



# THE Boswells SCHOOL

A member of the Chelmsford Learning Partnership

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Boswells School is committed to providing a full educational experience to all its students. The School believes that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial.

<b>Responsible</b>	Local Governing Body
<b>Lead Staff Member</b>	Deputy Headteacher, Standards
<b>Approved by</b>	Local Governing Body
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## **The Boswells School Attendance Policy**

The Boswells School is committed to providing a full educational experience to all its students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

#### **The School**

The Boswells School expects students to attend school regularly, on time and properly equipped and ready to learn.

The Boswells School will encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.

The Boswells School staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.

The Boswells School will work in partnership with parents, students and the Local Authority, to resolve issues, which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.

The Boswells School will include in reports to parents on achievement, student's attendance and punctuality three times a year (twice for year 11).

#### **Students**

Students will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.

Students will attend all lessons punctually.

Students can expect to receive assistance following periods of absence in order to catch up.

Students will have individual records of attendance/punctuality acknowledged by the school.

#### **Parents**

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child regularly and punctually attends school, properly dressed, equipped and in an appropriate condition to learn. Parents are reminded that they are legally required to

ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, up to and including, the end of the academic year in which their child turns 16.

Parents are responsible for immediately informing the school of the reason for any absence by telephone call every morning of any absence by 8.30am. Parents will be contacted on the morning their child is not in school if they have not telephoned the school in advance to let them know. For any absence that we have not been notified of, a phone call will be made from the Attendance Office. If contact is not made a 'Truancy Call' text message will be sent to parents that morning. Should parents not contact the school in regards to any absence the school will record this absence as 'unauthorised'. Repeated or frequent unauthorised absence will be referred to the Local Authority. For safeguarding purposes, we require notification on every day of absence. Failure to inform the school of an absence could lead to a home visit.

If attendance problems do develop, the school expects parents to work actively with school staff and the Local Authority, to resolve them. If a parent is requested to provide medical evidence to support absence through illness/injury, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure the school receives the documentation. Should a parent have difficulty in providing medical evidence a referral to the School Nurse may be required.

Parents do not have a right to take children out of school in term time. Leave of absence must be granted in advance by the school. Any application will be considered against the student's attendance record, family circumstances and timing with regard to controlled assessment and examinations. Parents should be aware that the school will not authorise any absence where it considers that the absence will be detrimental to the education of the student concerned.

A referral may be made to the Local Authority.

Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record.

**This policy will be reviewed to its effective implementation on an annual basis and updated as appropriate.**

## APPENDIX

### 1. REGISTRATION

At The Boswells School an electronic system is used for AM and PM registration. Students are registered electronically for every lesson where access to the system is possible.

Registers will be returned to the Attendance office at the end of the registration period for safety and will be secured but accessible by the Attendance team in the case of an emergency.

All notes from parents regarding a student's absence will be stored and retained for three years.

The school will complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and during period 4 registration at 1.20pm. Registration begins at 8.50am and 1.20pm each school day and registers will be closed 30 minutes after morning registration and 15 minutes after pm registration.

If a student arrives after the register has closed, they should report to the school's Attendance Office to be entered onto the electronic register.

All students that arrive after 8.50am are entered on the electronic system at Student Reception. Late students that do not have a valid reason for their lateness are expected to attend a 20-minute lunch time detention the same day. Arriving late for school twice in the same attendance week (Monday - Friday) will result in an after school detention for 60 minutes. Arriving late for school 3 times in the same attendance week will result in an after school Headteachers detention for 90 minutes. Persistent lateness to school may result in a student being placed on Attendance Report.

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording student's attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised.

In The Boswells School Sixth Form a system of lesson by lesson electronic registration is used. Students are required to sign in and out electronically if they intend to leave the site. In the event that a Sixth Former is to be absent the school will allow the student to contact the school via the main absence line. The school will in turn contact the parents electronically to advise them of the absence.

Any Sixth Form student that arrives after 08.50am is considered late. Late students in the first instance will be spoken to by their tutor. Should the student continue to be late for school the school will contact the parents and a meeting with parents may be required.

A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order in respect of a student.

Registers must be kept for a minimum of 3 years following completion at the end of the academic school year.

The following symbols are used in registers:

Code	Description
/ or \	Present
B	Educated Off Site
C	Other Authorised Circumstances – Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded from school
F	Extended family Holiday (agreed) – Authorised Absence
G	Family Holiday (not agreed) – Unauthorised Absence
H	Family Holiday – Authorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments) – Authorised Absence
J	Interview – Authorised Absence
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental Appointments – Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence – Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious Observance – Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave – Authorised Absence
T	Traveller Absence – Authorised Absence
U	Late (After registers closed) – Unauthorised absence
V	Educational Visit or Trip
W	Work Experience
Y	Enforced school closure
#	School Closed to pupils

The Headteacher is ultimately responsible for attendance issues, however in a school as large as The Boswells School, this responsibility has been delegated, in the first instance to the Attendance Officer and supported by the lead Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour, Safety, Wellbeing). They will, along with the Attendance Administrator, check the registers on a regular basis to identify any attendance/punctuality concerns.

The Attendance Officer and Pastoral Managers will liaise regularly with the Local Authority to discuss any attendance/punctuality concerns.

The Attendance team are responsible for ensuring that registers are kept safely and are available for inspection by relevant professionals.

The Attendance Administrator is responsible for logging attendance information onto the computerised system (SIMS).

The form tutor, or member of staff covering the registration period in the absence of the form tutor, is responsible for taking the register daily, once for the AM session. The teacher present for period 4 lessons is responsible for taking the PM register.

The form tutor and period 4 teachers are responsible for register maintenance of their own class register, ensuring that symbols used are appropriate.

The Boswells School will ensure that all staff are aware of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.

Each student should be called by name when the register is being taken. Unless a student is present at the time of the register being taken and answers to confirm their name, they will be marked absent

If a student is frequently absent or has unauthorised absence the Attendance Officer or member of the Pastoral team will contact the parent and they may be invited in to the school for a meeting with the Attendance Officer or member of the Pastoral Team. This meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the student from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance. Medical evidence may be requested to encourage better attendance and support absence through illness/injury.

If the student's difficulties are not resolved at this meeting then a formal referral will be made to the Local Authority, and a formal intervention planned.

If the student is returning to school after any exceptional circumstance, there will be provision to allow the student to ease back into the school system on a reduced timetable.

Where a student is persistently late the school will write to the parent/carer inviting them to a school based meeting.

### **3. AUTHORISING ABSENCE**

Parents should be aware that only the Head Teacher has the legal authority to authorise an absence.

Absence for the following reasons could be authorised where parents have confirmed the absence in writing on the child's return to school:

Sickness

Unavoidable medical/dental appointments

Days of religious observance

Exceptional family circumstances i.e. bereavement

If permission for absence has been granted in advance by the Head Teacher

Transport arranged by the LEA has failed to arrive where the student lives beyond statutory walking distance

Absence may be recorded as unauthorised when due to:

Shopping

Haircuts

Missed bus

Slept late

No uniform

Looking after brothers or sisters or unwell parents

Minding the house

Birthdays

Unapproved holidays

Family celebrations

Holidays in term time (please see below)

Parents should be aware that there is no legal right for the Head Teacher to authorise absence. When a parent applies for a leave of absence during term time, they will be notified in writing of whether the school has approved the absence. If the school does not approve the absence and the student(s) are still taken out of school, the school will refer the matter to the Local Authority. Parents should be aware that the school may ask the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice to parents for taking their child(ren) out of school during term time where the school has not approved the absence.

It may be necessary for the school or to ask the parent/carer to provide the school with written evidence of reason for absence for example:

Appointment cards/letters  
Medical certificate  
Letter from GP

If there is an extensive period of absence due to medical reasons the school may ask for the permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

#### **4. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE**

In the belief that students are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs the curriculum will be regularly reviewed.

Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.

Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the Home School Agreement, School Prospectus and annual report from the governors.

Opportunities to maintain awareness through newsletters, parents' evenings and student reports will be used.

Parents, students and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.

Students with a known attendance problem being admitted to school will be interviewed with the parents and will be set targets for improvement within the first academic term

Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

All issues, which may cause a student to experience attendance difficulties, are to be promptly investigated by the school.