



Yardleys
School
WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FUTURE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Adopted by Trustees:

Signed:

Date:

This policy is reviewed annually by the Curriculum & Standards Committee

Review date:

POLICY INFORMATION

Date of last review	April 2023	Review period	Annual
Date ratified by governors	July 2023	Governors' committee responsible	C&S
Policy owner	Philip Buckley	SLT member responsible	Gurpreet Basra
Date of next review	May 2024		

Reviews/revisions

Review date	Changes made	By whom
September 2021	-P.5 – 'Parents and carers are expected to' – final bullet point changed from 'Where a student's attendance is below target (i.e. below 97%)' to 'Where a student's attendance is below expectation or is a concern' -P.6 'An Authorised Absence Is' – bullet point 4 added. -line added to bullet points of the impact on children who do not attend school regularly -P.7 'Absence Procedures' – paragraph 3 changed from 'an absence will result in an 'absence text message' being sent to 'absence will result in contact from school to home' -P.9 'COVID-19' section inserted.	Philip Buckley
July 2022	Wording amended on final bullet point regarding what is deemed an unauthorised absence	Gurpreet Basra
April 2023	-P.6 – Reference to Covid-19 and Track and Trace removed from the section 'An authorised absence is'.	Philip Buckley

Dates of linked staff training (if applicable)

Date	Course title	Led by
September 2019	Boosting Attendance in your school	Creative Education
Ongoing	Changes to DfE attendance guidance disseminated on a regular basis to relevant colleagues	Philip Buckley
Half-termly	Attendance overviews by year and key student groups disseminated at HoY / SLT level	BYP

EQUALITY AND GDPR

All Yardleys' policies should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities and GDPR policies.

Statement of principle - Equality

We will take all possible steps to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, either directly or indirectly against any individual or group of individuals. When compiling, monitoring and reviewing the policy we will consider the likely impact on the promotion of all aspects of equality as described in the Equality Act 2010.

Statement of principle - GDPR

Yardleys School recognises the serious issues that can occur as a consequence in failing to protect an individual adult's or child's personal and sensitive data. These include emotional distress, physical safety, child protection, loss of assets, fraud and other criminal acts.

Yardleys School is therefore committed to the protection of all personal and sensitive data for which it holds responsibility as the Data Controller and the handling of such data in line with the data protection principles and the Data Protection Act (DPA)/GDPR.

POLICY STATEMENT AND AIMS

- To improve the overall attendance percentage of students at Yardleys School.
- To narrow the attendance percentage gap between different groups of students at Yardleys School.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all stakeholders in Yardleys School including students, parents, teachers and governors.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service as well as other agencies and services associated with student attendance.

These policy aims have been put in place to promote safeguarding and educational attainment. Yardleys School believes that regular attendance is a key factor in the drive to raise standards of attainment and enhance the learning opportunities of all students.

97 – 100%	95 – 97%	90 – 95%	85 – 90%	Below 85%
<p>Absent for no more than five days throughout the academic year.</p> <p>Your attendance figure will almost certainly lead to you making excellent academic progress and achieving the best grades for your ability.</p> <p>You are investing very wisely in your future by attending school regularly. This means that you are positioning yourself to have excellent post-16 and career opportunities.</p>	<p>Absent for fewer than 10 days throughout the academic year.</p> <p>You have a reasonable attendance record that means that you are likely to achieve well and make good progress.</p> <p>You are investing well in your future by attending school at least 95% of the time. This means that you are likely to have strong post-16 and career opportunities.</p>	<p>Absent for up to twenty days throughout the academic year. <u>This means that you are missing out on a full month of education.</u></p> <p>Your absence from school puts the majority of other students at an academic advantage to you as they are receiving a greater amount of education. You are likely to achieve a grade lower in every subject than if your attendance was 98%.</p> <p>You must improve your attendance now to ensure that you have a range of post-16 and careers opportunities.</p>	<p>Absent for up to 30 days throughout the academic year. <u>This means that you are missing out on six weeks of education (approximately a whole half-term).</u></p> <p>Your absence from school means that you will under-achieve academically as you are missing so much learning – this is likely to be two or more grades per subject than if your attendance was 98%.</p> <p>You must significantly improve your attendance now to ensure that you have a range of post-16 and careers opportunities.</p>	<p>Your absence from school on such a regular basis means that you are missing so much learning that it is virtually impossible for you to keep up to date with your studies.</p> <p>You must act now and attend school everyday to ensure that you make academic progress and provide yourself with post-16 and careers opportunities.</p>

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons are missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Students are expected to attend school every day. **It is the responsibility of parent(s)/carer(s) to perform their legal duty by ensuring children who are registered at Yardleys School attend regularly (at least 97% of the time that the school is open) and punctually.**

Yardleys School endeavours to support parents/carers and students in this.

EXPECTATIONS

YARDLEYS SCHOOL IS COMMITTED TO:

- Promoting excellent attendance and reducing absence. We expect all students to be reaching an attendance target of at least 97%.
- Keeping regular and accurate records of each student's attendance and reporting this to the DfE. AM registers are marked at 8:45am and PM registers are marked at 1:40pm. Registers are also taken every lesson within the first 3-5 minutes. AM register officially closes at 9:30am. Students will receive an absence mark if they do not attend school by 9:30.
- Acting immediately to address poor patterns of absence and poor punctuality in line with current legislation and guidance.

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Aim for 100% attendance, but attend no less than 97%.
- Attend Yardleys School every day and on time.
- The school day starts at 8:40am and students are expected in school at this time. Students who arrive after 8:45am will be recorded as late and sanctions applied in line with school behaviour policy.
- Attend all lessons promptly.

PARENTS AND CARERS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Obey the Law. The Education Act (1996 & 2002) requires parents/carers to ensure that their child/children attend school on a regular basis. Non-compliance may result in legal action against parents/carers when they fail to cooperate with their legal obligation or attendance remains a cause for concern despite school interventions and action.
- Make sure that their children attend Yardleys School on time every day that the school is open. At Yardleys School we require all students to be reaching the attendance target of at least 97%.
- Make sure that their children arrive in the building at 8.40am each morning ready for school.
- Contact the school by telephone (Head of Year/Attendance Officer) on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence if their child is unable to attend for any reason, followed by a written note on return.
- Arrange medical appointments outside school time where possible.
- Ensure that no holidays are booked during term time.
- Contact their child's Head of Year to discuss any concerns that they may have and which could affect their child's attendance.
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact details.
- Where a student's attendance is below expectation or is a concern, provide documentary evidence of medical conditions that have an ongoing effect on attendance.

ABSENCE

A student is classed as absent if they arrive to school after the register is closed or they do not attend for any reason. Absence from school disrupts the education of the individual and the whole class. Those children who do not attend regularly:

- Do not achieve well in exams

- Find it difficult to maintain friendships
- Are at more risk and makes them more vulnerable and more likely to be involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- Miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work.

Every half day absence from the school has to be classified by the school (not by parents), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of absence is required, preferably in writing.

AN AUTHORISED ABSENCE IS:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave (the school is not required to automatically authorise absence for sickness and may require medical evidence in order to do so).
- Medical, orthodontist or emergency dental appointments which fall unavoidably during the school day and the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observance for which school has granted leave (one day per academic year).

AN UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IS:

- Parents keeping the children from attending the school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival to school after the register has been closed
- Leaving the school for no reason during the school day
- Looking after other children or birthdays
- Parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to the school immediately to resolve the issue) are not acceptable reasons to be absent and will also be recorded as unauthorised.
- When a child's attendance is a concern and drops below the persistent absence figure, the school may deem an illness not serious enough to warrant an authorised absence, for example, headaches, stomach pain, a mild cold, sore throat etc.

Please note, that the authorising of absence is at the behest of the Headteacher and as such an absence may be unauthorised even if contact is made with the school by parents / carers.

PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

The school, in line with government legislation, defines persistent absenteeism (PA) as missing 10% or more (90% or less attendance) of schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Whilst a child may be absent because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any issues with regular attendance are best discussed between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is essential not to cover up their absence or give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives them the impression that attendance is not important and usually makes the issues worse.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of a student absence and also to inform us of any changes to contact details.

Parents are asked to contact the school before 8:00am on EACH day that their child is absent, informing us of the reason for the absence and when their child will be returning back to school.

Failure to inform the school of an absence will result in contact from school to home, followed by a home visit if necessary.

WHO TO CONTACT IF YOUR CHILD IS OFF SCHOOL:

Head of Year	Mr E Lawrence	0121 4650671
Head of Year	Mr S Sohal	0121 4645638
Head of Year	Mr B Tilley	0121 4645627
Head of Year	Mr P Buckley	0121 4645641
Head of Year	Mrs J Killarney	0121 4645626
Attendance Officer	Mr M Tullett	0121 6750674

MEDICAL/DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Wherever possible, parents/cares should make every effort to avoid making medical or dental appointments during the school day. It is preferable to try and arrange these during holiday periods or at the beginning or end of the school day. An appointment at the beginning of the school day should not result in a whole day's absence from school. If an unavoidable appointment requires the student to be collected during the school day, they must be collected by an adult listed on the student's record.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVATION

Parents must inform the school in advance if an absence is required for the religious observance. Please note that religious observance will only be for major events and festivals. The school will only authorise one day of absence for religious events (e.g. Eid/Diwali).

LEAVE DURING TERM TIME (EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE)

The Department for Education has amended the regulations and guidance in relation to absences in term-time. **There is no automatic right for a parent to take their child out of school during term time and we require parents to observe the term times set.**

Since September 2013, the Department for Education only allow the headteacher to grant a leave of absence if there are exceptional circumstances. In determining whether or not an absence in such circumstances can be authorised, it is for the headteacher to determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Therefore, in the case of an unauthorised leave the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified and a Penalty Notice will be issued.

Any requests to leave during term time must be made in writing to the headteacher. A leave of absence form can be collected from reception.

Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider some absences to be educational but your child will still miss out on the teaching that their peers will receive. Children returning from an absence are unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed. Teachers then have to give more time to help individual children catch up on missed work. This poses a potential risk of the under achievement of other students in the class. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION

The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor the attendance and punctuality of every student throughout the year.

- There may be daily phone-calls and unannounced home visits by the attendance officer/pastoral member of staff if attendance or punctuality are deemed to be a concern; in extreme circumstances, this home visit may be made by the police.
- Student attendance concern letters may be sent from the Attendance Officer, a Head of Year or member of the school's Senior Leadership Team; we expect parents to adhere to the advice offered in these communications.
- The school will seek to offer 'Early Help' support wherever possible. This works most effectively when parents and carers have open lines of communication with school, including initiating contact and providing school with an overview of how students are getting on outside of school.

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS/CARERS AND/OR CHILDREN

The school will regularly contact and communicate with parents where attendance is below expectations. The school will discuss any issues which may be a potential barrier to attendance, such as a medical problem, and will work with parents and carers to overcome these. Any such support from the school does not negate the parents' legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school.

FAST TRACK TO ATTENDANCE

Yardleys School uses the Birmingham City Council Programme "Fast track to Attendance" to promote excellent attendance. This is a programme that ensures children and parents receive support for issues around attendance and also manage the legal process for students who have excessive absence from school that is not authorised.

LEGAL ACTION THAT MAY BE TAKEN INCLUDES:

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence. Unauthorised absence is a safeguarding issue as it places children at risk. Under education legislation, parents have a duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. Failure to do so, without reasonable excuse, may result in referrals to the Education Welfare Service with the prospect of fines or prosecution.

- **Issuing penalty notices:** Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon the payment is made. If there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- **Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) – court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.
- **Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) – court can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Being taken to court could result in parents or carers having a criminal record.

COVID-19.

At all times, Yardleys School will follow the attendance guidance set out by the DfE and Birmingham City Council with regards to Covid-19.

REWARDING GREAT ATTENDANCE

The school would like to congratulate many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly and on time. Excellent attendance will be regularly acknowledged and rewarded.