



Bluecoat Beechdale
Academy
Belong. Believe. Achieve

Bluecoat Beechdale Academy Attendance Policy

Our Vision

Attendance is everyone's responsibility.

Parents, students, staff, and the wider community are part of the Bluecoat Beechdale Academy family and together we strive to make it an environment that is calm, orderly, safe and supportive in which all students can learn and thrive.

At Bluecoat Beechdale Academy, we all work together to achieve a culture of good attendance to ensure our students get the most out of their learning experience. We therefore have the highest expectations for every student in line with our academy improvement priorities: Be here. Behave. Belong.

There are significant links between attendance and a child's wider outcomes which is why you will find attendance prioritised in strategies such as: attainment & outcomes, behaviour, bullying & child-on-child abuse, SEND, supporting students with medical conditions or disabilities, safeguarding, physical and mental wellbeing, and supporting disadvantaged students. Absence can't therefore be addressed in isolation as it affects so many other factors.

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations are set for all students, our attendance policy accounts for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts.

Senior Attendance Champions and the Attendance Team

Bluecoat Beechdale has dedicated members of staff committed to improving attendance.

Senior Attendance Champions

Mrs R Frearson – Principal

Ms Gemma Anderson – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Targeted Support & Engagement Lead

Attendance & Community Officers

ACO's are your first point of contact for attendance-related support.

Chloe Hallam – Year 7 and Year 9

Jannita Bradshaw – Year 8 and Year 10

Sereece Cliff – Year 11 and vulnerable students

Academy Advisory Board member with attendance responsibility

Janet Doar

Education Welfare Officer (Education Welfare & EOTAS Service, Nottingham City Council)

Andrea Sherratt

Department for Education Expectations

The Department for Education (DfE) have clearly outlined their attendance-related expectations for schools, parents, the Academy Advisory Board (AAB), and local authorities from August 2024 in their [Working together to improve school attendance](#) document.

Please see an overview of this below, in addition to expectations set by Bluecoat Beechdale Academy in line with the document:

Expectations of Bluecoat Beechdale Academy

1. Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them
2. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance
3. Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, students and parents understand
4. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence
5. Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place
6. Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe
7. Be particularly mindful of students absent from school due to mental/physical ill health or their SEND, and provide them with additional support.

Expectations of parents/carers

As a parent, you are legally responsible for making sure your child gets a suitable full time education. The [DfE expectations of parents](#) clearly outlines what is required if that education is within a school setting.

For most parents, this will mean making sure your child is in school on time every day except when:

- Your child is too ill to go to school
- You have permission for a leave of absence from school for them not to attend (should only be requested in exceptional circumstances)
- Your religious body has a day especially for religious observance.

Leave of absence

Leave of absence (e.g. holidays) in term time will not be authorised (unless exceptional circumstances apply) and may result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service for consideration of a penalty notice/fine.

Illness

If your child needs to be absent from school, you should contact school as early as possible on the first day of absence to explain why. If you do not, we will contact you on the first morning of their absence to find out why your child is not in school.

[NHS advice](#) can help you decide whether your child is able to attend school when they are ill.

If your child's absence due to physical or mental illness is ongoing or frequent, you should speak to the Attendance Team to see what support can be put in place.

Medical/dental appointments

To avoid disruption to your child's education, medical/dental appointments should not be booked during the school day.

When this is unavoidable (e.g. hospital or orthodontist appointments), you should ask the school in advance for a leave of absence and collect them as close to the time of the appointment as possible and then return them to school for the rest of the school day.

Please note that leave of absence for routine appointments will not be authorised.

Expectations of students

- Take responsibility for your physical health [Physical activity guidelines for young people - NHS](#)
- Take responsibility for your mental health [Information on looking after your wellbeing - Mind](#)

- Arrive on time
- Arrive in the right uniform, with the right equipment, with an attitude to learn
- Be Here, Behave, Belong.

Penalty Notices/fines

If your child continues to be absent from school without good reason after support has been put in place to resolve their barriers to attendance, the Education Welfare Service (EWS) at Nottingham City Council may look to [enforce school attendance with legal action](#).

This will also be the case if it is proving difficult to engage a parent or child in the support being offered, or when a holiday/leave of absence is taken during term time.

The Senior Attendance Champion(s) will work alongside EWS to continue to try and support your child to access education so they can get the most out of their learning experience.

Referral for consideration of a penalty notice/fine may also be made if a student has been suspended but is seen in the community within school hours.

Nottingham City Council have released the changes that will come into force for Penalty Notices/fines issued after 19th August 2024:

Per Parent, Per Child	First Offence
Penalty Notice fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. <u>For example:</u> 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.	The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave of irregular attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
<p style="text-align: center;">Consecutive days of term time leave</p> <p>Penalty Notice Fines may be issued for Term Time leave of 4 or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 4 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period</p> <p>Penalty Notice fines may be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.</p> <p>In Section 4.2 of the Nottingham City Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct; In the case of unagreed leave of absence, Penalty Notices will be issued if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been at least 10 consecutive school sessions of unauthorised absence or • The unagreed leave of absence immediately precedes, or is attached to, a school closure (e.g. school holidays/INSET/school closure etc.) or any form of absence. There must be a minimum of 8 unauthorised absences” 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Second Offence (Within 3 years)</p> <p>The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)</p>	

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parents future DBS certificate, due to a 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Staff development

Training is delivered to all staff periodically throughout the school year to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities in promoting a culture of attendance at Bluecoat Beechdale Academy and how to achieve this.

Academy Advisory Board (AAB)

Janet Doar is the dedicated Board member who takes an active role in attendance improvements and supports Bluecoat Beechdale to prioritise attendance.

Data sharing

We will analyse data to target attendance improvement efforts of the students or student cohorts who need it most. Specific data will be shared with key stakeholders to ensure emerging patterns are identified quickly and effective support strategies implemented.

Rewards & Recognition

Promoting good or improved attendance includes incentives as recognition to students. The rewards system will be used and promoted throughout the school year in addition to verbal praise and encouragement, and targeted recognition.

Daily routines

Parents are expected to inform the Attendance Team of their child's absence before 9am on each day of absence. This can be done via Arbour or calling the Student Absence phone line.

If an absence is unexplained, the Attendance Team will send a first day absence text to all contacts for that child. When an absence continues without explanation, the Attendance Team will arrange for a home visit to be conducted to ascertain reason for absence and offer support for your child to return to school.

As part of our 'support first' approach, all absences whether you have informed us or not, will receive a first day phone call from your child's Year Leader to identify any barriers to attendance and encourage a swift return to school.

Registers are taken at each period of the day. Accurate and prompt completion of registers is essential to monitor attendance and whereabouts throughout the school day.

If your child is absent for 3 days or more, a home visit will be conducted by an Attendance Officer. This is a supportive visit that aims to establish reasons for the prolonged absence and ensure the student can return to school at the earliest opportunity to avoid missed learning.

Escalation of procedures/intensification of support

School absence is a recognised risk factor for children as we can't keep them safe if we can't see them, which is why attendance is such a high priority nationally. Legal thresholds are in place to support this.

Bluecoat Beechdale Academy employs a 'support first' method which includes all members of staff. It is essential that we all work together to maintain good attendance. However, where attendance barriers arise, we have a tiered approach to provide effective improvement strategies. Where it is proving difficult to engage a parent or child in the support being offered, there are escalation procedures in place to help to address this. In addition to the Education Welfare Service, this may include additional referrals to external agencies Children's Social Care.

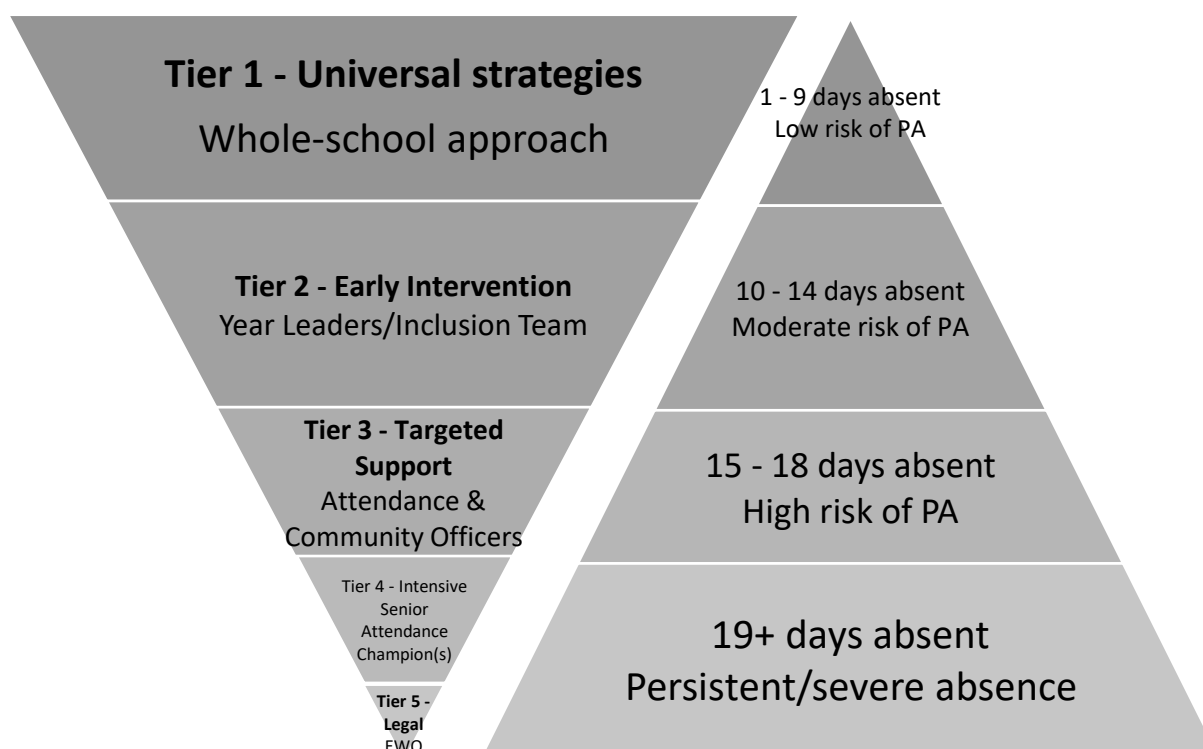
Key terms

Persistent Absence/Persistent Absentee (PA)

19+ day's absence across the whole school year. Overall attendance is less than 90%. This is the legal threshold for school attendance.

Severe Absence/Severely Persistent Absentee (SPA)

Overall attendance is less than 50%.



Punctuality

The school day starts at 8:25am and finishes at 3pm (unless a sanction has been issued). Therefore, all students are expected to arrive at school by 8:25am.

Students will be greeted by staff and welcomed into the building in order to set the tone for their day.

Morning registers are open from 8:25am-8:55am. Students who arrive at school after 8:55am will receive a U code. This is an unauthorised absence code that will negatively impact on their attendance data and may be shared with the local authority for consideration of a penalty notice/fine.

Support will be offered to address repeat lateness but it is essential students arrive on time every day to cause the least amount of disruption to their learning.

Afternoon registers are open from 12:10pm-12:40pm

Sanctions

Students arriving late to the academy will receive a sanction. This is staggered into 30 minute slots.

Arrival time	Sanction
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Between 8:25am – 8:55am <i>Up to 30 minutes late</i>	30 minutes after school
Between 8:55am – 9:25am** <i>Up to 60 minutes late</i>	60 minutes after school
Between 9:25am – 9:55am** <i>Up to 90 minutes late</i>	Loss of unstructured time (break and lunch to be spent in the Reflection Unit)
Between 9:55am – 10:25am** <i>Up to 2 hours late</i>	Loss of unstructured time (break and lunch to be spent in the Reflection Unit) and 30 minutes detention after school
Between 10:25am – 10:55am** <i>Up to 2.5 hours late</i>	Loss of unstructured time (break and lunch to be spent in the Reflection Unit) and 60 minutes detention after school
Beyond 10:55am** <i>Over 2.5 hours late</i>	Students arriving after this time is significantly concerning. Sanctions will be applied and parents will be invited into discuss.

**Arrival after 8:55am will result in an unauthorised absence for the morning session. This information may be shared with the local authority for consideration of a penalty notice/fine.

Sanctions will escalate as per usual procedures if they are not completed.

The school day

8:25am	8:55am	9:55am	10:55am	11:15am	12:15pm	1:15pm	2pm
Tutor	Period 1	Period 2	Break	Period 3	Period 4	Lunch	Period 5