



## **Mission Statement**

*Bristol Cathedral Choir School is a Church of England Academy with an ethos reflecting the Christian faith and with music and mathematics as its specialisms.*

*It aspires to be a learning community where all achieve their full potential in a supportive and tolerant environment, so that they can contribute fully to the society in which they live.*

## **THE BACKGROUND FRAMEWORK TO THE POLICY**

This policy has been designed to comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006/2007 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 that came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

## **Introduction**

At Bristol Cathedral Choir School we recognise the importance of regular school attendance as a key factor in promoting the welfare, social inclusion and achievement of pupils. A high priority is given to ensuring that parents and pupils are supported to achieve regular attendance of pupils registered in our school.

## **Aims & Objectives / Rationale**

In law every parent of every child of compulsory school age has a duty to ensure that he or she receives sufficient fulltime education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude, either by regular attendance at school, or otherwise (section 7 of the Education Act 1996). Full-time education means attendance for the period prescribed by the school authorities and a pupil may be marked absent if he or she arrives after the time when the school closes its register.

## **Purpose**

- To support the school vision, mission and aims
- To ensure all pupils achieve their full potential
- To support all pupils to achieve their maximum possible attendance
- To ensure the safety of all pupils by recording attendance and lateness

## **Process / Procedure**

1. A register of attendance will be kept at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
2. Parents should contact the Attendance Officer and give a reason for absence as early as possible on every day for which their child is absent. A note, verbal message or telephone call is required.
3. Parents may not authorise absence - only schools can do this. If school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised.
4. After persistent absence due to illness the school may request documentary evidence such as prescription note or GP appointment card. A doctor's "note" will only be requested in exceptional circumstances.
5. Parents are to be encouraged to send children to school when suffering very minor symptoms of illness such as mild cold, tiredness etc.

However, if a child has vomited or suffered from diarrhoea they should not return to school for 48 hours after the last symptom.

6. Any pupil arriving after 9.45am without valid given reason will automatically be assigned code "U" indicating "unauthorised lateness"
7. Attendance is monitored by the Attendance Officer and assessed by House Leaders every half term. Poor attendance will result in the following actions being taken at the school's discretion:
  - a) <95% Letter home from House Leader to raise awareness about the impact of reduced attendance
  - b) <90% Parents invited to attend Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) meeting with House Leader/Attendance Officer.
  - c) <85% Parents requested to attend Assistant Principal's Attendance meeting.
8. When attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern, the Principal will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service for intervention and support using the thresholds detailed in the appendix.
9. Penalty Notices may be requested from the Local authority when 8 or more unauthorised absences are accrued in a 10 week period. An absence is a morning or an afternoon session. This is in line with Bristol City Council's Education Welfare Service's Code of Conduct.
10. If a student persistently has unauthorised absence (more than 20 sessions in a ten week period, ie less than 80% attendance), the School may refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service to be considered for the Fast Track prosecution service, in line with Bristol City Council's Code of Conduct.
11. The Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. A formal application should be made to the school by sending an Absence Request form (see Appendix) addressed to the Principal giving specific reasons for requesting absence during term time, at least 4 school weeks in advance of the requested dates. This should be emailed to the Attendance Officer (attendance@bristolcathedral.org.uk)
12. When requests for absence are considered, the Principal may only authorise in exceptional circumstances. The Principal will determine the number of school days the pupil(s) can be away from school if the leave is granted.
13. Any unauthorised absence may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being requested from Bristol City Council EWS. (£60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days or £120 if they pay within 28 days). Failure to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice will result in legal action being taken by Bristol City Council EWS.
14. The Principal will always raise concerns with the Education Welfare Service and, in addition, the following departments will also be contacted when there are attendance concerns about such pupils:
  - i. Pupils on Child Protection (CP) register - Social Worker, Social Services
  - ii. Looked After Pupils - Behaviour Support Co-ordinator, Central Teaching Services
  - iii. Pupils with statements of SEN - Caseworker, SEN section
15. Parents will be contacted and supported to improve the attendance of pupils whose percentage attendance is a cause for concern. This may include the following forms of intervention:
  - i. Parenting Contracts
  - ii. Fixed Penalty Notices
  - iii. Fast Track to Prosecution
16. Attendance will be regularly reported to governors and the DFE
17. Penalty notices When the decision has been made not to authorise a request for leave of absence, parents/carers will be informed in line

with the academy absence procedures. The academy may send in a request to the local authority for the consideration of a penalty notice, who will then make the final decision about whether a penalty notice will be issued.

18. Education supervision orders. An academy, in conjunction with Bristol City Council, may consider applying to the courts for an education supervision order when a parent/carer fails to ensure their child has regular school attendance. The academy will inform the parent/carer that they are considering this option prior to the application.
19. When an education supervision order fails or the application is deemed inappropriate, the academy may apply to the local authority for a prosecution where attendance continues to be poor and when no improvement is seen. If a parent/carer does not co-operate with the Education Supervision Order (ESO) the parent/carer could be referred back to the court for a potential breach of the Order. The local authority may prosecute a parent/carer, this could result in a more severe penalty including a fine of up to £2500, a Community Order or, in extreme cases a prison sentence of up to three months.

## **Lateness**

Procedure for tutor:

1. Lateness is defined as not being in attendance for registration at 8.40am / 1.15pm.
2. Arriving during the registration / tutor period is to be considered "late." Any student arriving in school after 8.40 will be directed to the late tutor group, monitored by SLT.
3. Tutor to indicate initial "absence" in register with "N"
4. Subsequent presence of late pupil to be indicated by replacing "N" with the "L" by Attendance Officer.
5. If student signs into school after 9:45am without a valid reason being given, the "U" code should be used. This also applies after 2:30pm.

Procedure for late pupils:

1. Pupil to sign in at late tutor group, giving a reason for their lateness.
2. Pupil to attend relevant assembly as directed.
3. Pupils failing to follow this procedure satisfactorily may be classed as truanting.

The procedure for dealing with lateness (that is solely due to responsibility of parent or pupil) is as follows:

- For each L mark recorded in a morning session, pupils will be expected to sit a 'late detention' of ten minutes on Friday after school.
- For every subsequent L mark recorded in a morning session that week, a further ten minutes will be added to the detention up to a maximum of 50 minutes.
- Parents will be contacted on every occasion that their child is late to school. They may provide a reason for their child's lateness which will be taken into account by the Attendance Officer when deciding whether the pupil should attend a late detention.

For pupils with persistent lateness, House Leaders may introduce bespoke strategies to assist them with punctuality.

## **Conclusion**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- DFE Attendance Guidelines

- OfSTED Framework for Inspecting Schools
- Teaching and Learning Policy BCCS
- Equal Opportunities and Race Equality Policy BCCS
- Curriculum Policy BCCS

### **Appendices**

Absence Request Form

Standard Attendance Letters 0-4

School Attendance Meeting Pro Forma

Interventions and Thresholds

# BRISTOL CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL ABSENCE REQUEST FORM



Regular attendance is vital for your child's education progress. The Academy expects all parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences taken during school time, could hinder academic progress.

If you wish to apply for your child to be absent from school for any reason, please complete this form **and return it to school at least four weeks before the intended absence date.**

Thank you.

## APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

**Full name(s) of child(ren)**

**Address**

**Reason for application and dates**

**Signature of parent(s)/carer(s)**

**Date**

The Principal will consider the following points before authorising leave:

1. The child's previous attendance history.
2. The age of the child.
3. The child's stage of education.
4. The time of year - SATS or exams.
5. The nature of the trip - an exceptional experience.
6. Whether the parents are restricted in terms of leave from their employer.

**Office use only:**

Seen by Principal / Vice Principal:

Authorised :

Not Authorised:

Date: / /

## Interventions and Thresholds Guidance

When?	What?	Who?
<b>Sporadic Absence</b> pattern develops, below 95%	<b>Phone call or letter</b> home to raise awareness that odd days off have greater impact etc. at House Leader discretion.	House leaders/Attendance Officer
Below 90% sporadic absence at least 1 day in every 3 weeks	<b>School Attendance Meeting</b>	House Leaders/Attendance Officer
Below 85% Broken Weeks At least 1 in 3	<b>School Attendance Meeting.</b> No <b>unauthorised absence</b> from this point without Medical information (eg prescription or appointment card) Home Visit	Assistant Principal-attendance
No improvement	Attendance Panel Review	Assistant Principal-pastoral
Continued Unauthorised absences	Apply to EWS for prosecution	Principal
90% Persistent Absences level	Has to be reported to the DFE. All students below 80% must have reasons investigated by Attendance Officer/House Leader and a clear plan in place for improving attendance.	Reporting done by Attendance Officer. Action Plans to be completed by relevant staff (Assistant Principal, SENCO/HL/Attendance Officer) as part of ongoing attendance procedures