



**Beckfoot
Thornton
Attendance and
Punctuality
Policy
2017**

Aims

Beckfoot Thornton is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at Beckfoot Thornton, it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all students. The school actively promotes good attendance and discourages unjustified absence. Promoting good attendance and punctuality prepares students for the disciplines of adult working life.

Guiding Principles

- Beckfoot Thornton recognises that parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school every day, (section 444 Education Act 1996).
- The School emphasizes that it is the responsibility of everyone in the School to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Beckfoot Thornton aims to ensure that all its students access an education which meets their needs and allows them to realise their potential.
- The School will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered.
- The School will work with students and their families to ensure every student attends regularly and punctually.
- The School will challenge those students and their parents/carers that give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- The School has an effective system of communication with parents/carers together with appropriate agencies to provide mutual information and support.
- The School will continue to develop ICT-based attendance recording systems in order to provide accurate information and to use suitable tracking strategies to recognise any trends that can damage good attendance and learning.
- The School will have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and reasonable adjustments will be made for young people.

What you can expect from Beckfoot Thornton

- We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- We will work closely with parents/carers where student's absence is cause for concern.
- We will support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality.

What Beckfoot Thornton expects from Students:

- To attend regularly and on time.
- To be punctual to all lessons.
- To ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers are taken to the Attendance or Support & Challenge Year Teams.

What Beckfoot Thornton expects from Parents/Carers:

- To ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped to learn.
- To ensure their child attends every day the School is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- To provide medical evidence to school when absences due to illness are longer than 4 consecutive days (including weekends).
- To avoid keeping their child away from the School for any reason other than illness.
- To avoid arranging holidays during term time.
- To immediately inform the School if their child is unable to attend (by **8.00 am** where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return, and to confirm in writing on their child's return. A space for absence notes is provided in the Student Planner.
- If no indication of a return date has been given, parents/carers must contact the School on each day of absence.

Registration

- The law requires the register will be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and in the afternoon session. At Beckfoot Thornton this is at **8.20 am** and **12.00/12.30pm noon** at the start of period 4.
- Students are expected to arrive by **8.10 am** in order to be ready for the start of registration at **8.20 am**.
- Students are registered at the start of every lesson each day.
- Registers close **at 8.50 am** in the morning and **12.30/1.00 pm** in the afternoon, after which students will be marked unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation has been received.
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1).
- Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'Keeping Pupil Registers' published by the DfE.

Punctuality

- The School gates close at **8.20 am**. Any student arriving after this time should go to the main school reception where they will be given a late sticker and be informed of a 30 minute detention that day. Parents/carers will be informed of the late detention by the attendance or support & challenge teams.
- Records will be kept of students that are late. A second late detention in a week will result in further communication home and a punctuality report issued
- A parent/carer meeting will be arranged after the third punctuality report
- 12 lates in a term after the register closes will result in a fine by the Local Authority

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

- Authorised absence is where the School has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence.
- Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the School can do this.
- Parents/carers should contact the School (by telephone not email) on first morning of absence (preferably before **8.00 am**), giving a reason for the absence.
- Parents/carers need to contact school by telephone on each day of student absence.
- This should be followed up by a note on the child's return.

Absence may be authorised for such reasons as:

- Illness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments with medical evidence in the form of an appointment card, and/or a prescribed medicine
- exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement
- days of religious observance (see Appendix 2)
- study leave
- exclusion
- involvement in a public performance

Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:

- looking after brothers/sisters/unwell parents/carers
 - birthdays
 - days out
 - shopping trips
 - family holidays
 - special occasions, where the School does not agree that the absence should be granted
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- Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment.
 - Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a student's absence, the School will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise/unauthorise accordingly.
 - Absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised.
 - Students on attendance contract who have not provided the appropriate medical evidence

Removal from Roll

If a child is taken out of school without permission for more than 20 days, the child will be removed from the school roll and lose their place. Additionally, if permission for leave of absence has been given and the child fails to return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date and no valid reason is given for the non-return, they will also be removed from the school roll.

How we respond to Absence/Lateness

- If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent to explain the absence, the School will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence.
- Contact will be via automated message which will attempt to call landline numbers and mobile numbers for all contacts with parental responsibility.
- Parents/carers are able to respond directly upon receiving this call. Alternatively, where a message has been left by the automated service, a parent should contact the Attendance Office to inform us of the reason for their child's absence.
- If no response is received to the automated service, the Support & Challenge teams will call for a response.
- The attendance team may carry out a home visit to ascertain the reasons for absence and confirm there are no safeguarding issues.
- All absence notes will be retained.
- Where a student's absence is cause for concern, the School will write to parents/carers and/or invite the parents/carers into school or visit parents/carers at home in line with Appendix 3.

Holidays in Term Time

- The school **will not authorise** a child to take holidays during term time and parents do not have the legal right to take children out of school for holidays.
- Any absence, including absence for holidays, interrupts the continuity of students' learning and students cannot "catch up". Research shows that by missing lessons, students fall behind as lessons are not repeated at a later date.
- Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take students out of school for holidays during term time as there is no entitlement for them to be taken out of school for such a reason.
- Any holidays are expected to be taken as part of the 176 days available outside term time.

Parents who take their children out of school during the school term without the Headteacher's authorisation or beyond an agreed date, risk being issued with a Penalty Fine, prosecution or removed off roll.

- Leave of absence for family holidays will only be granted by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances and must be applied for in advance.
- Parents/students must request a form from the attendance office which should be completed at **least 3 weeks in advance** of the proposed absence.
- Where such an absence has not been granted, the absence will be unauthorised.

Persistent Absence

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to address this.

Any student whose attendance has reached the PA threshold (less than 90%) or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via:

- an attendance contract to improve attendance, following a meeting between relevant School staff and parents/carers
- where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by the School, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.
- Persistent Absence data is communicated to the Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

Medical Evidence

Where a student has an ongoing medical condition which is impacting on their attendance at school, it is the parents' responsibility to provide medical evidence. In exceptional circumstances, the school will ask for medical evidence to be provided directly from the GP, with consent of parents/carers.

Re-integration following Long-term Absence

Where a student has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness, the School will:

- welcome the student back to the School and value their return
- provide support for the student in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the School
- ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances
- work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome
- consider a personalised programme of return, if appropriate
- nominate a key member of staff to monitor and review the student's return.

Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- It is the belief that all students are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is engaging and personalised to meet their needs. The curriculum is monitored and revised on an annual basis so that it meets the ability needs of all students.
- Students are informed weekly of their attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve.
- Students whose attendance falls below **96%** will be set targets for improvement and progress towards these targets will be regularly reviewed.

- Good and improved attendance and punctuality will be promoted and rewarded.
- Students, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact Support & Challenge teams at any time to discuss their child's attendance.
- Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to re-integrate back into the School.
- Effective links are made with primary schools to facilitate the smooth transition to Beckfoot Thornton.

Attendance Data and Targets

- The School target is **100%** attendance.
- The target for all students is to strive for 100% attendance. Only by achieving full attendance can students expect to achieve their full potential.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the School's attendance practices and interventions.
- Individual student data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention.
- Attendance data is provided on a termly basis to the Trust.
- Attendance data and persistent absence data is communicated to the Local Authority.
- Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority.
- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure their child receives a suitable education.
- Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's attendance at school under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- The School works in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility in ensuring regular school attendance. There are a range of legal interventions used for unauthorised absence i.e. Penalty Fine, Parenting Contracts and Orders, or the matter being placed before the Magistrates Court with a possible fine of up to £2500 and/or 3 months in prison.
- All sanctions are used to improve attendance and punctuality and to reduce absence. Our aim is to avoid legal intervention, wherever possible.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of the School have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

Subject Teachers will:

- welcome and value the attendance of all students to lessons
- ensure all students are accurately registered
- identify student absence to lessons and take appropriate action
- identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

Tutors will:

- discuss absence and attendance weekly with students
- identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff
- work with identified students, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets
- ensure that all absence notes or verbal messages are sent to the Attendance Office
- discuss attendance with parents/carers at Parents' Consultation Evenings
- ensure all unexplained absences are investigated and resolved

Support/Assistant Support & Challengers Managers will:

- monitor absence and attendance daily
- discuss absence and attendance concerns with students and set targets for improvement
- contact parents/carers by phone on the 2nd day of absence if no reason for the absence has been received by school
- contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified
- support students to improve their attendance
- promote attendance through assemblies
- work with outside agencies, including the Local Authority, where appropriate to improve attendance of individual students.

Attendance Office Staff will:

- monitor registers on a daily basis
- receive and record calls and messages from parents/carers regarding student absence
- contact parents/carers regarding student absence
- identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff
- discuss attendance concerns with parents/carers and liaise with relevant members of staff.
- Undertake home visits to offer support to parents/carers or to undertake safeguarding responsibilities

- Administer 4 week Attendance Contracts with students identified as PA throughout the academic year

The Attendance Officer and Assistant Headteacher will:

- take the lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the School, including improving attendance and reducing absence
- monitor absence and attendance regularly
- identify any absence trends or concerns and will liaise with the appropriate members of staff
- contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified and provide support to improve their child's attendance support students to improve their attendance
- work with outside agencies, including the Local Authority, where appropriate to improve attendance of individual students
- provide data to the Headteacher, Senior Leaders and the Trust on a regular basis.
- Regularly review best practice to improve attendance
- Ensure all the require documentation is available in preparation for legal action to be taken in court

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders, will:

- ensure that the School attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed
- ensure the whole School ethos promotes excellence in attendance and punctuality
- report to the LSC and Trust on attendance
- monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision of educational experience
- utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning.

APPENDIX 1

DFES ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING	FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES
/	Present (AM)	Present	
\	Present (PM)	Present	
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate)	Authorised absence	
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances	
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence	
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence	
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence	
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence	
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
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	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances	
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances	
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances	

APPENDIX 2

Religious Observance

Authorised absence may be granted for religious observance. The Department for Education definition is as follows:

“Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals.”

If the religious body has not set the day apart, there is no requirement for the School to approve the absence or grant leave of absence.

Individual religions and their religious observance are too numerous to detail in this document. Parents should contact the School to request leave of absence for religious observance.

Appendix 3:

% band	Examples of Immediate actions	Interventions	Example of Rewards
100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announcement weekly in assembly Recognition within the year group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly celebration with; Form Tutor Yr. Teams Best attended Form sits on Balcony during assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% attendance badge – accessing a range of special rewards in school
97 – 99.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone call home to discuss absence/s Meeting with student to go through attendance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Yr. Team to discuss importance of attendance. Recorded on SIMS Set 4 week 100% target in planner and ask parents to support and sign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition in assembly If 4 weekly target is successfully met positive letter sent home, certificate and prizes Students on the path to receiving an attendance badge accessing a range of special rewards.
94 – 96.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Welfare Officer – Home Visit (dependent on phone call response) Phone call home to investigate absences Letter home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Yr. Team to discuss reasons for drop in attendance. Issues resolved and recorded on SIMS. Set 4 Week 100% target in planner, parents to support and sign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition in assembly If 4 weekly target is successfully met positive letter sent home, certificate and prizes Students on the path to receiving an attendance badge accessing a range of special rewards.
90 – 93.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Welfare Officer – Home Visit Phone call home to investigate absences Letter home Attendance contract to be put in place If failed attendance contract parents / carers are invited in / home visit made School to discuss with ESWS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students enrolled into Prince’s Trust Scheme to explore issues of poor attendance Support plan created, implemented, monitored and reviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition in assembly If the attendance contract is successfully met, positive letter sent home, certificate and prizes Students on the path to receiving an attendance badge accessing a range of special rewards.
89.9 and below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access and Inclusion Officer to visit home Invite parents to a panel meeting to discuss attendance and set targets Agreement signed between home and school (contract) Referred to BACS (Behaviour and Attendance Collaborative group) to discuss alternative educational provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESWS to issue penalty notices Multi agency meeting called linking to outside agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal recognition and rewards agreed in the contract.