



Attendance Policy

Ratified by Governors: July 2019

Date of Review: July 2021

Aims and Objectives

Philosophy

At Bilton School we seek to ensure that all our students receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each student's true potential to be realised. In the context of this attendance is a crucial matter for all students.

All staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. We recognise that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish a strong home-school links and communication systems. We will provide effective and efficient communications with students, parents, and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information advice and support in order to meet our objectives.

This policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and Statutory Regulations.

Objectives:

- To encourage students to achieve 100% and a minimum attendance of 96%.
- To improve the overall percentage of students attending school.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students to increase attendance levels.
- To develop a framework in which good attendance is promoted and attendance issues are addressed consistently.
- To build relationships with outside agencies, for example the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) – formally Attendance Compliance and Enforcement (ACE) to support students and families in promoting the need for good attendance.

Statutory/Legal Guidance:

Bilton School acknowledges the legislation provided below:

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- to his/her age, ability and aptitude and
- to any special needs they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

(note: for educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.)

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Additional legal requirements may be found in: *The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006*.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**.

School Responsibilities



Procedures

Registers

Registers are taken for each session and every lesson. Non-attendance is identified each morning. In the morning the child has not arrived in school and we have not been informed of a problem we will text parents to request information on the reasons for absence. The DSL notifies Children's Social Care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation.

Absence and Lateness

Parents are expected to telephone the school as soon as possible to inform us if a child is to be absent or late on each day that this applies. Calls should be made to 01788840600 option1 and a message left for attendance team to pick up. Students are late if they are not in their tutor time by 8:50am. The attendance team and tutors will monitor lateness and punctuality. Sanctions and parental contact will be used as appropriate.

Authorisation of Absence

We are advised by government legislation and Local Authority guidance that attendance can only be authorised if the following applies:

- Medical reasons - please note medical evidence and/or a parental written note will be asked for upon return to school for student's whose attendance falls below 95%. Medical evidence will always be required if a student has six consecutive days absent from school due to illness. Notes to be returned to attendance office.
- Religious celebration observation
- If transport provided by the school/Local Authority cannot bring the child to school.

Absences may also be authorised for the following reasons, but this will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher:

- Where a Leave of Absence has been completed by parent/carer and is agreed by the Head Teacher
- Where a student has a medical appointment that cannot be changed e.g. a consultant appointment
- When the student has no fixed abode, their parent is engaged in a trade which require them to travel, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and the student has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months
- Other exceptional circumstances e.g. family bereavement and for a limited period.

Medical Appointments

Where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours or in school holidays. However, we realise this is sometimes not possible. Students should come into school before and after appointments to ensure they miss as little lesson time as possible. Students should sign out and in at the attendance office before leaving/upon their return to school.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

Arranging holidays during term time causes issues for many reasons:

- the student's education suffers;
- lessons and extra-curricular activities are missed;
- there is often no opportunity for teachers to set additional work or to assist a child in catching up on their return from holiday; and
- parents may be in breach of their legal obligation to send their child to school.

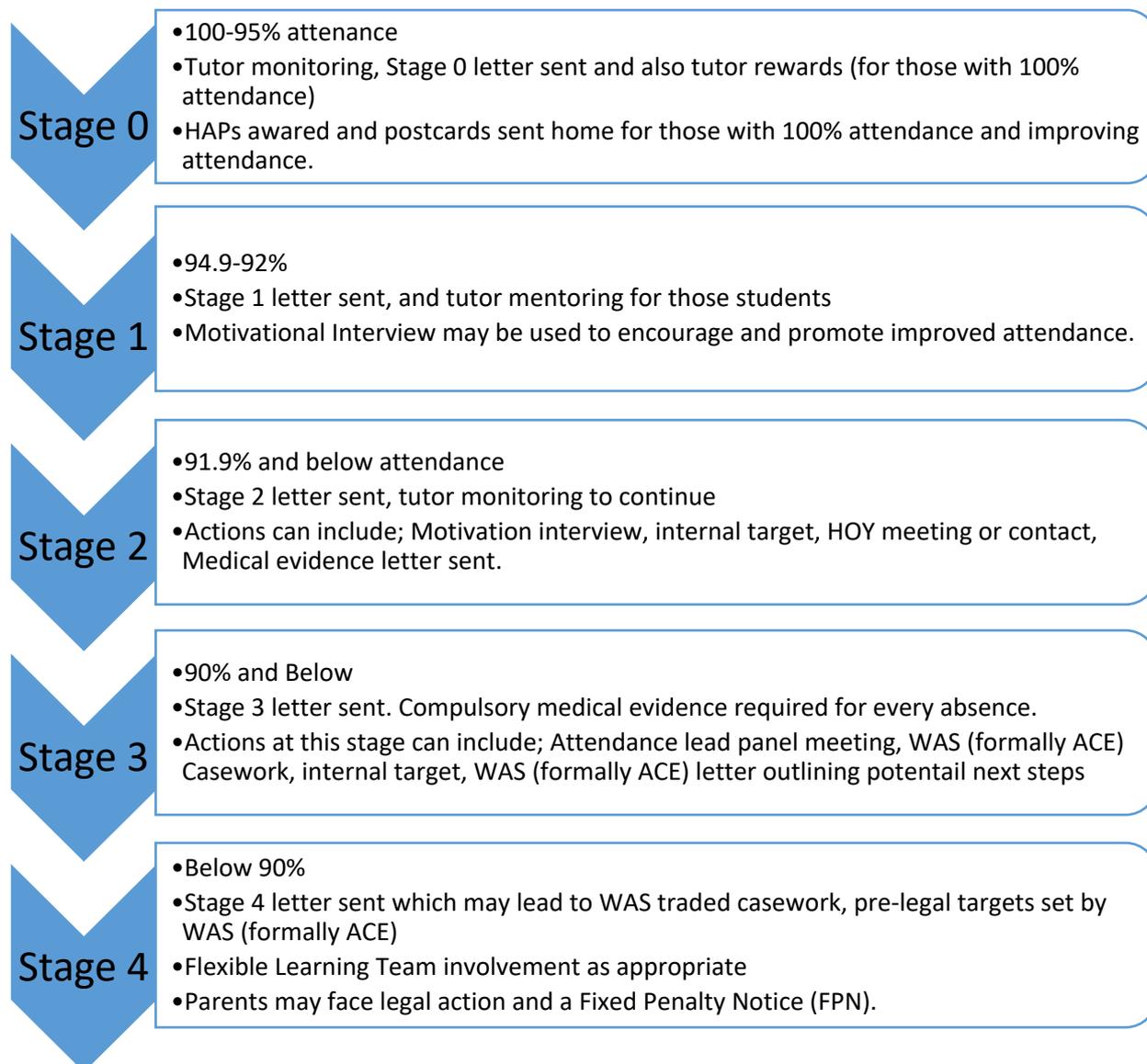
The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Attendance Intervention

Intervention will follow a staged approach and students will be monitored and different strategies will be used depending on the stage they are at in the process outlined below and their personal situation.



This flow chart is a guide and each case will be assessed and reviewed depending on each students' individual needs and which interventions will be most effective in supporting them to improve or maintain positive attendance. Early intervention will be sought so students can be supported meeting their attendance targets, however early attendance figures can be misleading so this staged approach will begin in after the first half term of each academic year. The nature of student absence is crucial when applying this approach; a student may be at stage 4 but no action is taken because there are perfectly valid reasons for their absence.