



Bovington Academy Attendance Policy

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Contents

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Recording attendance	4
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	6
6. Attendance monitoring	9
7. Monitoring arrangements	9
8. Links with other policies	9
Appendix 1: Attendance Codes	10
Appendix 2: Attendance Letter 1	13
Appendix 3: Attendance Letter 2	14
Appendix 4: Attendance Letter 3	15
Appendix 5: Attendance Letter 4	16

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- 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 perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. 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 parental responsibility measures](#). 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](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Regional Board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole academy on at least a termly basis. It also holds the principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the principal
- Works with the Local Authority to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Sends out Attendance Letter 1 to parents/carers (see appendices) at the start of the new academic year

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

3.5 School admin staff

School admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school's MIS system. It is also the responsibility of the school admin staff to ensure:

Attendance and lateness records are up to date

If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence to obtain the reason

Where it is not possible to make contact, the absence is recorded as unauthorised and additional contacts are telephoned

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry

- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

School opens at 8:30 am each day but the day officially starts at 8.45am.

In order for the Academy to adhere to this guidance we will close the registers 30 minutes after the start of the school day and code (U) for any student arriving 30 minutes after their expected time at the Academy session.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents can leave a message on the school phone (01929 462744) or email into the office on office@bovington-aspirations.org

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the reason for the child's absence.

If further evidence is required or a child has poor attendance, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

A copy of any appointment letter must be presented to the office.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- All pupils that arrive late must report, with their parent/carer to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded.

At Bovington Academy, the register is taken at 8:45 am and 12:45pm (KS2)/1pm (EYS & KS1). Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to Reception where their name and the reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L'). Lateness affects the child's overall attendance percentage.

The register will close at 9am and 1:15pm. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Frequent lateness is disruptive to learning, both for the child concerned and for the class. This will be discussed with parent/carers.

Frequent lateness after the register has closed (U) will be discussed with parents and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by telephone by 10am each morning.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- Where the academy has identified a pupil whose attendance or engagement with school is a cause for concern (below 92% including lates), early identification is essential to support them back into school. Contact will be made and in some cases Attendance Letter 2 - Initial Attendance Concern will be sent out.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents/carers will be informed of their child's attendance at parent consultation, at the end of the school year with the annual school report and on request.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events that are unavoidable and truly exceptional.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- Exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement (if abroad, only the actual day of the event)

The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Annual family holidays

Unauthorised absence for extended periods of term time leave may result in a child's place on roll being removed (see Children Missing in Education).

Children Missing in Education (see separate policy)

Definition

A Child Missing in Education (CME) is defined as a child or young person of compulsory academy age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by an LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in full time education.

School Responsibilities

Children missing from education can mean either a child being unenrolled or a child on extended absence.

The school will contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school may contact the Local Authority.

School have a legal duty to inform the appropriate LA if:

A child is absent for 10 days following on from a period of approved leave

A child is absent for 20 consecutive days without approved leave

A child fails to attend school regularly

A child is deleted from the register when the next school is not known

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

96%+

Excellent –

Well done! This will help all aspects of your child's progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.

94-95%

Average – Strive to build on this. Work with parents to continue to promote full attendance to move to 96%+

90-93%

Poor – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. School contact parents directly to highlight poor attendance and seek ways of working together to improve attendance. Letter 3 - Invite to Attendance Meeting may be sent out

Below 90%

Unacceptable – Absence is causing serious concern. It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting the child's learning. Attendance below 90% is classed as Persistent Absence, which is reported termly to the Local Authority. Meetings between home and school to share strategies for improvement will be called. If improvement is not achieved a referral is made to the Attendance Service Attendance Letter 4 - Invite to Inclusion Panel – Education Social Worker (ESW) and a Penalty Notice considered where absence is not authorised.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

- a) In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance.
- b) Prior to the engagement of the Education Social Worker, the school may issue letters/emails to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupil's attendance. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for ESW involvement.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 per child within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where a suspended pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

The pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school each day their child is ill

If a pupil's absence drops below 92%, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the regional board.

Bovington Academy collects and stores attendance data for internal purposes for the following;

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by the Principal.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Children Missing in Education
- CME Statutory Guidance for Schools

- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions
- Remote Education

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
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Attendance Letter 1 - Attendance - New School Year

Dear Parents and Carers

Information for parents and carers on the importance of attendance and the attendance process.

Bovington Academy is committed to ensuring our pupils achieve the best possible outcomes and good school attendance is key to achieving this aim. We will work hard to provide a safe and welcoming environment for your child and will monitor attendance closely.

Good school attendance improves your child's chances of success in life. There is clear evidence of the link between good attendance at school and high levels of achievement. Children with no absence at key stage 4 are almost 2 times more likely to achieve 5 or more GCSEs than children who missed 10-15 percent of lessons.

If your child has an attendance level of 90%, they will have missed one day a fortnight in school. Over a school year this will represent four weeks of absence. If this level of absence were maintained for a five-year period it would mean half a school year would have been missed.

We would really appreciate your help in ensuring that your child has good school attendance. If there is a concern, we will write to you and talk with you so that we can work together to identify any barriers that may be preventing your child from attending school and ensure support is put in place. We may also contact the Inclusion Team at Dorset Council for advice and support or other organisations that may be able to help. It is hoped that this will be successful in improving attendance.

Where support has failed to address attendance issues, we will contact you again to invite you to a meeting where we can identify the reasons why attendance has not improved and change or adjust the intervention where appropriate.

Here at Bovington Academy we are determined to ensure that all our students have the opportunity to achieve success and have an excellent record of attendance. If following additional support attendance does not improve sufficiently, you will be invited to meet with the school and an Inclusion Lead from Dorset Council at an Inclusion Panel. Other professionals may also be invited where appropriate. This meeting is an opportunity to meet and discuss why your child has a high absence rate and seek solutions to any problems.

The Inclusion Panel can recommend several outcomes, which can include a further period of close monitoring with specified targets for attendance; issuing a £60 Penalty Notice, a Parenting Order or seeking prosecution which could result in a fine of up to £2,500.

It is hoped that such measures will not be needed and that your child will have a good record of attendance, is happy and achieves the best possible outcomes.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 2 - Initial Attendance Concerns

Dear Parent/Carer,

Absences Matter and You Can Help

Pupil name has missed more school than their classmates.

Pupil name was absent **number** days so far this school year.

Pupils fall behind when they miss school – whether students are absent for authorised or unauthorised reasons.

You can have a big effect on **pupil name's** absences this term, and we appreciate your help.

Pupil name has had **number of absences** which means their attendance is **percentage** %. The average number of absences in Year **year group** is **number** which means the average attendance is **percentage** %.

What does the attendance percentage really mean?		
Attendance %	Days Lost	Lessons Missed
100%	0 Days	0 lessons
97%	1 Week	Number lessons
94%	2 Weeks	Number lessons
90%	4 weeks	Number lessons
85%	6 Weeks	Number lessons
80%	8 Weeks	Number lessons

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Letter 3 - Invite to Attendance Meeting

Dear Parent/Carer,

Absences Matter and You Can Help

Bovington Academy is committed to ensuring our pupils achieve the best possible outcomes and good school attendance is key to achieving this aim.

Unfortunately, following our letter/meeting/discussion, **child's name** attendance has not sufficiently improved. They have **number** absences and so their attendance is currently **percentage** %.

We would really appreciate your help in improving this and are therefore inviting you to an attendance meeting in school on **date and time**. This meeting will be attended by **insert details**. It is really important that you attend this meeting so that any issues or concerns which may be contributing to **child's name** non-attendance can be discussed and support put in place. You are welcome to bring someone along with you.

Please e-mail us or telephone to confirm receipt of this letter and your intention to attend the meeting by contacting insert name, e-mail address and telephone number.

Please be aware that Dorset Council's Inclusion Team may be informed of **child's name** current attendance.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 4 - Invite to Inclusion Panel

Dear Parent/Carer,

Absences Matter and You Can Help

Bovington Academy is committed to ensuring our pupils achieve the best possible outcomes and good school attendance is key to achieving this aim.

Unfortunately, following our meeting **child's name** attendance has not sufficiently improved. They have **number** absences and so their attendance is currently **percentage** %.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child is receiving an education and attends regularly at the school at which he/she is registered. You also have a responsibility to contact the school each day should the child be unable to attend for any reason.

You are therefore required to attend an Inclusion Panel on **date, time and venue**. You are welcome to bring someone along to support you.

This meeting will also be attended by **insert name** from the school and **insert name**, Inclusion Lead, Dorset Council. Bovington Academy values the working partnership we have with parents and it is important that you attend this meeting so that any issues or concerns which may be contributing to **child's name's** non-attendance can be discussed. If you do not attend the meeting, we will discuss **child's name's** school attendance and a decision will be made, in your absence, on the appropriate action.

PLEASE NOTE: All further absences may be marked as unauthorised and sickness absences should be supported with evidence such as a GP's appointment card or prescription, or hospital letter.

Please telephone or email to confirm receipt of this letter, and your intention to attend the meeting by contacting **name and phone number/email**. Dorset Council has already been made aware of **child's name's** current attendance.

Yours sincerely