



Attendance Policy

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1.0 Policy Aims

Orchard School Bristol seeks to ensure that all students and staff enjoy learning, experience success and develop their full potential. The school strives to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels valued, safe and secure. We recognise that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of students and staff.

2.0 Objectives

There are many well-documented studies linking poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement. The objectives of our attendance policy are:

1. To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at Orchard School Bristol.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, staff and governors.
3. To recognise external factors which influence student attendance and work provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students to address these.
4. To provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance and punctuality.
5. To encourage students to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending school regularly.

3.0 Practice

The school has established an effective system, which acknowledges the efforts of students and their parents to improve their attendance and timekeeping, and challenges the behaviour of those students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

A student's absence from school will be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received. It should be noted that only the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher can authorise an absence.

Parents will be informed if there are any concerns regarding attendance or if attendance falls below expected levels of attendance (96%). It is hoped that through working in partnership all attendance issues can be resolved.

Further practice is outlined in Appendix 1 – Procedure.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Improving school attendance is the responsibility of all staff and should be treated as a priority by all. Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.

Students

1. To attend school on time, every day
2. To attend every timetabled lesson punctually
3. To take advantage of additional learning opportunities around the school day

Parents

1. To ensure their child attends daily, on time, and ready to learn
2. To phone the school before 8.30am to explain any absence
3. To make medical appointments outside of school time as far as possible
4. To avoid holidays during term time and to inform the Headteacher at least a month in advance of any term time days requested
5. To attend Attendance Meetings with the school

Tutors

1. To actively promote excellent attendance and punctuality every day - every lesson counts.
2. To track attendance and check all reasons for absence
3. To ensure students are confident to return to lessons following an absence
4. To contact parents to promote optimum attendance

Subject teachers

1. To complete the electronic register accurately and submitting it within the first 10 minutes of every lesson.
2. To inform Pastoral staff if a student is missing from the lesson
3. To discuss attendance with students, Heads of Faculty and other staff as appropriate to ensure and promote optimum attendance.

Heads of House/Pastoral

1. To monitor and analyse attendance of tutor groups and year groups across Houses as well as within their House
2. To liaise with students, parents, Deputy Headteacher and other agencies to promote optimum attendance
3. To promote optimum attendance through use of displays, assemblies and certificates for individuals and tutor groups
4. To liaise with Attendance Administrator when further intervention is required

Attendance Administrator

1. To track attendance across school and identify trigger points for further action
2. To work with Pastoral staff and the Headteacher to ensure penalty notices or further action are time effective and appropriate

Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

1. To analyse weekly attendance reports, and ensure attendance across all group of students are addressed equally
2. To ensure persistent absenteeism is tightly followed up
3. To ensure appropriate full action is taken to address attendance
4. To attend any necessary legal meetings regarding absence

Appendix 1 – Procedure

Registration

1. The school day starts promptly with Lesson 1 commencing at 8.30 am.
2. If a student arrives late during the morning s/he should report to reception and sign in.
3. If a student misses registration to any lesson and fails to provide a satisfactory explanation, that student is marked as an unauthorised absence.
4. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that all registers are accurately maintained.
5. Absence notes and records of telephone messages are maintained and kept on file.

Lesson attendance and punctuality

1. Tutors and the Pastoral team use the attendance tracker to have conversations around importance of 96% attendance to school and to make sure attendance records are accurate.
2. All staff take a register within the first 10 minutes of every lesson.
3. Students arriving late have the number of minutes recorded in SIMS and action taken according to the number of 'lates' received.
4. Students missing lessons have agreed sanctions determined by number of 'missing lessons'
5. Staff monitor and analyse lesson attendance. Where there are issues of concern strategies are put in place to support and promote attendance, in liaison with the Head of House.

Absence due to illness

1. Parents/carers should contact the school by 8.30am daily – the number to call is: 0117 3772021.
2. If a student has not registered and we have not received notification from the parent/carer we will contact the parent/carer to ensure that the child's whereabouts are known, and that the child is safe.
3. It is for the Head Teacher to authorise ANY absence including illness, therefore medical evidence may be requested following an absence due to illness.

Leave of Absence Policy

1. Parents do not have any right or entitlement to expect term-time leave for family holidays to be granted but they must, by law, apply for permission in advance.
2. The Headteacher can grant leave, in exceptional circumstances and at her discretion. However, she will be reluctant to do so if she believes that a child's education will suffer as a result.
3. Leave for Religious Observance will be considered by the Head on an individual basis.

Penalty Notice Policy

A fixed prosecution notice is a fine issued to parents for irregular non-attendance to school if reasons are unsatisfactory or no reason provided.

More than 8 sessions of unauthorised absence can result in a penalty notice referral. The standard amount of fine is agreed by Bristol Local Authority (£60 per parent per child at July 2018), and rises if not paid within 21 days.

Persistent Absence

1. Persistent absence (PA) is a positive way of monitoring attendance. Students are considered a Persistent Absentee if they have less than 90% attendance
2. Students on the list will be given individual targets, support and guidance to support them back into positive attendance routines.
3. Parents will be required to attend regular attendance meetings to complete and review a parenting contract.

Non-Attendance – Truancy

When a member of staff notes that a student is missing from their lesson that has previously been marked present they immediately notify pastoral teams to investigate.

Reintegration

We recognise that students who have been absent from school will have missed valuable lessons and as a result may find it difficult to return to school. Pastoral Manager/Head of House may work with individuals or groups of students to support their return to school.