation pathways are outlined within the Attendance Pathways document (Appendix).

6. Data Protection and GDPR

Bedford High School processes attendance data in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Attendance information is collected, stored, and shared securely for the purposes of safeguarding, monitoring attendance, and fulfilling statutory duties. Data may be shared with relevant agencies, including the Local Authority and safeguarding partners, where required by law or where there is a legitimate safeguarding concern. All data is handled in line with the school's Data Protection Policy and retained only for as long as necessary.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually as a minimum by the Attendance Champion. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing board.

In the occurrence of an unprecedented situation, temporary changes of this attendance policy may be implemented. The changes may be influenced by scientific guidance, government policy or school risk assessments which may take one of many forms. The plan for school attendance will be shared with parents when required. This will be communicated via social media, letters and emails or other methods that will be deemed appropriate at the time.

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help Policy
- Behaviour and Rewards policy
- Elective Home Education Policy
- Children Looked After Policy
- SEND Policy

Other guidance/policies:

- Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Children missing education (wigan.gov.uk)
- Consequences of not attending school (wigan.gov.uk)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Leave of absence during term time request form

Guidance Notes:

- Please ensure this form is completed at least 1 month prior to requesting leave. Completing this form **does not** mean your request has been approved.
- The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2024 states that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time.
- If your leave of absence request is not approved, then the absence will be marked as 'unauthorised' on the attendance register.
- For such 'unauthorised' absence, you may be liable to be issued with a penalty notice (fine). The fine is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 per parent per child if paid between 21 and 28 days. If one or both parents fail to pay the penalty notice in full, then you may be prosecuted. The school also reserves the right to remove your child from the roll of the school. Where this happens, please be aware that it may not always be possible to re-admit your child to the school.

Exceptional Circumstances: In considering whether any 'exceptional circumstances' apply, the Principal / Headteacher will consider if the reasons are **rare, significant, unavoidable, and short**. The Principal / Headteacher will also take into consideration the factors listed below:

- can the event for which the absence requested can be reasonably taken during school holidays?
- levels of attendance and unauthorised absence over the last 12 months
- any leave of absence taken previously
- whether the leave is during the exam period, controlled exam periods or will result in not meeting assessment deadlines
- age and year group of the student

Student Details			
Surname		First Name	
Date of Birth		Year Group	
Address			
Parent / Guardian Details			
Surname		First Name	
Relationship to child			
Address (if different)			
Telephone number		Mobile Number	
Email			
Details of request of leave			
Date of departure		Date of return	
No. of school days absent		Destination	
Local emergency contact name		Emergency contact number	
Address resident at whilst on leave			
Please provide details and reasons for requesting this leave of absence and in particular any 'exceptional circumstances'. If necessary, please provide any documentary evidence in support of your request.			
I certify that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that the school reserves the right to issue a penalty notice or remove my child from the school register for unauthorised leave.			
Parent Signature		Date	

**– FOR COMPLETION BY THE
SCHOOL –**

Authorised	Y / N
Exceptional Circumstances	
Signature	
Name / Position	
Date	

Appendix 2: Attendance codes

Code	Definition
/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA
B	Attending any other approved educational activity (approved by the LA)
C0	Other authorised circumstances
C1	Approved sporting activity
C2	Reduced timetable
D	Dual registered
E	Excluded
G	Unauthorised holiday
I	Unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).
J1	Interview
L	Late arrival
M	Medical/Dental appointment
N	No reason of absence yet provided
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Sporting activity participation
Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registration has closed)
V	Educational trip or visit
X	Not compulsory
W	Work Experience
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not been available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being closed unexpectedly
Y5	Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
Z	Student not on roll
-	All students should attend

Appendix 3: Attendance and absence data

The tables below equate percentage attendance to time missed from school.

Table 1: Attendance over one whole school year for each student

Attendance	Missed Days
100%	0
98%	Less than 4 days / 8 sessions
97%	Less than 5 days / 10 sessions (school target)
95%	Less than 10 days / 20 sessions
90%	20 days / 40 sessions
85%	27 ½ days / 55 sessions
80%	37 ½ days / 75 sessions

Table 2: Attendance over 5 years for each student

Attendance	Missed Weeks
85-90%	19 weeks – ½ year absence from school
80%	38 weeks = 1 full year absence from school

What does ‘percentage attendance’ mean?

Parents/carers should be advised that the Government have categorised those students who have attendance of 90% and below as ‘Persistent Absent’ students (PA). The table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent Days Missed	Equivalent Sessions Missed	Equivalent Weeks missed	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 days	18 sessions	1.4 weeks	45 lessons
90%	19 days	38 sessions	3.4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	29 days	58 sessions	5.4 weeks	145 lessons
80%	36 days	72 sessions	7.1 weeks	180 lessons
75%	48 days	96 sessions	9.3 weeks	240 lessons

As of May 2022, the Department for Education have categorised those students who have attendance of 50% and below as ‘Severely Absent’ students. The Department for Education advise for all students who fall within this category to have a robust multi-agency plan and approach in place to support.

Appendix 4: CME referral form



CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION REFERRAL & CHECKLIST

As outlined in the statutory guidance for Local Authorities 'Children Missing from Education' are children of compulsory school age who are not a registered student at a school or are not receiving suitable education other if they are not registered at a school.

Where a student has not returned to school for ten days without authorisation the school and the local authority have a responsibility to jointly make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child. The appropriate completion of this checklist ensures that the Local Authority and school have fulfilled this responsibility.

It is school's responsibility to follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner and every effort should be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. If you require advice and guidance, please contact the Children Missing Education inbox CME@wigan.gov.uk. Where there are concerns in relation to safeguarding or child protection issues contact the Children First Partnership Hub on 01942 828300.

It is important that one checklist is completed for each child within the family, please do not include all children on one.

During the first 10 days of absence (reason unknown), school must complete this referral form and checklist. Once completed if the child's whereabouts remains unknown, please make a referral to the Children Missing Education CME@wigan.gov.uk within 5 days or earlier if all checks have been completed.

At any point if you feel a child is at risk of significant harm, FGM, human trafficking or sexual exploitation refer immediately to social care please contact 01942 828300

Please note that if the child is residing or located in the Wigan Borough, they are not a CME and should not be removed from school roll. Policies in relation to school attendance should be followed in these cases.

CHILD'S INFORMATION:

Child's Name:		DOB:
Child's Address:		
Previous Address: (if known)		
School:		
Parent/carer's names:		
Parent/carer's address:		
Contact names & numbers: (include emergency)		
Any known siblings & school:		

<u>Name of Member of staff completing form</u>			
<u>School checklist</u>	<u>Dates/Times</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>	<u>Name</u>
School to attempt to contact parent on first day of absence. This includes Truancy Call, First Day calling, Text, Email, all emergency contacts. Please detail all contact methods - whether a message was left, if the phone is working, is there an international dialing tone.			
School to check possible whereabouts with staff and students? This should include checking with family friends, all staff members, the child's friends, social media Contact all emergency contact numbers you hold in school.			
Visit to address(es) by school. Leave card if no answer Does the property look empty? Is someone at home but not answering the door? NB if school policy does not permit home visit a police welfare check to be requested			
Contact made with involved agencies within 5 working days (Social Care, EMTAS team, School Nurse etc)			

Contact made with agencies to understand when they last had contact/saw the child (no consent needed) - Social care - school nurse (when did health have any contact with the child)			
School to contact the new school or Local Authority the child is believed to have moved to? What were the outcomes? https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council			
NB – Has the child been seen? State when & by whom If not seen, what further action has been taken? (Refer to CME Policy Doc for advice)			

Reason for CME checks:	
Any other agencies involved:	
Known vulnerability/risk factors Do you feel this child is at risk of harm or neglect Y/N please provide detail:	
Is this child Gypsy Roma Traveller? Y/N	
Is this child parents service personnel? Y/N	
Has this child had any Missing from home episodes? Y/N	
Is this child known to the Youth Justice System? Y/N	
Does this child have any SEN/learning needs? Y/N	
Are there any other vulnerabilities you are aware of? Please provide detail;	
Date:	

All boxes must be completed, of not relevant please enter N/A

ALL BOXES MUST BE COMPLETED, IF NOT RELEVANT PLEASE ENTER N/A

Please submit this referral to CME@wigan.gov.uk

Appendix 5: Addressing Attendance Barriers: Attendance Pathways

Consider levels of engagement from parents/carers

EXPECT – High standards of attendance for all. Building a culture where all children can and want to be in school.

MONITOR Initial Concern is highlighted through data or communication with parents. Track and monitor patterns of absence including vulnerable cohorts to narrow the gap

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND Voice of Child/Parent. Meeting with the pastoral team and parents to outline concerns. Reasonable adjustments to be made to try to resolve the problem easily and quickly.

EBSA/SEMH

School level Intervention L1
Wellbeing Centre support
Voice of child – Signs of Safety
Daily Check In
Communication with staff
TATC
Adaptions to timetable
Regular KIT with parents
MHST
EBSA Resources - Appendix
RESET Room
Young Minds NSPCC
(resource)

SEND

School level Intervention L1
Discussion with SENCO/Assistant
SENCO
Consider Pre-send register
Assess through QFT
Voice of child
Understand barriers
Make reasonable adjustment
Gather student/parent voice
Internal TAC
Gather baseline assessments
Internal referrals SEND/RESET
Implement plan of support
Consider EHCP/Review

CLA

School level Intervention L1
Partnership Working
PEP plan
Additional Funding
Consideration PGO/PM support
Extra Tuition
External agency support
SENCO support
Adaptions to timetable
Home Visits
CLA review
Voice of the child

Home Circumstances

School level Intervention L1
Sign post parents
Young Carers referral
Signpost YP - Online support
Free bus pass/Food Vouchers
Home visits/support
Voice of the child/family
Partnership working
Citizens advice
Talk, Listen, Change referral
Family Transition Parenting
Wigan wellbeing & Resilience
(housing)

Medical

School level Intervention L1
NHS Guidance on absence
School Nurse drop in
Liaise with medical professional
Medication on site
Adaptions to timetable
Time out Pass
Safe place in school
Voice of Child
Reasonable Adjustments
Time out pass.
Access RESET room

FACILITATE SUPPORT – Removing the barriers and help students and parent access the support they need to overcome the barriers. Framework of support – Multi-Agency approach. Early Help Referral/CIN/CP

School level Intervention L2

Graduated approach
Engagement Centre
Add to SEND Register
Learning Plan (SEND)
CAMHS referral

School level Intervention L2

Consider adding to SEND reg
Discuss in RDP meeting
Advice from external agency
EP/TESS/SALT support
Big Picture meeting/EH
Specialist Teacher assess
Consider EHCP request
Blended offer

School level Intervention L2

Extra Tuition
Virtual School Support
Psychological Assessments
BASE (ASC)
CSC/Social worker support
PEP Reviews
CLA reviews

School level Intervention L2

EH drop in
School based EH L 2 or 3
Or refer Startwell/CSC
CSE/CCE referral
Reach referral
We Are With You referral
Community Resilience ref
Wigan Family Welfare
Aspiration Centre

School level Intervention L2

Health Care Plan
Specialist Training of staff
RTT
Three Towers provision
Specialist Nurse involvement
Asthma/Epilepsy/Diabetes
etc
Involve Primary Health
Care sector in meetings

FORMALISED SUPPORT – Where absence persist and support not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is in place so that families can respond

ENFORCE – Where support is not working or being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution (case by case discussion with LA)

Cycle of Assessment - Assess/plan/do /Review