BURY
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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Author: Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)

This policy is for Bury Grammar School

Key School contacts

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1. Introduction

This policy applies to all pupils within school from their 5th birthday.

The School expects full attendance. It is important for pupils to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Principal and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
The School is open for approximately 180 days each year and pupils are expected to be in attendance at all times, save for periods of official study leave, staff development days (designated home study days for pupils) and a small number of other occasions (e.g. the Infants do not attend at all on Founders' Day and Juniors and Seniors have a holiday in the afternoon).

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early, exercising professional curiosity and working with families and partner agencies to identify and address barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity.
- Recognising that attendance is a safeguarding issue and that patterns of absence, persistent absence and severe absence may indicate unmet needs, abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health difficulties or other safeguarding concerns.
- Prioritising, and where possible, improving attendance and punctuality across the School, to reduce absence in order to prevent children becoming children missing education, and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.

- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as Family Help, Early Help and other appropriate multi-agency services.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation
- DfE (2026) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE)
- DfE (2026) Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DFE (2024) Sharing Daily Pupil Attendance Data
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance'
- Office of the Children's Commissioner (2024) 'Guidance for Parents on school attendance'
- NHS (2024) 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2017) 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school'
- DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education: guidance for schools'

The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures;
- Risk assessment policy for pupil welfare;
- Missing child policy and procedures
- Special educational needs and disability policy;
- Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Physical Intervention Policy;
- Exclusion and Required Removals Policy; and
- The Parent Contract;

3. Publication and availability

This policy is published on the School website. This policy will be sent to parents when pupils join the School and parents will be reminded of it at the beginning of the school year and when the policy is updated.

This policy is available in hard copy on request. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

4. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the School has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the School has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the School has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA)

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Severe absence (SA)

- Missing 50% or more of possible sessions

Proprietor

- The board of Governors

Parent:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil
- Any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

Children missing education (CME):

- children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a School and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at School

5. The importance of good attendance

The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

- the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the School's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;
- the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding, online safety, wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;
- the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents;
- that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and
- children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

6. School responsibilities and monitoring of attendance and punctuality

The proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

The proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Assistant Head Pastoral who have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school.

The School's Attendance Champion (SAC) is Mrs Rachel Newbold.

Their responsibilities are:

- to formulate a clear vision for attendance improvement;
- to evaluate and monitor expectations and processes;
- to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and
- to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and parents.

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) has day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. In conjunction with the Senior Deputy Head Pastoral they:

- have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;
- make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with the pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;
- look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance
- deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;
- consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and

- discuss non-attendance and/or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

Form tutors, Class Teachers, The Pastoral Officer and Heads of Year also monitor punctuality and attendance. Continued lateness to school will result in sanctions. The School may contact parents when a pupil's attendance falls below 95% and there has been more than one period of absence. The School will also contact the parents of pupils whose attendance is at 92% or below at the end of each term and towards the end of the school year to make parents aware of the rate of absence and also to offer support and advice. More regular contact with parents will be made at any point in the school year if there are concerns for a pupil's overall attendance, punctuality and authorised/ unauthorised absence. Concerns about attendance are also raised by Heads of Year with the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)/ Senior Teacher Pastoral using CPOMS and pastoral meetings in school.

Where a parent has not supplied a reason for an absence within 5 school days, the absence will be deemed as unauthorised, and the code changed from 'N' to 'O'. If a subsequent reason for the absence is provided by a parent, then the absence may then be authorised with an appropriate code.
The School will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The School will collect data for:

- The School cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND and LAC/ PLAC
- Those at risk of Persistent or Severe Absence
- Pupils with identified mental health needs
- Pupils with an allocated social worker

The School will conduct thorough analysis of the above data basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

Staff should exercise professional curiosity when considering attendance concerns and seek to understand the wider context of a pupil's attendance, behaviour, family circumstances, wellbeing, online activity and any safeguarding concerns.

The School will provide regular reports to staff across the School to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Senior Deputy Head Pastoral and Assistant Head Pastoral and wider pastoral team will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Governors will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

Governors will also seek assurance that attendance arrangements remain fully aligned with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and that attendance information is considered alongside wider safeguarding information where appropriate.

Where possible, the School will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

7. Pupil responsibilities

School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

Pupils should be aware that:

- they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;
- they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;
- they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;
- they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;
- any unexplained absence will be followed up;
- persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:
    - offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;
    - communication with parents;
    - reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and

        sanctions against them or their parents in line with the School's behaviour policies.

If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

The School will seek and consider the views, wishes and feelings of pupils when identifying barriers to attendance and planning appropriate support, taking account of their age, understanding and any additional needs.

8. Parent / carer responsibilities

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the School.

The School will help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.

The School expects all parents to:

- make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
- notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this;
- notify the School in writing if their child will no longer attend the School after a certain day and supply information to the School about how their child will be continuing to receive suitable education; and
- cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

9. Staff Training

The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it.

The School will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and update training.

The School will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The School’s strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The skills to interpret and analyse attendance data
- The School’s procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school may indicate a safeguarding concern and that attendance patterns should always be considered alongside wider safeguarding information. Staff will understand that multiple low-level concerns, when viewed together, may indicate increasing risk and should be reported in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The School maintains written records of all staff training.

10. Attendance Monitoring procedures

Primary Division

Absence period	**Action**
Step 1 - 3 consecutive days of absence	FT to make phone call home on 3rd day of absence or flag with Head of Infants to make contact home
Step 2 - 92% and below (at end of Term 1)	Email from Head of Infants informing parent of pupil's attendance % – advising that it is school policy to inform parents where attendance falls below this level. Follow up phone call from class teacher to offer support/ identifying any barriers to attendance.
Step 3 - Below 92% (at end of Term 2 (where consistent improvement has not be made and/ or worsening absence since last communication)	Additional Supportive letter to improve attendance at school.
Step 4- where consistent improvement has not be made and/ or worsening absence since last communication) after already initiating Step 1-3	Options depending on the circumstances: • Second email (where appropriate) • Phone call home • Face-to face meeting If there is insufficient improvement or worsening absence and the above intervention has failed to bring about improvement consultation with Education Welfare Office/ Attendance Team at Bury Local Authority will be made for advice, if not already done so previously.

Seniors and Sixth Form

Absence period	**Action**
Step 1 - 3 consecutive days of absence	FT to make phone call home on 3rd day or flag with Pastoral Officer (PO) to make phone call home. FT or PO to call home.
Step 2 - 92% and below (at end of Term 1)	Email from PO informing parent of pupil's attendance % – advising that it is school policy to inform parents where attendance falls below this level. Follow up phone call from form tutor to offer support/ identifying any barriers to attendance.
Step 3 - Below 92% (at end of Term 2 (where consistent improvement has not be made and/ or worsening absence since last communication)	Supportive HOY letter to improve attendance at school.
Step 4- where consistent improvement has not be made and/ or worsening absence since last communication) after already initiating Step 1-3	Options depending on the circumstances: • Second email (where appropriate) • HOY phone call home • HOY face-to face meeting • DHP/ AHP/ STP face to face meeting If there is insufficient improvement or worsening absence and the above intervention has failed to bring about improvement consultation with Education Welfare Office/ Attendance Team at Bury Local Authority will be made for advice, if not already done so previously.

Access to School Buildings

Pupils are not permitted in school buildings before 7.30am and must leave at the end of the school day unless they have signed into the After School Club or are participating in an extra-curricular activity under the supervision of a member of staff.

Time of Registration

The School is under a legal obligation to register the presence and absence of all pupils on roll at the same time via an electronic register. These times are 8.45am and 1.50pm.

Pre-School pupils can be dropped off from 8am and are registered at 8.45am and 1.50pm.

In the Primary Division, including Reception pupils, children are able to come into school from 8am and provision is in place from 8.30am. Registration takes place at 8.45am in their form room with the Class Teacher. In the Senior School and Sixth Form, Form Tutors are expected to be in their form rooms before the registration bell so that the registration can be carried out at 8.45am.

Pupils are registered at morning and afternoon registration. If they leave school, they are signed out on the electronic system.

It is compulsory for Sixth Form students to attend registration each morning at 8:45am with their tutor. Sixth Form students may leave to go home following their final timetabled lesson or activity for the day if there are no academic or pastoral concerns identified by the Sixth Form Team. If permission is granted by parents, students are able to sign in and out of the school site during their free periods using the electronic system. Special permission must be sought from parents if a student does not have any published lessons for that day and wishes to study at home.

Attendance at registration is a requirement and pupils are expected to arrive punctually if they are in school. Repeated late arrival to registration will result in sanctions. Parental communications will take place with the parents of pupils in the Primary Division who have repeated late arrival to morning registration. This will be with the form teacher in the first instance and then with the Head of Infants where appropriate. Parents are under an obligation to ensure that their child arrives at school on time. If a pupil or student is absent from registration, then they will be marked with a code 'N'.

In the Primary Division the class teacher is responsible for completing both registers and the admin team follow up any absences. In the Senior School and Sixth Form, it is the responsibility of the **Form Tutor** (AM and PM registration) to take the register on iSAMS and the admin team, with the support of the wider pastoral and sixth form team, follow up any absences. The Sixth Form secretary will be responsible for following up absences in the Sixth Form.

Attendance Register

The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024.

The School uses **ISAMS** to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Form Tutors and Class Teachers will take the attendance register **at the start of each school day** and **at the start of the afternoon session** for all pupils. This register will record whether pupils are:

- physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
- absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or
- attending a place other than the school; or
- absent.

The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

- attending educational provision arranged by a Local Authority;
- for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
- attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
- attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
- attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

The School will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

1 Attending the school

Code	Definition
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session / afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed

2 Attending a place other than school

Code	Definition
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity

3 Absent - leave of absence

Code	Definition

C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered at another school
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

4 Absent - other authorised reasons

Code	Definition
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded

5 Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Code	Definition
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

6 Absent - unauthorised absence

Code	Definition
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established

O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed

7 Administrative codes

Code	Definition
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

When the School has planned in advance to be fully closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the School has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will still be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

The School will share its daily attendance data with the DfE on a monthly basis and meet termly with our designated attendance officer to analyse our attendance figures and interventions to support excellent attendance.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

Remote education

The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons. The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education. In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:

- ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, Parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the Local Authority should also be involved in the decision;
- if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;
- setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.

Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance

register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.

The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

The School will include on its website guidance about remote education provision.

Part-Time Timetables

Part-time timetables are an exceptional, time-limited measure and will only be used where they are in a pupil's best interests as part of a planned package of support to facilitate a safe and successful return to full-time education. This may be considered, for example, in response to:

- Reintegration following illness or extended absence
- Medical or mental health needs
- Support for pupils with SEND, as part of a wider personalised plan

Any part-time timetable must:

- Be agreed in writing with the pupil's parent
- Set a clear timeframe for review (typically within 2–4 weeks)
- Be overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure no safeguarding risks are posed
- Not be used as a long-term solution or for convenience

Where part-time arrangements are in place, the School will ensure the pupil still receives an appropriate and effective education, in line with their individual needs. Where appropriate, the School will work with parents/carers, the Local Authority, Family Help, health professionals, the SENDCo and other relevant agencies to review the effectiveness of the arrangement and identify any additional support required.

The use of a part-time timetable will only be considered where it is in the pupil's best interests and forms part of a planned package of support designed to facilitate full-time reintegration as soon as practicable.

Opening/ Closure of Registers

Registers across the School are open from **8.40am** and close at **9.10am** for the morning session and open at **1.45pm** and close at **2.15pm** for the afternoon session.

Late arrivals before the registers close

If the time of arrival means that it is still possible to attend form registration, pupils should go to their form rooms and register with their Form Tutor. If the registration period has finished pupils should register at the School Office. The pupil will receive a late **(L)** mark.

Late arrivals after registers close

If a pupil arrives after the register has been closed, they must sign in at the School Office. Such a late arrival will be recorded as an unauthorised absence code **(U)** and the time of arrival marked on the register together with the reason that the pupil has offered. The absence will remain unauthorised until the Office has received direct communication with parents which explains the late arrival. This may enable the late arrival to be recorded as an authorised absence if the reason is appropriate.

11. Absence Procedures

Authorising parental absence requests

Parents are expected to request permission in advance for any absence other than illness and the School reserves the right to refuse it. Permission to be absent from school (other than for a brief absence during the school day – eg for a medical appointment – in which case permission should be sought from the relevant Form Tutor) must be sought, in writing, from the Principal. Parents are asked to make these requests with as much notice as possible. Each request for absence is treated on an individual basis. Occasionally pupils' parents request permission for absence for other reasons such as competing in national or international sports tournaments or attending family weddings. Each request is assessed on an individual basis. Pupils of other faiths are allowed to take additional religious holidays eg Jewish New Year, Day of Atonement, Eid but these must be requested by the parent in writing. Sixth Form students must not arrange driving lessons for during the school day.

Leave of absence

The School will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the School will expect parents to contact the Principal in writing prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

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. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The School is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- During Year 7 when a pupil is settling into the School, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member
- 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 term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The School cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the School in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Medical or dental appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

The School will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution, e.g. university or college.

Study leave for a public examination

The School may grant leave of absence for a pupil to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with.
Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Pupils subject to a part-time timetable

In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a pupil's best interests, the School will grant leave of absence to accommodate for a pupil on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the days on which the pupil is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance in advance.

The School will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The School will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The School may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Parent travelling or occupational purposes

If a pupil is travelling with their parent as a result of the parent's trade or business and is therefore unable to attend, the School will assure itself that this is a genuine reason. Proof will not be sought without genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. The parent will be encouraged to ensure that the pupil can attend a school where they are travelling to, and be dual registered at that school.

Permission to not participate in PE

We require written confirmation from parents of a pupil's inability to take part in PE. For longer term inability to participate, we may require communication from a GP/physiotherapist. PE/Games is part of the educational curriculum offered at BGS and participation in it is mandatory. Participation will be monitored closely by the PE department and concerns referred to Form Tutors.

Term dates and holidays

Term dates are published well in advance, so that parents/guardians can make holiday arrangements which do not require pupils to be absent from school. Parental requests for a pupil to return to school after the beginning of term, to leave school before the end of term, or to be absent during term, must be made in writing to the Principal well in advance and should be seen as an exceptional occurrence, made because of very special circumstances. Absence owing to holiday will only ever be authorised in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal.

SEND- and health-related absences

The School recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult. The School will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

In line with the SEND Policy, the School will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any education, health and care plan (EHCP) that has been implemented. The School will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate. Where a pupil has an EHCP the School will communicate with the Local Authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

Where the School has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL, and the Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

The School will also consider whether poor attendance may be linked to wider contextual safeguarding concerns, including child-on-child abuse, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, online harms, coercion, bullying, harmful peer relationships or experiences beyond the family home. Where appropriate, concerns will be managed in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the School will:

- Make a sickness return to the Local Authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.
- Provide the Local Authority with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The School will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the School will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.

- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

- There is a lack of access arrangements.
- Transport normally provided is not available and the school is not within walking distance.
- There is widespread disruption to travel.
- Part of the school premises is closed, and the pupil cannot be practicably accommodated.
- The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly.
- The pupil is in criminal justice detention.
- Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited.
- Any other avoidable cause makes attendance impossible.

The use of the seven 'Y' codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes. Code Q will be used in circumstances where there are a lack of access arrangements.

Absence from school owing to illness

In cases of illness, parents should notify the School before 9.00 am. If contact has not been made with the School, a member of the School Office will contact home after 9.30am to establish the cause of the absence. This should occur every day during the period of absence unless it is clear a child will not return to school until a particular date. This will enable the School Office to authorise that absence with the appropriate code without the need for a written note, as long as the parent provides an appropriate reason for the absence to be authorised. This can only occur if contact has taken place with a parent or someone with responsibility for the child. Absence notes given to Form Tutors or to the School Office can be shredded once registers have been amended unless reason is given by a member of SLT to keep notes. These will be stored centrally. If contact cannot be established, the absence will be classed as unauthorised **(code O).** The office staff will always call two numbers to follow up any unexplained absences and liaise closely with the pastoral team if contact has not been established.

Parents are advised to only keep their child off school if they really are too ill or infectious to attend school. In the Senior School and Sixth Form, a child with vomiting and diarrhoea should be kept off school until they are well again, and their temperature is in the normal range.

In the Primary Division, a child with vomiting and diarrhoea should be kept off school for 48 hours following the last occurrence of illness and until they are well again, and their temperature is in the normal range.

EYFS (Pre-School and Reception)

Attendance for children in the EYFS will be monitored and followed up in line with the school's attendance procedures, with due regard to the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

The school promotes excellent attendance for all children, recognising the importance of continuity in learning, wellbeing and development. While children attending Pre-School are not of compulsory school age, the school will work in partnership with parents to understand and address any attendance concerns and to support a successful transition into the Primary Division. Attendance procedures will be applied appropriately.

Persistent absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- Looked After Children/Children in Care
- Young carers
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The School will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The School will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering academic mentor support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the pupil and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Having regular check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with the pupil's parent to discuss progress.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the School will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the School's duty of care. The School will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the School's Child Protection Safeguarding Policy.

Attendance concerns will be considered alongside safeguarding records and chronologies to identify cumulative concerns, recurring patterns or escalation of risk. Attendance information will contribute to safeguarding decision-making and be reviewed in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where applicable, the School will inform a pupil's Youth Offending Team (YOT) worker of any unexplained or persistent absences. This ensures that statutory partners are aware of patterns which may require joint support or intervention.

Truanting from school

Truanting from school or from lessons is considered to be a very serious offence and a pupil should expect the School to deal with such conduct as serious misbehaviour. All cases of truanting are reported to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). Repeated (more than once) acts of truanting may result in the position of the pupil within the School being reviewed.

The School recognises that persistent or severe absence may be a symptom of unmet need rather than the presenting issue itself. Support will therefore focus on understanding and addressing underlying barriers through a collaborative, child-centred approach alongside promoting improved attendance. Where appropriate, support will involve parents/carers, Family Help, health professionals and other relevant agencies.

13. Missing pupil procedures

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions without delay:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the DSL/ DDSL immediately.
- The doors, gates will be checked for signs of entry/exit
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher. A member of staff will ask pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil
- One or more adults will systematically search.
    - All classrooms
    - All toilets
    - Changing rooms
    - The libraries
    - Any outbuildings
    - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted
- Where indicated, our CCTV footage may be reviewed

A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is absent from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

The school takes appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

- If, after exhausting the above, the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken: Ask the Head of School to ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. The School will contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the Police will be contacted
- The Head of School would arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds

- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff may be asked to check if the pupil has gone home and would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with them
- The DSL would inform Bury Safeguarding Partnership who should liaise with safeguarding partners including local children's services as appropriate. The DSL will check with Bury Safeguarding Partnership that this has happened
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- The School would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the Local Authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- The School's insurers would be informed
- If the pupil is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) (where necessary).
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located if appropriate

During the course of the investigation into the missing pupil, the School will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. The School will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, with actions taken and decisions made and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a child going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Speak to the other pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Head of School will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Head of School will oversee a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Principal
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time that the child was missing and how they appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future
- Consider whether actions need to be taken in line with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy where there are concerns about the welfare of the child.

Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, or at the end of After-School club, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. Where reasonably possible the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. If there is no answer, the staff member in charge of the activity will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after. If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a one hour period, the Principal, Deputy Principal or Deputy Head will contact the Social Care Duty Officer. Social Care will make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police. The School will make a full written report of the incident. This procedure will be followed where the age and collection permissions for the child indicate it is needed.

The School will look after the child safely throughout the time that they remain under our care, until such a time as the child has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate, alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise the child's safety. The School's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

14. Reporting on attendance and reporting concerns

Parents should be aware that the School is required to report on attendance to Further and Higher educational establishments. A poor attendance record can significantly disadvantage an application to such an establishment. Parents are provided with registration certificates with full school reports. They should check the accuracy of the attendance certificate and if they wish to query it should contact their child's Form Tutor.

The School is legally required to share information from their registers with the Local Authority. As a minimum this includes:

- **New Pupil and Deletion returns:** notifying the Local Authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.
- **Attendance returns:** providing the Local Authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U).
- **Sickness returns:** providing the Local Authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year.

15. Information sharing

Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

Information sharing will be lawful, necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure and in the best interests of the child, in accordance with data protection legislation, safeguarding legislation and relevant statutory guidance.

Where enquiries following the absence of a pupil lead the School to reasonably believe that the child will not return, and no alternative provision has been confirmed by the parent, the School will make a referral to the child's home local authority CME team without delay. Where appropriate the School will attend regular targeting support meetings.

The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the Local Authority. As a minimum this includes:

1. New pupil and deletion returns;
2. Attendance returns ;
3. Sickness returns.

The law allows Local Authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State. The School meets this requirement by having an electronic management information system, iSAMS, containing the required information that can be accessed by the DfE. The School also uses this tool to monitor pupil level attendance and understand trends in attendance patterns.

Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and / or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

16. Record keeping and confidentiality

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

17. Admission register

In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:

- maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and
- inform the Local Authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.

The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

The School must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.

The School will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the School is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.
The School will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the School is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least two telephone numbers (where reasonably possible) by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the School
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register, as prescribed in regulation 9.

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

Attendance Policy Issues and Updates

Date	Policy version	Summary of key change(s)
Sept 2023	1	Additional information in introduction, inclusion of legal framework and definitions. Time of registration amended to include information on primary division. Paragraph 16 included to reflect procedures for persistent absence and more information added to 17 for monitoring attendance.
Sept 2024	2	Updated to reflect new school day and afternoon registration and Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024
January 2025	3	Tweaks to terminology throughout document, inclusion of named attendance champion and updated attendance monitoring procedures
January 2025	4	Change to close of registers
February 2025	5	Change to opening and closing of registers – updated to 9.10am and 2.15pm (open for 30 minutes- both sessions
Sept 2025	6	Updated reference to latest statutory guidance: Aligned with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (August 2024) and *KCSIE 2025*. Expanded data sharing section: Clarified that we shared attendance data with LA and meet termly. Part-time timetables: Defined short-term use only for compulsory school-age pupils; must be agreed with parents, reviewed regularly, and overseen by the DSL. Youth Offending Team (YOT) reference: Policy now includes notification of a YOT worker in cases of unexplained or persistent absence, where relevant. Minor formatting and clarity improvements: Wording refined in several sections to enhance consistency and readability.
January 2026	7	Updates throughout policy including - Addition of key school contacts - Updated legal framework - New section on the publication and availability of policy - Updated definitions to include definition of proprietor, parents and CME - New section on the importance of good attendance - New section on responsibilities for pupils and parents - New section on remote education - Updates to SEND and health related absences - Updates to missing pupils procedures - Updates to reporting on attendance to Local Authority - New section on information sharing and record keeping/confidentiality

September 2026	8	Updated to reflect Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) and current Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance. Strengthened safeguarding links between attendance, wellbeing and behaviour, enhanced professional curiosity, pupil voice, Family Help terminology, contextual safeguarding, multi-agency working and monitoring of vulnerable groups. Further aligned with the Behaviour, Mental Health and Physical Intervention policies. Updated to reflect changes to attendance procedures for Sixth Form students.
September 2026	9	Updated to clarify all pupils register at the same time.