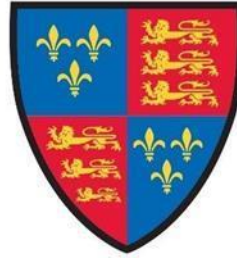




**THE SCHOOLS OF
KING EDWARD VI
IN BIRMINGHAM**



**KING EDWARD VI
ACADEMY TRUST
BIRMINGHAM**

In pursuit of educational excellence for all

Attendance and Punctuality

Committee	Welfare Committee
Policy Type	School Policy
Policy Owner	Kieran Lynch Assistant Headteacher
Statutory	Yes
Publish Online	Yes
Last Review Date	November 2024
Review Cycle	Annually

Next Review Date	September 2026
Expiry Date	November 2026
Version	1.5

Introduction

This policy is statutory (from 19 August 2024; Working together to improve school attendance) and is to enable Foundation Schools and the Academy Trust to promote high levels of school attendance.

This policy should be read alongside National, Local and School policies and documentation on:

- [Children missing education](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)
- [Suspensions and exclusions](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSiE\) 2024](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [Birmingham Elective Home Education \(EHE\) guidance](#)

For the purpose of this policy, a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who cares for a child or young person (i.e., lives with and looks after the child).

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils, the school considers the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy should be fairly and consistently applied but in doing we always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. In development and implementation of the policy, we recognise our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and considerations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We seek to work in partnership with pupils, parents to remove barriers to attendance.

The Equality Act 2010 states that it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of the protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

In the implementation of this policy, the school is mindful of conscious and unconscious bias. This means in dealing with attendance the school will:

- Take time to consider decisions; listening to and considering issues that are raised.

- Justify and record decisions, including the reasoning.
- Ensure all pupils, parents and interested parties know what is expected of them.
- Ensure clear guidance on reporting prejudice-related concerns.
- Promote positive behaviours.
- Encourage engagement from a wide range of pupils, parents and interested parties.

School will also comply with the Birmingham City Council and Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance on Elective Home Education (EHE) and involve services such as Birmingham Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Service ([SENAR](#)); [Birmingham Children's Trust](#); [Birmingham Education Safeguarding Team](#) and Birmingham Education Legal Intervention Team as we know that elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education.

1. School statement of intent

At King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy, we recognise that attendance at school is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and life chances. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for safeguarding and educational needs to be identified and support provided.

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. Parents have a 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.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of education and safeguarding, looking to parents to support these objectives. King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy has high expectations for every pupil's attendance and offers support to those who find attendance challenging. Securing good attendance must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff.

We appreciate 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.

The school is committed to working in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

2. Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

Expect: Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor: Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand: When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support: Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support: Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce: Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

3. Statutory information

Senior Attendance Champion Name	Mr K Lynch
Senior Attendance Champion Position	Assistant Headteacher & DSL
Senior Attendance Champion Contact Details	0121 464 9901 or enquiry@bwa.kevibham.org (Mark "FOA K Lynch)
School start time (AM register opens)	08:45 am
Morning (AM) register close time*	09:15 am

Afternoon (PM) register open time	14:05 pm
Afternoon (PM) register close time*	14:15 pm
Contact details for on-the-day explanation of unexpected absence**	0121 464 9901 or enquiry@bwa.kevibham.org
Electronic Management Information System used for admission and attendance registers	Go 4 Schools

*registers must be open for the same length in each session, but for not longer than 30 minutes

**when a pupil is unexpectedly ill, the school does not routinely require medical evidence; when the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of an illness, we may request additional supporting evidence.

4. The role of the School Attendance Champion

The School Attendance Champion is a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with pupils, parents and external agencies as appropriate. They are responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for attendance.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence.
- Maintaining a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress on attendance, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes.
- Ensuring all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance.
- Appropriately resourcing for attendance support.

5. School admission register

The admission register (school roll) contains personal details of every pupil (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in the school along with their starting date, information regarding parents, and details of the school last attended.

Parents are encouraged to notify school of changes to information whenever they occur, so the school can update the admission register.

A pupil's name can only be lawfully deleted from the admission register in line with regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The school will notify the Local Authority when a pupil is deleted from the admission register, except when it is at the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the school's most senior class. The school will inform the Local Authority of the pupil's admission register details as

well as the name of the new school and the reason set out in regulation under which the pupil's name has been deleted.

The school admissions register records:

- Full name.
- Name the pupil uses in school.
- Sex.
- Address.
- Full name and address of each of the pupil's parents.
- Which of the pupil's parents, if any, the pupil normally lives with.
- At least one emergency contact telephone number (two are recommended);
- Day, month, year of birth
- Day, month year of pupil's starting day at the school;
- Name and address of the last school attended by the pupil, if any.

Where a parent informs the school that the pupil will live at another address, whether in addition to or instead of the given address, the admission register will be updated to include:

- The address;
- The full name of each parent the pupil will normally live with; - The date the pupil will start normally living there.

If a pupil is moved to another school, the admission register will updated to include:

- The name of the other school;
- The date when the pupil began or will begin attending the school.

6. Principles of the King Edward VI Balaam Wood Attendance Policy

At King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy, we believe that good attendance and punctuality are important in helping pupils achieve the best that they can be. Education is important. Pupils should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. All research shows that pupils who attend well achieve well.

- *6 out of 10 pupils with over 95% attendance (missing no more than 10 days a year) gain 5 GCSE A* - C grades*
- *Only 1 in 10 pupils who are poor attendees gain 5 GCSE A* - C grades*
- *2 in every 10 attendees leave school with no qualifications at all*

Descriptor	Attendance	Equals absent number of days lost	Learning hours lost
Excellent	100%	0	0
	99%	2	10

Good	98%	4	20
	97%	6	30
	96%	7.5	37.5
Satisfactory	95%	9.5	47.5
Unsatisfactory	94%	11	55
	93%	13	65
	92%	15	75
	91%	17	85
Concern	90%	19	95
	89%	21	105
	88%	23	115
	87%	25	125
	86%	27	135
Serious cause for concern	85%	28.5	142
	84%	30.5	152
	83%	32	160
	82%	34	170
	81%	36	180

The government has laid down guidelines, which they expect pupils at secondary school to achieve in terms of attendance. They are set at 95% attendance.

A pupil will fall below 95% if they miss as little as half a day over a 2-week period

At King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy, it is our aim to reduce the difference towards the national average for overall attendance and persistent absenteeism.

It is the expectation and the target for all pupils to achieve **at least 96%** attendance.

There are a variety of reasons for pupils missing school. Some are unavoidable but we would ask that you support us in ensuring that your child's attendance meets both the school and the government's expectations. Any problems with regular attendance, especially any concerns about possible bullying or learning difficulties are best sorted out by the school, the parents/carers and the pupil at an early stage. We will closely monitor your child's attendance and alert you if we feel there is an issue. The school undertakes a wide range of measures to support pupils where attendance at school is an issue. Where there may be an issue and we fail to see an improvement it may be necessary to make a referral to an appropriate external agency to ensure the pupils receives the support required to bring about an improvement.

7. The school's programme to monitor attendance:

GRADE	MONITERED BY	DESCRIPTION
EXCELLENT	FORM TUTOR	Your child's attendance is above 98%. As well as being an excellent attender your child will almost certainly achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education or the world of work
GOOD	FORM TUTOR	Your child's attendance is 96-97% Your child is likely to achieve their grades that will give them real opportunities to continue their studies or in the world of work.
SATISFACTORY	FORM TUTOR	Your child's attendance is 95% and is in line with national expectations. Your child is likely to achieve their target grade but their outcomes will be improved further if their attendance improves.
UNSATISFACTORY	HEAD OF YEAR	Your child's attendance is 94-90%. They are below the national government threshold of 95% Your child will miss up to 18 days each school year and this will make it difficult for them to achieve their best
CONCERN	SENIOR LEADER	Your child's attendance is between 85-90%. Parents / Carers may face a fixed penalty fine as your child's attendance is below 90% and they are 'Persistent Absentees' <u>Your child is missing so much time from The Academy that it will be difficult for them to keep in touch with lessons or work</u>
SERIOUS CONCERN	ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER	Your child's attendance is below 85% You need to TAKE ACTION NOW, as you will face a fixed penalty fine or further legal prosecution if your child's attendance does not improve! <u>Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be almost impossible for them to keep in touch with lessons or work!</u>

8. National Context

The 1996 Education Act (section 444) states that parents (including non-related adult carers in the child's household) have a **legal responsibility** to ensure that those of compulsory school age are educated, either by 'regular' attendance at school or 'otherwise'. The 2008 Education and Skills Act (section 155) specifies the same requirement regarding regular attendance at alternative provision.

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.

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.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. 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 stages 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 higher standard. 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).

(DFE guidance – May 2022)

9. Roles and Responsibilities:

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Governors

- To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance

- evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy

Headteacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately record individual pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns.

Assistant Headteacher (Attendance Champion)

- To monitor individual pupil, year group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To decide whether or not to authorise requested periods of absence.
- To make a judgement whether an absence that has not been requested is authorised or unauthorised.
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To ensure appropriate systems are followed if a child is deemed to be absent from education (CME)
- To co-ordinate communication with external agencies (i.e. – Police, Early Help, Children’s Social Care, SENAR, Forward Thinking Birmingham) for vulnerable students and/or students deemed to be at risk of harm because of non-attendance.
- To implement attendance interventions and reward systems

Head of Year

- To monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils in their respective year group
- Meet with parents/carers to set targets for Attendance Action Plans (See Appendix 1) and review outcomes
- Undertake ‘Three Houses’ assessments and facilitate appropriate early help support measures to improve a student’s attendance and educational outcomes.
- To celebrate excellent attendance through rewards and celebration assemblies

Attendance Manager

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of Attendance data.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality are an issue, including regular meetings with the Assistant Headteacher, Head of Year, SENCO and external agencies
- To write to parents/carers regarding their child’s attendance, at least termly, and more often for those whose attendance is causing concern.
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- To prepare relevant attendance reports, when requested to do so by the Assistant Headteacher or Head of Year
- Where the school are not made aware of the reason for a child’s absence, they will contact parents/carers by text/telephone call on the first day.

- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of the week, preparing letters on behalf of the Assistant Headteacher where a satisfactory reason has not been established.
- To ensure that Fast Track Procedures are implemented in cases where persistent absence exists.
- To co-ordinate 'Child Absent from Education' (CME) referrals as required

Education Welfare Officer

- To support the whole school response to attendance, through regular meetings and the monitoring of individual children's attendance.
- To work effectively with families to improve educational outcomes of pupils.
- To ensure that Fast Track Procedures are implemented in cases where persistent absence exists.

10. Daily Procedures:

Registration

A register of all pupils is taken at the start of each morning session and once during the afternoon session of each school day. This is a record of the pupil's physical presence in school, or the reason they are not in school. The national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, are used.

The register is a legal record of attendance, and the school preserves every entry for 6 years from the date the data was entered. Amendments to the register must only be made when a reason for the absence is subsequently established. When amendments are made, the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made and the person making the amendment must all be recorded.

Attendance data is shared automatically with the Department for Education. Check and outline process for this – who does this – Foundation or School [Share your daily school attendance data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Registration takes place at 8.45 a.m. and again at 2.05 p.m. It is essential that all pupils are registered on both occasions. This is the responsibility of the form tutor in the morning and their P5 classroom teacher in the afternoon.

We encourage pupils to be in school by 8.40am, all pupils must be in school in preparation for the register being taken at 8.45am. At this time, they should collect items for the day and make sure that, they are aware of any changes / arrangements to the day's activities. It is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day. **It is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day.** Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a pupil checklist in respect of health and safety issues – e.g. Fire Drill

11. Absence from School

Regular attendance at school is the responsibility of parents and carers. Under the 1996 Education Act, parents commit an offence if the child does not attend school regularly. ***If your child cannot come to school because of illness, you should advise the school on the first day of absence by telephone.*** If no message is received we will assume that your child is absent without your permission. We will then make every effort to contact you. It is essential that the school is kept informed of changes of contact details such as phone numbers and addresses. In cases where we continue to be concerned we may make a 'home visit' or request the police to undertake a 'Safe and Well' visit. Parents/Carers are encouraged to ensure that their child brings in a letter confirming the reasons for the absence when the child returns to school.

Once contact (verbal and/or written) has been made with the parent the school will determine if the absence is to be authorised or unauthorised.

The school will only authorise a medical absence if the circumstances are unavoidable. The school may request medical evidence if a parent rings school to confirm the pupil is unwell: medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a professional, doctor's note, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence. The Head Teacher may not authorise medical absence without this evidence.

The school **may** authorise absence under certain specific circumstances. However, the parent must contact the Head Teacher in advance to secure authorisation. This **may** include work related interviews and meetings with external agencies (i.e. - Forward Thinking). The Head Teacher **may** also authorise events where pupils are involved in any supervised sporting events or trials, theatre performances and participation in acts of religious worship.

Parents/carers are encouraged to read the Public Health England publication 'Guidance on Infection Control in schools and other childcare settings' (September 2014) as it provides useful guidance on whether an illness necessitates pupils taking time off school. This has been updated in light of the COVID-19 pandemic (June 2020).

12. Absence from school

Authorised Absence from School According to the DFE guidance (August 2020), the following codes are to be used for authorised absences on the register:

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration

\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		

K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		

C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a parttime timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

13. Unauthorised Absence from school

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. These are an **offence** by the parent. Such circumstances include:

- A pupil not attending school to go shopping for school clothes
- A pupil not attending school as it is their birthday or the birthday of a family member
- A pupil not attending school as the family have gone to the airport to meet a visiting relative
- A pupil not attending school due to attending a hospital appointment for another family member
- A pupil not attending school due to the fact the family returned late in the previous evening from a family holiday
- A pupil not attending school as they are looking after younger siblings
- A pupil attends a medical appointment in the morning but then fails to return to school for afternoon lessons

14. Medical Appointments

We do appreciate that it is often difficult for parents/carers to obtain written confirmation of medical appointments. Parents/carers can obtain 'Medical Authorisation Cards' from school to take with them to the doctors to confirm their child has attended a medical appointment. (See below) Parents/carers must ensure the card is stamped, dated and signed by the practice to confirm their child has attended a medical appointment.

To whom it may concern:

King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy is committed working with pupils and parents / carers to improve pupil attendance and achievement by reducing absence.

**Please confirm by signature or practice stamp that (insert pupil name)
_____ has attended the surgery or practice today.**

Is this condition likely to impact further on their school attendance? YES / NO

Signed _____ Date _____

Parents/Carers are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments **outside school hours wherever possible**. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, parents should inform the school in advance so a decision can be made whether to authorise the absence or not.

12. Safeguarding

The school reserves the right to invite parents/carers into the school to discuss any attendance issues that raise potential safeguarding concerns, i.e. –sexual exploitation, domestic violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, radicalisation. This may be the case particularly if a parent/carer requests a leave of absence during term time.

In addition, if the school suspects that a pupil may be at potential risk as a result of their absence from school the Safeguarding team reserve the right to refer these concerns to the appropriate external agencies, i.e. – social care (Birmingham’s Children’s Trust), police. The school will inform parents/carers if a referral is to be made. However, this may not be appropriate in every circumstance depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern and a referral may be made without informing the parent/carer.

15. Children Absent from Education (CME)

The school recognises that when a child goes absent from school it is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, i.e. – sexual abuse or exploitation. The school follows the Birmingham LSCB procedures “Identifying and maintaining contact with children absent or at risk of going absent from Education 2013”. Under section 8h of the Education Regulations Act (2006) The school will make ‘reasonable’ enquiries into the location of pupils with 5 days continuous unauthorised absence or for those who fail to return from leave of absence

granted during term time. A referral will be made to the 'Child Absent from Education' (CME) to be investigated further by their safeguarding panel and appropriate interventions taken at that level, i.e. – refer to police.

The school reserves the right, however, to contact relevant agencies to seek advice (Children's Social Care, Police Safe and Well-being referral, CME) if any child is absent from school for more than five days without confirmation from parents. Every attempt will be made to communicate with parents to ensure the child is safe and well, including home visits by the Attendance Manager. The school will contact relevant agencies after two days absence without confirmation from parents/carers if the child is subject to a 'Child in Need' plan or considered vulnerable in other ways.

There are many circumstances where a child may become absent from education, as outlined below;

- Pupils at risk of harm / neglect (the school will follow standard Child Protection procedures for referrals to social care / police)
- Children of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families (the school will inform local authority when a GRT student leaves school without identifying a new destination school.)
- Families of Armed Forces (the school will contact MOD Children's Education Advisory Service for advice on making arrangements for continuity of education)
- Absent children / runaways (direct referral to Children's Services and Police)
- Children supervised in the Youth Justice system
- Children who cease to attend a school

When a pupil returns from a period of extended absence appropriate daily attendance checks will be carried out and their attendance, behaviour, emotional and physical wellbeing will be monitored closely by the safeguarding team in school. Parents/carers will be invited into school with the pupil to meet a member of the Guidance/Safeguarding Team or Senior Leader) as part of the reintegration programme and relevant support will be offered to the pupil / family as necessary.

16. Reluctance to go to school:

Sometimes pupils seem anxious about leaving home to go to school. They may tell you that they feel unwell or give another reason to not attend. You may notice that they are worried from things that they say e.g. that they do not want to do subjects, feel that they have no friends or are being bullied. If this is the case, please contact the school as soon as possible to speak to the relevant Form Tutor, HOY or member of the Guidance Team. This may involve working with external agencies. i.e. STICK Team, Pathfinder, PAUSE, Forward Thinking Birmingham

17. Sharing Panel Placement and Alternative Provision

Pupils can be placed on Off Site Directions through Managed Move or Passport placements via the Oaks Sharing Panel. Alternatively, pupils could be placed at Alternative Provision placements in Years 9-11. In these cases, the Attendance Manager will ring the placement school or provider daily to monitor attendance. Any concerns regarding a pupils' attendance will be referred to the Assistant Headteacher Mr K Lynch and parents/carers will be contacted and a meeting arranged, if necessary, with parents/carers and staff at the placement school or provider. It is our responsibility to ensure pupils attend placements daily and, if applicable, the school will engage with external agencies (i.e. – social workers / family support workers / youth offending team) to ensure the student attends the placement each day.

18. Elective Home Education

Under the DFE guidance on attendance (March 2013); 'Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education, but this does not have to be at a school. If a parent wishes to withdraw a child from school, the child will be known as 'Electively Home-Educated'. Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from school will be required to confirm this in writing to the Head Teacher (Mr McGarvey). The school will forward this letter to the Local Authority and the child will be removed from the admission register at the King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy. The Local Authority will then determine whether to accept this new arrangement or challenge it. However, parents are unable to withdraw their child from school if they are subject to a 'School Attendance Order'.

Children with Special Educational Needs statements (Education, Health and Care Plans) can be home educated. Where the statements set out special educational provision that the child should receive at home, the local authority is under a duty to arrange that provision. The local authority must review the child's statement / EHC Plan annually.

19. Part time or reduced timetables

Updated DFE guidance (June 2021) states that 'in very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. A parttime timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution and must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision'. A part-time/reduced timetable may be appropriate under the following circumstances:

- As part of an in-school support package – school, parent/carer and other professionals (ie – social worker, family support worker, health professional) agree that a short-term (no longer than six weeks) reduced timetable would support a pupil who has become disaffected, to be supported back into full-time provision.
- For medical reasons – if a student has a serious medical condition, where recovery is the priority outcome. These arrangements would be made as part of a medical plan agreed with health professionals.

- Reintegration – as part of a planned reintegration programme into school following, for example, an extended period out of school following exclusion, non-attendance, school refusal.

A parent/carer must consent to this arrangement by signing an agreement form. By signing the agreement, parent/carers will confirm they will take responsibility for the student when working at home and guaranteeing the student will be supervised at all times at home. The objectives of any part-time/reduced timetable will be clearly recorded in this agreement, along with the agreed timescale (no more than six weeks).

A staged part-time/reduced timetable will only be used for a student with an Education, Health and Care Plan after consultation with and agreement from relevant agencies (ie – SENAR). During this period, the school will continue to ensure the provision specified in the EHC plan is fully delivered.

Where a part-time/reduced timetable has been formally agreed, the sessions the student is not expected to attend will be marked with the C code unless arrangements for attendance at a supervised alternative provider are made. In that instant the B code would be used providing the student attended the alternative provision on that day. A student on a parttime/reduced timetable could still be a ‘persistent absentee’ in law should the number of sessions the child is not expected to attend constitutes more than 10% of all available sessions.

In line with DFE guidance (June 2021), the attendance officer will complete the required online form to notify the Local Authority when a part-time/reduced timetable has been agreed for an individual pupil.

20. Leave of Absence in term time

The total number of days missed due to absence in the academic year 2018/2019 was 41 million in the UK.

In March 2017, The Supreme Court confirmed the definition of regular attendance as ‘in accordance with the rules prescribed by school’. If parents wish to take their child out of school during term time, we advise parents to send a letter into the school outlining the reasons for and dates of the leave of absence. Parents will then be invited into school to attend a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher to discuss the request, complete the necessary paperwork and provide confirmation of travel arrangements (i.e. – flights details / tickets). During the meeting a date will be agreed by which the pupil must return to school after the leave of absence.

Under the DFE ‘Advice on School Attendance’, parents can no longer expect schools to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday for up to 10 school days per year. The Headteacher may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are ‘exceptional circumstances. For example, there may have been a bereavement in the family

or other serious circumstances or the Headteacher may be aware that a family is under strain and in need of time together.

The Headteacher will also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. **From this perspective, leave of absence in term time is no longer a parental right and will only be authorised at the Head Teacher's discretion.** Under DFE guidelines schools will notify the Local Authority if a parent/s takes leave of absence without the Headteacher's permission. In these cases, the G code will be used on the register to show this absence is unauthorised.

Under these circumstances, the school will apply to the **Local Authority (Fast Track)** for a **Penalty Notice Fine** (£60-£120) to be issued by the Court Section or other legal proceedings by the Local Authority. The £60 Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full separately by both parents within 21 days and will rise to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the penalty notice is not paid within 28 days, parents can be prosecuted under section 444(1), the Education Act 1996.

Where a child has unauthorised term, time leave but does not meet the criteria for 'Fasttrack to Attendance', schools can use an 'add on' legal process, the 'Leave in Term Time (Penalty Notice) Process'. The Local Authority can take legal action and issue a Fixed Penalty Notice fine under the following circumstances:

- a pupil's absence is marked as an unauthorised absence (G code), i.e. –family holiday – not agreed or extra days absence in excess of the agreement;
- a pupil has been absent for a minimum of 5 school days of G code and has had 5 school days of other unauthorised absence in the previous 12 calendar months;
- a pupil has been absent for at least 10 school days of G codes, where they have been no other unauthorised absence in the previous 12 calendar months

In addition, if the pupil does not return within 14 days of the agreed return date the school has the right to remove the pupil from the school register without parental consent. This would mean the pupil would lose their place at the school. It is also important for parents to note that the pupil may also be removed from the school register if the parent decides to remove the pupil from the country for an extended period of time (more than six weeks).

It is important for parents / carers to note that the school will not authorise ANY leave of absence unless the school feels the circumstances are unavoidable.

Additionally, as previously outlined in the policy, the school reserves the right to either contact the parents / carers directly or make an immediate referral to social care or the police if the school feels a pupil is potentially at risk being taken out of school during term time. This is particularly relevant to concerns schools may have about sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and radicalisation.

The school also reserve the right to request parents/carers provide medical evidence if there is suspicion a pupil is away and leave has not been formally requested by parents. This is due to the high number of unauthorised term time holidays nationally at certain points of the year, i.e. – around school holidays.

The school will seek advice from the Local Authority if a pupil fails to return from an extended family holiday during term time and the school and local authority have made reasonable enquiries but cannot locate the pupil. **This applies to leaves of absence that are both authorised and unauthorised by the school.** As a result, the school may remove the pupil from roll under such circumstances. However, we will keep the pupil on roll if the family remain in contact with the school even though the pupil has not returned to the school by the agreed date.

In line with current guidance on COVID-19, parents/carers should fully consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X will be used in the register.

21. Persistent Absenteeism

The school has a responsibility to reduce the number of pupils whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. **Pupils with attendance below 90% fall into the ‘Persistent Absentee’ category.** This is particularly relevant if any of the child’s absences are unauthorised.

According to the DFE guidance (August 2020); ‘If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority’. In addition, ‘Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order (section 443 of the Education Act 1996) or fail to ensure their child’s regular attendance at a school (section 444 of the Education Act 1996)’

Monitoring the attendance of all pupils is a priority for King Edward VI Balaam Wood Academy. Therefore, all pupil’s attendance will be monitored by a member of staff, these include form tutors, Head of Year, SLT and Governors. King Edward Vi Balaam Wood Academy use a wide range of supportive interventions to support pupil attendance. The academy may request a meeting with parents/carers whenever the staff member monitoring raises attendance concerns.

The school will follow the guidelines outlined by the BCC’s **Fast Track Process** As soon as attendance becomes a concern, parents/carers will be advised via a letter from the Headteacher and will be invited in to attend an informal meeting where strategies to support the child’s attendance can be explored. The school will also undertake a piece of work with the pupil (Three Houses) where any obstacles to education can be identified and offer Early Help support. If a pupil does not attend school in the autumn term 2020, despite

the agreed support systems put in place by the school, absences will be marked as unauthorised and will contribute to any Fast Track action taken by the academy.

If the child continues to have periods of unauthorised absence, parents will be invited to attend a formal school attendance review meeting (SARM) where clear actions will be agreed and expectations about attendance including legal consequences of further absence will be discussed. Following this, if the pupil has one further unauthorised absence, the process will be escalated and a formal warning notice (ELIT1) will be issued. The school will continue to use its discretion to determine if any absence after this time is authorised or unauthorised, in line with DFE guidance on absences relating to COVID-19, during the autumn term 2020.

The pupil's attendance will then be closely monitored for a period of 10 school weeks. If at any point in this period the pupil accumulates 10 further unauthorised absences (5 school days) a Family Information Sheet will be completed by the Attendance Officer and sent to Birmingham City Council's Court section.

Court section will consider proceedings under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act and 2007 Anti-Social Behaviour Act. This could result in a penalty notice being issued to parents/carers or court proceedings under the 'Single Justice' process. **A Penalty Notice will be issued for £60 to parents.** This will be issued to both parents even if one of the parents does not live with the pupil. Each parent will have 21 days to make payment. This will rise to £120 if the initial fine is paid between 22 and 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority. There is no right of appeal by parents against the penalty notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice Fine will result in further legal action being taken by the courts, with the maximum fine currently £2,500 or three months in prison. These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in parents/carers have a criminal record.

Under the 1989 Children Act, the Local Authority has the power to issue an **Education Supervision Order** (ESO) and place a child under their supervision on the grounds that the child is not being 'properly educated' and is in danger of 'significant harm'. The Local Authority can issue an order if the child is persistently absent from school. The Local Authority appointed 'Supervisor' can give 'directions' to the parents on how the child should be educated and work with the parent to ensure the child attends school regularly. The Local Authority may use an ESO as an interim measure before moving directly to prosecution.

Under the 2003 Anti-Social Behaviour Act, if a pupil continues to have attendance issues after a parent has been convicted, the courts can also issue a **Parenting Order**. This legally requires the parents to participate in a programme of parenting support and counselling. If the unauthorised absence continues, a new case will be brought against the parent/s but previous parental failure to engage with school and local authority can be cited.

If a Penalty Notice Fine is issued by the court, the school will be required to continue to monitor the pupil's attendance and begin the Fast Track process again if the pupil has a further 20 sessions (10 days) unauthorised absence from the date the fine was issued by the

court. This may result in further legal action taken against the parent if the pupil continues to have periods of unauthorised absence from school.

22. Punctuality

The 1996 Education Act requires that every pupil should attend school and be on time. It is better to be late than not to be in school at all, **BUT** when pupils arrive late it makes it difficult for everyone. The teacher has to stop and wait for the latecomer to settle down, the rest of the class is disrupted and the latecomer misses the, often vital, first part of the lesson and will receive a consequence.

Pupils who arrive after registration must enter through the main reception and sign in. Failure to sign in can lead to consequences being issued.

If you are aware your child will be arriving late, please send them with a note explaining the circumstances or contact the school by telephone, i.e. - unplanned appointment at the doctors.

We do appreciate that some of our pupils rely on public transport, which may make them late for school. However, it is the parents/carers responsibility to make alternative arrangements to get their child to school if they are aware of on-going issues with public transport and road networks that may result in their child being repeatedly late for school. The school site is open from 8.25 am each day for pupils. If there are any problems, please contact Reception.

Pupils who are up to 10 minutes late for school will receive a 30-minute after school detention on the same day. Pupils will receive a 45-minute after school detention on the same day if they are 10 to 30 minutes late. Pupils who arrive later than 30 minutes will receive a 60-minute same day detention after school. Parents/carers will receive a text message informing them the duration of the detention. Failure to attend the detention will result in an escalation in consequences.

The Attendance Manager will meet with the pupil and their parents / carers if they are late to school more than 10 times. This meeting will be repeated every tenth time the pupil is late for school. Parents/carers will be invited to attend a 'Governors Attendance Panel' meeting if their child is late for school more than 25 times in a year.

23. Communication with parents

Letters sent to parents in relation their current progress at school also contain information on the child's attendance. Each letter also has an Attendance Certificate attached. This allows parents to be informed of both their child's attendance and punctuality. Parents are also informed about their child's attendance, at parent's evenings and Progress Review meetings

24. Rewards and Incentives

Pupils are rewarded for excellent attendance in many different ways. There are Bronze, Silver, Gold attendance certificates. This is celebrated each half term in a celebration assembly. Form Attendance information distributed to form tutors and updated weekly, form group incentives and rewards are given. There is a half term draw for pupils who achieve 100% attendance, they receive, 10 House Points, certificate. Pupils with the most improved attendance rates are also rewarded as a further incentive. At key intervals over the year, we implement the 15-day attendance challenge, where all pupils regardless of their attendance prior to the twenty days can be rewarded for a period of excellent attendance.

There are also targeted rewards for key groups to support with improving their attendance.

25. Improving attendance – WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

1. Try to make all medical appointments (doctors, dentist and hospital) out of school time. Obviously this is not always possible but in such cases, try to minimise the disruption to the day by getting an early morning appointment so that your child can attend afterwards OR a late afternoon appointment so that she can complete most of her timetable before leaving.
2. Encourage your child to take responsibility for being on time for school. Try to make sure they have an alarm clock that is reliable and not their mobile phone. Make sure that they have a realistic bedtime and will not be too tired to get up in the morning for school. Bags, books and other equipment should be prepared the night before. Regularly checking your child's planner can help you to do this.
3. Discourage your child from staying overnight with friends during the week. This sometimes leads to them both being late (or not attending at all) the next day.
4. Check with school reception or Attendance Manager if you have any concerns about whether your child is present in school. Our Attendance Manager is Mrs Nolan
5. Leave of absence during term time is not a parental right. If there are special or exceptional circumstances please contact the Headteacher and decision will be made if the absence can be authorised or not.
6. Encourage your child to come to school even if they are feeling slightly unwell. Many aches and pains are forgotten when they are with friends and the school will contact you if it becomes necessary.
7. Talk positively about going to school – “What was good about school today?” “Did anything funny happen?”
8. Monitor your child's internet and social media use to ensure they are not experiencing any difficulties that may prevent them from wanting to attend school.

9. Take any worries seriously but do not show that you are unduly concerned. Believe that they will be sorted out. Contact your Child's Form Tutor or a member of the Guidance team before the concerns escalate.

26. Improving attendance – WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES:

1. Mark the registers in accordance with the law twice a day.
2. Informs any parents / carers who have not contacted school, of the absence of their child on a particular day.
3. Maintains records and monitors attendance of pupils on a regular basis.
4. Authorises absences in accordance with the government guidelines. Please note that only school can authorise absence.
5. Contacts parents / carers when the attendance falls below acceptable levels and / or when particular patterns of absence are causing concerns.
6. Provides access to staff with whom attendance related issues can be discussed.
7. Works with external agencies to maintain good attendance and to support the pupil / family with any issues that may affect attendance and punctuality to school.
8. Provides re – integration support for pupils returning from absence.
9. Uses the schools reward systems to encourage pupils to arrive on time for school.
10. Maintains a range of strategies to encourage good attendance by means of rewards and tracking pupils.
11. Works with relevant external agencies if a pupils' attendance becomes a concern, i.e. – Social Care, Forward Thinking, Pupil Support Service, Police, and YOT.
12. Uses Fast Track as a means of working with parents to resolve issues affecting attendance.

27. Key Attendance staff in school:

Head Teacher – Mr McGarvey

Assistant Headteacher/ DSL – Mr Lynch

Head of Year/Attendance Intervention/Deputy DSL – Mrs Crawford

Head of Year – Mr Robinson

Head of Year/Deputy DSL - Miss Duckworth

Attendance Manager/Deputy DSL – Mrs Nolan

Safeguarding Officer – Mr Wills

SENCO – Miss Smith (Assistant Headteacher)

Receptionists – Miss Mills and Mrs O Neil

28. Links to Other Policies

- a. Anti-Bullying Policy
- b. Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- c. Equality Policy
- d. Safeguarding Policy
- e. E-Safety Policy
- f. Health & Safety Policy
- g. Special Educational Needs Policy

The school has a legal responsibility to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school regularly. Our staff are committed to working closely with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Your continued support in this matter is essential. Please work with us.



Appendix I

Attendance Contract/Action Plan

Date Time of meeting:	
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Pupil name	
Date of birth	
Address	
Present at meeting	
Actions Agreed	
Attendance target:	
Timescale for improvement:	
Date for review meeting:	
I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present	
Parent signature	
Pupil Signature	
School representative	
School Governor	

