



Jewell Academy
Bournemouth
an Aspirations Academy

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of last review:	September 2022	Review Period:	2 years
Date of next review:	September 2024	Owner:	Academy
Type of policy:	Academy	SCRB or Trust Approved:	SCRB

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Regular attendance at academy is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored regularly with the academy seeking to work actively with parents/carers to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the academy is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling academy experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and celebrate class attendance within celebration assemblies each week. We encourage children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards the academy and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:-

- attainment in academy
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- confidence to attempt new work and to learn alongside others

The Trust and Principal, in partnership with parents/carers have a duty to promote full attendance at academy.

Parental Responsibility

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends academy regularly and arrives on time. Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of a child who should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Poor attendance undermines a child's education and sometimes, puts pupils at risk. The academy shares the attendance percentage with parents/carers at each parents/carers' consultation meeting and more frequently where there are concerns.

It is the parents/carers responsibility to contact the academy on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding matter so that all parties know that your child is safe.

Pupils are expected to arrive between 8.45am and 9.00am, when the doors are open and children go to class. All pupils who arrive late must report to the academy office where they are registered and the reason for lateness is recorded.

Illness and Medical Appointments

If a child cannot attend academy, parents/carers are required to contact the academy and leave a message on the absence line (01202 774830) before 9.30am. Parents/carers are required to call on the first day of a child's absence. If a reason for a child's absence is not received, then the academy will try and contact parents/carers to find out why their child is not in the academy. Should we be unable to contact a parent, we may ask the School Attendance Worker to carry out a home visit or a member of the pastoral team may visit the home as a matter of safeguarding.

Please note:

- a) Routine/non-emergency dental or medical appointments should be made outside academy hours where possible.
- b) An appointment card or verification by the doctor/dentist/hospital is required to be submitted to the office for all appointments within academy hours.

- c) If it is necessary for a child to be out of academy for this reason, the child should be returned to academy directly after the appointment.
- d) If your child is absent due to vomiting and/or diarrhoea, they should not return to academy for the **next 48 hours** after the last bout of sickness/diarrhoea. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the academy.
- e) If your child is absent for four days or more, the academy will require medical evidence to support the reason for absence. The academy office will request this if it is not produced. If no medical evidence is provided, the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Attendance in Preschool:

Where children are in receipt of the government funded education sessions and are absent, the nursery is required to inform the Local Education Authority when:

- the absence is continued or reoccurring
- the absence is for a period longer than 3 weeks
- Where a child is absent for 3 weeks or more the Local Education Authority will review the funding of that placement and may make the decision for this to be removed.

The Role of the Academy Staff

The Principal has overall responsibility for attendance.

Class teachers complete a register at the beginning of each morning by 9.15am any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as late. Teachers also complete a register for the afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. Pupil attendance is monitored weekly to highlight and take action where the attendance of individual children is causing concern.

It is the responsibility of the academy to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are updated daily
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents/carers are contacted on the first day of absence to obtain the reason by 10.00am.
- Where it is not possible to make contact, the pupil's emergency contacts are phoned.
- If no contact is established within 24/48 hours, a home visit may be made; this is in line with the academy safeguarding policy.
- If after a home visit, contact still cannot be made, then Social Services or the Police may be called to carry out a safeguarding and welfare visit.
- The appropriate national attendance code is entered into the register.

Action for Low Attendance

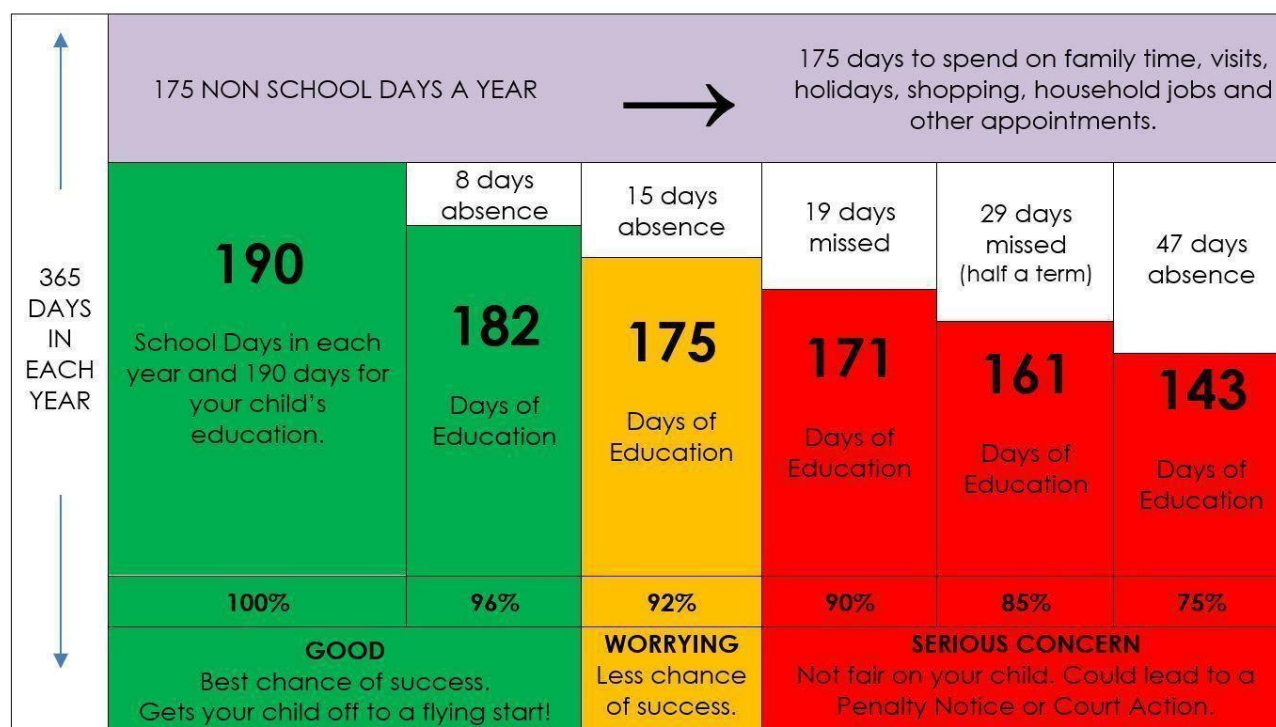
96%+ Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of a child's progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.

94-95% Average – Strive to build on this. Work with parents/carers to continue to promote full attendance to move to 96%+ 85-93%

Poor – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. The academy will contact parents/carers directly to seek ways of working together to improve attendance. Children with a percentage of 90% or below are termed as 'persistently absent'.

Below 85% Unacceptable – Absence is causing serious concern. It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting the child's learning. Meetings between home and school to share strategies for improvement will be called. If improvement is not achieved a referral is made to the Attendance Service – School Attendance and Inclusion Worker and a Penalty Notice considered where absence is not authorised.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.



[Impact of low attendance graph](#)

- In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents/carers keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance.
- Prior to the engagement of the School Attendance and Inclusion Worker at BCP Council, the school may issue letters/emails to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupils' absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for involvement from the School Attendance and Inclusion Worker.

Process of intervention regarding attendance concerns:

- Pastoral Lead or Principal will speak with parents and carers via phone call or informally face to face to alert parents. Texts or informal letters may be sent out via the office as a 'gentle' reminder of child's current attendance level if falling below 90%
- If attendance does not improve, a formal letter (letter 1) will be sent to the parent/carer inviting them to a meeting in school
- If the parent/carer does not attend this meeting, a second and final letter will be sent, inviting the parents to a meeting in school with the attendance lead and pastoral lead.
- If the parent/carer does not attend this meeting, a [parenting contract](#) will be implemented and the [FAST TRACK](#) process started.
- If attendance still does not improve, [Fixed Penalty Notice Warnings](#) issued by [BCP](#) may be authorised. This is the same when persistent lateness is a concern.

It is hoped that we can work together with parents/carers to support improved attendance at an early stage.

Children Missing Education

If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer their child to another academy, the Principal must be informed in writing. Children cannot be removed from the academy roll until we have been notified by another school that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending and who cannot be traced cannot be removed from the academy roll. They are reported to the local authority Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

Lateness

The class register is taken at 9.00am and at the start of the afternoon session. Pupils arriving after 9.00am must enter the academy by the main entrance and report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded (Code L in the register).

The register will close at 9.15am. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') This national code counts as an unauthorised absence. Lateness affects the child's overall attendance percentage. Parents/carers should accompany their child to the office to report the reason for their child's lateness.

Frequent lateness is disruptive to learning, both for the child concerned and the class. This will be discussed with parents/carers at parent consultations, attendance meetings and may be referred to the Home School Liaison Officer. Frequent or regular lateness can provide grounds for prosecution or the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness

Parents/carers will be liable for a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning from BCP Council if their child is persistently late to academy (after the registers have closed at 9.15am). Persistent is defined as a minimum of 5 late arrivals within 5 weeks. The absences do not need to be consecutive.

Definitions

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the academy (not by the parents/carers) as either

AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from academy for a legitimate reason and the academy has received notification from a parent or carer within the correct time frame. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the academy on the first day of absence before 9.30am.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from academy without the permission of the Principal.

Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'authorisation' has been given.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off academy unnecessarily
- Absences that have never been properly explained.
- Truancy during the school day.
- Holidays not agreed.

Authorising Absence

Following amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into effect 1st September 2013, Principals are only allowed to grant leave of absence from academy in exceptional circumstances. In considering whether or not to authorise a request for exceptional leave of absence in term time, the Principal will look at each individual case and only grant authorisation if the circumstances are truly exceptional. Additionally, any request should be made prior to the leave of absence and should be submitted to the academy using the ['Request for Leave of Absence form'](#) (available from the academy office or from the website) at least ten days advance of the requested absence.

Parents/Carers may be asked to provide additional information/evidence or meet with the academy to discuss the circumstances. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. 'Unavoidable' should be taken to mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. As a general guide, the following indicates the type of scenarios that might be considered as 'exceptional':

- Immediate family member returning home from Service Duty;
- Immediate family weddings or funerals (if abroad, only the actual day of the wedding/funeral);
- Occasions of religious observance;
- Other situations where a 'compassionate' element is applicable.

Generally, the following scenarios cannot be considered 'exceptional':

- Annual family holidays;
- Educational visits arranged by family members during academy time;
- Family birthdays or other events;
- Parents/carers' profession or place of work making it difficult to coincide academy and work holidays.

Following an application for term time absence, parents/carers/carers will be notified of the Principal's decision at the earliest opportunity. If the circumstances are not considered to be exceptional then the absence cannot be authorised and the academy may need to request that the Local Authority issues a Fixed Penalty Notice. In considering whether to request a Penalty Notice, the academy will have due regard to the latest version of the BCP Council 'Education Penalty Notice - Code of Conduct'.

It is important for parents/carers to note that once Jewell Academy have requested that BCP council issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for a period of unauthorised leave in term time, you will not have an opportunity to discuss this matter further with the Local Authority. Any queries or discussions should be had prior to, or at the time of requesting the leave.

Year group attendance figures are reported monthly in the Academy newsletter. 'Attendance Matters' information will be sent out regularly to parents.

Review

This policy will be reviewed according to the schedule for policy review.

Further information regarding school attendance

Please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence> [BCP school attendance information](#)

If a registered pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly, the parent could be guilty of an offence under [Section 444 Education Act 1996](#).

In April 2017, the Supreme Court held that attending school "*regularly*" means attendance in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school and not "*sufficiently frequent attendance*". This means that a child must attend school on every day that the school requires him or her to do so and failure to do this may lead to the commission of an offence.

There are 2 offences:

1. [Section 444\(1\) Education Act 1996](#) – If the child is absent without authorisation then the parent is guilty of an offence. This is a strict liability offence i.e. all that needs to be shown is a lack of regular attendance. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £1,000.
2. [Section 444\(1A\) Education Act 1996](#) – an aggravated offence. If the child is absent without authorisation and the parent knew about the child's absence and failed to act then the parent is guilty of an offence. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to 3 months.