

BIRMINGHAM INDEPENDENT COLLEGE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 Birmingham Independent College recognises the high correlation between achievement and attendance, therefore, in order to achieve high levels of attendance we have an attendance policy that is circulated to staff and students.

1.2 School attendance is subject to various Education Laws and this School Attendance Policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by The Department for Education.

1.3 We are keen that everyone aims for 100% attendance at college.

1.4 We would hope that parents and carers will help by:

- a) not letting their child take time off school for minor ailments;
- b) arranging appointments and outings after school hours, or as late as possible in the afternoon, at weekends or during school holidays;
- c) not taking holidays during term time.

1.5 The importance of good attendance is an integral part of our home-school agreement.

1.6 If we have a concern regarding a student's attendance, we will notify parents and carers by telephone and/or letter/email.

1.7 There are clear procedures for the reporting of absence (see below) and this policy is available as a paper copy on request.

1.8 The taking of holidays during the school terms is strongly discouraged.

1.9 Attendance is monitored at registration.

1.10 Attendance figures are reported termly.

1.11 Attendance figures are monitored on a regular basis by the Senior Leadership.

1.12 We will work co-operatively with external agencies to deal with problems of irregular attendance.

1.13 We will keep accurate records of all exclusions and, in accordance with statutory guidance, report them to the Proprietary Body and the Local Authority.

1.14 We take appropriate action to reduce the need to exclude students from our college.

1.15 Each year we will review our attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets.

2 School Attendance

2.1 In order to achieve high levels of attendance and promote learning, we adhere to the following lines of action.

2.2 Procedures

a) The Senior Leadership Team will monitor attendance.

b) Prolonged absence without medical support will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service.

c) The Senior Leader will investigate all cases where a student's attendance falls below 95% in any one half-term.

d) The attendance of any student classed as a Persistent Absentee (attendance below 90%) is monitored every half term and strategies implemented to try and support the student to improve their attendance

e) All holiday requests must be made directly to the Head of College and such requests will be logged with the Operations Manager and a copy of the acknowledgement letter, so that the appropriate entry can be made to the register.

g) All holiday requests will be dealt with in accordance with Department for Education guidance i.e. it at the discretion of the Head of College and only for 'exceptional circumstances.

j) All staff promote high standards of punctuality and attendance by being a good role model.

k) Parents and carers will receive communication regarding attendance at the end of each term via student end of term reports.

3 Student (Sickness) Absence Reporting Procedures

3.1 Any student who is absent from college during morning or afternoon registration will have their absence recorded using the appropriate DfE attendance guidance code. This information will be submitted to Birmingham City Council as required. See Appendix A

3.2 Only the Head of College or a member of the Senior leadership Team with the delegated responsibility to act on their behalf can authorise absence.

3.3 If a reason for the absence is provided, it will be recorded as authorised using the appropriate DfE attendance code. If no reason is provided, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised using the relevant code. See Appendix A

4 Lateness

4.1 Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.45am.

4.2 Any student arriving after 9.00am will be marked late unless there is an acceptable explanation (e.g. transport problems that can be verified).

4.3 In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

4.4 Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others.

5 First Day Absence

5.1 If a child is absent, parents and carers should call the college on the first day, stating the reason for the absence.

5.2 A note or email should then be sent into college on the day the child returns explaining the absence.

5.3 If no contact is made by parents and carers explaining the absence on the first day, the college will telephone to secure an explanation.

5.4 Where the college is unable to make contact by telephone a letter or email will be sent.

5.5 If attendance rate does not improve the Head of College will liaise with the SLT who may contact the parents and carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.

6 Persistent Absence

6.1 Either authorised or unauthorised.

6.2 A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the college environment.

6.3 Any student who is absent without an explanation for (3 days) will be discussed with the SLT. The school will record details of the action that they have taken.

7 Frequent Absence

7.1 It is the responsibility of the Operations Manager to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

7.2 In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absences, the college will try to resolve the problem with the parent(s) or carer(s).

8 A Welcome Back

8.1 It is important that on return from an absence that all students are made to feel welcome.

8.2 This should include ensuring that he/she is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other student and students.

9 Absence Notes

9.1 Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year.

9.2 If there are attendance concerns that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

10 Promoting Attendance

10.1 The college will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

10.2 The Home-School agreement is used in this way at the start of a student's education.

11 Holidays During Term Time

11.1 Term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed and will not be authorised as stated in the Working together to improve school attendance

11.2 The school will only consider granting leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances** that are not related to holidays.

11.3 Parents/Carers must write directly to the Head of College for permission to take their child out of school during term time (at least **2 weeks** before an absence)

11.4 The 2 week time period is necessary in order for the school to give due consideration to the request.

11.5 If the request is denied, the college will inform the parent and carer of the reason by letter or email.

11.6 If the parent or carer chooses to continue with the planned absence holiday it will be taken as an unauthorised absence and could result in a penalty notice.

11.7 In the rare circumstance when the Head of College is satisfied that there are genuine reasons for an absence, they will determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

12 Penalty Notices

12.1 Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority Officers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school.

12.2 Penalty notices must be issued in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended and can only be issued by a headteacher or someone authorised by them (a deputy or assistant head), a local authority officer or the police.

12.3 A Penalty Notice could be issued in the following circumstances:

If a minimum of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks for:

- Overt Truancy;
- Parentally-condoned absences;
- Holidays taken in term-time. and;
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 9.00am)

13 Attendance Targets

13.1 The college will set attendance targets each year.

13.2 A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for overseeing this work.

BIC's attendance target is 100.0%

14 The Registration System and Absence Codes

The school uses an electronic system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information

APPENDIX A : DESCRIPTION OF ATTENDANCE CODES

ATTENDANCE CODES		ADMINISTRATIVE	
Present (AM)	/	Not required to be in school	X
Present (PM)	\	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Y
Off-site educational activity	B	Pupil not on admission register	Z
Dual registered	D	Planned school closure	#
Interview	J	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE CODES	
Late arrival	L	Unauthorised holiday	G
Sporting activity	P	Reason not provided	N
Educational visit or trip	V	Unauthorised absence	O
Work experience	W	Arrival after registration	U
AUTHORISED ABSENCE CODES			
Authorised leave of absence	C		
Excluded	E		
Authorised holiday	H		
Illness	I		
Medical/dental appointment	M		
Religious observance	R		
Study leave	S		
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	T		

NEXT REVIEW: 31/10/2027