



Bronte Academy Trust

Attendance and Truancy Policy

Reviewed By	Approved By	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Next Review Date

Contents

Statement of Intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Absence procedures
5. Contact information
6. Attendance register
7. Lateness
8. Term-time leave
9. Leave during lunch times
10. Truancy
11. Missing children
12. Religious observances
13. Appointments
14. Modelling, sport and acting performances / activities
15. Young carers
16. Rewarding good attendance
17. Monitoring and review

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Bronte Academy Trust (the Trust) believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) to any special educational needs he / she may have

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise”

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils
- Rewarding regular attendance

1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2018) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing in education'

1.2 This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Trust has overall responsibility for:

- The implementation of the Attendance and Truancy Policy and procedures of Bronte Academy Trust
- Ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity / national origin
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Trust's Complaints Procedures Policy
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing in Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated

2.2 The head teacher is responsible for the day to day implementation and management of the Attendance and Truancy Policy and procedures of the school.

2.3 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Following the Attendance and Truancy Policy and ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently
- Modelling good attendance behaviour
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated

- 2.4 Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time
- 2.5 Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day
- 2.6 Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 For the purpose of this policy, the Trust defines:

- **“Absence”** as:
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed
 - Not attending school for any reason

- An **“authorised absence”** as:
 - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
 - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
 - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
 - An absence due to a family emergency providing the school is contacted as soon as possible

- An **“unauthorised absence”** as
 - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
 - Truancy before or during the school day
 - Absences which have never been properly explained
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed
 - Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
 - Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
 - Leaving school for no reason during the school day

- **“Persistent absenteeism”** as:
 - Missing 15 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

4. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence
- 4.2 A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school
- 4.3 In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Parental Involvement Worker (PIW)
- 4.4 If a pupil's attendance drops below 85%, the PIW will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents
- 4.5 Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive schools days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquires

5. CONTACT INFORMATION

5.1 Parents are responsible for :

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number
- Updating the school if their details change

6. ATTENDANCE REGISTER

6.1 The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

6.2 The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way

6.3 When the school has planned to be fully or partially closed, the code # will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent.

7. LATENESS

7.1 Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated

7.2 Pupils should be in their classroom at the time the school day starts

7.3 Registers are marked by 9.10am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time

7.4 The register closes at 9.30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time

- 7.5 After lunch, registers are marked by 1.10pm. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- 7.6 The register closes at 13.15pm. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present
- 7.7 Pupils attending after 9.10am will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark

8. TERM-TIME LEAVE

- 8.1 At Bronte Academy Trust, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed
- 8.2 The head teacher is unable to authorise holidays during term time
- 8.3 The head teacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the head teacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term time leave
- 8.4 Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the head teacher
- 8.5 Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account
- 8.6 Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
 - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
 - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10% for any reason
- 8.7 If parents take their child out of school during term time without authorisation from the head teacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines

9. LEAVE DURING LUNCH TIMES

- 9.1 Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunchtimes with permission from the head teacher – it is at the head teacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises
- 9.2 Parents are required to submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the head teacher
- 9.3 The head teacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request
- 9.4 Pupils will leave the school premises within 10 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch
- 9.5 Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in at the school office
- 9.6 A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff has given their permission

9.7 If a pupil expected to leave no longer has reason to do so, e.g. a medical appointment has been cancelled, they should inform a member of staff at the school office immediately

10. TRUANCY

- 10.1 Truancy means any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence
- 10.2 All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning
- 10.3 All pupils are expected to be in their classes at the beginning of the school morning and afternoon, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically
- 10.4 Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must be signed out at the school office and signed back in again on their return
- 10.5 Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting
- 10.6 If truancy is suspected, the head teacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school
- 10.7 The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:
 - In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken

11. MISSING CHILDREN

- 11.1 Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the head teacher
- 11.2 The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:-
 - The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the head teacher immediately
 - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
 - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the head teacher
 - Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted
 - If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified
 - The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided

- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted
 - The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing
- 11.3 If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any SEND, then appropriate personnel will be informed
- 11.4 When the pupil has been located, the member of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- 11.5 The head teacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary
- 11.6 Parents and other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located
- 11.7 The head teacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred
- 11.8 Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Trust's Behaviour Policy

12. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

- 12.1 The Trust will take advice from the LA to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals
- 12.2 Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance

13. APPOINTMENTS

- 13.1 As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours
- 13.2 Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office
- 13.3 If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a member of staff
- 13.4 Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible

14. MODELLING, SPORT AND ACTING PERFORMANCES / ACTIVITIES

- 14.1 Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, all pupils engaging in performances / activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s)
- 14.2 Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity / performance is required to request a licence from the LA

- 14.3 The organiser is required to allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away
- 14.4 The LA will only approve a licence application once it is satisfied that:
- The pupil’s education, health and wellbeing will not suffer
 - The conditions of the licence will be observed
- 14.5 The LA will impose any conditions it considers necessary to ensure that the pupil is fit to take part in the performance / activity, that there will be proper provision for the pupil’s wellbeing, and that the pupil’s education will not suffer
- 14.6 The school will make additional arrangements for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil
- 14.7 The organiser of the performance / activity is responsible for ensuring these arrangements are carried out
- 14.8 The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school
- 14.9 The above requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:
- For not less than six hours a week
 - During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
 - On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA
 - For not more than five hours on any such day
- 14.10 Where the applicant is unable to specify the dates of the performance/activity and the LA decides to grant the application, the LA will specify that the pupil can only take part in the activity for a specified number of days within a six month period
- 14.11 Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the school
- 14.12 Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day
- 14.13 The head teacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil’s attendance would fall below 96%
- 14.14 Where a licence has not been obtained, the head teacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity
- 14.15 The LA will be satisfied that arrangements for chaperones, accommodation, place of performance and rehearsal, and travel are suitable before it grants the application
- 14.16 The LA may decide to place restrictions on any performance or activity – this

can include maximum hours and breaks

- 14.17 The maximum number of consecutive days that a child can perform is six – this applies to performances only
- 14.18 Pupils who perform are entitled to a break of at least 14 days following the last performance where the pupil has been performing on the maximum number of consecutive days over a period of eight weeks, unless the period to which the licence applies is less than 60 days
- 14.19 A licence is also required where a pupil will be absent from school and conducting a performance or activity abroad
- 14.20 The LA is responsible for enforcing all licence requirements; they may carry out inspections of the premises:
- Where rehearsals during the performance period are taking place
 - Where performances or activities are taking place
 - Where the pupil is receiving their education, in order to check that licensing conditions are being met
- 14.21 The LA has the power to amend or revoke existing licences at any time
- 14.22 if the LA refuses to grant a licence, it will provide reasons for this decision in writing to the individual / organisation applying for the licence
- 14.23 The organiser of the performance / activity has the right to appeal the decision to a magistrates' court, including its refusal, revocation or variation, and against any condition under which a licence is granted or an approval is given

15. YOUNG CARERS

- 15.1 The Trust understands the difficulties that face young carers
- 15.2 The schools will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school
- 15.3 The Trust takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case by case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate

16. REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE

- 16.1 The schools acknowledge 100 percent attendance in the following way:
- Certificate presentation (end of year assembly)
- 16.2 Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded in the following ways:
- Certificates
 - Class awards
 - House points

17. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Attendance and Truancy Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Trustees

Declaration of Responsibility

This Attendance and Truancy Policy was reviewed and formally adopted by Bronte Academy Trust on

..... 27th February 2019Date

..... *John A. Bennett* Signed Chair of Trustees

..... *John Holes* Signed Chief Executive Officer