

BRADFIELDS ACADEMY

Attendance Policy

Signed..... Principal

Date.....

Signed Chair of Governors

Date.....

This policy will be reviewed on at least an annual basis and whenever significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place.

Where any changes, amendments or additions are made, the revision number will change.

Reviews that result in no changes at all will maintain the same revision number.

REVIEW DATE	REVISION NUMBER	SIGNATURE
September 2015	5	

Attendance Policy – Bradfields Academy

Introduction

This policy was initially written and adopted in May 2009.

The policy was reviewed and updated during February 2012. The review consisted of consultation with Leadership Team, Pastoral Staff, and the Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP) from the Attendance Advisory Service.

A further review was taken in July 2013 following the removal of EMA and changes in guidance from the Secretary of State regarding holidays in term time.

Review 4 was undertaken in July 2014 for adoption in September 2014 to incorporate the academy's use of the electronic register and the inclusion of students at Bradfields@Strood Academy provision.

Review 5 has occurred at the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year due to a change in the Persistence Absence Guidelines and the extension of the electronic system to full Lesson Monitor

Member of staff with responsibility for attendance :

Mr D Waters (Vice Principal - Student Development)

Additional staff working in the field of attendance :

Mrs E Morley (Academy Reception)

Mrs L Smith (Academy Reception)

Mrs E McGregor Davies (Parent Carer Partnership Manager)

Ms L Osborne (Business Manager - Pupil Premium and Bursary)

Zonal Pastoral Managers

Zonal Assistant Principals

All Form Tutors

Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP) :

Bernice Behan (Medway LA)

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Statement of Intent

- Bradfields Academy is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all of the students. Regular attendance is crucial if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities available to them.
- One of the basic principles of Bradfields School is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. The academy promotes 100% attendance for all of the students, and a variety of rewards and strategies are used to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- The academy recognises that parents and carers have a vital role, and legal responsibility to ensure good attendance. The academy will work in partnership with parents and carers, students, and other agencies to ensure good attendance and resolve any attendance issues.
- All zones of the academy [Yellow, Red, Green, Blue Zones, Primary Blue Zone, and BA@SA] will hold attendance as a priority. The post-16 elements of the school will use attendance information to make informed decisions about the payment of the Discretionary Bursary.

Responsibilities

1.1 Parental Responsibility

The responsibility that student attend Bradfields regularly and punctually rests with parents and carers. It is, therefore, desirable that parents (or carers) should be the first line of contact whenever the student is absent.

It is the parent or carers responsibility to contact the academy whenever the student is absent and on the first day. The academy recognises the fact that this will not always happen and so will phone home if a student is absent and the school has not been informed. This initial contact from the academy is part of the Safeguarding procedures to ensure that students have not gone missing on the way to Bradfields.

1.2 Staff Responsibilities

1.2.1 Form Tutors and Form TAs

Form Tutors (and TA's in their absence) will ensure that an academy register is taken during each registration period. These are completed at the beginning of the morning and the afternoon session. Staff will complete the registers electronically through the SIMS system. A detailed guide of how to do this is included in Appendix 1

Staff will be able to see the DFE codes that are currently used to complete registers, they will, however, only be able to use a limited number of these when completing the register. Any additional codes needed will be entered by the Office Staff. For example a mark of E indicating an exclusion can only be entered by the Office following an exclusion being determined by the Principal and a letter being sent.

All students must receive a mark each time the register is called.

If a student is absent and the reason is not yet known then an **N** is entered. When a reason is provided then the N will be updated. All N's are supposed to be resolved within 10 working days. Updates can be carried out by the tutorial staff on receipt of a note, or by the Office Staff following telephone or text confirmation.

Form tutors will encourage, and remind students to bring in notes to support absence, if they remain unauthorised.

Form tutors should also be vigilant for patterns of absence, and concerns should be reported to the Vice Principal (Student Development)

If a student is referred to the AAP the tutorial staff will be required to collect medical evidence from the student or the parents and carers to support any absence. This will be forwarded to the Office who will collate these to pass to the AAP.

1.2.2 Subject Staff

A class register will be taken during each lesson. Staff with concerns about an individual's attendance at their lessons should report this to their Subject Leader who will liaise with the Vice principals (Student Development or Curriculum and Quality Standards).

Registers should be completed through the Lesson Monitor module on the SIMS system.

1.2.3 Office Staff

It will be usual that staff in the office will be the first to know of the reason for a student's absence. They will update the electronic system when reasons are known.

Academy Office staff will ensure that the SIMS system is up to date and will report any concerns they have to the Vice Principal (Student Development). If a student is removed from the Academy Roll and a destination is not known the academy must ensure the AAP is informed.

Office Staff will assist the Vice Principal (Student Development) with any official returns that are required by the Local Authority or the DFE.

The Vice Principal and the Business Manager will administer and oversee the Post 16 Bursary Scheme.

Attendance figures will be circulated to the form tutors on a weekly basis so that the attendance graphs can be completed.

Office staff will collect Medical Evidence for any student referred to the AAP

1.2.4 Vice Principal (Student Development)

The Vice Principal (Student Development) has over-all responsibility for the academy's attendance. They will monitor tutors and the office staff in their responsibilities.

It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal (Student Development) along with the Parent Carer Partnership Manager to liaise with the AAP and ensure they are kept up to date with the academy's position regarding attendance. It is also their role to make any referrals to the AAP if there are students with patterns of absence or a concern over unauthorised absence.

It is the role of the academy to authorise absence and not that of the parent/carer. In many cases this can be delegated to Tutors and Office Staff if there is any doubt or difficulty over authorising an absence it should be referred to the Vice Principal (Student Development).

The Vice principal (Student Development) should over see any official returns required in the field of attendance and prepare the information required for the AAP to carry out an official register check each year.

1.2.5 Attendance Advisory Practitioner

The AAP will liaise with the Assistant Headteacher (SD) over attendance issues and follow up any referrals made. They will visit the school every six weeks to review and update.

The AAP will attend In School Reviews wherever possible/relevant.

Procedures

It is expected that parents will contact the academy if a student is going to be absent and provide a suitable explanation. If this does not happen then the Office staff will contact home to find the reason. If there are concerns at this stage then they are reported on to the Vice Principal (Student Development).

Form Tutors or their Teaching Assistants in their absence, will complete a register twice daily. The morning session starts at 08:40 and the afternoon session at 15:10. Students are expected to be in registration at this time and will receive a late mark if the register has been completed and closed before they arrive. Students who are persistently late will be referred to the Vice Principal (Student Development).

2.1 Authorising Absence

The academy authorises absence. This will normally be the role of the Form Tutor or the Office Staff on receipt of a reason. Once the absence is authorised then the Office will insert the correct code on the computer. If the absence is unauthorised for three days then it should be highlighted to the Vice Principal (Student Development). If the absence cannot be resolved it should be brought to the attention of the AAP.

2.2 Lateness

If the register has been returned to the School Office and then a student arrives, this student must report to the School Office to sign in. The Office Staff will then ensure that the register is updated along with the computer system.

Persistent lateness should be reported to the Vice Principal (Student Development) and then the AAP.

As the majority of Bradfields' students rely on transport to bring them in, professional judgement needs to be exercised with lateness. Students should only receive a late mark if they are individually involved in their lateness. For example a student who oversleeps and is late should receive a late mark, whereas student who are on a bus that breaks down and all the students are delayed should not be penalised by this.

2.3 Holidays and Leave of Absence

Following amendments to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, and the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007:

Schools and Academies may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'.

The entitlement to take a holiday in term time has been removed.

If it is necessary for a student to take time off, this request must be made in writing, highlighting all the details. The Principal and the Vice Principal (Student Development) will discuss all requests and consider them on their individual merits. In their considerations the following facts will be taken into account:

- Reason for the absence request,
- Attendance for the current academic year,
- Attendance in the previous academic year,
- Academic progress made and the capacity to catch up missed work.

Applications for leave will be answered in writing.

Leave taken without the academy's permission, or failure to return on the agreed date, will mean that the absence will be unauthorised (truancy). The deliberate taking of leave in term time without or against permission (where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission was not given) will result in the parent/carer being liable to a fixed penalty notice. These Penalty Notices are applied to each parent/carer accompanying the student and require the recipient to pay a fine, currently £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Non-payment of these fines will result in application to the Magistrates Court.

If a student fails to return within ten school days of the agreed return date, and there is not good reason for this absence, the school, in discussion with the Attendance Advisory Service, may remove the student's name from the Academy Roll.

2.4 Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority Officers, Headteachers, and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school/academy. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004.

From 2005 Medway Council issued Penalty Notices. From September 1st 2013 they will consider issuing fixed penalty notices for the following circumstances:

- a) Overt truancy (including students caught in truancy sweeps)
- b) Parentally condoned absences
- c) Taking unauthorised leave
- d) Delayed return from leave without school/academy agreement
- e) Persistent late arrival at school/academy.

2.5 Rewards

Students who achieve good attendance will be recognised. Each term students who achieve over 95% will receive a certificate. In Term 6 certificates for those students achieving over 95% for the whole year will also be issued.

Names of high achievers will be published in the Zonal Newsletters.

2.6 Looked After Children (CLA)

Each term the percentage attendance for each CLA will be returned to their home Authority.

Most Local Authorities carry out a daily check on attendance of their CLA students through a telephone call.

2.7 Persistent Absence Form (PA Form)

Each term the academy is required to return the Persistent Absence form. This is downloaded from the Schools' Forum website and returned to the PLASC team. Students who have an attendance of below 90% for the academic year should be recorded on the form along with their reasons for absence.

The form is then discussed with the AAP at the next meeting, and actions decided.

2.8 Post 16 Bursary

Students who are eligible for a full bursary will be paid this termly. Discretionary Bursaries will also be paid termly. Additional funds remaining that have been unallocated will be awarded on a system based around student attendance.

2.9 Register Audit

The Attendance Advisory Service will carry out an annual inspection of the academy's register. They will check the use of codings, any codes that have been changed, and students that have been removed from the academy roll.

The academy will prepare the relevant information before the inspection and the AAP will provide written feedback along with action points after the process.