

Attendance Policy

Bolder Academy

MacFarlane Lane, Isleworth, West London, TW7 5DB

Registered in England and Wales No: 08932893

Attendance Policy

This policy is called:	Attendance Policy
It applies to:	All staff and students of Bolder Academy
Person responsible for its revision:	Headteacher
Status:	Statutory
Published on:	The Academy Website
Approval by:	Governing Board or Delegated Committee
Review frequency:	Annually
Date of approval:	September 2024
Date of next approval:	September 2025

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.

Government Guidance states:

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education.

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;
- have a named Senior Attendance Champion, Liz Green who is responsible for the attendance policy at Bolder Academy. See appendix 1 for contact information
- track and monitor individual student and cohorts attendance via the Attendance Tracker, this is reviewed weekly by the Attendance Officer and Senior Attendance Champion
- 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);
- 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;
- Reiterate the importance of attendance through tutor time, assemblies, parent events and our parent newsletter;
- Reward students with good attendance or improved attendance through tutor time, assemblies and reward trips/events.

Parents and Carers

We expect parents and carers to:

- ensure that their child arrives at the Academy on time at 8.40am, 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 – report absences every day using ParentMail.
- avoid unnecessary absences – dental appointments for example need to be made after school hours;
- 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;
- 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.

Where students arrive late to school they will serve a detention at lunch time that same day. This is to support students to become organised and prepare them for life after school.

After registration the attendance officer will do visual checks of any students we have not received a ParentMail notification from parents with reasons for the absence. The attendance officer will then send a ParentMail to any parents where we have not received notification of an absence.

Codes U and L - Late Arrival

As a school we are duty bound to record codes "L" and "U". A 'U' recorded on SIMS will affect a learner's individual attendance.

If a student arrives before 9.30am they will be marked as late and coded as "L" (before registration closes).

If a student arrives after the registers close at 9.30am they will be marked as "U" (late after registers closed) and coded as an absent for the morning session. Continual lateness will result in an attendance Action Plan and referral to the Education Welfare Service.

The registers are 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. If we are unable to find a student we will contact the parent/carer and then if they are unable to locate we will inform the police.

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 ParentMail or by telephone on the child absence line by 8am for each day of absence.

We follow up by sending out a daily ParentMail prompting parents to report the absence. If on the 4th day we have not heard anything we will raise a CFAN via the Hounslow SASS portal as a no contact from parents.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, the parents/carers will 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.

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. Please scan and email child.absence@bolderacademy.co.uk

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 **exceptional** circumstances. This is exceptionally rare.

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. Applications for authorised absences must be made in writing prior to the absence. The request should be sent emailed to child.absence@bolderacademy.co.uk for approval.

Where a leave of absence is requested as above, the Head Teacher or Senior Attendance Champion will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request. The decision:

- will be confirmed in writing
- is at the Headteacher's or Senior Attendance Champion's discretion
- 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).

Absences around School Holidays

As schools should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

Where the school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer than the period of leave granted

we will refer to the local authority. Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or are not appropriate (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time), the local authority's school Attendance Support Team should liaise with school and the early help lead practitioner or social worker (where applicable) to take forward attendance legal intervention.

To support your child's absence during these periods, the Academy will require dated medical evidence to support the absence. Please email this to child.absence@bolderacademy.co.uk

If evidence is not provided, the absence will be 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 parent belongs,

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. This can include phone calls, meetings and signposting students and families to support available. We have a mental health and wellbeing page on our website which recommends a range of different support services and organisations. Pastoral Managers take an active role in attendance and supporting students and families overcoming any barriers they may have to attendance. See appendix 1 for contact information.

Failure to attend or arrive at lessons on time 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 through an attendance 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 in conjunction with the local authority. A penalty notice is a fine 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.

Covid 19

In terms of absences because of Covid we follow the latest Government Guidance.

Appendix 1: Contact Details

- Senior Attendance Champion, Deputy Headteacher & DSL: Liz Green, lgreen@bolderacademy.co.uk
- Attendance Officer, Geeta Kumar, gkumar@bolderacademy.co.uk
- Attendance Champions
 - Jess Pickering, Year 7 Pastoral Manager, jpickering@bolderacademy.co.uk
 - Jhenni Izqueirido, Year 8 Pastoral Manager, jizqueirido@bolderacademy.co.uk
 - Katie O’Loughlin, Year 9 Pastoral Manager, koloughlin@bolderacademy.co.uk
 - Sheetal Takkar, Year 10 Pastoral Manager, stakkar@bolderacademy.co.uk
 - Tracey Palmer, Year 11 Pastoral Manager, tpalmer@bolderacademy.co.uk
 - Debra Knights, Year 11 Pastoral Manager, dknights@bolderacademy.co.uk
 - Stevan Alimovic, Head of Key Stage 3, salivomic@bolderacademy.co.uk



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Sept 2021