



## **Attendance Policy**

Date: September 2024  
Author: Deputy Head (Pastoral and Safeguarding)  
Review Cycle: Annually  
Next Review Date: September 2025

Bredon School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education; the Proprietary Body also known as the Governing Body. Any reference to Governors means any Director of Cavendish Education.

This Policy document is one of a series of Bredon Policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive, formal Statement of Bredon's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each and every one of its pupils and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this Policy needs to be read alongside all of these Policies in order to get the full picture; in particular it should be read in conjunction with the ***Equality Policy, The Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding Policy.***

All of these Policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to evidence the work that the whole School is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

'To be a small, family school that genuinely focuses on the individual; ensuring each pupil reaches his or her personal potential and destination by way of a rich and diverse journey based on breadth of opportunity, support and continuously striving towards excellence.'

In all Bredon Policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "**parent**" imports the meaning parent, guardian, carer or any person in whom is vested the legal duties and responsibilities of a child's primary caregiver.

**Bredon employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure compliance is met and the best practice is implemented:**

**Peninsula HR Online  
Peninsula Business Safe (Health and Safety)  
Atlantic Data (DBS)  
Educare (online CPD)  
SchoolPro (Online CPD and Data Protection Service)**

# Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Terms Used Within this Policy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Framework and Legislation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Rationale</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.1 Principles and Ethos</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.2 Aims</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Partnership</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4.1 Promoting good attendance &amp; punctuality</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4.2 Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4.2.1 Responsibilities of the Parents</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.2.2 Responsibilities of Pupils</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.2.3 Responsibilities of Tutors, Teachers and Boarding Staff (where applicable)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.2.4 Responsibilities of HoH</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4.2.5 Responsibilities of the Headmaster and the School' Strategic Lead for Attendance</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4.2.6 Governing Body</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5. Recording Attendance</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5.1 Admissions Register (The School Roll)</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5.2 Attendance Register</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5.3 Registration</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.3.1 AM Registration</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.3.2 PM Registration</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.3.3 Lesson Registration</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.3.4 Educated Offsite</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.3.5 Absence Codes</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.4 Lateness / Punctuality</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6. Persistent and Severe Absence</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>7. Reasons for Absence</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7.1 Authorised absence</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7.2 Illness</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7.3 Unauthorised absence</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7.4 Reporting absence from school</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7.5 Appointments</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7.6 Religious observance</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.7 Gypsy/Roma and Traveller absence</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.8 Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or TV work &amp; modelling</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.9 Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.10 Study Leave</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8. Requests for Leave of Absence</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>9. Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Health-Related Absence</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>10. Children Missing in Education (CME)</b>	<b>15</b>

10. 1 Children at Particular Risk of Missing Education	16
10.1.1 Pupils at Risk of Harm/Neglect	16
10.1.2 Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families	16
10.1.3 Children of Service Personnel	16
10.1.4 Missing Children and Runaways	17
10.1.5 Children and Young People Supervised by the Youth Justice System	17
10.1.6 Children Who Cease to Attend a School	17
10.1.7 Children of New Migrant Families	17
<b>11. Part Time / Temporary Timetables</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>12. Elective Home Education</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>13. Parental Advice and Information</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>13.1 Leavers</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Annex A - Exceptional Circumstances</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Annex B: Attendance Codes</b>	<b>21</b>

## 1. Terms Used Within this Policy

In all Bredon School policies, we use the word “**parent**” to mean parent, guardian, carer or any person in whom is vested the legal duties and responsibilities of a child’s primary caregiver.

We use the terms ‘**must**’ and ‘**should**’ throughout this policy. We use the term ‘**must**’ when the person in question is required to do something and ‘**should**’ when the advice set out should be followed unless there is good reason not to.

This policy uses the terms ‘**child**’ and ‘**children**’, which is defined for the purposes of this policy as a person aged under 18. Under this policy we adopt a wider interpretation of our safeguarding responsibilities so that they apply to all pupils, regardless of age.

## 2. Framework and Legislation

Regular and punctual school attendance is important and parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child has good attendance. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Bredon School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours available.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant documents, guidance and legislations, and applies to all children registered at Bredon School, as outlined below:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(DfE, 2024\)](#)
- [Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools \(DfE, 2023\)](#)
- [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures \(DfE, 2015\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2024\)](#)
- [Children Missing in Education \(DfE, 2024\)](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Behaviour Management Policy](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy](#)
- [Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy](#)

In accordance with the above, and the Local Authority’s (LA) legal responsibility to monitor and oversee Bredon School’s attendance, data is shared accordingly with relevant LA’s, where applicable.

## 3. Rationale

### 3.1 Principles and Ethos

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils

and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel safe, valued and supported. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents and staff share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all and working together to remove any barriers to attendance.

The law relating to school attendance states in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 that the parent of every child of compulsory age shall cause them to receive full time Education suitable:

- a. to age, ability and aptitude and
- b. to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Where 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.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents the importance of regular attendance.

Where a pupil has a medical condition (physical or emotional), a disability, a special educational need or indeed any other factor which may present a barrier to attendance we uphold our expectation of excellent attendance. We endeavour to work with these pupils and their families, taking into account their individual needs, in order to make reasonable and supportive adjustments to facilitate excellent school attendance.

For our pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital that each pupil is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines pupils develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and attendance below 95%.
- Regular attenders make better progress both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school and higher education, employment or training.

As stated in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2024), **The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.** At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall

absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%). At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent) and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study).

### 3.2 Aims

- To develop attitudes and behaviours that enable pupils to take an active and responsible role beyond the school gates.
- To recognise the importance of attendance to the overall achievement of pupils in school.
- To promote a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality with pupils and parents.
- To monitor and organise procedures to encourage good attendance.
- To create a climate which gives attendance a high profile and ensures that absence for any reason is kept to a minimum.
- To ensure that non-attendance and poor punctuality are effectively monitored and followed up.

With the intention of recognising attendance patterns and determining when additional support may be necessary, Bredon School have established attendance groups within school:

Attendance Group	Attendance Grade	Attendance Percentage
Stage One	Excellent	97% and above
Stage Two	Good	95% and above
Stage Three	Concern	91% and above
Stage Four	Persistently Absent	90% and below
Stage Five	Severely Absent	50% and below

## 4. Partnership

### 4.1 Promoting good attendance & punctuality

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home/School Agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves excellent attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance in our school communications, newsletters and website.
- Report to you on how your child is performing at school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment each term.
- Meet with parents, pupils and staff to work together on raising attendance levels individually and across the school.

Bredon School places significant importance on maintaining consistent attendance. Every instance of absence has the potential to disrupt a pupil's educational progress, and persistent absenteeism can significantly hinder their overall learning experience. The absence of any pupil can disturb the established teaching routines, subsequently affecting the educational journey of their peers within the same class. Moreover, children who frequently miss school often encounter difficulties in developing friendships, building confidence, and nurturing self-esteem. These pupils frequently sense a disconnection from ongoing learning, leading to a reluctance to participate in school activities. It's worth noting that pupils with frequent absences often face challenges in both academic advancement and social integration, potentially resulting in an overall sense of dissatisfaction within the school environment.

The attendance table below gives an idea of how many days and lessons missed based on a possible 167 days (minus INSET days) in one academic year:

Attendance during one school year	Days Absent*	Number of lessons missed*
100%	0	0
99%	2	14
97%	5	35
95%	8	56
92%	13	91
90%	16	112
85%	25	175
80%	33	231
50%	83	581

*\*approximations*

## 4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

A member of the Senior Management Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is recorded accurately and analysed. They will work alongside the reception team, the Data Manager and Head of Houses (HoH) to ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with concerns.

The school's strategic lead and champion for attendance is Mr Robert Starr, Director of

Boarding) and he is responsible for the school's strategic approach to attendance.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

#### **4.2.1 Responsibilities of the Parents**

Including but not limited to:

- Be aware of the morning and afternoon registration periods for their school.
- Providing up to date and accurate contact information.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact.
- Ensuring that their child(ren) attends school regularly and has excellent school attendance.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Provide evidence following absence or appointments.
- Not taking their child(ren) out of school during term time for holidays or other similar reasons.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.
- Informing the school of their child's absence on the first day of absence.
- Keeping in regular contact with the school during a period of absence.
- Contacting the school for support if school attendance/punctuality is a challenge.
- Support the school in aiming for 100% attendance each year for their child.
- Adhere to this policy and all relevant guidance pertaining to attendance and safeguarding.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parents legal responsibility (section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law. For further information, see the DfE's [Guidance for parents on school attendance](#).

#### **4.2.2 Responsibilities of Pupils**

Including but not limited to:

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Attend all registrations and lessons on time.
- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.
- Support the school in aiming for 100% attendance.

#### **4.2.3 Responsibilities of Tutors, Teachers and Boarding Staff (where applicable)**

Including but not limited to:

- Monitor and support pupils who are not regularly attending school.
- Ensure that pupils are registered accurately.
- Ensure that pupils bring absence notes or parents send an email and that these are passed to reception and their respective HoH upon receipt.
- Identify patterns of absence which may be significant and report to their respective HoH.
- Encourage and praise pupils with good attendance records.
- Keep their respective HoH's informed of any signs of suspected truancy and inform them of any possible underlying problems which may account for absences.



- In the event of a power failure and the internet connection and Schoolbase being disabled, tutors will send a paper copy of their AM and PM registrations to main reception with a pupil runner before the end of each registration period.
- Teachers will inform the 'missing email box' if a pupil isn't present in their particular lesson by means of an email or in the event of a power failure, by means of a pupil runner.
- Adhere to this policy and all relevant guidance pertaining to attendance and safeguarding.

#### **4.2.4 Responsibilities of HoH**

Including but not limited to:

- Monitoring attendance data and identifying trends (including for vulnerable groups and individual pupils).
- When a pupil's attendance reaches 97% or below (Yellow group), the HoH will communicate attendance with both the pupil and parents, and record the outcome of communications on Schoolbase.
- Liaise with the Form Tutor, Data Manager and the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Safeguarding) on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Promote & reward good attendance with pupils at all appropriate opportunities.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a pupils' absence and monitor any safeguarding issues.
- Support pupils and parents to overcome barriers to attendance, arrange meetings and signpost appropriate support.
- Adhere to this policy and all relevant guidance pertaining to attendance and safeguarding.

#### **4.2.5 Responsibilities of the Headmaster and the School' Strategic Lead for Attendance**

Including but not limited to:

- The day-to-day implementation of this policy and attendance management procedures.
- Ensuring all staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's attendance expectations.
- Monitoring attendance data and identifying trends (including for vulnerable groups and individual pupils).
- Developing, implementing and reviewing strategic approach and action plans to address areas of development / improving attendance.
- Monitoring the impact of attendance interventions.
- Ensuring the effective deployment of resources to promote excellent attendance across the school, vulnerable groups and for individual pupils.
- Ensuring that relevant staff with key responsibilities (e.g. Head of Learning and Development, SENCo etc) are aware of attendance performance and are accountable for excellent attendance within their areas of responsibility.
- Communicating with pupils and parents regarding attendance, including individual pupil attendance, where applicable.
- Ensuring that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education.
- Informing the LA of attendance concerns the school may have about a pupil.
- Determine whether to authorise any proposed leave of absence requested in writing / via email, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made.
- Inform the LA of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register and those pupils who may be deemed missing in education (in line with the Children Missing Education DfE guidance).
- Adhere to this policy and all relevant guidance pertaining to attendance and safeguarding.

## 4.2.6 Governing Body

Including but not limited to:

- Providing professional support, challenge and accountability to the Headmaster / School Strategic Lead for Attendance regarding attendance.
- Having an understanding of the attendance trends across the school and the actions in place to improve / sustain high attendance including for vulnerable groups.
- Having an understanding of school attendance performance in comparison to national averages and progress towards targets.
- Receiving regular reports on attendance from the Headmaster / School Strategic Lead for Attendance.
- Ensuring the consistent implementation of this policy and that it does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Handling any complaints regarding this policy in line with the school's complaint procedures.

## 5. Recording Attendance

### 5.1 Admissions Register (The School Roll)

All pupils are placed on an admissions (school roll) and attendance register. The admissions register must include specific information as outlined in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2024):

The law requires all schools including independent schools to have an admission register and, except for schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on the admission register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register. The proprietor of a school who fails to comply with these regulations is guilty of an offence and can be fined.

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or readmission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended.

A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

Further details can be found at [Chapter 7](#) in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2024).

### 5.2 Attendance Register

Bredon School must also take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion the school must record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Further details can be found at [Chapter 8](#) in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2024).

## 5.3 Registration

Legally, the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day during tutor time and again in the afternoon. Tutors and the class teacher must mark pupils as present only if they have physically seen them. A parent can view their child's attendance via the parent portal. If the member of staff hasn't seen the child or doesn't know the reason they are absent, they must mark them as 'N' (Reason for absence not yet provided).

### 5.3.1 AM Registration

If a pupil arrives between 8:35 and 8:50am the attendance will be registered as 'L' (late before the register closes). If a pupil registers after 8:50am, they will be registered as 'U' (late after register closes); this will be actioned by reception as all pupils must go to reception to sign in after this time. Please note: we will be considerate when school transport is late due to unforeseen circumstances.

### 5.3.2 PM Registration

If a pupil arrives late to registration, the attendance will be registered as 'L' (late before the register closes) for that session.

If a pupil is not in attendance, staff will implement the procedures outlined in the schools Internal Missing Child Procedure for Registration and Lessons, and mark as an 'N' (No Reason Provided).

### 5.3.3 Lesson Registration

Where a pupil attends a registration session but does not attend subsequent lessons, we will treat this as a truancy and non-attendance matter in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and engage parents where necessary.

### 5.3.4 Educated Offsite

Where a pupil is educated offsite, registers must be coded daily to reflect communication from offsite providers. The School will make arrangements with the offsite provider, to ensure they communicate daily absences and concerns around attendance, with the School.

### 5.3.5 Absence Codes

The register is marked using the national attendance and absence codes which can be found in the Department for Education's guidance on attendance - [Working together to improve school attendance \(DfE, 2024\)](#).

## 5.4 Lateness / Punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions as well as to all lessons. The start of school/lessons are used to give out instructions or organise work. If a child is late they could miss work, time with the class teacher receiving vital information and support, and cause disruption to the lesson for others. This could also cause the pupil to feel embarrassed and lead to possible further absence.

- The school day begins at 8:30am and all pupils are expected to be in school at this time.
- Morning registration starts at 8:30am until 8:50am. The 'L' code (late before the register closes) will be used after 8.35am - 8.50am.
- Officially the register closes at 8:50am. Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as an unauthorised absence code 'U' (late after register closes) in line with the DfE guidance. This mark shows the pupil to be on site, but legally recorded as an absence. If a pupil is late after registration closes, they must sign in at reception (Pull Court).

- Persistent lateness will be treated with a consequence and will be dealt with in line with the behaviour management policy.
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the LA and other statutory partners, should further action need to be taken for non-attendance or lateness, where applicable.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, and we have been advised in advance, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M' (medical). Please be advised that, where possible, doctors' and dentists' appointments are to be made outside school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late to school and lessons are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. On-going and repeated lateness is considered a concern which would mean further action could be taken.

Parents of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents will be invited to attend the school to discuss the problem and offered support. If support is ineffective, not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of lateness to school in any term, the school will need to inform the LA, where applicable.

## 6. Persistent and Severe Absence

If a pupil's attendance **falls below 90%**, they become categorised by the DfE as a '**persistently absent**' pupil. Similarly, if a pupil's attendance **falls below 50%**, they will be categorised by the DfE as a '**severely absent**' pupil. In such instances, the pupils will be monitored closely by the school and the LA will be notified, where applicable.

Bredon School will work with the LA and other partners (where applicable) to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence to attend school. These may include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the pupil and their parents to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with the pupil's parents to discuss progress.
- Considering whether an Early Help Assessment may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

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

## **7. Reasons for Absence**

### **7.1 Authorised absence**

Absence will only be authorised where the School has given approval in advance for a pupil to not be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the school can authorise absence.

### **7.2 Illness**

Illness related absence will only be authorised in line with UK Health Security Agency Guidance or where evidence is provided for exceptional illness ([Health protection in children and young people settings, including education](#)). Illness may be a physical or mental health issue.

### **7.3 Unauthorised absence**

Absence will be marked as unauthorised where the School is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. An unauthorised absence is where:

- The School considers that the pupil was well enough to attend, but they did not.
- Medical evidence is not provided for an illness absence of 5 days or more.
- Medical evidence is not provided for a pupil at a level of persistent absence or below.
- Absence immediately before or after a period of school holiday may not be routinely authorised.
- Medical evidence is not provided where there is a regular pattern to illness absence.
- The School considers that the absence was not unavoidable or exceptional.
- Medical appointments may not be authorised if taken during the school day.
- If the School considers that the pupil could have attended for part of the day but is absent for the whole day, a proportionate unauthorised absence will be applied.
- A leave of absence request is declined but still taken (this includes holidays in term time).
- If the School has reasonable grounds or obtains evidence to suggest that information has been falsified when giving reasons for absence, then the school may unauthorise the absence.

### **7.4 Reporting absence from school**

Where a pupil is absent from school without prior permission, parents must notify the school promptly via phone or email. This notification should include reception, the pupils form tutor, HoH, and, if applicable, the Director of Boarding on the morning of the first day of absence. Additionally, parents must provide an estimated date for the pupils return. If the return date is not confirmed on the first day of absence, parents are required to contact the school each day their child is absent, otherwise the pupil may be marked as an unauthorised absence.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence, such as an appointment slip, text or prescription. If this evidence is not provided, the absence may be marked as unauthorised.

### **7.5 Appointments**

Medical, dental and other essential appointments for a pupil should take place outside of school hours where this is reasonably possible.

Where an appointment must take place during school time, the pupil should attend the school for as much of the day as possible and as much prior notice as possible should be given to the pupils form tutor and HoH.

## **7.6 Religious observance**

We recognise that pupils of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance falls during school time, the absence from the School will be authorised. For further details, please see Annex A - Exceptional Circumstances.

## **7.7 Gypsy/Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

The 'T' (Traveller absence) code will be used for when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes. We encourage traveller families to communicate with the school about their travelling patterns and intentions, whilst maximising attendance. Parents must provide the school with advance notice of their travel plans, including the expected date of return. The school may use the 'T' code if it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision elsewhere. It should not be used for any other types of absence by Traveller children.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school, whilst remaining on the register of the base school. For further details, please see Annex A - Exceptional Circumstances.

## **7.8 Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or TV work & modelling**

Legislation sets out that a LA licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. There are some exemptions, including the granting of Body of Persons Approval (BOPA). BOPAs can be issued by the LA where a performance is to take place, or by the Secretary of State (generally only if there are to be many children involved and a number of different locations, but legislation does not limit this to those situations).

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headmaster in writing / via email to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer / agency during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as a 'C1' (Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad). For further details, please see Annex A - Exceptional Circumstances.

## **7.9 Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport**

Parents can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, at the Headmasters discretion whether to authorise this and they may wish to discuss with the parents the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for the child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at

the discretion of the Headmaster and is not likely to be given if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an educational tutor as part of their coaching. Any absence recorded as part of a sporting activity is recorded as a 'P' (Participating in a sporting activity). For further details, please see Annex A - Exceptional Circumstances.

### 7.10 Study Leave

Year 11 and 13 study leave is not compulsory and has to be applied for. The study leave period will be confirmed during the trinity term and before examinations start.

Important details of the approval process include:

- All requests have to be submitted in writing to the Deputy Head (Academic).
- The Deputy Head (Academic) coordinates academic checks that are completed by appropriate teaching staff, who will provide feedback on whether the pupil has completed all necessary assignments and other course commitments.
- Study leave will be granted if all of the pupil's teachers state that all assignments are completed.
- The Deputy Head (Academic) will liaise with the Pastoral Team and take an informed final decision on how effective study leave will be.
- The Deputy Head (Academic) will either grant or deny permission.
- All teaching staff will be informed of the Year 11 and 13 pupils who have been granted study leave and registers will reflect this using the 'S' (Study Leave) code. Pupils on study leave will sign in at reception at least 30 minutes before their examination start time.

## 8. Requests for Leave of Absence

Requests for leave in exceptional circumstances should be made **at least 6 weeks in advance** of the event and in writing / via email to the Headmaster, before making any arrangements.

Important notes for parents requesting absence:

- Retrospective approval for absence cannot be granted.
- Parents do not have the right of appeal if a request for a leave of absence is declined.
- Leave of absence will NOT be granted for pupils whose attendance falls into the persistent absent category (less than 90%) or where attendance/punctuality are a concern.
- Leave of absence will NOT be granted during periods of public examinations or internal school assessments.
- Leave of absence will NOT be granted for holidays during term time.
- Where leave of absence is NOT authorised and parents decide to take pupils out of school despite the school's decision, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and we may inform the LA, where applicable.
- If the school grants a leave of absence request and subsequently obtains evidence that indicates an application was falsified, the school reserves the right to amend the child's attendance records to record the absence as unauthorised and may inform the LA, where applicable.
- Where a pupil fails to return to school after an agreed period of leave of absence, absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and we may need to report this to the LA as a 'Child Missing Education' which could potentially result in their loss of placement at Bredon School.

- Where a leave of absence is requested, the Headmaster will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request (see Annex A). The decision:
  - a. Will be confirmed in writing
  - b. Is solely at the Headmaster's discretion and is final.

The Headmaster may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school to go on holiday and in the majority of cases leave will not be authorised.

## **9. Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Health-Related Absence**

We recognise that pupils with SEN and / or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with disabilities to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHCP plans that have been implemented.

The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance, where applicable.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

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

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence

The school will implement a Support Plan to help pupils with SEN and / or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there have been signs of significant improvement.

## **10. Children Missing in Education (CME)**

Where a pupil has not returned to school for **ten** consecutive school days after a leave of absence or is absent from school for reasons statistically recorded as unauthorised absence



for **twenty** consecutive school days, the pupil's name can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to find out the location and circumstances of the child or have succeeded but agree there are no reasonable grounds to believe that they will attend the school again. In deciding there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again both school and local authority must agree, including that there are no reasonable steps that could be taken (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance. Neither ground for deletion applies if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause

Bredon School recognises that children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation. For further information, please see the schools Safeguarding Policy.

## **10.1 Children at Particular Risk of Missing Education**

There are numerous situations in which a child might become missing from education, making it crucial for local authorities to assess each case individually. While not an exhaustive list, the examples below highlight some of the circumstances that local authorities should take into account when developing their CME policies and procedures. Accordingly, Bredon School recognizes the following as children who are at heightened risk:

### **10.1.1 Pupils at Risk of Harm/Neglect**

Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected Bredon School will follow local child protection procedures. However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children's social care (and the police if appropriate). Local authority officers responsible for CME should check that a referral has been made and, if not, they should alert children's social care. The Department's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024) provides further advice for schools and colleges on safeguarding children.

### **10.1.2 Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families**

Research has shown that many children from these families can become disengaged from education, particularly during the secondary school phase. It is therefore important that Bredon school informs the local authority when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination school, particularly in the transition from primary to secondary so that they can attempt to facilitate continuity of the child's education. Although many are settled, some GRT families move regularly and their children can be at increased risk of missing education. Local authority Traveller Education Support Services (TESS), where these exist, or the named CME officer within the local authority, can advise schools on the best strategies for ensuring the minimum disruption to GRT pupils' education, for example dual registration with other schools or the provision of electronic or distance learning packages where these are available.

### **10.1.3 Children of Service Personnel**

Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in the UK and overseas and often at short notice. Bredon School and the local authority should contact the MoD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980 618244 for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for those children when the family moves.

#### **10.1.4 Missing Children and Runaways**

Children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education. Further sources of information about missing children are listed in the Children Missing in Education Guidance (DfE, 2024).

#### **10.1.5 Children and Young People Supervised by the Youth Justice System**

Children who have offended or are at risk of doing so are also at risk of disengaging from education. Local authority Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are responsible for supervising those young people (aged 8 to 18). YOTs should work with the local authority CME officer to ensure that children are receiving, or return to, appropriate full-time education. Where a child is registered at a school and is given a custodial sentence, the school may be required to keep their name on the admission register where there are reasonable grounds to believe they will return to the school after they cease to be detained.

As set out in the Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance (DfE, 2024), in determining whether the pupil will return to the school, it is expected that the school will discuss this with the pupil's youth offending team worker. The School is expected to communicate with the pupil's Youth Offending Team worker while the pupil is in custody and remains on the school roll to discuss the pupil's educational needs, progress and return to the school upon their release where appropriate. Absence for this should be recorded as 'Y5' (Unable to attend as the pupil is in criminal justice detention).

#### **10.1.6 Children Who Cease to Attend a School**

There are many reasons why a child stops attending school. It could be because the parent chooses to home educate their child. However, where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the school will notify the local authority who should investigate the case and satisfy itself that the child is receiving a suitable education elsewhere.

#### **10.1.7 Children of New Migrant Families**

Children from new migrant families may not have yet settled at a permanent address or may have arrived in a local authority area without the authority's knowledge, which increases the risk of the child missing education. Bredon School will inform the local authority of such settlements at the point of registration.

### **11. Part Time / Temporary Timetables**

Placing a pupil on a part time / temporary timetable may be used as a strategy to support a pupil who is finding attending school a significant challenge. The use of part time / temporary timetables are used as a short term (ideally for no more than 6 weeks) measure to ensure the successful return to full time education.

Part time / temporary timetables will be reviewed every two to three weeks, with the aim of increasing the timetable at each review point. These pupils may be reported to the LA, where applicable.

The decision to place a pupil on a part time / temporary timetable must be approved by the Headmaster or the School' Strategic Lead for Attendance.

Any absence recorded as a part time / temporary timetable is recorded as a 'C2' (Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable)

## **12. Elective Home Education**

Parents have the right to express their interest in homeschooling their child(ren); any such requests should be placed in writing / via email to the Headmaster. However, at Bredon School, our educational philosophy emphasises that children thrive in a school environment. As a result, we do not approve requests for flexible schooling arrangements and discourage the pursuit of homeschooling.

The school will liaise with the Elective Home Education team within the LA prior to removing any pupil from the school roll.

## **13. Parental Advice and Information**

Occasionally, pupils may display hesitancy towards attending school. Any issues related to consistent attendance are most effectively resolved through collaborative communication between the school, parents, and the pupil. In instances where a pupil exhibits reluctance to attend, fostering open and transparent dialogue regarding the reasons for their absence is encouraged. This approach facilitates the school's comprehension of potential obstacles, allowing us to implement the necessary support measures accordingly.

Parents should contact their child's Tutor and HoH immediately and openly discuss their concerns. Various factors could contribute to a child's avoidance of school, encompassing challenges with academic tasks, experiences of bullying, friendship-related issues, and family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for the child's reluctance to attend school, and work together to tackle the problem. In certain situations, parents may discover value in engaging with an additional professional to explore the specifics of their child's challenges.

Parents and boarding staff have an important role in making sure the child gets enough sleep and wakes up on time each morning. It's also their responsibility to make sure the child leaves home or the boarding house wearing the right clothes and having everything they need for school. Taking care of these aspects sends a clear message to the child that their education is highly valued.

Schools are under no obligation to provide work for pupils who are absent from school, unless pupils are taking part in sporting / arts / theatre events as part of a professional organisation and permission has been received from the local authority, where applicable.

Remote learning for pupils unable to attend school will only be provided in exceptional circumstances (e.g. long-term illness supported by medical evidence, unexpected school closure).

### **13.1 Leavers**

If a child is transferring to another school, parents are asked to:

- Give their relevant HoH, Director of Boarding (where applicable) and the school's Bursar comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and their new address and telephone numbers, their child's new education provider

and the start date when known. This should be submitted to the school in writing / via email.

If the child transfers and we do not have the above information, then they will be considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This requires schools and the LA to carry out investigations to try to locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the police and other agencies. By parents giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

## Annex A - Exceptional Circumstances

Where a child has persistent absence or below, or where the leave of absence will make them persistently absent, leave of absence will not be granted.

Circumstance	Number of days which <u>may</u> be authorised	Additional notes All requests <b>MUST</b> be made in writing, 8 weeks in advance
Religious Observance	1 day in any one academic year	Additional days for travelling abroad will NOT be authorised and the LA may be notified, where applicable
Family Celebration	1 day in any one academic year	Additional days for travelling abroad will NOT be authorised and the LA may be notified, where applicable
Family Emergency/compassionate leave	1 day in any one academic year	Additional days for travelling abroad will NOT be authorised and the LA may be notified, where applicable
Participation in a performance	<b>Dependent on LA licence</b>  <b>Absence must <u>not</u> to be authorised if a licence has not been obtained by parents from the LA</b>	Additional days for travelling abroad will NOT be authorised and the LA may be notified, where applicable  <b>Parents are required to obtain a licence from the LA</b>  <b>This leave will NOT be authorised if a pupil's attendance falls below 90%</b>  <b>The School will make arrangements for the pupil to receive a suitable education:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● For not less than 6 hours per week</li> <li>● During each complete period of 4 weeks or if less than 4 weeks during that period, for periods of time not less than 3 hours a day and</li> <li>● On days where pupils would be expected to attend school</li> <li>● For not more than 5 hours on any such day</li> </ul>
Participation in a sporting event – competing at a national level or above only	Maximum of 4 days in any one academic year	Additional days for travelling abroad will NOT be authorised and the LA may be notified, where applicable
Gypsy/Roma and Traveller Absence	N/A but only travel for occupational circumstances	Absences will not be granted for any other reasons other than occupational circumstances

## Annex B: Attendance Codes

The codes below follow the order provided in [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(DfE, 2024\)](#). If there is any uncertainty about which code to apply, the responsible staff member should refer to the latest DfE guidance on school attendance.

Code	Description
<b>Attending the school</b>	
/ or \	Present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken.
L	Late arrival before the register is closed.
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>	
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority.
V	Attending an educational visit or trip.
P	Participating in a sporting activity.
W	Attending work experience.
B	Attending any other approved educational activity.
D	Dual registered at another school.
<b>Absent - leave of absence</b>	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for compulsory school age pupil subject to part-time timetable.
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
<b>Absent - other authorised reasons</b>	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
R	Religious observance.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment).
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made.
<b>Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements.
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel.
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed.
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.
<b>Absent - unauthorised absence</b>	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
<b>Administrative codes</b>	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

Author: Deputy Head (Pastoral and Safeguarding)

Review Cycle: Annually

Next Review Date: September 2025