



Pupil Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Policy reviewed by Headteacher
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Signed.....

Rob Higgins
Headteacher

THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL
Egerton Street, Oldham. OL1 3SQ

1 Blue Coat Pupil Attendance Policy

At Blue Coat we are proud of our high attendance levels and aim to improve them further still. Ensuring that your son/daughter attends school every day is one of the most important things you can do to guarantee their success.

There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and attainment. All pupils should be aiming for **100%** attendance and parents' support and encouragement in achieving this is crucial. We believe that a strong partnership between school and home is a key factor in ensuring children attend school regularly.

2 How parents can work to support excellent attendance

2.1 Illness

We understand that, on occasion, pupils may have to miss school due to ill health. We ask that parents:

- 1) Adopt a bracing approach to illness. Please only keep pupils off school when it is absolutely necessary.
- 2) Contact school by telephone on the attendance line (0161 624 1484) on the first day of absence by 8.30am, indicating expected date of return.
- 3) Provide a written explanation for the absence for your child to bring to Student Services on the day they return.
- 4) Provide supporting medical evidence if the absence exceeds 5 days.

2.2 Medical appointments

Medical/dental appointments should be made out of school hours to prevent disruption to learning. Where this is not possible please contact the Student Services team in writing (email studentservices@blue-coat.org) with the appropriate evidence, e.g. letter/ appointment card. We will require this in order to authorise the absence.

2.3 Holidays

Holidays must not be taken during term time. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents needing leave of absence for exceptional circumstances should apply in writing to the Headteacher. The exceptional reason should be outlined in detail and evidenced.

Parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absence for their child which may result in a penalty fine.

3 Other requests for absences

Requests for absence for engagements resulting from personal sporting or other commitments/interests should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher and will be considered individually, taking into account the impact of absence on a pupil's progress.

4 Religious observation

Christian holidays are already covered by the school's holiday pattern. Any additional requests should be made in writing in advance to the Headteacher. Such requests will only be granted where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent(s) belong.

Members of Saddleworth Churches who wish to participate in the act of witness on Whit Friday should seek permission from the Headteacher with a letter signed by the Vicar/Priest. They will be granted an authorised absence for the morning. Without this, their absence will be classed as unauthorised.

5 Unexplained/unexpected absences:

If we have not had contact from parents/carers to inform us of a pupil's absence by 9.00am on the first day of absence, we will:

Day 1: Contact parents/carers by MyEd to confirm a pupil's absence; the reason for this absence and the expected date of return. This will take place between 9.00am – 10.00am.

Day 2: If a pupil is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a pupil's parent/carer on day 1, a further attempt to contact parents is made.

Day 3: If a pupil is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a pupil's parent/carer our Attendance Officer undertakes a home visit in order to find out the nature of the absence.

We will continue to contact all known numbers for the pupil until we make contact with parents / carers or establish that the pupil is missing.

If we are unable to obtain a satisfactory explanation for a pupil's absence, they are considered missing in education. The school will work with the local authority and other partners as appropriate to find out the reason for the pupil's absence and get them back into school as soon as possible.

Where this is not possible, the pupil will be off rolled after 20 days of non-attendance. Further information about this can be found in the schools 'Missing Pupil Policy' which has been included as Appendix 1.

6 How we will work with parents when there is an attendance concern

Each week form tutors and Directors of Learning analyse pupils' attendance. If we have concerns about a pupil's attendance pattern, we have a 3-stage approach:

Stage 1: Yellow Concern

This category includes:

- Any pupil who is falling below 96%, **excluding** pupils who have had one period of illness or Covid-related illness/period of isolation
- Any pupil with any unauthorised absence
- Any pupil who has a concerning pattern of medical appointments, or other absence concern
- For students whose circumstances mean they require additional support, we will apply the yellow support process after 2 days absence in a half term

Actions:

1. The form tutor contacts home to discuss strategies for improving attendance or supporting pupils if their absence is unavoidable.
2. This is followed up in writing by the school's Support and Attendance Manager.
3. The Director of Learning and Attendance Manager monitor the pupil's attendance closely for 1 month.

Stage 2: Amber Concern

This category includes:

- Any pupil who has less than 93% attendance and has had 3 periods of unrelated illness, **excluding** Covid-related illnesses/periods of isolation
- Any pupil who has had a 'yellow' intervention but fails to show improvement within 1 month
- Any pupil who is currently falling below 96% and has a history of poor/sporadic attendance
- Any pupil who has 3 unauthorised absences over a half term period
- For students whose circumstances mean they require additional support, we will apply the amber support process after 2 periods of unrelated absence in a half term or if attendance falls under 96%, excluding any Covid-related absence.

Actions:

1. Parents are invited in for a meeting with the Pupil Support and Attendance Manager and/or Director of Learning to examine the reasons for the child's absences.
2. Attendance targets are set and strategies agreed between school and home to ensure they are met.
3. The Director of Learning monitors the pupil's attendance closely for 1 month. If attendance improves a letter will be sent acknowledging their efforts. If no improvement is seen they move on to the next stage.

Stage 3: Red/Purple Concern

This category includes:

- Any pupil who has been an amber concern and has not shown improvement within 1 month.
- Any pupil with more than 5 days of unauthorised absences.
- For students whose circumstances mean they require additional support, we will apply the red/purple support process if attendance falls below 93%.

Actions:

1. Parents and pupils are invited into school to attend an Attendance Panel. This meeting will usually involve the Pastoral Support team and a senior member of staff:
 - Purple: Where poor attendance is because of a medical issue (supported by medical evidence) we will consider the following actions:
 - Adaptation of curriculum
 - Referral to Specialist Learning Centre
 - Referral to hospital teaching
 - Red: Where poor attendance is not for medical reasons, or there is no medical evidence:
 - Pupils receive a support programme designed to make immediate improvements to attendance
 - The pupil, parents and a representative from the school's senior leadership team sign an agreement setting out the necessary steps to bring this improvement
 - Parents are advised that any future absence will need to be supported by medical evidence. Without this evidence, absence is unauthorised

Stage 4 / Enforcement

Parents commit an offence if they fail to ensure their child attends school regularly. Should the pupil continue to have unauthorised absences after being placed in Red Concern, the school works with the Education and Attendance Service to explore legal methods of enforcing school attendance. This includes issuing a penalty notice and / or prosecution.

7 Punctuality

Good punctuality is also essential for pupils' progress. Pupils who are late for school miss learning and develop bad habits, resulting in them being unprepared for the world of work. Pupils who are late for school will be dealt with by the student services team and/or their form tutor and will receive a detention.

If we have concerns about a pupil's attendance pattern, we have a 3-stage approach:

Stage 1: Yellow Concern

This category includes:

- Any pupil with more than 6 lates or 4 U marks in a half term
- For students whose circumstances mean they require additional support, we will apply the yellow support process at 3 lates or 2 U marks

Actions:

1. Student Services will arrange a meeting with the student to explore reasons for lateness and offer any support
2. This is followed up in writing by student services
3. The Form Tutor will monitor the pupil's punctuality closely until the end of that term
4. At the end of term, the DoL and student services will review progress and:
 - If punctuality has improved, will recommend removal of monitoring
 - If punctuality is still a concern, the monitoring period and support will be extended
 - If lateness has increased, students will be moved to amber monitoring.
5. A letter will be sent home informing parents/carers of the outcome of the review

Stage 1: Amber Concern

This category includes:

- Any pupil with more than 10 lates or 6 U marks in a half term

Actions:

1. Parents are invited in to attend a meeting with Student Services and the DoL, to to examine the reasons for the child's lateness.
2. Punctuality targets are set and strategies agreed between school and home to ensure they are met. Any support identified will also be put in place.
3. The Director of Learning and Student Services monitors the pupil's punctuality closely for the agreed period. If punctuality improves a letter will be sent acknowledging the pupil's efforts. If no improvement is seen they move on to the next stage.

Stage 1: Red Concern

This category includes:

- Any pupil with more than 14 lates or 8 U marks in a half term

Actions:

1. Parents are invited in to attend an Attendance and Punctuality Panel with Student Services and a member of the Senior Team, to examine the reasons for the child's lateness. Fixed penalty fines will also be used when pupils are persistently late.
2. Punctuality targets are set and strategies agreed between school and home to ensure they are met. Any support identified will also be put in place.
3. The Director of Learning and Student Services monitors the pupil's punctuality closely for the agreed period. If punctuality improves a letter will be sent acknowledging the pupil's efforts. If no improvement is seen they move on to the next stage.

We understand that school buses are sometimes late. This will be taken into consideration when issuing punishments / fines.

8 Part-time Employment

Part-time employment cannot be accepted as a reason for non-attendance at detention or failure to do homework. Parents are reminded that no child under the age of 13 may be employed and that for children aged 13-16, full details must be sent to the Local Education Authority by the employer within four days. For any queries, please contact your local authority.

9 How we will support you in encouraging good attendance

School reports will show your child's level of attendance and punctuality record. We will clearly indicate if it is a cause for concern.

Pupils are regularly given up-to date information about their attendance / punctuality and form tutors will praise and reward those pupils with excellent attendance (100%-99%) and will hold coaching conversations with those that need improvement.

Parents will be informed if we have concerns about attendance or punctuality. In serious cases, parents will be invited to school for an Attendance and Punctuality Panel meeting with senior members of staff.

Appendix 1: The Blue Coat School Missing Pupil Policy

1. Rationale

Schools have a safeguarding duty for their pupils and effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, therefore it may not only be their educational attainment that is at risk, but also their safety and welfare.

Government guidance states that schools should make 'reasonable enquiries' to establish the whereabouts of a child missing from education

2. Purpose of the policy

- To ensure any pupil who is potentially missing from education is identified as soon as possible to minimise any risk of harm.
- To ensure the appropriate staff and outside agencies are notified promptly if we suspect a pupil is missing from education.
- To ensure school systems are updated promptly once it is established that a pupil will not be returning to school.

3. Circumstances under which policy applies

Oldham Council are notified of all pupils missing for 10 days. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or have been absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive days, the pupil can be removed from the school admission register, even it has been impossible to establish the whereabouts of the child. The school must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as the grounds for removal is met.

The withdrawal categories used by the Council are outlined in full in Appendix A(i) and (ii): 'Admission and Withdrawal Categories'. This policy is concerned with the following sections of the document:

- Left the area (without new address)
- Not returned from leave approved in advance
- Leave taken which has not been granted in advance

Some examples of scenarios in which this policy would be followed are outlined below:

- Pupil does not start school in September as anticipated and no notification is received by the school
- Pupil stops attending school and no explanation for this is received by the school
- Pupil does not return from a family holiday on the anticipated date and no notification is received
- School receives information that a pupil will no longer be attending school, e.g. from another pupil

It is expected that the school makes 'reasonable enquiries' to establish the whereabouts of a child jointly with the local authority before deleting them off the school roll. This gives schools the flexibility to act on a case-by-case basis. Examples contained in the statutory guidance include checking with parents, relatives and neighbours, checking with agencies known to be involved with the family and conducting home visits.

4. Procedure

If at any stage a member of staff has reason to believe a missing child is in immediate danger they should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The Safeguarding Lead will contact the relevant MASH team and, where appropriate, the police.

First day of absence: Student Services contact all known numbers for the pupil before the end of Period 1.

Days 2: Student Services to contact all known numbers.

Day 3: Student Services contacts all known numbers again and any agencies involved with the family. Attendance Manager conducts home visit and hand-delivers a letter, informing parents/carers of their visit and requesting that parents contact school by return to explain their child's absence.

Days 4: Student Services to contact all known numbers.

Day 5: Attendance Manager visits home address and if no-one is home, attempts to speak to immediate neighbours and hand-delivers a letter requesting that parents contact school immediately to inform parents that their child's continued absence is a safeguarding concern and that their child will be off-rolled after 20 days of non-attendance. Attendance Manager sends a copy of this letter to the Missing In Education Team at Oldham Council.

If the pupil and / or parent(s) are at home, Attendance Manager establishes reasons for child's absence and expected return date and discusses consequences of the pupils continued non-attendance. Attendance Manager to share any concerns with the designated child protection / safeguarding leads at the school and, where appropriate, local authority.

Days 6 – 7: Student Services contacts all known numbers daily.

Day 8: Attendance Manager conducts another home visit if this is deemed appropriate, e.g. if the school has no information about the whereabouts of the pupil.

Day 9: Student Services contacts all known numbers

Day 10: Attendance Manager completes Missing Pupil Form and sends to the Missing In Education Team, along with details of school investigations.

Day 20: If the pupil doesn't return to school, Attendance Manager informs Data Manager and other key staff that the pupil can be off-rolled as well as the Admissions Secretary, so the details can be recorded on the weekly Admissions and Withdrawals return to the local authority.

When a pupil leaves the school, the admission register must record the name of the pupil's new school and expected start date.

When notifying the local authority that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admissions register the school must provide:

- Name, address & contact number of the parent with whom the pupil lives
- Name and start date of the pupil's destination school (if applicable)
- The grounds for deletion from the admissions register
- Any contextual information (e.g. safeguarding concerns)

Any information the school has been unable to obtain should also be highlighted.

The Local Authority 'Overview of Missing Pupil Process' is shown as Appendix A(iii)

Appendix A(i) Pupil Registration Regulations – Withdrawal Categories
Schools/academies should only 'off roll' 'delete' in one of the below circumstances

PUPILS CIRCUMSTANCES	Code	FURTHER ACTION FOR SCHOOL
<p>Admission to another school Pupil has been admitted to another school and the previous school have had confirmation they have started.</p>	1	<p>Send Common Transfer File (CTF) to new school. Admission & Withdrawal (A&W) form to LA.</p>
<p>Left the area (with new address) School has become inaccessible Pupil has left Oldham with a confirmed address (but has not been admitted to another school) or has emigrated.</p>	2a	<p>Send CTF to new LA or to the Lost Pupil Database (LPD) if they have left the country. A&W form to LA. Complete notification form that a child/young person has left the country.</p>
<p>Left the area Missing Pupils Pupil has left their address and they are 'missing'. These pupils cannot be off rolled until the missing pupil procedures have been followed.</p>	2b	<p>Once the pupil has been 'missing' for 20 school days (and the LA has had the missing pupil form with evidence that investigations have taken place) pupil can be off rolled. CTF to be sent to LPD.</p>
<p>Not returned from Approved Leave Pupil has not returned from leave that HAS been agreed with school.</p>	3a	<p>The pupil has failed to return to school 10 days after the agreed return date. Provide LA with evidence of reasonable investigations (i.e. home visit log, parental letter, and contact with possible agencies that are involved). Confirm with Education Attendance Service that the pupil can be off rolled. CTF to be sent to LPD.</p>
<p>Unauthorised Leave Pupil has taken leave not agreed with school.</p>	3b	<p>The pupil has taken leave which has not been granted and not returned within 20 school days. Provide LA with evidence of reasonable investigations (i.e. home visit log, parental letter, and contact with possible agencies that are involved). Confirm with Education Attendance Service that the pupil can be off rolled. CTF to be sent to LPD.</p>
<p>Permanent Exclusion Pupil has been Permanently Excluded AND their deadline for appeal has been reached.</p>	4	<p>Send CTF to new school, Kingsland School or LA (353LLLL) if no school confirmed.</p>
<p>Education otherwise than in school Pupil is to be educated at home or otherwise than in a school. Parents must put this in writing to school.</p>	5	<p>School must notify the LA of all requests to educate at home or otherwise than in a school. CTF to go to the LPD.</p>
<p>Deceased pupil Local Authority to be informed 0161 770 1648.</p>	6	<p>No further action from school.</p>

<p>Medical Reasons</p> <p>School have been provided with medical evidence stating that the pupil is not well enough to attend school before ceasing to be statutory school age. Copy of evidence needs to be sent to LA asap BEFORE off rolling.</p>	7	Send CTF to LA (353LLLL).
<p>In Custody</p> <p>Pupil has been detained in custody for more than 4 months. School to discuss with LA BEFORE off rolling.</p>	8	Send CTF to LA (353LLLL).
<p>Pupil has a School Attendance Order (SAO) naming a particular school and the SAO is then revoked on the grounds arrangements have been made to educate otherwise than at school.</p>	9	No further action.
<p>Pupil has a School Attendance Order (SAO) naming a particular school and the SAO is then revoked on the grounds arrangements have been made to admit the pupil to another school.</p>	10	No further action.
<p>Pupil is registered at more than one school and a mutual decision is made to delete registration at one of the schools.</p>	11	No further action.
<p>Pupils that cease to be of compulsory school age.</p>	12	No further action.
<p>Pupils that cease to be a pupil of the school (not including maintained schools, academies, CTC, UTC).</p>	13	No further action.
<p>Where a pupil has been admitted to the nursery provision of the school and does not continue in to the reception class.</p>	14	No further action.
<p>Where a pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an academy and has failed to pay for chargeable board and lodging and those charges remain unpaid at the end of the school term they relate to.</p>	15	No further action.
<p><i>Any registered pupils at special schools cannot be removed from the admission register of that school without the consent of the Local Authority</i></p>		
<p>The Vulnerable Groups Officer (CME Team) are available on 0161 770 4201 / 3665. The Education Attendance Service are available on 0161 770 6620.</p>		

Appendix A (ii) – Admission and withdrawal procedures

Step 1

Schools must complete an admission and withdrawal form for every new addition and every deletion from the school's register



Step 2

Schools must inform the LA of every new starter and every deletion within 5 school days. To be sent via e-mail to ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk



Step 3

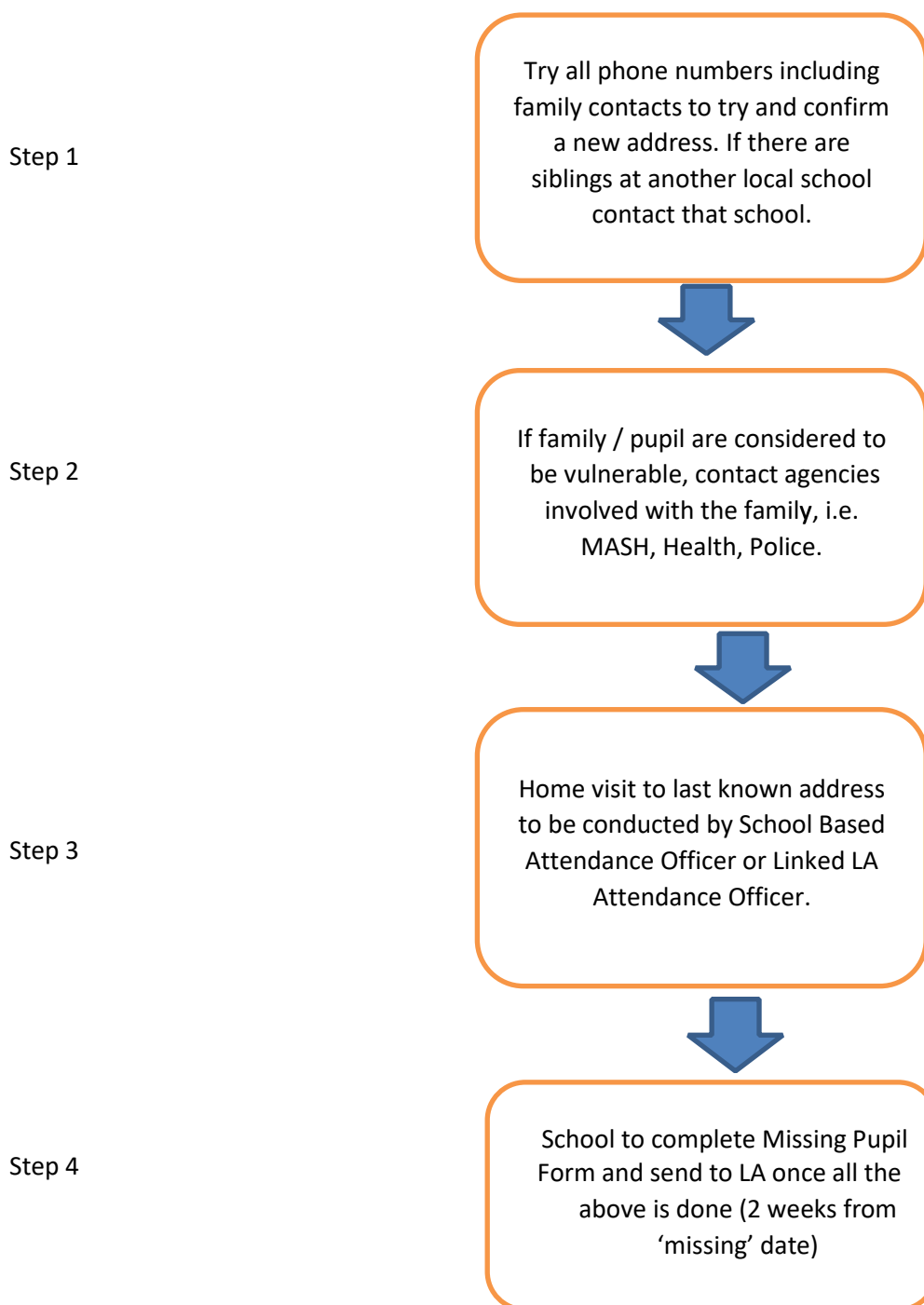
All admission and withdrawal forms must be complete, giving full details of the pupil, current/previous addresses, current/previous schools, parental contact details and destinations



Step 4

If any pupil is taken off the school register for the reason code 2b, the missing pupil procedures must be followed and evidenced. School investigation evidence will also be needed for code 3a and 3b. For any pupil that has left the county; schools must complete the notification form in appendix 5

Appendix A (iii) – Missing pupil procedures/checklist
Guide to school actions for a pupil whose whereabouts are unknown (Missing Pupils) – **Code 2b**



Following the completion of the above, the Access Service will undertake the task of 'tracking' the pupil. This will include checks on benefits /council tax/ health etc. as well as contacting other boroughs. It is essential the above is completed before the missing pupil form is sent in. Vulnerable Groups Officer (CME team) are on 0161 770 4201/3665 cme@oldham.gov.uk

Education Attendance Service (EAS team) are on 0161 770 6620 sais@oldham.gov.uk