



BATH & WELLS
Multi Academy Trust

'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10

Pupil Attendance Policy

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Regular attendance is essential for all pupils to achieve their potential as well as being a legal requirement.

Optimum levels of attendance can only be achieved when responsibility is accepted and shared by all concerned: The Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust, the Local Governing Board, School Staff, Parents, Pupils and the Local Community.

Regular attendance is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their reliability and commitment to their own learning.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. The Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust (BWMAT) are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital that children are at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Duties and Responsibilities

Headteacher (or designated member of staff):

- To oversee and monitor whole school attendance
- To liaise with staff, parents, the Local Authority Education Attendance Officer and governors

School Staff

- The teacher in charge of a class must accurately take a register of attendance at the school agreed times and in accordance with DfE Attendance guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>
- Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:
 - Present;
 - Attending an approved educational activity;
 - Absent; or,
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- School
- If a child is absent with no notification of reason, a designated member of staff will call the parent/carer on the first day of absence
- The head teacher (or designated member of staff) will regularly monitor attendance and contact parents where concerns arise

Parents

- The parent/carer is responsible for ensuring that his/her child attends school regularly and punctually in accordance with their legal obligations
- Parents must contact the school and report absence on the first day and continue to do so in line with this policy

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Governors

- The Local Governing Board (LGB) has a responsibility to monitor and review attendance at school level
- The Head Teacher must notify the ADLA of attendance levels and set targets in accordance with the BWMAT policy (see Attendance Levels below)

Policy Guidelines

Attendance Statement:

- Regular attendance is a legal requirement
- It is important because the student has the opportunity to experience the full range of a balanced curriculum, with its contribution to the pupil's moral, spiritual, cultural, mental and social development
- Regular attendance is an opportunity for parents/carers to demonstrate their responsibility and commitment to the learning of their child
- Regular attendance is an opportunity for each pupil to demonstrate their responsibility and commitment to their own learning

Attendance Levels

Children's attendance will be classified in the following way:

97% to 100%	Excellent attendance
96%	Expected attendance
Below 95%	Attendance below this level will trigger action by the school

Attendance Process

- The head teacher (or designated member of staff) will check the attendance of all children on a half termly basis. All parents will be made aware of their child's attendance on a termly basis.
- Parents will be informed by letter if their child's attendance falls below 95%. This communication will be supportive and will take into account individual circumstances. Levels of attendance persistently below 95% are of concern and will be investigated.
- If a child's attendance levels drop towards 92%, and/or there are 10 unauthorised sessions in a 12-week period, this will trigger a discussion with the Local Authority Attendance Officer and monthly update letters and/or communication will be issued.
- Attendance figures are monitored by the Government on a termly basis.

Legal Position

- Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, all children of compulsory school age must receive suitable education by regular school attendance or otherwise.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend, and stay, at school. They are also responsible for informing schools of any absence as soon as possible, ideally on the first day of absence.
- It is the responsibility of the schools to support attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance. The Education (Student Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 1997 state that attendance records must show whether an absence of a child of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised.
- Amendments to the 2006 regulations were made by the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) and came into force on 1 September 2013.

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- The LA's duties are to provide regular education and also ensure that parents fulfil their responsibilities by sending their children to school. If necessary, it must institute legal proceedings against the parents of non-attending children.
- Within the framework of Keeping Children Safe in Education, it is the School's duty to ensure all children are safe and accounted for at all times.
- Schools should hold more than one emergency contact number and where reasonably possible three contact numbers should be held.

Record Keeping

- Registers and all related correspondence will be kept for a period of six years.
- Registers will be completed electronically at an identified 'closure of registration time' individual to each school. This will be no later than 10 minutes after the official start of the morning and afternoon sessions of each school.
- Registers will be printed for fire and evacuation procedures and a laminated card will be displayed in the classroom with the number of children present recorded after each registration.
- Where paper registers are not printed a laminated class, list will be displayed in the classroom and after each registration the number of children present will be recorded on the sheet. Children who are absent will be marked on the list.
- The office staff will follow up and code absences immediately registers are closed.
- Children arriving late will sign in at the main entrance.
- Any child leaving site during the school day must be signed out and signed in again if returning, noting reasons why.
- The school has ultimate responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved off site educational activity. It is the responsibility of the school to check that the pupil is present at the provision and to record this with the appropriate attendance code on the school attendance system.
- Any correspondence regarding concerns about a child's attendance will be kept in the child's individual file. This will be passed on to the next school at the point of transfer.

Authorised Absences

- Absence on approved educational activities counts as attendance for national Performance Tables and Prospectuses.

Unauthorised Absences

- By law, only the school can authorise absence, not the parents. School staff need not accept a parental explanation of a child's absence, whether written, telephoned or given in person, if they doubt the explanation.

Absence Reporting

Guidance for parents/carers

Day 1 Parent/carer to phone the school by on the day of absence to confirm the following:

- Child's name
- Reason for absence ("unwell" is not sufficient) to be recorded on electronic register
- Time/date of doctor's appointment (if made)

Day 2 As Day 1

Day 3 As Day 1

Note: If the child does not return to school on Day 3, then the parent/carer will be informed that

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from Day 6 onwards the school will require supporting medical evidence (e.g. appointment card/letter, doctor's note, specialist report, copy of prescription etc) before consideration will be given as to whether or not to authorise the absence (wholly or in part)

If a child's attendance is already causing concern and has a Persistent Absence of 8% or more, medical evidence will be required.

Day 4+ Parent/carer to phone the school by on each subsequent day of absence until either:

- a) The child returns to school or
- b) As otherwise agreed with a senior member of school staff

No more than 5 consecutive school days of absence will be authorised by the Headteacher without sight of relevant medical evidence to support the absence.

Any child with an accumulated total of 12 school days (24 sessions) of authorised absence due to illness within an academic year (consecutively or non-consecutively), will be required to provide sight of relevant medical evidence to support every absence due to illness from Day 13 onwards. This is to ensure that the school is appropriately meeting the individual child's educational needs. Parents of children who have a recognised medical condition will be supported by the school to ensure their educational needs are met.

The coding of any absence from school, for whatever reason(s) given, is ultimately at the sole discretion of the Headteacher. The school may therefore request sight of relevant evidence to support an absence of any length of time.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to obtain the relevant evidence to support any absence from school.

Children Missing Education

- The school has a statutory Duty to report a child who has been absent for a continuous period of 10 school days to the Local Authority in line with Children Missing Education Guidance.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Holidays in Term Time

- There is a clear correlation between attendance and achievement at school.
- Parents to not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and, in law, are required to apply, in advance, for permission.
- Any requests for term time leave, up to a maximum of 10 school days in an academic year, will only be considered by the Head under the following conditions:
 - Exceptional circumstances apply e.g. Forces personnel, unforeseen family circumstances.
 - Cost is not deemed to be an exceptional circumstance.
 - Any request must be received a minimum of two weeks in advance.
 - A definite return date must be provided. Any child not returned to school on the expected date will trigger a safeguarding concern and be considered a 'Child Missing from Education'.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

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- The Local Authority has been granted the power to fine parents who take their children out of school without the Headteacher's authorisation. The school will request the relevant LA to issue a Penalty Notice where appropriate.