



Bishop Chadwick Attendance Guiding Principles, 2022-23

"Attendance needs to be everyone's business, it's not just an abstract metric – and we must do everything we can – at national, local and school level – to make sure children are in school, every day, and ready to learn. Not just for their future, but for their wellbeing and safety too." Children's' Commissioner Rachel De Souza

Intent

The vision of Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust is that "As a family of schools inspired by Christ, we aim to enable each individual to fulfil their God given potential. Excellence for everyone through learning, respect and partnership is the heart of our Trust." Underpinning this, is the Trust's mission of "Better Schools, Better Communities and Better Futures in Christ"

The Trust is committed to ensuring each school develops a robust attendance strategy that supports all learners in regular and punctual school attendance. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to ensure their formation: spiritual and social; intellectual and emotional; aesthetic and physical through the provision of a broad, balanced and aspirational curriculum.

At all phases of education, we will develop excellence in attendance and punctuality in all schools through ensuring:

- BCCET policy for attendance is effectively implemented
- A whole school culture in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school
- A curriculum offer which incentivises good attendance for all pupils
- Robust school systems which provide timely, useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns
- Clear, fair and consistently applied systems and processes to improve, reward and incentivise attendance and address absences; systems must be inclusive and appropriate for all pupils
- Clear strategy for communication which raises awareness to parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education
- Every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance, receiving regular professional development and support to deploy attendance systems effectively
- A dedicated senior leader with clearly assigned responsibilities for attendance is identified within the attendance policy, escalation of procedures and school improvement plan
- Governors have an accurate view of school attendance and engage in escalation procedures where appropriate
- Effective use of attendance, pastoral and SEND staff who are skilled in supporting pupils and their families to identify and overcome barriers to attendance
- A positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.

Implementation

"Tenacity is very important when schools are trying to improve attendance. As one leader put it: It's about parents knowing that we are not going to let go" DfE May 2022 Improving School Attendance

At all phases of education, schools will undertake the following procedures to support exceptional attendance by:

- Monitoring and interrogating local and national data, feedback from schools and intelligence from partner agencies to develop strategies to improve attendance and monitor impact (including join up with early help, children's social care and other LA services)
- Maintaining regular communication with leaders across our Trust Schools and through local networks and forums, to share local and national data, disseminate best practice and respond to intelligence from school leaders
- Utilising fully intelligence gathered from across Trust schools via the Trust attendance survey, ensuring good practice is shared and embedded.
- Engaging partners from virtual school, early help and social care teams to ensure that they understand attendance expectations and ensure that the vulnerable cohort they serve are supported to sustain good levels of attendance
- Working closely with local health services and school nursing teams to ensure practitioners understand attendance requirements/responsibilities and work collaboratively with them to link families into the right support
- Weekly analysis of attendance data (register inspections, code analysis, cohort and group monitoring, punctuality, lesson attendance across subjects and benchmarking) to ensure that appropriate intervention is delivered quickly to address absence
- Weekly reports to staff across the school from attendance leaders to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures effectively
- Establishing a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance
- Creating action plans in partnership with families and other agencies that may be supporting families, for example, children's social care and early help services. Commission or deliver interventions to improve attendance
- Ensuring additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers for pupils where absence becomes persistent. Where necessary this includes working with partners
- Ensuring join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed
- Intensifying support through statutory children's social care where safeguarding concerns exist
- Ensuring attendance leaders monitor the impact of any intervention, adjusting if necessary and using findings to inform future strategy. *Where interventions fail to address attendance issues, identify the reasons why and, where appropriate, change or adjust the intervention*
- Establishing robust escalation procedures which are initiated before absence becomes a problem:
 - sending letters to parents and carers
 - first day response and phone calls to parents by 9.00am
 - weekly tutor review
 - creating attendance clinics
 - home visits where appropriate
 - engaging with the Trust Family Liaison Officer
 - engaging with local authority attendance teams and/or independent attendance organisations
 - using fixed penalty notices as outlined by the DfE
 - engaging with children's social care staff, including Virtual School Heads and social workers where appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation and quality of escalation procedures (and intervention), for example, sampling of case files by senior leader with responsibility for attendance
- Evaluating the impact of escalation procedures half termly with Trust Family Liaison Officer, seeking robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work and that reflect the school context best
- Following local authority codes of conduct, policies and procedures and make referrals for statutory intervention when interventions have not resulted in improved attendance and relevant triggers / thresholds are met
- Engaging governors in attendance panels to reinforce messages and outline relevance in terms of training and employment
- Providing a termly attendance report to stakeholders
- Clearly communicating to staff, parents and pupils our expectations using the following traffic light system:

Attendance Flag	Information
Red – Under 92%	Pupils in the red zone are more likely to underachieve, find making friendships difficult and often exhibit poor behaviour. Pupils with this level of absence have large gaps in their learning and struggle to make expected progress despite support. Legal action may also be taken against Parents/Carers of Red Zone pupils.
Amber – 92-96.99%	Pupils in the amber zone are still at risk of underachieving due to the absence level. Pupils who miss school regularly are more likely to suffer from school related stress. Pupils in this zone have gaps in their learning which put additional pressures on children and parents to fill those gaps with the support of the school. If your child is in the Amber Zone we will contact you to complete a suitable action/intervention plan to help avoid attendance falling into the Red Zone.
Green – 97+%	We expect pupils to have Green attendance throughout their education. Those in the Green zone have minimal learning gaps which are addressed within the school day. This means that they are more likely to do well in examinations, achieve their full potential, have better job opportunities, develop good mental health and can develop strong friendships within school.

Parents will support exceptional attendance by:

- Working in partnership with school to promote exceptional attendance with their child
- Ensuring that their child attends school every day and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at an urgent medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter). Where possible ALL medical appointments should be made outside of the school day.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and intervention plans implemented.

Pupils will support their attendance by:

- Ensuring they arrive to school on time and ready for the day.
- Remaining positive and resilient even in the hardest of times.
- Speaking to a member of staff if support is needed.

Impact

Our success in fully embedding and implementing these Guiding Principles will be measured by our Key Performance Indicator: "Pupil attendance rates compare favourably with national comparators. Particularly for those pupils that are disadvantaged or have Special Educational Needs".

The greatest impact of high rates of attendance:

1. Pupils' physical, moral and intellectual God given talents: enabling all pupils to flourish as a whole and complete person, preparing them fully to enter the world as active citizens.
2. Values, motivation, aspirations and the moral imperatives that inform their choices and actions.
3. The development of knowledge: Exceptional attendance allows **progress in knowing more and remembering more**.
4. Pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve.
5. Pupils' knowledge of where they are in their learning journey and can articulate it.
6. The removal of barriers to enable exceptional attendance
7. Swift intervention when attendance falls below exceptional
8. Strong relationships with parents/carers to ensure communications are timely and effective
9. Pupils' develop exceptional routines and habits in relation to punctuality and attendance.
10. Pupils being ready to succeed in their next phase of their journey.