



THE BEWDLEY SCHOOL

We fly with our own wings

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Attendance Procedures Policy – Parental

Adoption Date: September 2024
Person Responsible: Mr P Phillips

Attendance Procedures Policy - Parental

At The Bewdley School we want all pupils to aim for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellent attendance and expect all pupils to be in school every day that school is open unless they are too unwell to attend. This is really important so we can give your children the best education we can, and the education that they are entitled to.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and we will work together with parents/carers, pupils and any relevant partners to remove any barriers getting in the way of pupils attending regularly. Pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance will be fully supported by our school, in partnership, where necessary, with any health or external professionals. Promoting and supporting excellent attendance is everybody's business within our school and community.

By providing a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive school where all pupils want to be is important to us. We will work together with you as parents to explore and support any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly.

Why is Attending School Regularly So Important?

Excellent attendance is important for pupils to feel part of the school community and develop a sense of belonging. Regular school attendance can facilitate all-round student development and positive peer relationships, which is a protective factor for mental health and wellbeing.

If attendance over the school year is:	...a pupil will miss this many days:	...and this many lessons:
100%	0	0
95%	10	60
90%	19	114
85%	29	174
80%	39	234
75%	49	294
70%	58	348

A major benefit of outstanding attendance is that it gives students the best chance of being successful at school, research shows that for every 17 days missed from school, GCSE results go down by 1 grade.

The impact of attendance on GCSE results of Bewdley students:

Attendance Group	Average GCSE Grade
Above 95%	4.7
90.1-95%	4.2
80.1-90%	3.2
50.1-80%	2.9

What to do if your child can not attend school

You must contact the school at the earliest point possible, by 8.00am at the latest, to inform the school if your child is unable to attend, along with a clear and detailed explanation as to why your child is unable to attend school on that day.

You can report the absence in a number of ways, and you must do so by 8.00am on the day of the absence. To report an absence, you can:

1. Leave a voicemail with the name and tutor group of the student along with a clear and detailed reason for absence by calling 01299 406828.
2. Send a text message with the name and tutor group of the student along with a clear and detailed reason for absence by texting 07422 128124.
3. Send a message with the name and tutor group of the student along with a clear and detailed reason for absence via the MyEd app.

If we do not receive a message explaining the reason for the absence a text message will be sent to the parent/carer from school before 11.00am asking for you to contact the school to provide the reason for the absence.

If we do not get a reply from the text message a phone call will be made to the parent/carer to find out the reason for the absence.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school on each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

Absence Requests

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take a child out of school during term time for any reason, including a holiday.

Only in very, very exceptional circumstances will absence requests be authorised.

If you feel you are facing an exceptional circumstance and need to request absence in term time a request form will need to be completed, this can be found on our school website in the attendance area, alternatively you can collect a paper copy from reception.

We need to make you aware that by taking a term time holiday you are at risk of being issued a penalty notice from the local authority.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence will be unauthorised if your child is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst as parents you can provide explanations for absence, it remains the school's decision whether to authorise an absence or not.

Unauthorised absences may include:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark (after 9.20)
- Absences for shopping, birthdays, day trips, errands
- Absences whereby parents are stating they are waiting at home for some purpose, such as a washing machine to be repaired or a parcel to be delivered
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless in very, very exceptional circumstances as agreed in advance by the school)

- If a pupil is kept away from school longer than has been agreed - any additional absence will be unauthorised
- Missed transport to school when a back-up plan has not been made by the family

Unauthorised absences may result in the use of penalty notices or prosecution.

Support for School Attendance

Sometimes your child may not want to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reasons for absence. If your child does not want to attend school, it is never better to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to let your child stay at home. This can give the impression to your child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why your child may not want to attend school so we can support you and your child in the best way possible.

In these circumstances, please report your child's absence as outlined above and ask that their Head of Year makes contact with you to look at the issues behind them not wanting to come to school. It is vital that you raise these issues as soon as possible so we can support you and your child.

For pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance, we will fully support each pupil to be able to attend as much as possible. Our school will use an individual health plan where required and will work alongside other relevant professionals such as health colleagues, and yourselves, to best support this. If your child's attendance is being affected by a long-term medical condition, please speak to our school attendance officer (Mrs Dobinson, Telephone number: 01299 403277, email: sdo@bewdley.worcs.sch.uk) as soon as possible.

As a school we monitor the attendance of our pupils very closely and look to offer support as soon as we have identified that a student's attendance has fallen below the school target of 96%. We will be in contact with you via email if your child's attendance has fallen below 96% to make you aware of the situation and ask for your support. We understand that this can be caused by a very small absence but will continue to monitor to make sure it does not become a pattern of non-attendance. If attendance does not improve, we will be in contact with further concerns and methods of support to allow us to work together to improve the pupil's attendance. This will involve communication from the pupil's head of year, the student support team and meetings in school where appropriate to look at the barriers to regular attendance.

If our school is unable to work in partnership with you as parents to improve attendance, we may refer to the Local Authority. We hope as parents you will work with us to best support your child so this does not need to happen.

Penalty notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance, for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.

The school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where a student reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term). An increase to the rate of a penalty notice has also been introduced from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

If our school has any safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary to ensure a child's safety and well-being.

Thank you for your on-going support to ensure your son/daughter has the best attendance possible in school.