

Bridlington School

Attendance Policy



Approved by:	Full Governing Body September 2026
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1. Aims

This policy demonstrates our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (effective 19 August 2024). Through a whole-school culture that values good attendance, we will:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students.
- Promote good attendance and its benefits.
- Reward students for good and improving attendance.
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure every student has access to the full-time education they are entitled to.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Build strong relationships with families to ensure support is in place.
- Promote and support punctuality in attending both school and lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (DfE, 2024)
- Education Act 1996, Education Act 2002, and Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments (including 2024)
- Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2013 and 2024 amendment
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- DfE guidance on mental health and attendance

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Governing Board:

The Governing Board will:

- Set high expectations for attendance across the school community.
- Ensure leaders fulfil statutory duties and share attendance data with the LA and DfE.

- Monitor persistent and severe absence specifically, challenging leaders on these figures.
- Review attendance data termly and hold leaders accountable.
- Ensure attendance is reflected across policies and ethos.
- Ensure staff are trained on attendance.

Link Governor: Mr Philip White (Attendance and Safeguarding).

3.2 Headteacher:

The Headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, monitoring absence data, reporting to governors, issuing penalty notices (or authorising others to do so), and ensuring SEND-related barriers to attendance are addressed.

3.3 Senior Leader for Attendance (Senior Attendance Champion):

Julia Barber leads on

- Championing attendance across school.
- Overseeing absence data and interventions.
- Liaising with parents, carers, and external agencies.
- Developing reintegration plans.
- Delivering targeted interventions.

3.4 Attendance Officers and Education Welfare Officer:

Amber Sutton, Alice Tasker (Attendance Officers), and Lauren Owen (School Education Welfare Officer) will

- Collate daily attendance and punctuality data.
- Monitor attendance, benchmark data, and report concerns.
- Contact parents daily for unexplained absence.
- Work with the Pastoral Team and EWO to tackle persistent absence.
- Issue penalty notices (authorised by the Headteacher).

3.5 Class Teachers and Form Tutors:

Teachers and tutors will

- Complete registers accurately and promptly in Arbor.
- Promote good attendance and punctuality daily.
- Monitor tutees' attendance and support incentives.

3.6 Parents/Carers:

Parents and carers are expected to

- Ensure their child attends school every day, on time.

- Report absences by 9am each day of absence.
- Provide more than one emergency contact.
- Make appointments outside school hours where possible.
- Provide evidence for appointments/exceptional absences.
- Engage with attendance support plans.

3.7 Students:

Students at Bridlington School are expected to

- Attend regularly and punctually.
- Report their own absence in Sixth Form.
- Engage with support, interventions and attendance contracts.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Registers:

Procedures ensure that

- Registers are taken at 8:30 (kept open until 10:00) and at 1:45 (kept open until 2:15).
- Registers are maintained in Arbor, using DfE-approved codes (Appendix 1).
- Records are kept for 6 years.

4.2 Unplanned absence:

Parents must report by 9:30am on the first day of absence on 01262 672593 or office@bridlingtonschool.org.uk. Illness absences are authorised unless there are genuine concerns. Where needed, medical evidence may be requested. Unauthorised absence will be notified to parents in advance.

4.3 Planned absence:

Requests must be made in advance and only authorised under circumstances permitted by regulations. Evidence may be required. We encourage medical and dental appointments to be made out of school hours where possible. Applications for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

4.4 Lateness:

Punctuality is monitored by

- Arrivals before registers close are marked late.
- Arrivals after registers close are marked as unauthorised absence.

- Persistent lateness is tracked, with escalating sanctions: weekly detention, referral to Attendance Officer, and parental meetings.

4.5 Unexplained absence:

Daily first-day calling applies. If parents cannot be reached, safeguarding escalation (Police, LA, ERSCP) may occur.

Students with more than 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within a 10 week period will be referred to Local Authority Education Welfare Officers for consideration of a penalty notice.

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.

If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may also contact the Police, education welfare officers at ERYC or East Riding Safeguarding Partnership.

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the student was absent.
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving our School Education Welfare Officer, Ms Lauren Owen, or the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer.
- Where relevant, report the absence to any services working with the student or family, specifically, Youth Justice.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the student needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a School Action Plan, Notice to Improve, Penalty Notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents:

Parents are updated regularly via Arbor, letters, texts, and reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Authorisation criteria:

The Headteacher may only authorise absence in circumstances defined by regulations:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness), that is in line with NHS guidance and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a student to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.

- Attending another school at which the student is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority.
- Attending work experience.

If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the principal education welfare officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent. The East Riding of Council principal education welfare officer will discuss each case with the Headteacher and will make a recommendation on the proposed absence.

Holidays in term time are not authorised unless exceptional.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a student is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the student or a parent they normally live with.

5.2 Sanctions and escalation:

Penalty Notices, Notices to Improve, and legal interventions will be applied where support is not engaged with, or absences continue. Early Help support and attendance contracts will always be considered before sanctions. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), Local Authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice. If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the Local Authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that student
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the student's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same student, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the student must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process. In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to Improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the Local Authority area in which the student attends school. They will include:

- Details of the student's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement
- period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

The Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare Service is a key source of help and support; therefore It is very important that you speak with them at the earliest opportunity if you have any problems securing your child's attendance. The school and the Education Welfare Service will give you advice and support to help you fulfil your responsibility to secure improvement in your child's attendance. If you wish to make contact with your Education Welfare Officer please contact them using the methods below:

Education Welfare

Service, County Hall, Beverley, HU17 9BA, East Riding of Yorkshire

Tel: (01482) 392146 Email education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Attendance rewards: prizes, stamps, competitions, assemblies, trips.
- High-profile communication campaigns promoting attendance.
- Use of mentoring, targeted intervention, and pastoral support.

7. Supporting students with barriers to attendance

7.1 Complex barriers:

Multi-agency meetings to identify barriers; attendance contracts; school and external interventions (tutoring, mentoring, Early Help, CAMHS referrals).

7.2 Health needs/SEND:

Joint use of this policy with *Children with Health Needs* and *Medical Conditions* policies. Correct coding (C/I/M/B/D) will be applied consistently. Key adults and interventions (soft starts, part-time timetables, mentoring) will be used. LA informed where EHC plans are affected.

7.3 Reintegration after long absence :

Individual reintegration plans agreed with families; measures may include phased return, soft starts, key adult support, and pre-teaching.

Where relevant, parents', carers' and students' views will be gathered.

8. Attendance monitoring

- Daily, weekly, half-termly, and annual monitoring of attendance at student, group, and cohort levels.
- Persistent (10%+) and severe (50%+) absence tracked and reported separately to governors.
- Data analysed for patterns, shared with governors, LA, and DfE.
- Interventions monitored for impact and adapted as needed.
- Collaborative working with other schools and agencies to reduce persistent absence.

9. Monitoring arrangements

Policy reviewed annually (minimum) by Julia Barber (Assistant Headteacher – Inclusion).
Approved by the Governing Board. Updates made as LA/DfE guidance changes.

10. Links with other policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Children with Health Needs Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Meaning	Statistical Category	Notes / Use
/ \	Present (AM / PM)	Present	For students present in school for registration.
L	Late (before register closes)	Present (Late)	Arrived after bell but before register closes.
B	Off-site educational activity	Approved Education	Must be supervised and approved by school.
D	Dual registered (at another school)	Approved Education	Not counted as absence by either school.
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education	Only for events supervised by a coach or teacher.
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education	School-organised trips only.
J	Interview	Approved Education	For job interviews, college/sixth-form placements.
W	Work experience	Approved Education	For KS4/5 students on approved placements.
C	Authorised absence (other)	Authorised Absence	At school's discretion – not illness.
E	Excluded (no alternative provision)	Authorised Absence	Only used if no alternative is provided.
H	Holiday authorised (exceptional only)	Authorised Absence	Only in <i>exceptional</i> circumstances.
I	Illness	Authorised Absence	School may request medical evidence.
M	Medical/dental appointment	Authorised Absence	Must be evidence-based if repeated or lengthy.
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	School decides appropriateness; 1–2 days common.
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	For Y11 pupils preparing for public exams.
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Only for approved traveller families.
G	Unauthorised holiday	Unauthorised Absence	Not agreed by school or exceeding agreed days.
N	Reason not yet provided	Unauthorised (until updated)	Temporary code — must be updated promptly.
O	Absent (unauthorised, no reason given)	Unauthorised Absence	Used when no satisfactory reason is provided.
U	Late (after register closes)	Unauthorised Absence	Arrived late without valid reason.

Appendix 2:

NHS Guidelines

We refer to and use the following NHS information as a guide when authorising absence from school <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell. There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about health protection and managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason. If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know.

What to do about other conditions

High temperature

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.

Feeling anxious or worried

It's normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. They may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping. Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship problems, school work or sensory problems. You can also work with the school to find ways to help them. If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, it might be good to talk to your GP or school nurse. Find information and advice about how to help children with anxiety

Coughs and colds

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Chickenpox

If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis, unless they are feeling very unwell. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

COVID-19

If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school. Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of COVID19 and they either: have a high temperature and/or do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities. Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.

Ear infection

If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.

Impetigo

If your child has impetigo, they'll need treatment from a pharmacist or GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.

Measles

If your child has measles, they'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily. Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears. They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system.

Ringworm

If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever

If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

Sore throat

You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.

Threadworms

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms. Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours). For further information about attendance and absence, please use these links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcarefacilities/exclusion-table>

<https://downloads.eastriding.org.uk/corporate/pages/holidays-during-term-time-and-authorized-absence-fromschool/2018%20ASEC%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf>

<https://www.hereforschools.co.uk/Pages/Download/71f28b47-7cb1-46dd-b998-db94c9a92b4d/PageSectionDocuments>

Parent/Carer Summary (Quick Guide):

- School starts at 8:30am – all students must arrive on time.
- Report absence by 9am daily by phone, Arbor, or email.
- Medical/dental appointments should be outside school hours if possible; evidence may be required.
- Holidays in term time are not authorised unless exceptional.
- Persistent absence (10%+) or lateness will trigger support and, if needed, legal action.
- We will support students with health, SEND, or emotional needs through tailored plans, soft starts, mentoring, and reintegration support.