



Attendance Policy

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Attendance Policy

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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Aim

To raise pupil attainment; by improving individual, class, year group and whole school attendance.

Objectives

- Raise the profile and importance of attendance.
- Reinforce the relationship between good attendance and attainment.
- Set personalised attendance targets that are reviewed monthly to improve individual attendance
- Operate a layered system of rewards to promote good attendance.
- Use technology to track attendance and inform all stakeholders of appropriate data to improve attendance.
- Provide annual staff training on the use of Sims to manage attendance.
- Consult all stakeholders annually in relation to the review of the attendance policy.
- Communicate the attendance policy to all stakeholders.

Rationale

Attending school regularly is important for all young people because of the link between attendance and attainment. Parents have a statutory duty, as set out in Article 45 in the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 to ensure that their child attends school regularly. As a school we are committed to prioritising attendance in the school development plan and having appropriate resources to manage attendance.

The Department for Education published their strategy for improving attendance entitled 'Miss School, Miss Out: Improving School Attendance Strategy' (Dec 2016) in which it was stated that "Attending school regularly is important for all pupils because of how their attendance can affect their educational attainment and their subsequent life chances." (Miss School, Miss Out, p5) It is also highlighted that school leadership should produce a "school ethos and culture that values the importance of attendance and its link to attainment" (Miss School, Miss Out,p5). With these in mind, this policy has been designed so that Bangor Academy can share in the goal to "maximise the attendance rate of pupils so that they are in school being supported to reach their full potential." (Miss School, Miss Out,p14)

The proactive nature of our strategy focuses on making Bangor Academy and Sixth Form Collage a place that young people want to come to for their learning. We focus on recognising and rewarding good attendance and ensuring that young people are aware of their own attendance by setting and reviewing attendance targets through the BA Plus Programme as well as a reward system that recognizes and celebrates good attendance. Intervention groups allow early identification and intervention with pupils who are struggling to attend.

The focus of the pastoral team is to support pupils in school and through re-integration if necessary. Our strategy includes effective collaboration and engagement with all stakeholders involved in improving pupil attendance including pupils themselves, parents, pastoral team members and the Education Welfare Service and the Education Welfare Officer.

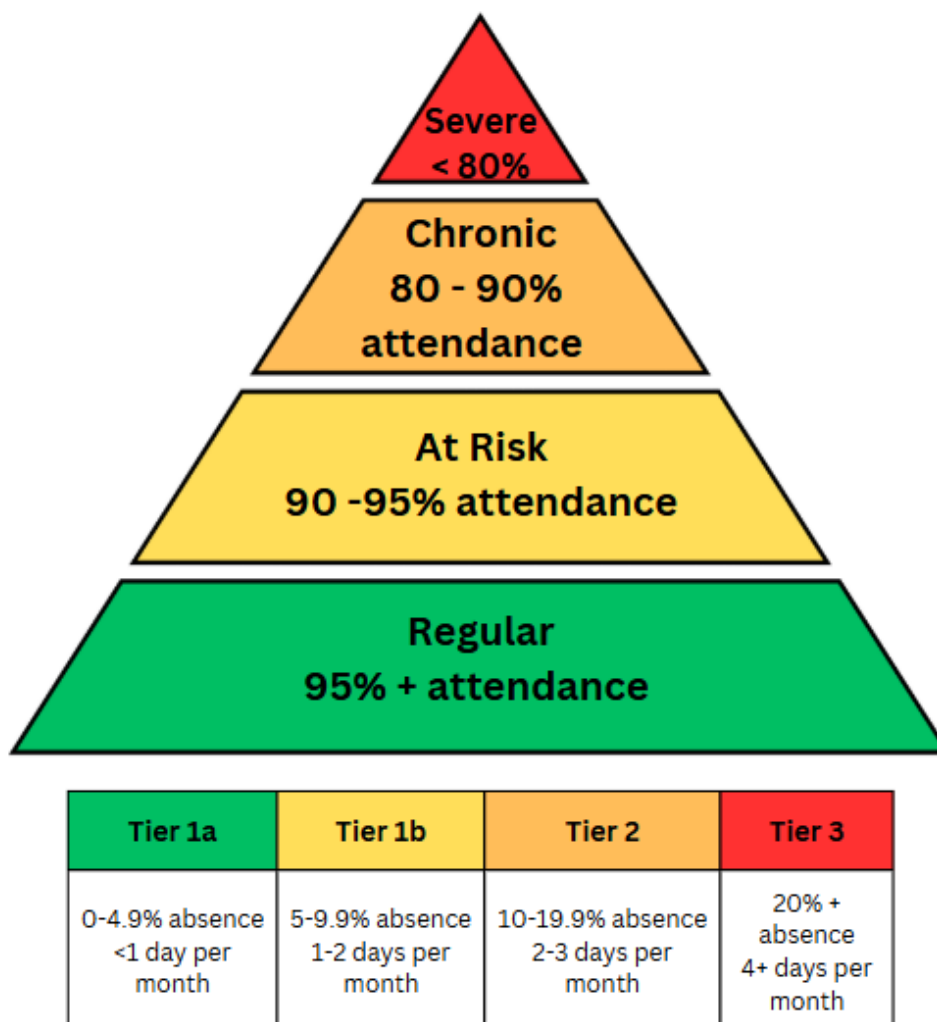
Pastoral staff will remain aware and sensitive to the needs for tailored support as and when necessary as outlined in the DE guidance for vulnerable groups (Miss School, Miss Out, pp25-27).

Policy implementation at Bangor Academy will be supported by EA and DENI in line with the guidelines provided. (Miss School, Miss Out, p31) In particular, partnership with the EWS will be a vital element of practice at Bangor Academy.

Overall this policy will direct all stakeholders on the shared goal where "The focus will be to strengthen school leadership commitment, early intervention, tailored support and collaboration and engagement" (Miss School, Miss Out, p42)

Attendance Tiers

In 2023 the Department of Education reclassified attendance into the following tiers. Bangor Academy will use these categories to design interventions for groups and individuals.



Tier 1a pupils with Regular Attendance missing 0-4.9% (<1 day per month).

At this level, proactive interventions may include:

- The use of BA+ monthly data to encourage and reinforce attendance messages.
- Pastoral teams and Form Tutors to encourage, celebrate success and intervene early. This may include incentives for good attendance/100% attendance etc.
- Form tutor will continue to monitor and discuss absences to ensure codes are correct with office staff.
- Truancy call messages sent daily to ensure attendance codes are correct, parents can view attendance on SIMS Parent App.

Tier 1b with 'At Risk' Attendance missing 5-9.9% (1-2 days per month)

At this level, proactive interventions may include:

- Interventions from Tier 1a
- Assemblies discussing attendance and the link to academic success
- Form Tutors to discuss absences with pupil/parent and inform pastoral team.

Tier 2 with 'Chronic' Attendance missing 10-19.9% (2-3 days per month)

At this level, interventions may include:

- Interventions from previous tiers
- DHOY to contact parents to arrange face to face meetings with parents/pupils to establish support for pupil/family.
- Personalised action plans for pupils, strategies may include wellbeing support, attendance reports, meeting with pastoral support staff, restorative approaches after suspensions etc
- DHOYs will be engaging with their EWO through audits to identify school related attendance difficulties and organising support with 'pre-referral clinics'

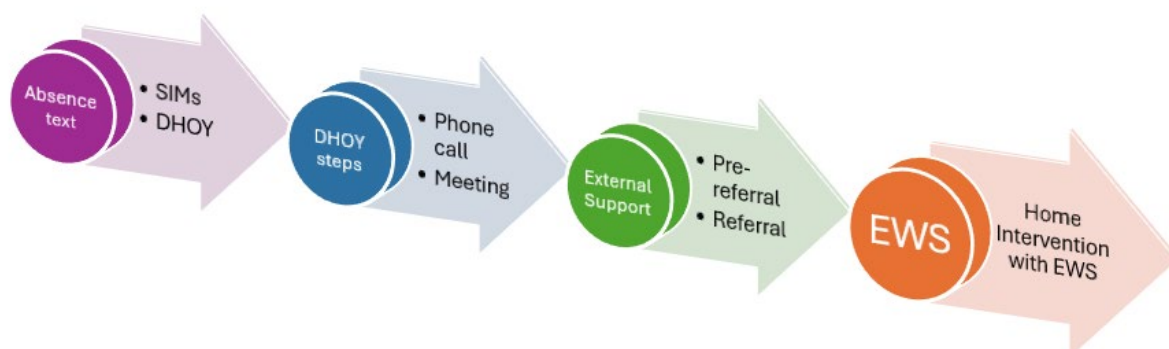
Tier 3 with 'Severe Chronic' Attendance missing over 20% of school days

At this level, specific interventions may include:

- Regular meetings with Education Welfare Services
- Seeking support from external Agencies
- Specific interventions implemented by EWS in conjunction with the school which may include home visits, individual plans of action and / or court action

7- Step Attendance Strategy

Early identification and intervention are essential for addressing concerns around attendance. Ongoing communication between pupils, parents/carers, and teachers regarding attendance is the key to success.



The pastoral teams follow the 7-step attendance strategies as outlined below.

Step 1 – SIMS daily absence texts

A text will be sent to the parent/carer of any pupil absent from school. Parents/carers are to reply to the text to explain the absence. Registers on SIMS will be updated with the information provided to ensure complete and accurate records.

Further texts will be sent in the event that the school receives no reply.

Step 2 – Follow up text (DHOY)

The DHOY will contact the parents/carers of those pupils identified as having a pattern of absence, in the first instance this will be via text or email. The objective of this communication is to encourage improvement and offer support if required and appropriate.

Step 3 – Follow up call (DHOY)

If there has been no improvement to attendance, or if there has been no engagement with communication, the DHOY will make contact with the parents/carers via phone to discuss. This gives the parents/carers an opportunity to raise any issues or concerns with the DHOY and actions to be taken in school if required.

Step 4 – Parental meeting (DHOY)

When further intervention is required, parents/carers will be invited into school for a meeting to discuss support strategies to improve attendance. Parents/carers should inform DHOY of any barriers that are impacting on the pupil's attendance. A plan should be made to support the improvement of attendance, actions to be taken should be clearly outlined and a plan to review should be made.

Step 5 – Pre-referral meeting (EWS clinics)

Where there is no improvement or lack of engagement and external intervention is likely, an introduction will be made to EWS. Pre-referral clinics are held termly, and it gives parents/carers an opportunity to meet with EWS to discuss next steps. Feedback from these clinics is shared with the DHOY, who can then continue to support from school.

Step 6 – Referral to EWS

With continuous low attendance, and no improvement following interventions, the case will be referred to EWS. In school interventions will continue and further attempts will be made to engage with the pupil and parents/carers to support.

Step 7 – Education Welfare home intervention

EWO will contact the family directly to offer support.

The Attendance Improving Toolkit

The Pastoral team will work in collaboration with staff, parents, pupils, and outside agencies to improve attendance issues identified, using a number of methods and incentives.

These include but are not limited to;

- ★ Maintaining good communication with home, school, and outside agencies
- ★ Forming intervention groups – informed by those moving between tiers
- ★ Setting and monitoring attendance targets
- ★ Rewarding success (consistent success and individual improvements) - through verbal praise, recognition, achievement points, reward cards and celebration events
- ★ BA+ awards

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Parents / Carers** are responsible for ensuring their child receive a suitable education.
- **Pupils** are responsible for knowing their attendance percentage and working with their form tutor to set attendance targets. Pupils have individual responsibility for their own attendance at school.
- **Form Tutors** are responsible for helping pupils to monitor and discuss attendance under the BA Plus Award programme. Form Tutors are also responsible for awarding pupils reward points for achieving their attendance targets.
- **Heads of Year** are responsible for ensuring attendance receives a high priority in year group assemblies. Heads of Year are also responsible for distributing attendance certificates and form class attendance cups.
- **Deputy Heads of Year** are responsible for leading the intervention strategies in line with the 7 Step Programme. The Deputy Heads of Year are responsible for leading their pastoral team in relation to the Attendance Policy. The Deputy Heads of Year will keep the Heads of Year updated following monthly attendance pastoral team meetings.
- **Education Welfare Officer** is part of the Education Welfare Service provided by the Education Authority who work to support young people to re-engage with education. The Education Welfare Officer will work primarily with the Deputy Heads of Year in school.
- **Vice-Principal** is responsible for consultation, writing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

Attendance Coding and Record Keeping

To accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way, we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2024/13. It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal to update this in the event of updated DENI instructions.

Records of Attendance and Punctuality are kept using the SIMs system and text message correspondence between school and parents / carers will be recorded by the school office. Form Tutors will record attendance at form time and will be responsible for recording form class attendance for the BA Plus programme. Class teachers will record attendance each period throughout the day. Rewards and sanctions given by any member of the Attendance Pastoral Team will be recorded on Sims.

Summary of Attendance Codes on current C2K system (Updated July 2025)

CODE	DESCRIPTION	CODE	DESCRIPTION
/\	Present: / = (AM); \ =(PM)	S	Study Leave
A	Artistic Endeavour	U	Late (after registration closed)
B	Bereavement	V	Educational Visit / Examination
C	Suspended	W	Work Experience
D	No reason provided for absence	X	Only staff should attend
G	Family Holiday (not agreed)	Y	Exceptional Closure
H	Other Absence	#	Holiday for all
I1	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	!	No attendance required
I4	Illness – Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA)	1	Community Providers / EOTAS (organised by the EA)
J	Extended Leave	2	Exceptional Teaching Arrangement / hospital
L	Late (before registration closed)	3	Elective Home Education
M	Medical / Dental Appointments	4	Pupil Referral Unit
N	No reason yet provided for absence (temporary code only)	5	Another mainstream school (under Entitlement Framework – EF)
O1	Other Exceptional Circumstances	6	Training Organisation (under EF)
O2	Temporary Exceptions to the Curriculum	7	FE College (under EF)
P	Approved Activity	8	Intensive Support Learning Unit
R	Religious Observance	9	CAMHS / Mental Health Support
Absence Category Colour Code			
	Present / Approved Educational Activity		Authorised Absence
			Unauthorised Absence
			Attendance

Punctuality

We expect all of our pupils to arrive punctually in the morning. Good punctuality is important not only for pupils to maximise their educational attainment, but also as a key life skill as they prepare for life beyond school. Lateness results in disruption for the pupil, the teacher and the class as a whole and is therefore to be avoided unless there is a reasonable issue that should then be shared with school.

Our school day begins with registration class, and this time is invaluable for all pupils for the following reasons...

- To settle into the school day in preparation for learning
- To hear important school announcements from their Form Teacher
- To discuss goals and targets with their Form Teacher
- To develop a rapport with the Form Teacher who will be their first port of call for any issues in school for pupil and parent
- To socialise with their form class

Pupils who are late to school twice within a week will receive an after school detention, but this will be escalated in the event of continuous poor punctuality to school. Punctuality remains important throughout the day as pupils move from class to class, and after break and lunchtime. Pupils who are continually late throughout the day as they move from class to class will also receive a school sanction, which will be escalated if the behaviour persists.

Recording lateness

Pupils who are not in class will be marked absent. Each morning our computer system will send a text to the parent of each pupil who is marked absent. Parents should respond to that text to inform the school of the reason for absence. In the event that a parent receives a text but believes their child is in school, the parent should contact the school office.

Form Teachers will collate records of the number of lates per pupils. Pupils who are continually late will receive a school sanction. This will take the form of a detention but can be escalated in the event of continuous lateness.

Promoting good punctuality

Punctuality is one of the key pillars for pupils to strive towards to achieve the BA Plus award as described in the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Punctuality will be regularly discussed in assemblies and highlighted on notice boards to demonstrate the impact it has on academic achievement and personal development.

Consultation

The following groups of stakeholders have been consulted in the writing of this policy:-

- Pupils
- Deputy Heads of Year
- Heads of Year
- Education Welfare Officer
- Senior Leadership Team
- Teaching and Non-teaching staff
- Parents

Communication

The Attendance Policy is available on the school web site
www.bangoracademy.org.uk/policies

Review of Policy

The Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

Miss School, Miss Out: Improving Pupil Attendance Strategy

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/impact-pupil-attendance-gcse-level-2-performance-miss-school-miss-out-improving-pupil-attendance-strategy>

Appendix 2

'School Attendance Matters: A Parent's Guide'

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/attendance-matters-a-parents-guide.pdf>

Inclusion and accessibility statement

This policy applies to all pupils in Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College. We at Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College are committed to inclusion and supplying all our school publications in an accessible format.

Should any pupil parent or carer require support in interpreting or understanding this policy school will provide guidance in partnership with the Inclusion and Diversity Service.

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact us on policies@bangoracademy.org.uk