

Attendance Policy

Attendance officers at BGIS – Mr C Pugh Seniors, Mrs T Djukic Juniors.

Philosophy

Bedford Greenacre Independent School are committed to maximising attendance for all pupils to enable them to benefit fully from their education. We believe that regular attendance is vital for effective learning and maintaining peer relationships.

The school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise the importance of establishing strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance.

We will identify and address, as speedily as possible, any problems affecting attendance and adopt, at all times, a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance.

The school will ensure that all pupils and families feel supported and valued.

This policy must be read in conjunction with our Children Missing Education and Safeguarding Policies.

Principles

Staff are aware of the registration process and receive instruction on registration regulations.

Registers are completed accurately morning and afternoon and attendance is regularly monitored.

Parents should contact school early on the first day of absence.

Senior managers and school governors will regularly evaluate attendance procedures.

Rights and Responsibilities

Pupils are expected to attend school every day on time. Pupils who do experience difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day on time, appropriately dressed and in fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are required to notify the school of the reason, on the first day of absence either by phone or by emailing the school.

School staff will encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Staff will convey high expectations to pupils regarding attendance and punctuality.

Registration

Registers will be called promptly at 8.45 am and at 3.55 pm including the Sixth Form.

Where pupils arrive late they are required to come to the main office to register.

Sixth Form students leaving the premises

For sixth formers who may be leaving the premises during the day, it is a requirement that they sign out of school at the Sixth Form office.

Requests for Absence from parents

Parents are asked to note that the school would discourage parents from taking their pupils out of school, at any stage, during the term and that full attendance is expected, up to and including the last day of each term.

In exceptional cases, the authorisation for absence may be sought. Parents/carers will need to request permission from the Senior Leadership Team by completing an Application for Leave of Absence form. This must be completed and returned to the school office **AT LEAST TWO WEEKS** before the date when the period of absence is to start.

Persistent Absence

The DFE states that a child has persistent absence when they have missed more than 10% of possible attendance sessions. This means any child with attendance below 90% for a full academic year.

In line with Government guidelines, the Senior Leadership Team will monitor the attendance of individual pupils and work with parents to ensure that additional steps are taken to support any pupil with persistent absence. This will include pupils who have long term illnesses or who have been suspended from school.

The support may be in the form of a letter, drawing parents' attention to their child's absence or it may be offering support in the event of a long-term medical absence. In addition, the school will also consult Education Welfare Teams for the area in which the child resides.

Where attendance is poor the Local Authority does have powers to take action to enforce school attendance. Periods of unauthorised absence where the pupil is not known to be ill, and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted can lead to a pupil being removed from the school roll.

Recording Absence

All staff must record accurately whether a pupil is present or absent.

Follow up of Absence

School action to address irregular and/or non-attendance, or pupils not returning to school after an authorised absence:-

At Bedford Greenacre Independent School, we will attempt to address irregular and/or non-attendance as soon as it is identified. The actions of the school could include:

- If no contact is received from the parent of the pupil on the morning of the first day of absence the school will contact the parent by telephone by 9.30 am.
- A letter to bring to the attention of the parents that absence has been identified as a concern.
- Medical evidence from the GP/Medical practitioner.
- Interview with the pupil to obtain the pupil's perception of the problem
- A meeting with parents/senior staff and Chair of Governors (or any other Governor) to discuss attendance difficulties.
- Consulting with the schools' Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL, and if appropriate, completing a Cause for Concern Form and a Child Missing Education (CME) Checklist (see Children Missing Education Policy). The Schools' DSL/Deputy DSL will then follow the procedure detailed in the schools' Safeguarding Children Policy and notify the Bedford Borough Children Missing Education Officer.

Children Missing Education Office
Education Welfare Service
Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

01234 228178 childrenmissingeducation@bedford.gov.uk

In extreme cases setting up an agreement with the Chair of Governors and parents of the child regarding the attendance which the parents will be required to sign. Where this does not result in the improvement in attendance the parents may be asked to remove their child from the school. Should this be the case the Bedford Borough Children Missing Education Officer will be notified and further non-attendance in the maintained sector may result in prosecution of both parents.

