



Boroughbridge
High School

Attendance Policy

Policy last reviewed (date)	June 2022
Ratified by Governors (date)	July 2022
Next policy review due (date)	July 2023
Due for review by Governors (date)	July 2023
Staff Lead	Deputy Headteacher

Significant revisions since the last review:

New policy.

INTRODUCTION

Good attendance and punctuality at school is important and ensures continuous learning.

School encourages good attendance through making the school day and pupils' learning enjoyable.

We aim to encourage a positive attitude to school to nurture learning in all pupils.

Children need to feel that their contribution in school is valued and all staff care about them as individuals.

Boroughbridge High School Attendance Aims

We are committed to:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- We will also support parents to uphold their legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Securing good attendance involves close interaction and joined up thinking in the curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral, mental health and wellbeing and effective use of resource. It cannot solely be the preserve of one member of staff but must be a partnership across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.



Boroughbridge High School Attendance Strategy



WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. Working together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritizing attendance improvement across the school



MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents and listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all parties can work together to resolve them.



FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.



FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalizing support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.



ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education

GUIDANCE

Attendance at School

Parents are legally obliged that unless there is illness or some other acceptable reason for absence, children should attend school for each session during the prescribed school days of the academic year. Children are welcome to arrive on site from **8.40** each morning. ***(Please note children should not be on site prior to this time there is no supervision available)***

Reporting of Absences

Illness

Parents are asked to inform the school office by 8.45am each day a child is unwell and will not be attending school.

- A child who has been given antibiotics should be kept away from school for the first 48 hours of treatment.
- A child who has been sick or who has diarrhoea should also be kept away from school until the child has been clear of the problem for 48 hours.
- Medical/dental appointments should be made out of school hours, however where this is not possible the school will require notification prior to the absence. When a child is absent for a medical appointment it is expected that they will return to school immediately following the appointment.

Please contact the office for further guidance on specific illnesses & required length of absence.

It is crucial that parents adhere to this procedure to ensure that all pupils are safe and their whereabouts accounted for.

Long term Absences

Occasionally, some pupils experience health or other difficulties that prevent them from attending school for some time. School deals with each case individually, agreeing procedures for reintegrating these pupils with each family as the need arises. Please contact their Pastoral Manager if your child would benefit from such an arrangement.

Registration and Lateness Procedures

A registration system is in place to record, in an accurate manner, attendance, lateness and absences. This complies with Government and L.A. guidelines.

- School's official starting time is **8.50am**.
- Any child arriving after these times will therefore be registered with a late mark.
- Pupils arriving after this time should report to the school office as they will be required to sign in and provide a reason for the lateness.
- If a child arrives after registration closes (9.15am for all pupils) they will be marked as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning session. ***Note – this is based on the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 and could be used as evidence against parents if legal action were to be considered by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.***

Recording and use of Absence Data

When a child fails to attend school for one or more sessions this will be recorded as an absence. Unless informed of the absence previously by a parent/guardian, an automated text will be sent to the contact numbers of parents/carers on the morning that a child is not in school requesting the reason for absence. Some parents/carers may be contacted by phone.

Absences for illness will be shown as authorised or unauthorized. Where students have been absent on three or more occasions due to illness, where none of these occasions have been verified with medical evidence, parents/carers will be asked to provide medical evidence from the third un-evidenced occasion onwards in order for it to be authorised as illness. This could take the form of a doctor's appointment card, prescription on a packet of medication, a letter from a doctor or nurse. When absences are unaccounted for, school will telephone and/or send a letter home to try to ensure all absences are explained.

If your child has an on-going medical condition which causes them to have periods of time off school ill, evidence of this condition will be needed before the third and following absences due to illness can be authorised. Once this evidence is received, and so long as it explains that this is an on-going condition which will require the child to be absent from school at times, no further evidence will be required for each separate absence due to illness caused by this condition.

Data is collected and subsequently collated. Attendance figures are published for individual pupils in their school report and/or at the end of each term. Where pupils' attendance causes concern the parameters and procedures as shown in the Pupils Punctuality and Attendance Policy Statement will be followed (Appendix A) and the actions set out in Appendix B and shared with North Yorkshire County Council Inclusion service. Attendance information is passed on when pupils transfer to other schools.

Leave of Absence from School during Term Time

The Department for Education requires Local Authorities to implement government regulations regarding the taking of Leave of Absence in term-time, which came into force on the 1st September 2013. The new law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional. Therefore Headteachers will only be able to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and this will still be at the discretion of the Headteacher. No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right.

The Education Regulations state that applications must be made in advance by a parent/carer with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each leave application is considered individually by the school taking into account any factors presented by the family. Application forms are available from your child's school.

Headteachers will also welcome early discussion with you around potential applications. The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

This is not an exhaustive list and Headteachers must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter. Leave is only acceptable against exceptional circumstances and should not be granted on the basis of attendance record, academic performance or the 'experience' offered by being out of school.

Where a headteacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances which do not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice. The decision of the Headteacher is, however, final.

Please note that the ability to access a reduced cost of a holiday does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorized and as such may result in a

Penalty Notice. Penalties are applied by the Local Authority and as such are not at the discretion of the Headteacher. If a Penalty Notice is not paid, the matter may be taken to prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Amendments to 2007 Penalty Notice regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1st September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices in line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecution if the fine is not paid.

It must be noted that taking a pupil on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt your child's educational progress.

Absences for part of the day

From time to time, pupils show symptoms of illness at school. School will contact parents and other family members if a child needs to go home. School asks parents to ensure we have up to date contact names and telephone numbers for this purpose.

In the event of School Closure

During winter months it occasionally becomes necessary to close the school due to adverse weather conditions. If this closure takes place at the start of the day it will be broadcast on Stray FM, BBC Radio York and Minster FM. If the weather or other conditions mean that a decision is taken to close school during the school day parents and guardians will be texted or telephoned and asked to collect their children as soon as possible. The school staff will remain on the premises until all children have been collected.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.
- Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- School Attendance Support Pathway - Legal Document 2021
- Working together to improve school attendance 2022

APPENDIX A

Boroughbridge High School

Policy statement – Pupils’ Punctuality and Attendance

(To be read in conjunction with DfE and NYCC policy statements)

The highest standards of attendance and punctuality are encouraged for all pupils at all times.

School will endeavour to work with all parents/carers to assist them in carrying out their duties as required by the DfE.

Where a child’s attendance causes concern, the following parameters and actions will be considered by the Headteacher:

(Each case will be considered individually based on circumstances)

Cause for concern	Action(s) to be considered
97% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance will be monitored by the School and attendance history considered• Contact with parents/carers if deemed necessary
90% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter to parents/carers asking them to work with school to improve attendance• Discussion with parents/carers to develop a plan of action
85% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion with North Yorkshire County Council prevention service re possible referral for consideration within NYCC policy and practice guidance
Repeated incidences of illness-related absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with parents/carers• Referral to school nurse• Request that parents/carers provide proof of doctor’s involvement (appointment card with child’s name on / letter / copy of prescription etc)• Work for the pupil might be sent home to be completed
Repeated arrival at school after 8.50am/8.55am	This will be marked in the class register as a LATE. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter to parents/carers requesting that the matter is addressed and offering support• An action plan to be established• Consideration of request from outside agencies through the Common Assessment Framework
Repeated arrival at school after 9.15am	This will be marked in the class register as an UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE for the session. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An action plan to be established• Consideration of request from outside agencies through the Common Assessment Framework• Referral to North Yorkshire County Council Inclusion service for consideration within NYCC policy and practice guidelines

APPENDIX B

School Attendance

Definition of a parent

A parent means:

All natural parents, whether they are married or not;

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,

Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

The local authority and school will need to decide who comes within the definition of parent in respect of a particular pupil when using the legal measures, but generally parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

Context of the school attendance measures

Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise (e.g. the parent can choose to educate their child at home).

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1

January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1

April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1

September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.

A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen. From September 2013 16 year-olds will be required to continue in education or training, until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. From September 2015 they will be required to continue until their 18th birthday.

School Attendance Orders

If it appears to the local authority that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, then they must begin procedures for issuing a School Attendance Order. The order will require the child's parents to register their child at a named school. If they fail to comply with the order the parent can be prosecuted.

Prosecutions by local authorities

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. Only local authorities can prosecute parents and they must fund all associated costs. Local authorities should consider the Attorney General's Guidelines for Crown Prosecutors in all prosecution cases.

Local authorities must conduct all investigations in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984.

Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order (section 443 of the Education Act 1996) or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school (section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Section 444 has two separate but linked offences: Section 444(1): where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly, and fails to ensure the child does so. Section 444ZA applies the offence to where parents fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where alternative provision is provided. There are statutory defences for parents to use under the Act. The fines available to the courts if parents are found guilty of the section 444 (1) offence include a level 3 fine of up to £1,000. If they are found guilty of the section 444 (1A) the fine is at level 4, up to £2,500 and the court can also sentence them to imprisonment for up to three months. Local authorities

have the power to prosecute parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours after being excluded from school. The fine is a level 3 fine of up to £1,000

Education Supervision Orders

The local authority must consider applying for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) before prosecuting parents¹⁶. A local authority may apply for an ESO instead of or as well as prosecuting parents. The order is placed on the child and the local authority is appointed by the court to supervise that child's education either at a school or at home for a specified period of time.

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices are fines of £60/£120 imposed on parents. They are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided. Penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences.

Penalties can be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school.

Penalties may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies.

The Code of Conduct

The *Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007* set out the details of how the penalty notice scheme must operate. This includes a requirement that every local authority must draw up and publish a Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices, after consulting all schools, including academies, and the police. The code should set out the criteria that will be used to trigger the use of a penalty notice. These could include: a number of unauthorised absences, perhaps within a rolling academic year; one-off instances of irregular attendance such as holidays taken during term time without the school's permission; and where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

The local authority administers the scheme for all schools in its area, including academies and Free Schools.

Payment of Penalty Notice From the 1st September 2013

The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The payment must be paid direct to the local authority. The parents can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice.

Can schools decide whether parents should be prosecuted or not?

No. Only local authorities can make decisions on whether parents should be prosecuted for school attendance offences. All schools (including academies) have a duty to refer regular absence (authorised and unauthorised) to the relevant local authority. This may include any evidence to show how they supported the pupil and parent to improve attendance. It is for each local authority to judge each referral on its own merits and make a decision on the next probable cause of action.

It is the statutory duty of local authorities to carry out investigations including witness statements leading up to prosecutions. Local authorities should conduct all investigations in accordance with PACE and Attorney General's Guidelines for Crown Prosecutors. Local authorities cannot delegate this function to schools (including academies) or charge them for this service.

Working with North Yorkshire County Council to Support Students' Attendance

The school will refer to the North Yorkshire School Attendance Support Pathway (guidance published September 2021) when all internal strategies to support attendance have been used