Attendance Policy

This policy is called:	Attendance Policy
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Bolder Academy
MacFarlane Lane, Isleworth, West London, TW7 5DB
Registered in England and Wales No: 08932893
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Aim of this policy

To support excellent levels of attendance for all students to enable fulfilment of their potential at Bolder Academy.

Key principles

High levels of attendance and punctuality levels are promoted and rewarded.

It is the responsibility of everybody in the Academy to improve attendance and punctuality.

Where attendance or punctuality fall short of expected standards, steps will be taken to address this and sanctions may be applied in accordance with the behaviour policy.

Roles and responsibilities

The Academy

We will:

- work with students and their families to support high levels of attendance and punctuality;
- investigate unexplained or unjustified absence, applying sanctions where appropriate;
- work with the local authority and, where required, make appropriate referrals in accordance with local procedures, legislation and guidance;
- regularly review and analyse attendance levels and set targets for the future;
- ensure that all students can access full-time education;
- ensure that the trust board and Academy's leadership team work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy;
- ensure that all legislation and guidance are complied with and reflected in our policies and procedures;
- have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (please refer to our Child Protection policy available electronically on the staff 'T' drive.);
- provide information requested by the Secretary of State, including termly absence data collected by the Department for Education;
- support students who are returning to education following long term absence;
- ensure that effective systems to record and report attendance data are in place.

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Parents and Carers

We expect parents and carers to:

- ensure that their child arrives at the Academy on time, in the correct uniform and with the necessary equipment;
- promote the importance of regular attendance at home;
- follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their child from the Academy (see below);
- avoid unnecessary absences;
- keep the Academy informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance;
- not take their child out of education for holidays during term time (see below);
- inform the Academy in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren), along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live.

Students

We expect students to:

- attend the Academy regularly and on time;
- be punctual to all lessons and morning line ups;
- follow the correct procedure if they arrive to the Academy late (see below).

Registration

The Academy maintains an attendance register and uses this to record each student's attendance at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon.

Students who arrive after the start of a registration session but before the end of the registration session will be marked as late. Where students arrive after the end of a registration session, the process set out below will apply.

The register is marked using the national attendance and absence codes which can be found in the Department for Education's guidance on School Attendance guidance - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment _data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf

Where a student attends a registration session but does not attend subsequent lessons, we will treat this as a truancy and non-attendance matter in accordance with the behaviour policy and engage parents where necessary.

Late Arrival

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If a student arrives at the Academy after the relevant registration period has ended, he/she must immediately go to the Academy office to sign in and provide a reason for the lateness. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the register will be marked as unauthorised absence.

Persistent lateness will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in line with behaviour policy.

Reasons for absence and how to report or request authorisation

Authorised absence - absence will only be authorised where the Academy has given approval in advance for a student to not be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the Academy can authorise absence.

Unauthorised absence – absence will be marked as unauthorised where the Academy is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Reporting absence from the Academy

Where a student is to be absent from the Academy without prior permission, the parent/carer should inform the Academy by telephone on the morning of the day of the first absence and let the Academy know when they expect the student to return. If the return date is not confirmed on the first day of absence, parents/carers must contact the Academy on each day of absence.

On the day of return to the Academy, parents must also provide written confirmation of the reason(s) for the full period of absence.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, the parents/cares may be asked to provide the Academy with medical evidence, such as a note from the child's doctor. If this evidence is not provided, the absence may be marked as unauthorised.

Appointments

Medical, dental and other essential appointments for a student should take place outside of school hours where this is reasonably possible.

Where an appointment must take place during school time, the student should attend the Academy for as much of the day as possible.

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For the time absent from the Academy to be marked as an authorised, confirmation of the appointment by way of an appointment card or letter must be provided.

Leave of absence (including holidays during term time)

Parents and carers should make every effort to avoid taking students out of education for holidays or other extended leave during term time. The Academy will only authorise a leave of absence during term time where there are <u>exceptional</u> circumstances.

To request a leave of absence, parents/carers must make the request in advance and in writing and, wherever possible, at least [4] school weeks ahead of the planned leave.

Where a leave of absence is requested as above, the [Principal/Head Teacher] will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request. The decision:

- will be confirmed in writing
- is solely at the Headteacher's discretion and
- is final.

Where permission is granted, the Headteacher will confirm the number of days and dates of absence which are authorised.

If permission is not granted and the parents/carers proceed to take their child out of the Academy, the absence will be marked as unauthorised and parents may be issued with a penalty notice or be subject to prosecution by the local authority (see below).

Religious observance

We recognise that students of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance:

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student belongs,
- the absence from the Academy will be authorised.
- We ask that parents/carers notify the Academy in writing in advance where absence is required due to religious observance.

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

There are some circumstances in which students cannot attend school due to coronavirus. In accordance with the Department for Education's guidance on *recording*

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attendance in relation to COVID-19 during the 2021-2022 academic year, if a student's travel to, or attendance at school would be contrary to law or government guidance relating to coronavirus, their non-attendance will not be counted as an absence.

If a student tests positive for coronavirus, their absence will be recorded as illness.

Addressing poor attendance and punctuality

Where absence or punctuality is a cause for concern, for example because there is:

- a pattern of unauthorised absence
- a question over the reasons provided for a particular absence or late arrival
- persistent truancy or lateness

We will attempt to make contact with the parents/carers with a view to working together to support improved attendance and/or punctuality.

Failure to attend or arrive at lessons on time / morning line ups may also be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Absence will be classed as persistent where it falls below 90% across the academic year. Absence at this level is very likely to hinder educational prospects and we expect full parental co-operation and support to urgently address these cases. Intervention steps may include implementation of an attendance action plan, referral to other agencies and/or seeking to put in place a parenting contract.

Where parents/carers have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is regularly attending the Academy, we may consider issuing a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a fine (£60 if paid within 21 days, £120 if paid within 28 days) imposed on parents.

When considering whether to issue a penalty notice, we will have regard to:

- the Department for Education's statutory guidance, School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures.
- the local authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.

In the event that a penalty notice is issued but is not paid within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to proceed to prosecution. The local authority also has separate powers to prosecute parents if their child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly.

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Appendix : Coronavirus-related absences, quick reference guide

What to do if…	*Action needed*	*Code*	*Return to school when*
… my child has coronavirus symptoms.	• Self-isolate. • Inform the school. • Take a confirmatory PCR test.	X	• Pupil tests negative. • Child feels well.
… my child tests positive for coronavirus using a Lateral Flow Test.	• Self-isolate. • Inform the school. • Take a confirmatory PCR test.	X	• Pupil tests negative. • Child feels well.
… my child is self-isolating but has not had a PCR test.	• Self-isolate. • Inform the school. • Take a confirmatory PCR test. • Send medical/supporting evidence for absence to the school.	X	• When period of self-isolation ends. • Child feels well.
… my child tests positive for coronavirus using a PCR test.	• Self-isolate in line with public health guidance. • Inform the school.	I	• When period of self-isolation ends. • Child feels well.
… my child tests negative but feels unwell.	• Keep child off from school. • Contact the school daily to report absence.	I	• Child feels well.
… my child has been in close contact of someone who has symptoms or who has a confirmed Covid-19.	• Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 do not need to self-isolate. • Take a PCR test and self-isolate if a positive test result.	I	• When period of self-isolation ends. • Child feels well.
… my child is required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine.	• Parents/carers should plan holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their child out of school during term time. • Families should consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. • Is a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, self-isolate in line with public health guidance.	X	• When period of self-isolation ends.

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