



Bellevue Place

EDUCATION TRUST

Attendance Policy

Signed:	
Chair of Trust Board:	Claire Delaney
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1.0 Bellevue Place Education Trust – Our Commitment

Learn. Enjoy. Succeed.

Three words that mean the world to us.
Three words that have been with us from the day we started Bellevue Place Education Trust.
Three words that govern all that we do.

As a parent you can expect excellence, both in how we teach and nurture your child. We foster a positive attitude to life, encouraging a ‘be interested and be interesting’ attitude by providing a rich learning environment full of arts, drama, sport, music and academic rigour.

Bellevue Place children are happy, confident, successful 'all rounders' who expect to win and achieve in an inclusive setting where children, parents and school staff work together to provide the best. Our commitment to you and your child is that we will teach them to learn, enjoy and succeed both in their school career and beyond.

2.0 Introduction

The Trust, Local Advisory Board and staff in partnership with parents and pupils are committed to schools which serve the community and of which the community is proud.

The Trust, Local Advisory Board and staff firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end, all schools within the Trust will do all they can to encourage parents and carers to ensure that the pupils in our care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and promptly resolved.

This policy applies to all schools within BPET. All schools will adopt this version of the policy in full, adapting their own attendance procedures (section 7). BPET schools use Arbor to log pupil attendance, monitoring where attendance dips below an acceptable level. Parents can expect to be questioned and challenged, if this occurs. The Trust will set an annual attendance target for all schools, which will usually be above national average.

Research demonstrates that regular attendance is important for several reasons:

- It leads to better progress, both socially and academically
- statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- It leads to greater confidence and security for our children, which leads to better social progress
- It gives greater continuity to the learning process
- It makes the transfer to secondary school easier

3.0 Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:	We expect that all parents/ carers who have day to day responsibility for children will:	We expect that school staff will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend school regularly • Attend school punctually • Attend school appropriately prepared • Tell someone if there is anything that is preventing these actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities • Ensure that the child (ren) in their care arrives at school punctually, prepared for the school day • Ensure that they contact the school to explain the reason for absence whenever their child is unable to attend school • Contact the school on the first day of absence and send a note on their return to school • Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily • Monitor every pupil's attendance • Contact parents/ carers if a pupil fails to attend school and where no message has been received • Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes authorising the absence • Encourage good attendance • Provide a safe learning environment • Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns • Make initial enquiries to parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the Trust's expectations with regard to regular school attendance • Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service or address this with parents in an appropriate and effective way • Meet, where possible, the requirements of the UN convention – The Rights of the Child, by ensuring that they are consulted in all decisions that relate to them

4.0 Holidays

We are always concerned when pupils miss school time as a result of holidays. Parents/carers need to complete a leave of absence form if they wish to take their child out of school during term time.

- The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave. This will often involve a meeting with the headteacher and attendance officer.

- The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school during term time. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher and agreed only in exceptional circumstances.
- Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
Immediately before and during assessment periods
When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If pupils miss extended periods of time, it is difficult for them to catch up. Proper understanding of schoolwork only takes place when the pupil is regularly in the classroom.

5.0 Unauthorised and Authorised Absences

- The Law allows some absences - for example, when a child is ill or there is a crisis such as bereavement in the family.
- Occasionally, there are other reasons or particular problems at home. We encourage parents/carers to let us know, so that we can deal with these sympathetically.
- Appointments during school time should be kept to an absolute minimum. It is unsettling for pupils to miss part of the school day. If parents/carers need to take their child out of school during the day, they must be collected from school. They cannot be allowed go to the bus stop or surgery unaccompanied. If your child requires an appointment, we would encourage you to make the appointment out of school hours or during the school holidays. We understand at times this is unavoidable and therefore on these rare occasions, we request that you provide us with evidence to support this.
- Reasons such as a child's birthday, sleeping in late, having a haircut, buying a new pair of shoes, holidays abroad or shopping are not permitted.

5.1 Penalty Charge Notices

- If your child takes unauthorised leave from school, you will be issued with a penalty charge notice from Barnet. Unauthorised leave is any leave that has not been authorised by the headteacher.
- If your child misses the last or first day of any term without medical evidence, you will be issued with a penalty charge notice from Barnet.
- Penalty notices are per parent per child. Parents have 21 days to pay at the reduced rate of £60 and a further 7 days at £120.
- If your child has six unauthorised lates at school in any four-week period, you will be issued with a penalty charge notice from Barnet.

6.0 Other Absences

6.1 Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling

- Parents/carers of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance through the completion of a leave of absence form.
- Parents/carers must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the Headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they should discuss with the parent/carer the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs.

- Where a child's attendance has fallen to below 90%, leave of absence is unlikely to be approved unless there are arrangements for the provision of an education tutor.
- Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

6.2 Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport

- Parents/carers of outstanding sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions through the completion of a leave of absence form
Headteacher's can apply their discretion as to whether to authorise this depending on the nature of the competition and the frequency of the absence. It is obviously vital to understand how learning will continue if absence occurs.
- Permission for a child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headteacher, but this is not recommended to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

6.3 Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families

- Absence of a child from a Traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return.
- To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. This results in the school retaining the Traveller child on the school roll while they are travelling and records the absence as authorised through the T code.
- Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.

7.0 Encouraging Attendance

At each BPET School, we encourage attendance in the following ways:

- By providing a welcoming and safe environment
- Involving pupils in attendance through an attendance reward system
- By responding promptly to a pupil's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils
- By marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If a pupil arrives at school after the close of register without a written or previously notified explanation, the lateness will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the pupil's name recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill
- By publishing and displaying attendance statistics and school attendance targets
- By celebrating good and improved attendance
- By monitoring pupils' attendance and informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance; arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the EWS or implementing relevant actions as agreed with parents if the irregular attendance continues.
- By reporting to the Board on a regular basis school attendance statistics.

8.0 Attendance Procedures

Please see the school specific policy

9.0 Attendance Monitoring

The Headteacher is responsible for undertaking daily routine attendance monitoring. This involves dealing with late pupils, contacting parents about on-going attendance and punctuality issues and ensuring that agreed systems are followed.

Each half term, the Headteacher will discuss the school's overall attendance and will identify specific pupils who cause concern in relation to either attendance or punctuality.

10.0 Legal action to enforce school attendance

When a pupils' attendance falls below 90% the school will decide on a case by case basis whether or not to refer the case to the local authority. The local authority may take the following legal powers to enforce school attendance. This includes:

- Parenting Order – this requires the parent/carer to attend parenting classes. The court will mandate what the parent/carer needs to undertake to improve the child's school attendance.
- Education Supervision Order - If the local authority thinks the parent/carer needs support getting their child to go to school but the parent is not co-operating, they can apply to a court for an Education Supervision Order. A supervisor will be appointed to assist the parent/carer in getting their child to school. The local authority can do this instead of prosecuting the parent/carer, or as well.
- School Attendance Order – A parent/carer can be issued with a School Attendance Order if the local council thinks the child isn't getting an education. The parent/carer has 15 days to provide evidence that they have registered their child with a school or that they are giving them home education. The order will require the parent/carer to send their child to a specific school and if they don't, they are likely to be prosecuted or given a fine.
- Fine – Parents/carers are fined by the local authority, which rises if the fine is not paid within 21 days. If parents/carers don't pay the fine after 28 days they can be prosecuted for their child's absence from school.
- Prosecution – a parent/carer could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court will also give the parent/carer a Parenting Order.

The school will need to ensure they follow all notifications required to enable these legal actions.

11.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy statement will be reviewed bi-annually and updated in consultation with key staff, in line with current best practice as considered necessary.

12.0 Approval by the Bellevue Place Education Trust Board

This policy has been formally approved and adopted by the BPET Board and will be reviewed every two years.