Attendance Policy

Botley School

Date written by Nathan Thomas	*October 2024*
Date adopted by School	November 2024
Date to be reviewed by School (This policy will be reviewed at least biannually)	October 2025

This policy is available on our website

You can ask for a paper copy of this policy at ……

You can find details of our INSET dates here or email …..

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Review Cycle	Every 2 years	Owner	CEO	Approval Body	Trust Board

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Key Contacts		
Role	**Designated Person**	**Contact details**
Senior leader responsible for attendance (Attendance Champion)	Jo Reid	head.2569@botley.oxon.sch.uk
Contact for day-to-day attendance queries	Shine Yasin	shineyasin@botley.oxon.sch.uk
Contact for detailed support on attendance	Shine Yasin	shineyasin@botley.oxon.sch.uk

Statement of Intent

Botley School 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 –
  - to age, ability and aptitude, and
  - 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 and the UN convention on the rights of a child.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Being mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and providing them with additional support.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

This policy works to meet the mandatory requirements laid out in Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.ukwww.gov.uk)

Legal Framework

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 and Young Persons Act 1963
- KCSIE 2024
- Working together to improve school attendance 2024
- Children missing in education guidance 2024

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, the Complaints Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This policy works to meet the mandatory requirements laid out in the government guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust board has overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds any student including any student holding any protected characteristic.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education procedure in place and that this is regularly reviewed.

The CEO has responsibility for:

- Ensuring the implementation of this policy and procedures
- Monitoring attendance and ensuring high and/or increasing levels of attendance are maintained
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy
- Having regard to the most recent version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Governors have responsibility for:

- Overall responsibility at Governors' level for implementation and monitoring of policy.
- Reviewing attendance at Governing Body meetings
- Challenging and support attendance procedures and data with school attendance leads.
- As required supporting attendance panels.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation and management of this policy
- Reviewing and updating the policy bi-annually to ensure it reflects local school procedures and is in line with the model policy
- Monitoring attendance and action planning to promote and improve attendance and punctuality
- Keeping parents informed of their child's attendance and any changes to attendance policy and procedure.
- Ensuring that they keep abreast of changes in legislation and undertake CPD to ensure best practice.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

- Monitoring attendance and promptly discussing any concerns over attendance with parents and students.
- 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.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children attend and stay at school.
- Ensuring that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn.
- Instilling in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- Ensuring that they are aware of the attendance policy of their children's school.
- Impressing upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct.
- Working in partnership with their children's school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance.
- Notifying the school if their child is absent. This should be done on the first day of absence and every subsequent day. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed when the child returns to school.
- Avoiding arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours.
- Avoiding booking holidays during term time.
- Contacting the school following procedures detailed below prior to any known, unavoidable term-time absence.
- 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.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending school, on time, prepared and ready to learn.
- Attending all expected lessons

Definitions	
Absence	• Arrival at school after the register has closed. • Not attending school for any reason.
Authorised Absence	• Authorisation is granted for absence at the discretion of the school, in compliance with legislation and guidance. It could be granted for: • Sickness. • Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably falls during school hours. • Religious or cultural observances (up to two days per year). • An exceptional family emergency.
Unauthorised Absence examples	• Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason. • Truancy • 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. • Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed. (These will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances in compliance with legislation and at the discretion of the school) • Leaving school with no explanation during the day.
Persistent Absenteeism (PA)	Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason, regardless of authorisation.
Severe Absenteeism (SA)	Missing more than 50 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason, regardless of authorisation.

Absence Procedures

- Parents should contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence to explain why they were absent
- A phone call will be made to the parent of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school. If the school is unable to make contact with the parent/ carer, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who could reasonably be expected to be able to advise of the pupil's whereabouts.
- The staff member will encourage the attendance of any pupil that they believe should be able to attend.
- In the case of persistent absence and severe absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance staff. The school will inform the Local Authority (LA), on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.
- 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 school days, the school will contact the Local Authority and follow the 'Child Missing Education' guidance.
- Where there are concerns that the absence of a child constitutes a risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Attendance Register

The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start the afternoon. This register will record whether pupils are present or absent.

The school uses the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way.

Please see Appendix A for further details of Registration Codes.

School Times and Registration Times

The registers are by taken the class teacher between 8.40am and 9.00am. The close of register must be within half an hour of the start of the session.

Registers close at 9.10am in the morning and 1:45pm in the afternoon. Any pupils that arrive after these times will be recorded as 'late after the register is closed' which is an absence mark. (See DfE coding in Appendix A).

Pupils At Risk of Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

The school will:

- Track attendance data in school at least half termly to target key groups of pupils needing support.
- Use a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Rigorously, fairly and supportively use agreed escalation procedures including:
    - Sending letters to parents
    - Having a regular review
    - Engaging with LA attendance teams
    - Using fixed penalty notices
    - Attendance contracts
    - Holding parental meetings
- Hold attendance reviews and panels involving governors or senior leaders from across the Trust.
- Ensure pupils potentially at greater risk of harm who need a social worker will be supported with pastoral and academic support, alongside action by statutory services in response to any unauthorised absences.
- Welcome pupils back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meet with pupils and parents to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead regular check-ins with pupils to review progress and the impact of support
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress.

Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' when they miss 50% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing significant damage to any child's academic and social progress which can have lifelong consequences. All SA pupils at our school will have an Individual Attendance Plan, which will incorporate multi-agency input and will take into account exceptional circumstances, such as serious, long-term illness. You will be expected to engage with all partners to improve your child's attendance, to 95+% wherever possible. SA pupils are our highest priority at our school.

Punctuality

The school will:

- Actively encourage high levels of punctuality.
- Monitor and follow up on lateness.
- Promote school times and the time of registers opening and closing through brochures and the website.
- Not keep a register open for the whole session.
- When a pupil arrives late and the register is still open he/she will be marked as 'late' but counted as present for that session.
- When a pupil arrives after the register has closed and a parent provides a satisfactory explanation, he/she will be marked as 'authorised absent' for that session using the correct code.
- When a pupil arrives after the register has closed and the parent fails to provide a satisfactory explanation, he/she will be marked as 'unauthorised absent' for that session. (Code U)

Term Time Leave of Absence

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.

- The Headteacher will be unable to authorise holidays during term-time
- The headteacher will be only allowed to grant a leave of absence in highly exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence, which is presented, before authorising term-time leave.
- Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis
- Requests for leave will not be granted immediately before and during assessment periods.
- If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

The student Request for absence form can be found here and should be submitted no less that 2 weeks prior to the requested time.

Missing Children

Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the headteacher.

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 SSD (senior staff member on duty) immediately.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by a member of the senior leadership team.
- Staff will then search the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found, 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
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located
- The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred
- Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Pupils who are not collected at the end of the school day

All pupils who are collected from school at the end of the day are made aware that if their parent / guardian / carer will be late, they should remain with their class teacher.

If no communication is received about a pupil, the class teacher, office staff or SLT member will call the contact numbers for the parent and /or other appropriate contact numbers relevant to the pupil.

During this time the pupil will be safely looked after by a member of staff in the After School Club. Parents will be charged the normal rate for the afternoon session if regularly late. (see collecting from school policy)

If there is no response from the parents' contact number or the emergency numbers within a three hour period the police and / or social services (LCSS or MASH) will be contacted. The incident will be recorded and logged in the child's safeguarding records on CPOMS.

Appointments

As far as possible, parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

Where this is not possible, a hospital letter or appointment card should be presented to the school office

If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will need to be signed out at the school office by a parent.

Pupils should attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

Part-Time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs.

- Any part- time timetable will be time-limited and will not be treated as a long term solution.
- Part-time timetables will only be made with parental agreement and in compliance with the Safeguarding Policy.
- Part-time timetables will be agreed with the Local Authority and reviewed every two weeks.
- The school will mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence.

Approved Educational Activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities (for example, if a student is attending another school for part of their educational provision), the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Absence will be authorised where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example, in the following circumstances:

- a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
- where the parent of a child is deployed in the services for 4 months or more, absence may be authorised but for no more than 5 days and proof of deployment must accompany the request eg. An official letter from the line manager. For this to be authorised the student must have attendance that is above 90%.
- where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
- where the student has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand); Medical/Dental appointments should be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.
- where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions.
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong;
- in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a very limited period. (Note: absence may not be authorised even in these circumstances where the student has a poor attendance history or is a persistent absentee with attendance below 90% but the school must still be informed) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised.

Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent;

- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the student is staying at home to mind the house;
- the student is shopping during school hours;
- the student is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday, looking after other children;
- the student is absent from school on a family holiday.
- the student has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.
- excessive illness without medical evidence

Attendance Contracts

An attendance contract may be explored with parents when attendance is becoming a concern, it is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. An attendance contract is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.

Penalty Notices

Parents whose children fail to attend school regularly are committing an offence (Section 444 Education Act 1996). A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, unauthorised holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school. In such cases, the school will:

- In the case of term time leave of absence please see the section above as this may result in an instant penalty notice being issued.
- In other instances parents will be invited into a meeting to discuss support, potential attendance contracts and allow them 15 days to improve the situation.
- Follow this first warning with a formal written notification, explaining that actions may be taken.
- Submit an application to issue a penalty notice to the Local Authority.
- Notices may be issued to each parent liable for the offence. Penalties are paid to the Local Authority.

The Penalty is £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £160 if paid between day 21 and day 28. This amount is prescribed by the Education Penalty Notices (England) Regulations 2007. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice within the prescribed period may result in prosecution for the underlying offence of failure to secure regular school attendance.

Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period will be charged at a higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80. (The three-year period begins from the date of the first penalty notice issued on or after 19 August 2024)
Please note: Penalty Notices are issued per parent/per child.

Penalty notices

- Code of Practice - Issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools August 2024 (pdf format, 173 KB)
- Code of Practice - Issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools September 2022 (pdf format, 143 KB)
- Blanket holiday warning letter (docx format, 20KB)
- Penalty Notice FAQs for Parents (docx format, 94KB)
- Helping Parents understand Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance (pdf format, 137KB)

Other Absences

Absence due to military posting

If a student leaves due to posting they are expected to attend their new school within 1 week of moving unless this coincides with school holidays. We have a duty to track students who leave us until they arrive in their new school and should there be a delay in starting a new school without a reason given, the Local Authority will need to be informed.

Traveller Absence

When Traveller families are travelling for occupational reasons, absence from school must be requested in the usual way. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and at Botley School. Children from these groups whose families do not travel for occupational reasons are expected to attend as normal.

The County Attendance Team

Parents or children may wish to contact the County Attendance Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 01865 323513 attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

OCC Attendance team

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/school/attendance

Children Missing Education

Children missing education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalization, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Why Children Miss Education

The most common reasons for children missing education include the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of 5
- Failing to make a successful transition between educational settings
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer between educational settings
- Families moving to a new area Children at Particular Risk of Missing Education

There are many reasons why a child may be missing from education, therefore the Local Authority will make a judgement on a case-by-case basis. The following list indicates pupils who are most at risk of missing education:

- Pupils at Risk of Harm or Neglect – where this is suspected, local child protection procedures will be followed; however, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to the Local Authority Safeguarding Team (and the police if appropriate) as per the school's safeguarding procedures. The LA officers responsible for CME will check a referral has been made and will contact This policy is to be read in conjunction with the new Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022 document. children's social care if this is not the case. Should there be a reason to suspect a crime has been committed or the child's safety is at risk, the LA will contact the police.
- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families – when a GRT student leaves the school without naming their next destination school, the school will contact the LA. If necessary, the school will consult the Attendance Team for advice on the best strategies to ensure minimal disruption to the GRT pupil's education.
- Children of Service Personnel – the school will contact the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service for advice to ensure continuity of education for these children.
- Missing Children / Runaways – should the school suspect a child has gone missing or run away, an appropriate staff member will consult the Local Authority Safeguarding Team (and police if appropriate) for advice. - Children and Young People Supervised by the Youth Justice System – in this case, LA youth offending teams are responsible for supervising children (aged 8 to 18). Where a young person is registered at the school prior to custody, the school will keep the place open for their return.
- Children who cease to attend Botley School – where the reason for a child who has stopped attending the school is not known, the LA will investigate the situation.
- Children of Migrant Families – there is an increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address, or may have arrived into an LA area without the authority becoming aware.

School Roles and Responsibilities

The school will:

- Enter students on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been

notified, that the pupil will attend the school. In the event that a student fails to attend the school on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence, and will consider notifying the LA at the earliest opportunity.

- Keep an accurate and up-to-date admissions register by encouraging parents / guardian / carers to inform them of any changes. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the new Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022 document. The school will monitor students' attendance through our daily register.
- Agree with the LA what intervals are best to inform them of students who are regularly absent from school, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from the school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the school will remove the student from the admission register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.
- Notify the LA if any student is to be deleted from the admission register in the circumstance outlined in Annex A of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended. Students who remain on the school roll are not necessarily missing education, but will be monitored and attendance will be addressed when it is poor.
- Arrange full-time education for excluded students from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion.
- Provide information to the LA regarding standard transitions, if requested to do so by the LA.

Strategies for promoting attendance

- There is a weekly class award for the best attendance in the celebration assembly
- The school will report attendance periodically in newsletters and overall attendance will be displayed on our website.
- Reporting at least termly to parents how their child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is.
- Including attendance expectations in our new starter packs and resending the policy to parents whenever it is updated.

Rewarding Good Attendance

The school acknowledges good attendance in a number of ways:

- House points
- Certificates
- Class attendance awards

Appendix A: Attendance Register Codes

Present Codes

Code	Name
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

Approved Educational Activity – Counted as present

Code	Name
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

Authorised Absence Codes

Code	Name
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

Unauthorised Absence Codes

Code	Name
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed

Not Counted in Attendance or Absence Figures

Code	Name
D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance
X	Not required to be in school - for non-compulsory school age children

Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause