

Baginton Fields School

Policy for Student Attendance



"Dedicated to delivering inspirational learning experiences"

Review: Autumn 2021

Parents / carers of students attending Baginton Fields School are strongly discouraged from organising family holidays during term time.

Rationale:

- At Baginton Fields the staff and governing body are committed to providing high quality education to all students.
- To ensure all students succeed and achieve to their full potential excellent attendance is crucial.
- Absence from school disrupts learning and will impact negatively on the life chances of all students.

Context:

This Student Attendance Policy relates to the students attending Baginton Fields School. Reference is made to amendments made to the 2006 attendance regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 regarding term time holiday that came into force on 1st September 2013.

The school admits students with severe and complex special educational needs. Students' learning is influenced by such factors as autism, challenging behaviours, communication difficulties, physical disabilities and medical conditions. These factors can also influence continuity of attendance.

Additional considerations regarding attendance must also be considered when reading this policy:

- The majority of students attending the school are provided with escorted home / school transport from Coventry Education Authority.
- Students do not leave the school premises during the lunchtime period.
- There is close contact between home and the school.
- The school Parent Support Advisor, Sharon Evans, will work with parents to encourage consistent attendance.
- A number of "Looked After" students are accommodated by the Local Authority in residential placements in surrounding districts and are required to travel.
- Students who attend the school may suffer acute and ongoing health issues that influence their ability to attend.
- A minority of students present significant challenging behaviours that may impact on the capacity of families to encourage attendance.

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Medical Absence:

A number of students attending the school have complex and chronic medical conditions. It is not uncommon for some students to be unwell and unable to attend school. Students may also be admitted to hospital for treatment or as a result of illness/infection. The percentage of students who are recorded as suffering epileptic seizures stands at approximately 15% and a number of these students are also admitted to hospital in response to seizure activity.

All absences relating to medical conditions / hospital and health appointments should be supported by an appointment card / letter for scheduled appointments / admissions. Such medical absences will be recorded as **Authorised**.

However, it is important that Heads of Key Stage are aware of the length of time students are absent from school for medical reasons. Heads of Key Stage will:

- Maintain regular contact with the family to ascertain the time scale and condition of the student involved.
- Make sensitive home visits to gain a personal insight into the condition of the student.
- Consider the possibility of providing work for completion at home.
- Liaise with the appropriate professionals e.g. Physiotherapist who may have more regular contact with the family to accrue up to date information.

Role of Headteacher/Governors:

- Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented
- Meet with parent/carers where there is a persistent concern
- Complete attendance figures for the Local Authority and the DFE

Role of Deputy Headteacher/Heads of Key Stage:

- Ensure attendance is discussed weekly at SLT meetings and that any student who is a cause for concern is raised
- Support with meeting parents when necessary and implement strategies/targets for improvement
- Monitor Attendance

Role of class teachers:

- Responsible for ensuring registers are taken and returned promptly
- Encourage good attendance
- Be alert to factors that might have a negative impact on attendance and discuss these with Head of Key Stage
- Be vigilant for patterns of poor attendance

Role of administrator:

- Telephone parents/carers of pupils on the first day of absence
- Record absences on daily absence register to alert senior leaders

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- Contact members of staff who fail to have taken their registers
- Record authorised and agreed absences in registers
- Amend registers as required

Role of parents/carers:

- Ensure their daughter/son attends school
- In the event of a student being absent parent / carers are required to inform the school by phone message or letter. Such messages will constitute the absence being regarded as **Authorised** provided the Headteacher is satisfied with the reason given for absence.
- Should the parent / carer fail to inform the school of the reason for absence then the absence will be regarded as **Unauthorised**.

Request for leave of absence during term time:

From September 1st 2013 amendments to the regulations stated in the Context of this policy make clear that:

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence in term time unless there are EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

What does this mean for parents / carers of children attending Baginton Fields?

- *Leave of absence will not be granted other than for EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.*
- *“EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES” would not ordinarily include holidays in term time.*
- *The headteacher will decide if a request for leave of absence is reasonable and each request will be judged on a case by case basis.*
- *The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.*
- *Where family holidays or leave of absence are taken without permission of the school, parents will be given a Penalty Notice.*
- *Authorised Leave of Absence will be recorded in the register as an “Authorised Absence”*

How do parents/ carers apply for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances?

A Leave of Absence request form is available from school. Please contact the School Office on 02476 303854 or admin@bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk

The form may also be found on the school website: www.bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk

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What happens if a child is taken out of school without permission: permission is refused or the child does not return to school by the agreed date?

The headteacher could choose to issue a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice results in a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. (Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

The absence will be recorded in the register as “Unauthorised”

How does the headteacher decide to grant a Leave of Absence request?

The following factors will be taken into account:

- Reason for the request.
- Length of leave of absence.
- Student attendance history.
- Potential impact on the child’s education.
- Timing of request.

Persistent absence: Less than 85%.

Students attending Baginton Fields are generally enthusiastic about attending school. Students have not been known to truant and the average attendance figure for the school is above 90%.

The school monitors attendance of children with less than 85%:

- Where there are no firm medical reasons for absence.
- When absence is unauthorised.
- When absence or lateness gives cause for concern.

Parents are contacted either by letter, home visit or by invitation to an attendance meeting involving all relevant agencies, when strategies for improvement are put in place.

Removal from roll.

A student could be removed from the school roll if they fail to return within 10 days of the agreed return date or after 20 days of unauthorised absence if leave of absence has not been agreed.

In the event of school transfer or a pupil moving to another area, a pupil will normally remain on roll until notification is received from a receiving school. Should no notification be received the school will make every effort to locate the pupil in conjunction with the Children and Families Service and SEN Management Services. If unsuccessful, a missing person form must be completed and sent to the Local Authority and the pupil removed from roll after four weeks.

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Home school transport:

Is provided by Coventry Local Authority and, to some extent, dictates the time students arrive for school. All contractors are fully aware that students should be in school for a 9am start but continuous emphasis is placed on the achievement of what proves to be an elusive target.

A number of parents now receive a Personal Transport Budget. They choose to transport their child to, and from, school. All such parents are required to ensure their child arrives before 9am and is collected 3.30pm. The LA can withdraw the budget if parents do not adhere to their contract.

Rewards and Strategies

The school will look for every opportunity to raise the profile of the importance of good attendance with pupils, parents and carers.

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Baginton Fields School
Request for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances.

Dear Parent / Carer,

Leave of absence in term time cannot be granted unless there are EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

- The headteacher will decide if a request for leave of absence is reasonable and each request will be judged on a case by case basis.
- The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.
- Where leave of absence are taken without permission of the school; or the headteacher has refused the request but the absence occurs; or the child has not returned to school by the agreed date without a satisfactory explanation, parents/carers can be given a Penalty Notice.

Alison Francis. Headteacher.

To be completed by Parents / Carers.		
Childs name:		Class Group:
Home address:		
Reason for request:		
Dates of leave requested:	From:	To:
Name of parent / carer:		Signature:

Office use:		
Child:	Class:	Current attendance:
Decision:		
In this instance I am able to authorise this leave of absence request for the above period		
Further information required. Please contact school		
This request is not authorised because:		
Your child's attendance is below the recommended government guidelines (95%)		
Your child has already taken leave of absence this academic year.		
The new school year has only just started.		
Absence from school will have a detrimental effect on your child's learning.		
The reason for your request is not acceptable		

Signed, Headteacher Date

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