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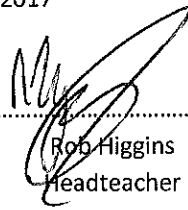
# Pupil Attendance policy

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Review Date: Autumn 2020

Policy reviewed by Headteacher  
Autumn 2017

Signed.....



Rob Higgins  
Headteacher

THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL  
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# 1 Blue Coat Pupil Attendance Policy

At Blue Coat we are proud of our high attendance levels and aim to improve them still further. 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 students 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 students may have to miss school due to ill health. We ask that parents:

- 1) Adopt a bracing approach to illness. Please only keep students 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 write *into student services* 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. The Government has recently made amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 which come into force on 1st September 2013. The amendment states **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 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. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored. Parents will also be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action if they do not ensure their child attends school regularly.

## 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 student'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 student's absence by 9.00am on the first day of absence, we will:

**Day 1:** Contact parents/carers by phone to confirm a student'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 student is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a student's parent/carer on day 1, a further attempt to contact parents is made.

**Day 3:** If a student is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a student'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 student until we make contact with parents / carers or establish that the student is missing.

If we are unable to obtain a satisfactory explanation for a student'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 student's absence and get them back into school as soon as possible.

Where this is not possible, the student 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 students' attendance. If we have concerns about a student's attendance pattern we have a 3 stage approach: -

### Stage 1: Yellow Concerns

This category includes:

- Any student who is falling below 95% **excluding** students who have had one period of illness.
- Any student with any unauthorised absence.
- Any student who has a concerning pattern of medical appointments.

### Actions:

The form tutor contacts home to discuss strategies for improving attendance or supporting students if their absence is unavoidable.

1. This is followed up in writing by the school's Support and Attendance Manager.
2. The Director of Learning and Attendance Manager monitor the student's attendance closely for 1 month.

#### Stage 2: Amber Concern

This category includes:

- Any student who has less than 95% attendance and has had over 2 periods of unrelated illness.
- Any student who has had a 'yellow' intervention but is failing to show improvement within 1 month.
- Any student who is currently falling below 95% and has a history of poor/sporadic attendance.
- Any student who has more than 4 unauthorised absences.

Actions:

1. Parents are invited in for a meeting with the Student Support and Attendance Manager and Form Tutor 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 student'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 Concern

This category includes:

- Any student who has been an amber concern and has not shown improvement within 1 month.
- Any student with more than 10 unauthorised absences.

Actions:

Parents and students are invited into school to attend an Attendance Panel. This meeting will usually involve a member of the Pastoral Team and a representative from the Education and Attendance Service.

Possible actions from this meeting

If poor attendance is because of a medical issue (supported by medical evidence) we will consider the following actions:

- Adaption of curriculum
- Referral to Specialist Learning Centre
- Referral to hospital teaching

If the poor attendance is not for medical reasons (there is no medical evidence) the following actions are taken:

- Students are placed on Fast Track to attendance which is an intensive support programme designed to bring attendance levels up with immediate effect.

- The student, parents and a representative from the school's senior leadership team sign an agreement setting out what steps will be taken to bring about this improvement.
- Parents are advised that from this point forward all 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 student 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 students' progress. Students who are late for school miss learning and develop bad habits resulting in them being unprepared for the world of work. Students who are late for school will be dealt with by their form tutor and may receive a detention.

If their lateness becomes habitual, we will ask parents to attend an Attendance and Punctuality Panel. Fixed penalty fines will also be used when students are persistently late. 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 of 13-16 full details must be sent to the Local Education Authority by the employer within four days. For any queries, contact your local authority.

### 9 Other ways in which we will support 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.
- We will hold half termly 'Attendance Weeks' in school where all students will be given up-to-date information about their attendance / punctuality and form tutors will praise students with excellent attendance 100%-99% and will hold coaching conversations with those that need improvement.
- We will reward and recognise students with excellent attendance records.
- Parents will be informed by letter / phone call if we have concerns about attendance and punctuality levels.
- Where we feel additional support may improve attendance and/or punctuality our Attendance Officer will contact parents/carers. This may be by telephone, by letter or they may visit the family home.
- In severe cases of poor attendance / punctuality, parents will be asked to come into 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 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 student 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 student is missing from education.
- To ensure school systems are updated promptly once it is established that a student will not be returning to school.

## 3. Circumstances under which policy applies

Oldham Council should be notified of all students missing for 10 days. 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. Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorized absence or have been absent without authorization for 20 consecutive days, the student can be removed from the school admission register even it has been impossible to establish the whereabouts of the child.

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:

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

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 safeguarding lead for their key stage and / or the Safeguarding and Family Liaison Officer immediately. The Safeguarding Lead will contact the relevant MASH team and, where appropriate, the Police.

**First day of absence:** Pastoral Officer, contacts all known numbers for the student before the end of Period 1. Pastoral Officer informs the Attendance Manager, at end of the first day if s/he is unable to contact parent / carer.

**Days 2 & 3:** Pastoral Officer to contact all known numbers on days 2 & 3.

**Day 4:** Pastoral Officer contacts all known numbers. Attendance Manager contacts any agencies involved with the family.

**Day 5:** Attendance Manager visits home address and, if no one home, attempts to speak to immediate neighbours and hand delivers a letter requesting that parents contact school by return to explain their child's absence. The letter includes a reminder that the child will be off-rolled after 20 days of nonattendance. Attendance Manager sends a copy of this letter to the Pupil Tracking Service at Oldham Council.

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

**Days 6 – 9:** Pastoral Officer contacts all known numbers daily.

**Day 9:** Attendance Manager conducts another home visit if this is deemed appropriate e.g. if the school has no information about the whereabouts of the student.

**Day 10:** Attendance Manager completes Missing Pupil Form and sends this to Pupil Tracking Service along with details of school investigations. Students details will be included on the 10-day absence log which is sent weekly to Oldham Council.

**Day 20:** If the student doesn't return Attendance Manager informs Information Manager that the student can be off rolled and 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 student's new school and expected start date.

When notifying the local authority that a student's name is being deleted off the admissions register the school needs to provide all relevant information including:

- Name, address & contact number of the parent with whom the student lives
- Name and start date of the student's destination school (if applicable)
- The grounds for deletion off 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><b>Admission to another school</b>  Pupil has been admitted to <b>another school</b> and the previous school have had confirmation they have started.</p>	<b>1</b>	<p>Send Common Transfer File (CTF) to new school.  Admission &amp; Withdrawal (A&amp;W) form to LA.</p>
<p><b>Left the area (with new address)</b>  <b>School has become inaccessible</b>  Pupil has left Oldham with a confirmed address (but has not been admitted to another school) or has emigrated.</p>	<b>2a</b>	<p>Send CTF to new LA or to the Lost Pupil Database (LPD) if they have left the country. A&amp;W form to LA. Complete notification form that a child/young person has left the country.</p>
<p><b>Left the area</b>  <b>Missing Pupils</b>  Pupil has left their address and they are 'missing'.  These pupils cannot be off rolled until the missing pupil procedures have been followed.</p>	<b>2b</b>	<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><b>Not returned from Approved Leave</b>  Pupil has not returned from leave that HAS been agreed with school.</p>	<b>3a</b>	<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><b>Unauthorised Leave</b>  Pupil has taken leave not agreed with school.</p>	<b>3b</b>	<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><b>Permanent Exclusion</b>  Pupil has been Permanently Excluded AND their deadline for appeal has been reached.</p>	<b>4</b>	<p>Send CTF to new school, Kingsland School or LA (353LLLL) if no school confirmed.</p>
<p><b>Education otherwise than in school</b>  Pupil is to be educated at home or otherwise than in a school. Parents must put this in writing to school.</p>	<b>5</b>	<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><b>Deceased pupil</b>  Local Authority to be informed 0161 770 1648.</p>	<b>6</b>	<p>No further action from school.</p>



<p><b>Medical Reasons</b></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><b>In Custody</b></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](mailto:ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk)

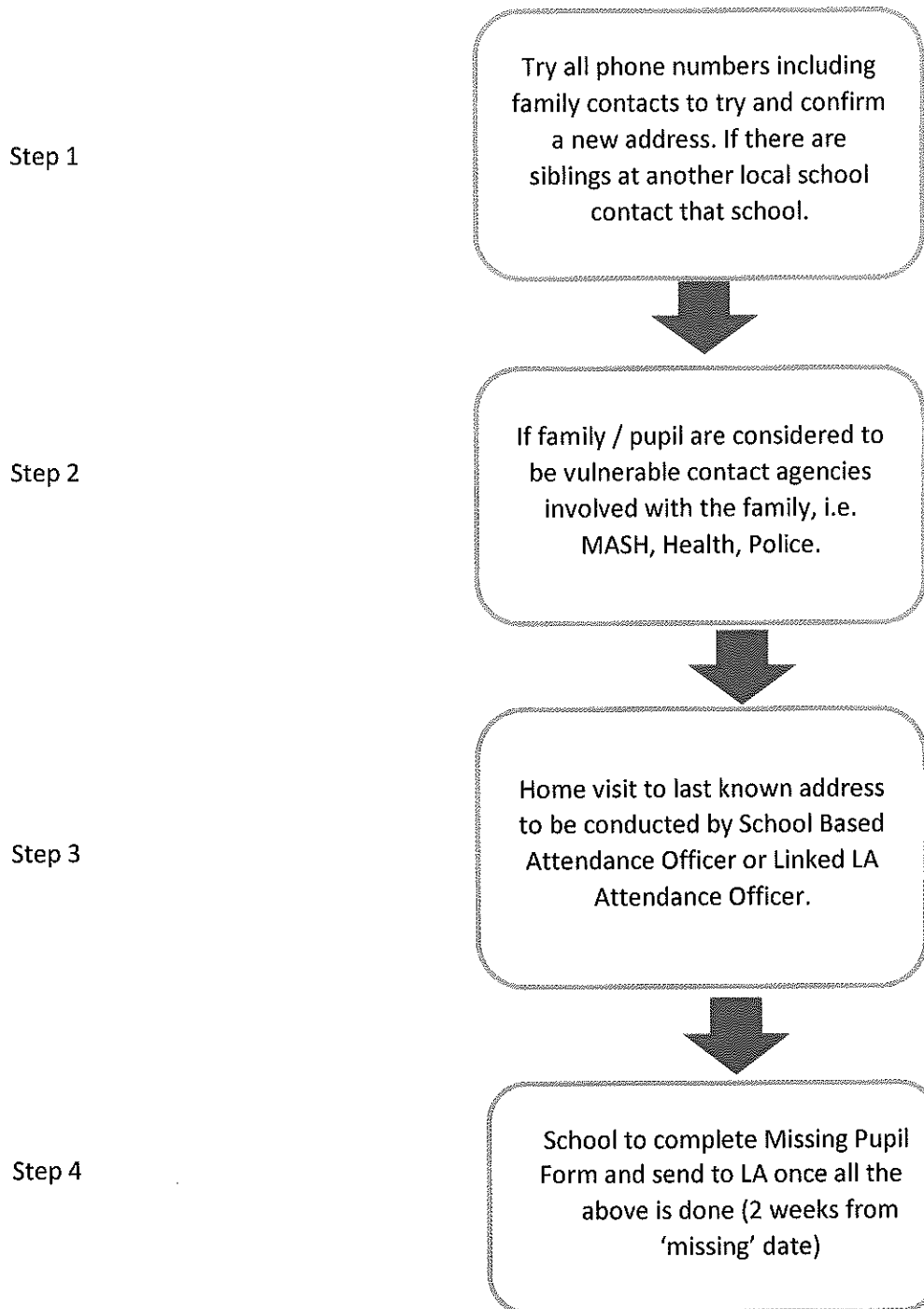
Step 3

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](mailto:cme@oldham.gov.uk)

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