



Brymore Academy Attendance Policy

This policy draws from and must be read in conjunction with the [DFE Guidance working together to improve school attendance](#) and [summary table of responsibilities](#) for school attendance.

Contents

1. Key Contacts
2. Introduction
3. Our School Commitment
4. Effects of Non-Attendance
5. Impact of lateness on learning
6. Our Expectations of Parents / Carers
7. Absence Procedures
8. Approved Educational Activity (AEA)
9. Safeguarding
10. Mental Health & Wellbeing
11. Religious Observance
12. Traveller Absence
13. Suspensions
14. Unauthorised Absence
15. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)
16. Persistent Absence
17. Severe Absence
18. Term Time Leave of Absence Requests
19. Children Missing Education (CME)
20. Vulnerable Children
21. Pupils Who Abscond or Go Missing
22. Long Term Absence and Reintegration to School
23. Part Time Timetables
24. Legal Interventions
25. Statutory and Legal Guidance

1. Key Contacts

Senior Attendance Champion	Ollie Walby	oliver.walby@brymoreacademy.co.uk
Attendance Outreach Officer		
Attendance Officers	Karen Rossiter Jess Sharland	Karen.Rossiter@brymoreacademy.co.uk jessica.sharland@brymoreacademy.co.uk



2. Introduction

As part of the Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust, our shared and common purpose is to work together to ensure that every child achieves, and whatever their background, receives a high-quality education. We have a shared belief that excellent school attendance is a critical factor in your child's achievement at school and we are committed to helping every child and their family to achieve this.

It is vital that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Therefore, the Trust will encourage families of Nursery children, and Reception children who are not yet compulsory school age, to send their children to every session that is available to them. Excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. For your child to gain the greatest benefit from their education they should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

We appreciate that many students come to school with a range of needs and feelings as a result of difficult experiences and the barriers to accessing education can be wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families.

Brymore Academy has developed a range of flexible responses to meet the SEMH needs of the students. There are a range of strategies in place to support students and to enable them to achieve. Any support for SEMH or other additional SEN needs is designed to run alongside our attendance processes and to help overcome any barriers to attendance that may occur.

Improving attendance is everyone's business: effective communication and joined-up working are paramount.

The roles and responsibilities of the Trust, our School, parents and pupils, can be found in Appendix C and how we manage absences in Appendix D.

3. Our Commitment

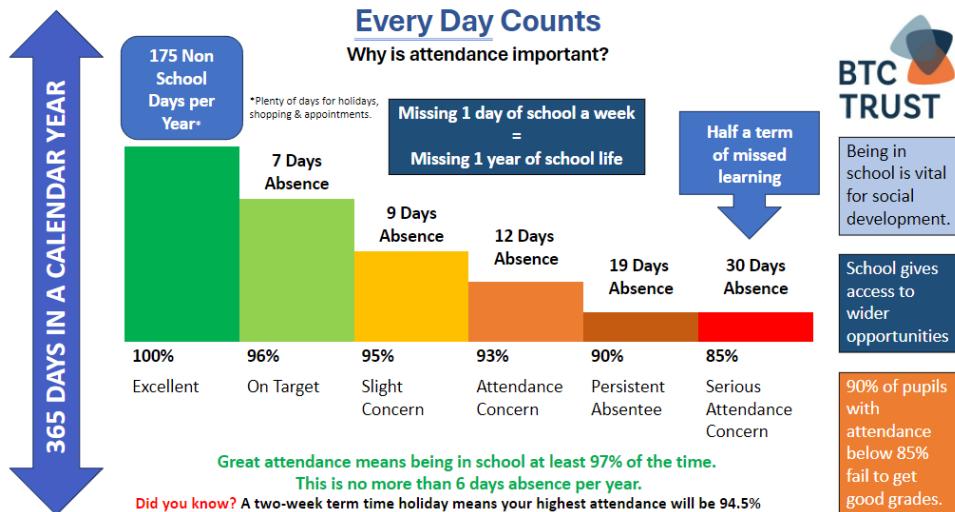
Brymore Academy strives for 100% attendance for all pupils; however, we appreciate that children can be ill or have rare unavoidable absences for other reasons. Therefore, our overall school target is at least 96% attendance. **No Brymore Academy pupil should have more than 7 days (14 sessions) absence.**

All staff are made aware of how each of their roles impacts on attendance and punctuality and that every member of staff, regardless of their role, can make a difference (See Appendix C for 'Roles and Responsibilities'). All staff will receive training commensurate with their roles. The school's attendance team will listen to and support pupils and parents/carers to achieve good attendance and punctuality and will work closely with them where absence is a cause for concern. We will report to you 3 times per year on how your son/daughter is performing in school, including what their attendance and punctuality rate is (including %, days & sessions absence) and how this relates to their attainment. We will celebrate and reward good and improving attendance by;

- Regular messages & letters home regarding positive attendance
- Postcards for improved attendance
- Certificates & badges
- Celebrating class & tutor attendance in school.
- Celebrating student attendance streaks

4. Effects of Non-Attendance

Being in school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and wider development.



Attendance	Days	Sessions	Missed lessons
98%	4	8	At least 24 lessons
95%	9	18	At least 54 lessons
93%	12	24	At least 72 lessons
90%	19	38	At least 114 lessons
85%	30	60	At least 180 lessons

Commented [NC1]: Adapt according to school day

Commented [Nt2R1]: 5 Lesson Day

98 = 20 Lessons
95 = 45 Lessons
93 = 65 lessons
90 = 95 lessons
85 = 150 lessons

Commented [OA3R1]: I've converted this to our six lesson day.

Commented [Nt4R1]: Great, thanks



5. Impact of lateness on learning

When a pupil arrives late to school, they miss important events like notices, interventions, instructions, assemblies and phonics. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late. They miss settling into the day and being sociable with their friends. The image below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others



Being late after the register closes is an unauthorised absence, a U code. Unauthorised absences can lead to legal action.

Boys are marked present if they are in school when the register is taken. If a boy leaves the school premises after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

The Assistant Head will meet with parents of those boys who are frequently late arriving at school to investigate reasons and suggest solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

Our boys must arrive by 8.30am but not before 8.00am

Our morning register is taken between 8.35-8.45am

Our afternoon register is taken between 1.55-2.00pm

A boy who arrives after 8.45am will be marked as Late (L). If the boy arrives after 9.15am due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised. If the boy is late for no good reason they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code 'Late after registers close' (U). See DfE Attendance Codes - Appendix One.

6. Our Expectations of Parents / Carers

In line with government guidelines, we expect parents and carers to:

- Ensure your child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify us as soon as possible when your child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g.: sickness).
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Engage in support, if and when necessary.

Further information on understanding attendance can be found in appendix A



7. Absence Procedures

The school day starts at 8:30am. It ends at 3:45pm.

Students will be recorded as;

- present
- attending an approved educational activity
- absent
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT YOU MUST:

Contact us before **08:15am** on the first day of absence and every further day of absence until they return via the Arbor Parent app.

If you haven't already, please get the free Arbor Parent app, and use it to tell us whenever your child's ill and unable to attend school.



From here, click the green **Log Absence** button in the top-right of the page.



Log Absence

This form lets you notify that Kim will be absent today, Tue, 02 Jul 2024. If you need to record an absence for a future date, you will need to contact the school.

Student	Kim Bowers
Date	Tue, 02 Jul 2024
Absence start*	09:00
Absence end*	15:45
Reason*	Please provide a reason for the absence

Information on the Parent App is available here: [Log into the Parent Portal and the Parent App - Arbor Help Centre \(arbor-education.com\)](#).

A helpful video for the Arbor app can be found here: <https://youtu.be/kFCuC1NyH5U>

If you are unable to use the above app you can email the attendance team at office@brymoreacademy.co.uk or call 01278 652369 and leave a voicemail.

Please be aware that you may be asked to provide medical evidence such as a doctor / consultant note if your son/daughter' has had more than 15 days absence and you have received a letter informing you that their attendance is a cause for concern.

IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT WE WILL:

- Contact you on the day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Call you to check for any concerns when you child has had a total of **7 school days (14 sessions)** of absence.
- Write to you when your child has a total of **9 school days (18 sessions)** of absence to inform you they have fallen below the DfE requirement of 96% attendance.
- Invite you in to discuss attendance concerns if your child has a total of **12 days (24 sessions)** of absence to see how we can provide support to ensure they do not become a persistent absentee.
- Contact you when your child has had **10 days (20 sessions)** of absence due to illness to say they are approaching the threshold for informing the local authority regarding absence for illness and to contact us if any support is needed for your child's medical needs.
- Contact you if your child has had **15 days (30 sessions)** of absence to inform you that we will be notifying the local authority as per DfE guidelines and documentation will be required to authorise any absence due to illness. This can be a doctor's note, hospital letter, appointment card, copy of prescription or packaging from prescribed medication.
- Refer the matter to the Education Engagement Service if attendance continues to be a concern or support has not been effective.



Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the school reception by a parent or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

8. Approved Educational Activity (AEA)

When pupils are attending educational activities off the school site that have been approved by the school, the register will be marked to show this is the case. If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, the school will make arrangements for the pupil to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, we will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). The school expects the alternative provider (AP) to notify us of any absences by individual pupils, to ensure we become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and take follow up action as necessary. Attendance updates will be provided on a daily basis. Any attendance concerns will be followed up by us, in conjunction with the AP.

9. Safeguarding

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare. (Please see our Safeguarding Policy for more information.)

We are aware that children with unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education require a degree of professional curiosity and will always apply a support first approach with our families.



10. Mental Health & Wellbeing

Brymore Academy educates pupils to look after their mental health and wellbeing from an early age. They are also taught to be able to discuss and articulate their emotions and ask for help and support when they need it. Detail of our curriculum can be found here:

[Whole School - Long Term Overview.docx](#)

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the academy SENDCo for further advice and information on the support available. Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

If you want to report any safeguarding concern to us anonymously, please use the Whisper report link here: [Whisper report](#)

Commented [NC5]: Amend link or remove if not available

Commented [OA6R5]: Changed to our Whisper system.

[Parents Mental Health Support | Advice for Your Child | YoungMinds](#)

We also have lots of staff in school to support students with their mental health & wellbeing. More details of the staff in school that can support your child with their mental health can be found [here](#).

11. Religious Observance

School Name acknowledges the multi-faith nature of our school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

12. Traveller Absence

The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.



Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

13. Suspensions

If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a Suspension. The school will follow the current [DfE's statutory guidance on suspensions](#). Any suspension must be agreed by the headteacher.

The school will notify the parent / guardian of the suspension. If the pupil is a Looked After Child, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The pupil must be collected from the school by the parent or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

A pupil who is suspended from school cannot be in a public place during school hours and if seen in a public space a Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority.

14. Unauthorised Absence

Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes but is not limited to:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark (30 minutes after the start of the school day)
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Being up too late and then too tired to attend school
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

[Information about Penalty Notices for Parents.pdf](#)



15. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage families and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent/guardian to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way. Please see our graduated response for more detail on our support first approach to attendance.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Parents will be asked to meet with a member of staff to discuss the matter.

If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter.

We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

If our school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

16. Persistent Absence (PA)

In accordance with DFE guidance, your child becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. This means **19 or more days of absence** over the whole year. We monitor all absences thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and Parents/Carers will be informed of this immediately.

In this circumstance we expect families to:

- Work with us and other agencies to help us understand your child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered which may include more formal support such as a EES Attendance Support Plan, parenting contract and / or a voluntary Early Help Assessment.



We will:

- Put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers, including working with other partners where necessary.
- Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.
- Hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about possible future legal interventions where there is a lack of engagement.
- Intensify support through external agencies if we have safeguarding concerns.

17. Severe Absence (SA)

In accordance with DFE guidance, your child is considered to be a 'severe absentee' if they are absent for more than 50% of their current attendance. This would mean over **95 days (190 sessions)** of absence over the whole year. Any pupil who is at this level of attendance is deemed to be at serious risk of harm.

In these circumstances we expect families to:

- Work with us and other agencies to help us understand your child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered which will include more formal support such as a parenting contract and / or a voluntary Early Help Assessment.

We will:

- Continue support as for persistently absent pupils.
- Agree a joint approach with the Education Engagement Service and consider and an EHA, EHCP, or alternative form of education provision.

18. Term Time Leave of Absence Requests

The school will only consider a formal application (See Appendix E) for a leave of absence at least **two weeks** in advance of the dates requested. "The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours."

Any period of leave taken without the authorisation of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and a will be referred to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice fine.

If no request is made or absence is taken and believed to be unauthorised term time leave the responsibility is on the parent to provide evidence to the Local Authority to dispute any penalty notice requested.

[Absence Request Form.docx](#)



Guidance for off-rolling for children gone abroad '20-day rule' Reviewed by the DFE April 2021

The following guidance will be used by the school for children who have gone abroad and have not returned to school within 20 days. This guidance does not apply to children who are still in the UK but not attending school; these pupils will be treated as an attendance issue and must remain on roll.

We acknowledge that some families may experience difficulties in travelling back to the UK and will work with families wherever possible to plan for their return and we will always encourage families to return to the UK as soon as possible in every instance.

Unless justified, **we cannot hold places for extended periods of time if the pupils are not in the UK**, and where we have waiting lists for school places.

We will make clear to parents before any decision is taken, so that they fully understand that in choosing not to return to the UK and resume statutory school attendance, that the place will become available to offer out to another child. We will also advise the parent that the onus for providing evidence supporting the reason for absence is on them, and that the school is not obliged to accept it if they feel it is insufficient. We will put this information in writing to the parent, to allow the parent to make an informed decision on returning. Each case will be fully considered on its own merit.

If we decide to keep the pupil on roll, we will write to the parent (email and hard copy where possible) advising that to keep their child on roll they must:

- Provide the following information:
 - The address at which their child is currently staying
 - The details of the adult responsible for their child's care while they are staying at this address
 - The date by which they expect them to be back in the UK
- Keep in regular touch with the school (we would advise at least weekly).
- Be aware that the absence will be reviewed regularly and if the justifications for keeping the pupil on roll no longer apply, the school will write to the parent again advising them of this and providing the date on which the pupil will be off rolled if they have not returned.

If we make the decision to take the pupil off roll, we will:

- Write to the parent (email and hard copy where possible) advising the parent of the date the pupil will be removed from roll if they have not returned. This date should be at least ten days from the date of the letter to allow them time to return. It should also remind the parent that if their child is removed from roll, they will need to apply for a new place for them, and there is no guarantee they will be able to return to their current school.
- Forward a copy of the letter sent to the Education Engagement Service.

If the pupil has not returned by the date advised in our previous letter to the parent, and we are now taking the decision to take a child off roll, we will write to the parent advising this has been done and forward the letter to the Education Engagement Service.



19. Children Missing Education (CME)

Brymore Academy will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. The school will follow the appropriate local authority Child Missing Education process and make CME referral as appropriate.

20. Vulnerable Children

It is recognised widely that some groups of pupils are more vulnerable to poor attendance than others. Pupils with medical needs, SEN, Disabilities, Young Carers, Pupils with a social worker or in receipt of the pupil premium are likely to require more targeted support. These groups will be carefully monitored, and intervention targeted appropriately. In exceptional cases, schools can gain advice from the BTCT Central Inclusion team. The school recognises that "all schools (including academies) must agree with the relevant local authority, the regular interval that the school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more", (DfE guidance, October 2016)

22. Pupils who Abscond or go Missing

Staff must always be very aware of the potential for children to go missing either onsite or by absconding from the school premises. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'absconding' is used to cover incidents of pupils leaving the school grounds without permission (an adult is present but is unable to stop the pupil). 'Missing from the school site' is used to describe a pupil who cannot be found, and it is unclear if the pupil is still onsite or have left the school grounds.

All staff must be aware of the procedures to be followed if a child goes missing off the school site. This can be a very stressful time for all concerned. Every care is taken to ensure that all children are kept safe. Risk assessments are carried out to ensure that the school and setting is as safe as possible, and children should never be allowed to leave the premises on their own, without parent consent. It is possible, however, that despite all precautions a child cannot be accounted for and goes missing. This policy is designed to put in place swift and effective actions to locate any missing child and to notify and involve parents and the authorities at every appropriate point.

Preventative Procedures

Systems must be in place to ensure that children do not go missing off the school site. These include:

Site security

- Children must be made aware of the boundaries of the school. Brymore Academy is an open site and pupil must respect the boundaries of the school at all times.
- Some doors are activated by using a fobs and should not be propped open. Pupils must not have access to the fobs, unless as part of their individualised programme, risk assessed and for internal doors only.
- Effective supervision
- Children must be supervised at all times and there will be sufficient staff available to ensure this happens.
- Registration should take place regularly through the day and particularly when a class has been out of the classroom.



- Parents/carers must inform the school in advance if their child has an appointment which will require them to arrive at or leave school during school hours. This is logged on the system.
- Children will not be allowed to leave the school with anyone other than the authorised persons unless the school has been informed otherwise and that alternative person is identified.
- Any visitors to school will be signed in and out. They must be let into the school by a member of staff; also seen off the premises by a member of staff to ensure that no doors are left open, and the safety of the children is maintained.

Staff Guidance for Pupils Missing from the School Site (Reactive Procedures)

- If a child cannot be found, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), along with the office staff, must be notified immediately and told when and where the child was last seen. Time is of the essence and prompt action must be taken by all.
- The staff on call should check the students lessons and search the school site for the student.
- SLT will nominate two staff to search the area in the immediate vicinity of the school. All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the school site.
- If after 10 – 20 minutes of thorough searching, the child is still missing, the parent must be called by SLT on call or the Pastoral support team to inform them of the situation. **The timescale is dependent on the student's vulnerability and level of need,**
- If a member of staff finds the child, SLT must be told at once. Parents, and any other authorities will be notified.
- Once the situation has been resolved, a full written account of the incident will be recorded and held on file.
- Further risk assessments will be carried out to ensure that the incident does not happen again.

Staff Guidance for Pupils Absconding from the School Site

- In the event of a child attempting to and/or successfully absconding from the school premises while in the presence of a staff member, the staff member must inform the office staff and a member of SLT.
- While help is arriving, the staff member is to closely follow the pupil as best they can and provide updates for other staff members in order for them to come and help. Staff must only follow the pupil if it is safe to do so and continuing to evaluate the risks as they move away from the school premises.
- On Call staff members to respond to urgent call for help, including the Head teacher and members of the SLT. Staff who are allocated to a pupil are to remain in school and not respond. Further assistance will be called if required.
- SLT to instruct Pastoral support to inform parents to be called to update on the situation.
- In the event that the pupil is moving towards a potentially life threatening hazard (e.g. a busy road), the closest staff member is to provide the pupil with information about the situation (e.g. "you are going towards a main road where you can get hurt"). Provide an alternative route for the young person if they need to keep moving or if there is an immediate threat to life, the member of staff will need to warn the pupil that they will need to support the young person to stop. Staff will support the pupil to stop by using what is reasonable, proportionate and necessary as outlined in Team Teach.



- Once the situation has been resolved, a full written account of the incident will be recorded and held on file.
- Further risk assessments will be carried out to ensure that the incident does not happen again.

23. Long Term Absence and Reintegration to School

We recognise that pupils who have had long term absence from school need support to return and encourage families in these circumstances to contact the Senior Attendance Lead to arrange a reintegration plan for any pupil returning to school following a significant absence from school.

24. Part Time Timetables

A part-time timetable will only be in place for the shortest time necessary and will not be treated as a long-term solution. It will be time limited with regular two weekly review meetings with a view to the pupil attending full-time. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, the absence will go down as authorised by the school.

When not on school site students are expected to complete work from our curriculum appropriate for their year group from our catch-up provision. Further details will be included when this is ready.

25. Legal Interventions

At all times Brymore Academy will try and support families without the use of legal intervention. However, if parents/carers are not supporting good attendance, the school, via the local authority, may exercise its legal powers to address poor attendance in school with all parents/carers who have the day-to-day responsibility for the child.

These interventions include:

Attendance Contract - A parenting contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school or local authority to address poor attendance. It is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. If there is non-compliance, then an alternative course of action will be taken which may lead to fines and prosecution.

Education Supervision Order (ESO) - This can be used when a formal parenting contract has failed. It is an action plan that would be overseen by the high or Family Court. Non-compliance with the directions given in an ESO can lead to a fine of up to £1000.

Penalty Notices - Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 allows penalty notices (fines) to be issued to parents/carers. They are an alternative measure to the prosecution of parents/carers who fail to ensure that their child attends school. A penalty notice will be issued by the local authority in line with its code of conduct when a child's absence has not been authorised by the school. This is issued to any adult with parental responsibility for each child. The penalty is £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 per parent/carer per child if paid between 21 and 28 days. If one or both parents/carers fail to pay the penalty notice in full, then the local authority may decide to prosecute the parents/carers.

Commented [NC7]: Amend link according to school arrangements

Commented [OA8R7]: We don't currently have this provision in place.

Commented [Nt9R7]: I would raise this as a piece of work to be done with SLT and just take this line out

Commented [OA10R7]: Yes, I agree. I have asked Jayne about this.



Attendance Prosecution: If a child fails to attend school regularly at which they are registered then the parents/carers may be guilty of an offence and may be prosecuted by the local authority. They have the power to prosecute parents/carers who fail to comply with a school attendance order under section 443 of the Education Act 1996 or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The fines available to the courts if the parents/carers are found guilty could be between £1000 and £2500. The courts can also sentence parents/carers for imprisonment for up to 3 months.

Parenting Order - The order requires a parent to comply with the arrangements specified in the order by the Court which can include a requirement for parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions (e.g. parenting education or parenting support classes) where they will receive help and support to enable them to improve their child's attendance for up to 3 months. Any breach of the order can lead to a fine of up to £1000.

26. Statutory and Legal Guidance

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 either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. When parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child 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. This policy aligns with the following statutory guidance and regulations:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amended) 2013
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and 2013) The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 was amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations in 2013 only allowing head teachers to authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In line with these regulations, requests for term-time leave will not be granted. Additional legal requirements relating to school attendance can be found in The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Links to other policies

Schools to link to

- [Brymore behaviour policy](#)
- [Brymore safeguarding policy](#)
- [Brymore anti-bullying policy](#)
- [Brymore SEND policy](#)
- [BTCT complaints procedure](#)
- [Brymore equality policy](#)



APPENDIX A - UNDERSTANDING ATTENDANCE TYPES

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day.

This shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, every half day absence must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. If an absence is authorised, then this means the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as the reason for absence. An unauthorised absence is where the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for absence or no reason is given. It may also be unauthorised if attendance level is below target and no medical evidence has been given.

This Attendance Policy includes procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. BCA have a duty to refer to the Local Authority any child of compulsory school age who is

- continuously absent from school for 20 sessions (2 weeks) without explanation
- has irregular attendance
- is persistently late to attend school
- has an unauthorised leave of absence



DEFINITIONS

Session - is a term related to the recording of absence data. Each school day has two sessions, morning and afternoon registration and attendance must be recorded for each.

Authorised absence - This means the school has given approval in advance or has accepted an explanation for absence.

Unauthorised absence - This is where the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for absence or no reason has been given.

Persistent absentee (PA) - The government threshold for Persistent Absence is 90% or lower. This includes ALL absence regardless of whether it is authorised or not. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents and carers' support and cooperation to tackle this.

Severe absentee (SA) - The government threshold for severe absence is 50% or lower. This includes ALL absence regardless of whether it is authorised or not. Any pupil who is at this level of attendance is at serious risk of harm and we need parents and carers' fullest support and cooperation to tackle this.

Appendix B - Graduated Response

100%	
Rewards system	Acknowledge attendance achievement to the family
4 School Days / 8 Sessions Absence	End of Year = 98% Acknowledge attendance achievement to the family.
When a pupil has 4 days absence during the academic year and this causes them to fall under 96% their teacher / tutor will check in with the pupil / parent and record the conversation has taken place and act on any concerns raised.	
6 School Days / 12 Sessions Absence	End of Year = 97% Acknowledge attendance achievement to the family
7 School Days / 14 Sessions Absence	Trigger for Letter 1 . Under DfE requirements and missing out on learning, social development, time with peers and all the other opportunities at school.
9 School Days / 18 Sessions Absence	Trigger for Letter 2 . Under DfE requirements and missing out on learning, social development, time with peers and all the other opportunities at school. School to check reasons for absence and consider if a letter is also needed for Medical reasons or Unauthorised Absence .
12 School Days / 24 Sessions Absence	Trigger for Attendance Contract Meeting . Family and pupil will be invited to an ACM to explore reasons for absence and any barriers to attendance. Our motivation is to work as a team to prevent any pupil becoming a persistent absentee.



Once Attendance Contract is in Place. Review in 3 weeks. Modify support or continue. 6 Week Outcome Meeting.		
Significant Improvement	Some Improvement	No Improvement
Praise and close Attendance Contract. Monitoring period. Consider Medical Evidence. Possible NTI if any unauthorised in near future.	Extend Attendance Contract for further 3 weeks. Amend support as needed. Consider Medical Evidence. Possible NTI for UA Absence.	No more authorised without medical evidence. Consider NTI or referral to EES/ FIS for TAF.

Appendix C - Attendance Roles & Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual learners
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement with a focus on disadvantaged learners
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Creating and reviewing policy and procedures
- Reducing absence levels of absence across all year groups
- Weekly analysis of vulnerable groups
- Providing workable data to middle leaders to support workload reduction
- Tracking attendance of all Brymore Academy learners in order to provide support to families as required with a focus on disadvantage and strategies to reduce absence levels for these learners
- Using research and national guidance to support effective strategy and implementation
- Training and induction support for attendance administrators and new pastoral staff
- Oversight of any learners on reduced timetables
- Provide support with complex cases
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes



- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Working in close collaboration with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure children missing from education have a safeguarding first response
- Ensuring there is a robust process for accurate and timely register taking.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance can be contacted through the school office.

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a timely response to absence at school through first day truancy/absence processes
- Ensuring that the reasons for absence are accurately recorded
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Take messages from parents for the senior leader in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

The attendance officer can be contacted via attendance@brymoreacademy.co.uk or through the Arbor app.

The school attendance outreach officer is responsible for:

- Organising attendance support meetings and referrals in response to absence
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance
- Tracking attendance of all Brymore learners in order to provide support to families as required
- Communicating with parents regarding attendance concerns
- Providing regular attendance data and reports to school staff
- Overseeing requests for term time absence and liaising with the senior leader regarding these
- Advising the Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Planning the delivery of targeted intervention and support to learners and families
- Working with education engagement officers to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

The attendance outreach officer can be contacted via attendance@brymoreacademy.co.uk

The Parent and Family Support Advisor is responsible for:

- Planning the delivery of targeted intervention and support to learners and families
- Supporting the work with education engagement officers to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues for their cases
- Working with students and families to support improved attendance
- Attending EES meetings

The PFSA can be contacted via office@brymoreacademy.co.uk

Class teachers at Brymore Academy are responsible for taking an accurate register at the start of every lesson. In secondary school, the only codes that teachers are expected to use are L, N and /.

Commented [OA11]: @Nikki Doughty - Central trust would this be me at Brymore or another person?

Commented [Nt12R11]: office staff at Brymore - Karen and Jess

Commented [Nt13R11]: May need to move some of the bullet points as Sue as PFSA does some of the welfare checks and things.

Commented [OA14R11]: Thanks. I've requested an attendance email address.

Commented [Nt15R11]: Good plan!



Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 08:15am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

Learners are expected to:

- Arrive at school on time by 08:30am and to attend every timetabled session on time.

Appendix D: Letters

Letter 1

Dear

I am writing to highlight that <<chosen_forename>>'s attendance has dropped below the Government's requirements of 96%

They have now had <<AUTHORISED_ABSENCE>> sessions of authorised absence and <<UNAUTHORISED_ABSENCE>> sessions of unauthorised absence.

We are aware that there are many things that can affect a student's attendance but wanted to highlight it as a concern to enable you to avoid any further absence where possible. We want to ensure that <<chosen_forename>> does not miss all the wonderful opportunities school has to offer, their time with their friends or fall behind in their learning.

Please find enclosed our Every Day Counts attendance leaflet with lots of helpful information and guidance. If we can support <<chosen_forename>> in improving <<his/her>> attendance in any way, please contact your child's class teacher or tutor in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

Letter 2

Following our previous communication regarding <<chosen_forename>>'s attendance, I wish to let you know that your son / daughter's attendance continues to be of concern.

Even when we have reasons for absence when a student has 9 school days or 18 sessions of absence, we write to families to highlight this concern and invite you to contact us to arrange an Attendance Support Meeting.

We would like to understand the causes of any absence and avoid any further absence this academic year as we want to prevent <<chosen_forename>> becoming a persistent absentee. The government threshold for Persistent Absence is 90% or lower. This includes ALL absence regardless of whether it is authorised or not. 90% is 19 school days or 38 sessions of absence.

<<chosen_forename>> currently has <<authorised absence>> sessions of authorised absence and <<unauthorised absence>> sessions of unauthorised absence.



If you feel an Attendance Support Meeting would be beneficial to prevent further absence for <<chosen_forename>> please contact us at **enter attendance email address**.

Yours sincerely

Invitation to an Attendance Contract Meeting

Dear

Student(s) Full Name (Legal) , (Student(s) Date of Birth)

We are concerned that Student(s) First Name (Legal) continues to be absent too frequently, as their attendance is now Report Field: % Attend. Each absence is recorded on your child's register, which currently shows they have Report Field: Auth Absence authorised and Report Field: Unauth Absence unauthorised absences.

Regular absence from school is often a sign that additional support is needed, and we would like to ensure that this is put in place to support Student(s) First Name's improved attendance.

You are invited to attend an Attendance Contract Meeting on **long date at time**.

Attendance contracts allow us to work together to identify and understand barriers to attendance and agree on a plan to overcome them. We are keen to work collaboratively with you to improve Student(s) First Name's attendance. Please be aware, however, that unauthorised absences or non-engagement in this process may result in you being issued a Notice to Improve or a request for support from the Local Authority being made.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely



No reason provided for absence

Dear

<<Chosen_forename>> has been absent from school during the last week and we have not yet received a reason. Unfortunately, this means an unauthorised mark will be on their attendance record for the day(s) in question.

According to DfE guidance it is your responsibility to notify the school on **all days** of absence to explain the reason why <<chosen_forename>> is unable to attend school. Unfortunately, we have not received any contact from you.

Please could you update the reasons for absence via Arbor app or contact the attendance team with reasons for absence by emailing **add email address** or call **add phone number**.

Yours sincerely

10 Days of Medical / Illness Absence Letter

Dear

I wish to bring to your attention that <<chosen_forename>> now has at least **10 school days / 20 sessions of absence**. I have noticed that the majority of <<chosen_forename>>'s absences seem to be for illness or medical reasons.

The Department for Education guidelines state that when a student has 15 school days / 30 sessions of absence for illness or medical reasons we should submit a sickness return to the local authority. We have therefore made an appointment for you at **time** , on **day, date**. The purpose of this meeting is to put in place an Attendance Support Plan for <<chosen_forename>>. If this is not convenient, please contact us in advance to rearrange.

We look forward to working with you to improve <<chosen_forename>>'s attendance.

Yours sincerely

Request for Medical Evidence

Dear

I wish to bring to your attention that <<chosen_forename>> now has at least **15 school days / 30 sessions of absence**. I have noticed that the majority of <<chosen_forename>>'s absences seem to be for illness or medical reasons.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to support <<chosen_forename>> with improving their attendance through an Attendance Support Meeting. Please contact us to arrange this at attendance@bridgewatercollegeacademy.org



In the meantime, with the current level of absence we **will no longer be able to authorise absence** until such time you can provide us evidence such as a valid appointment card or a copy of a prescription which was obtained while attending a medical appointment, then an authorised mark will be placed for <<chosen_forename>>'s attendance record for the relevant day.

If you wish to contact me to discuss this issue, then please feel free to discuss this matter on the number below.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

Reminder of Medical Evidence

Dear

I have written to you previously to inform you that due to <<Chosen_forename>>'s low attendance we would not be able to authorise any more absences until such time you can provide us with a valid appointment card, or a copy of a prescription which was obtained while attending a medical appointment.

This letter is to remind you that until any medical confirmation is received, we will not be able to authorise any absences for illness.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to support <<chosen_forename>> with improving their attendance through an Attendance Support Meeting. Please contact us to arrange this at attendance@bridgwatercollegeacademy.org

Yours sincerely

Lates Letter

Dear

I wish to bring to your attention that <<chosen_forename>> is arriving late to school. It is essential that pupils form good habits of punctual attendance at school from the earliest age. The details of attendance and amount of lateness for <<chosen_forename>> is detailed in the table below.

Overall attendance %	
Total number of late marks	
Number of unauthorised late marks	

It has been proven that the attendance of a student is strongly linked to their social development and attainment. Children who arrive late often;

- Miss vital parts of the lesson
- Disrupt the class when the lesson is underway
- Find it acutely embarrassing entering a class once a lesson has started



If a pupil arrives at school after the registers have closed without an adequate reason, we are required to record this as an unauthorised absence, this classes as a missed session from school.

8.40am - 9.10am	Assembly*
9.10am - 10.05am	Lesson 1
10.05am - 11.00am	Lesson 2
11.00am - 11.20am	Break
11.20am - 12.15pm	Lesson 3
12.15pm - 1.10pm	Lesson 4
1.10pm - 1.55pm	Lunch
1.55pm - 2.50pm	Lesson 5
2.50pm - 3.45pm	Lesson 6

Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The image below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year by being late to school every day.



We understand that the school mornings can be hectic, but when your child is late for school they miss out on vital parts of their education. Please could you emphasise to <<chosen_forename>> how important it is to arrive to school on time. If a meeting to discuss this would help, please let us know, we are happy to support. Please contact us by emailing [add email address](mailto:add_email_address)

We will continue to monitor <<chosen_forename>>'s attendance and punctuality and hope to see an improvement over the next few weeks.

Yours sincerely



Unauthorised Absence / Notice to Improve Information

Dear

I am writing to let you know that <<chosen_forename's>> attendance continues to be a concern.

His / Her's attendance is now <<attendance percentage>>% with <<sessions absence>> missed sessions. <<unauthorised absence>> of these are unauthorised absences, please see the enclosed registration certificate.

Local authority guidelines state that schools can request a Penalty Notice be issued to parents and carers of pupils with at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absences within 10 school weeks. Please read the enclosed information leaflet.

I need to make you aware that currently XX of the unauthorised absences are currently in the 10 school weeks and if there are any further unauthorised absences, we will have to consider issuing a Notice to Improve. You would be informed of this by letter.

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for children and young people to maximise their educational opportunities, personal and social development.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to support <<chosen_forename>> with improving their attendance through an Attendance Support Meeting. Please contact us to arrange this at **add email address**.

Yours sincerely

Notice to Improve

Dear

Re: Notice to Improve

I am writing to let you know that attendance and unauthorised absences continue to be a concern. <<Chosen_Forename>>'s attendance is now <<percentage attendance>>% with <<unauthorised absence>> unauthorised absences, XX of which are within 10 school weeks.

As your child is of statutory school age and are not regularly attending **SCHOOL NAME**, you as the parent/carers of <<Chosen_forename>> may be guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

You have 15 school days from <<Insert Date>> in which to improve your child's attendance. Should there be any unauthorised absences during this period, including arriving after the close of registration, ENTER SCHOOL NAME will request a Penalty Notice be issued by Somerset Council as per their Code of Conduct. If attendance is good during the 15 days, we will continue to monitor attendance for 3 months and if there are any further unauthorised absences during this 3-month period a Penalty Notice may be requested without further warning.



A Penalty Notice, if issued, gives you the opportunity to pay a £160 fine within 28 days of the notice being issued or £80 if paid before the 21st day. Paying the Penalty Notice, within these time scales, discharges your liability for the above offence for the dates in question. If the Penalty Notice is not paid by the 28th day you may be prosecuted for the offence and could be fined £1000 if found guilty.

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for children and young people to maximise their educational opportunities.

Please contact **NAME**, Attendance Officer, on **CONTACT NUMBER** if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Lead

No request for Term Time Leave

Dear

We need to draw your attention to a current period of consecutive school days absence for your children.

We have reason to believe this absence may be for an unrequested period of term-time leave for a holiday. The school's attendance policy clearly states that any planned absence should be requested in advance on the school's Request for Authorised Leave of Absence form.

Unless you provide evidence that this absence was for illness or other unavoidable reason, within 5 school days, this period of absence will be 'G' coded as an unauthorised term time leave for a holiday.

As we cannot retrospectively accept any request for Term-Time Leave we may ask the local authority to issue a Penalty Notice in line with Somerset's Code of Practice.

Please contact **ATTENDANCE OFFICER** on **NUMBER** if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely