



Bowden House School

Secondary School Attendance and Absence Policy

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Agreed by the schools governing body and minuted at their meeting.

Agreed: Autumn Term 2025

Review date: Autumn Term 2026

Statement of Intent

Bowden House School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex and that some students find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with students and parents/carers.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support and the effective use of resources such as Student Premium – can have on improving student attendance.

We are committed to:

- promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits
- ensuring equality and fairness for all
- intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our students
- building strong relationships with families/carers to overcome barriers to attendance
- working collaboratively with other agencies
- ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents/carers and students
- regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is **Tracey Van-Tongeren** she can be contacted via email address tvtongeren@bowdenhouse.towerhamlets.sch.uk. Staff, parents/carers and students will be expected to contact the attendance officer or a member of the admin team for queries or concerns about attendance.

Aims:

This policy aims to ensure that all pupils have access to their full-time education entitlement by promoting regular attendance, acting early to address barriers, and building strong relationships with families to support engagement.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing daily student attendance data'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy

Equality and Inclusion

Attendance procedures and interventions will be adapted to individual needs, with reasonable adjustments made for pupils with SEND, medical, or other vulnerabilities, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- arrival at school after the register has closed – 15 minutes after the close of registration is classed as 'late' – after that time, students are classed as 'unauthorised absence'
- not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- an absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- an absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- parents/carers/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason

- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- arrival at school more than 15 minutes after the register has closed
- absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Severe absence (SA):

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for:

- monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies
- working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals
- ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation
- handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy
- having regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy (in Bowden House School, this policy is entitled 'Absconding Procedures & RMFHC protocols) in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role
- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures – see Holidays and Leave in Term Time – advice to parents/carers attached to this policy
- ensuring that every student has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- following this policy and ensuring students do so, too
- ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently
- modelling good attendance behaviour
- using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated
- where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- the overall strategic approach to attendance in school
- developing a clear vision for improving attendance
- monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions
- analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement
- communicating with students and parents/carers with regard to attendance
- following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance
- informing the LA of any student being deleted from the admission and attendance registers – this would only be following a permanent exclusion, or meetings have been held with parents/carers and the student to identify alternative provision.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- providing accurate and up-to-date contact details
- providing the school with more than one emergency contact number
- updating the school if their details change
- the attendance of their children at school
- promoting good attendance with their children.

Students are responsible for:

- attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school
- arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for students' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents/carers and students.

Students will be expected to:

- attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day
- attend school punctually
- attend every timetabled lesson.

The school day starts at **9:15am**, and students will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, students will be expected to be on the school site by **9:00am**. Students will have a morning break at **11:00am**, which will last until **11:20am**, and a lunch

break at **13:00pm**, which will last until **1:45pm** – students will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- the morning register will be marked by **9:00am**. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by **9:30am**. Students attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at **9:30am**. Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school by **9:45am**
- The afternoon register will be marked by **2:00pm**. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close at **2:15pm**. Students will receive a mark of absence if they are not on the school site by this time ready for the afternoon lessons.

Students will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

5. Absence procedures

Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office via phone or text before 8:00am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimate of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day, etc.

Where a student is absent and their parent/carer has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administration will contact the parent/carer via phone call or text as soon as is practicable on the first day that the student does not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- ascertain the reason for the absence
- ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken, if applicable
- identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a student is absent for more than 3 school days in a row or more than 10 school days in one term, the student's parents/carers will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a student is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents/carers to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the Attendance & Welfare Officer of the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of students who fail to attend regularly or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a student's attendance drops below 85%, the attendance officer with the assistance of the Headteacher or designate, will arrange a formal meeting with the student and their parents/carers.

Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will contact the LA if it has failed to establish the whereabouts of the student after making reasonable enquiries. At Bowden House School, the staff work closely with the Attendance & Welfare Officer in all cases where there are irregular or prolonged absences.

6. Attendance register

The school uses Arbour to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

A member of the admin. team will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether students are:

- present
- absent
- attending an approved educational activity
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

= Planned whole school closure

/ = Present in the morning

\ = Present in the afternoon

L = Late arrival before the register has closed

C = Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

C1 = Leave of absence granted by the school for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad

C2 = Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable

E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made

I = Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

M = Medical or dental appointments

R = Religious observance

S = Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination

T = Parent travelling for occupational purposes

G = Unauthorised holiday

N = Reason not yet provided

O = Unauthorised absence

U = Arrived after registration closed

D = Dual registered at another school

B = Attending any other approved educational activity

J1 = Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

K = Attending education provision arranged by the LA

P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Q = Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

V = Educational visit or trip

W = Work experience

X = Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school

Y1 = Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

Y2 = Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

Y3 = Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Y4 = Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed

Y5 = Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention

Y6 = Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

Y7 = Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Z = Prospective student not on admission register

When the school has planned, in advance, to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant students who are absent.

Students who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will still be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

The school will share its daily attendance data with the DfE directly from the management information system.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

7. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents/carers will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the Headteacher, taking the best interests of the student and the impact on his education into account. The Headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents/carers and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a student a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents/carers to contact the Headteacher in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be considered. Where the absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of time that the student can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leave of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- during Year 7 when a student is settling into the school, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member
- immediately before and during assessment periods
- when a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- where a student's authorised absence record is already above 10% for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a student out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance, will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents/carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours, wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents/carers will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

This has not been, nor is it likely to become, a situation where our students would fall under this section.

However, for the purposes of this policy, Child Entertainment & Performance Activities are managed by the LBTH Education Safeguarding Team.

Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

The school will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the student normally lives with and the leave is to enable the student to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution, e.g. university or college.

Study leave for a public examination

The school may grant leave of absence for a student to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the student normally lives with.

Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for students who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Students subject to a part-time timetable

In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a student's best interests, the school will grant leave of absence to accommodate for a student on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the days on which the student is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance

Religious observance

Parents/carers will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents/carers for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the student's parents/carers would be expected by an established religious body, to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Parent travelling or occupational purposes

If a student is travelling with their parent as a result of the parent's trade or business and is therefore unable to attend, the school will assure itself that this is a genuine reason. Proof will not be sought without genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for

absence given. The parent will be encouraged to ensure that the student can attend a school where they are travelling to and be dual registered at that school.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a student's parents/carers belong to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parents/carers will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for students from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and health-related absences

Bowden House is a special school and therefore recognises that students with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers and will incorporate robust procedures to support students who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled students to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC Plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a student's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a student that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding & Child Protection procedures will be followed. All students will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a student is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- inform the Attendance & Welfare Officer of the LA if a student is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- provide the Attendance & Welfare Officer of the LA with information about the student's needs, capabilities and programme of work
- all staff of Bowden House School will help any student reintegrate back into school, when they return
- make sure the student is kept informed about school events and clubs

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any students with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the student is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of students with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments
- incorporating a pastoral support plan
- identifying students' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework
- using an internal or external specialist
- enabling a student to have a reduced timetable
- ensuring a student can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes, if required
- implementing a system whereby students can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out
- temporary late starts or early finishes.
- phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- one-to-one lessons.
- tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Where a student has been absent for an extended period, the school will implement a reintegration plan.

9. Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a student is unable to attend because:

- There is a lack of access arrangements.
- Transport normally provided is not available and the school is not within walking distance.
- There is widespread disruption to travel.
- Part of the school premises is closed, and the student cannot be practicably accommodated.
- The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly.
- The student is in criminal justice detention.
- Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited.
- Any other avoidable cause makes attendance impossible.

The use of the seven 'Y' codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

Code Q will be used in circumstances where there is a lack of access arrangements e.g. the LA has not upheld its duty to arrange the student's home to school travel.

10. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of students and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified and he will contact the parent/carer in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- in the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents/carers of the student informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken
- if any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- a penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

11. Missing children

Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school or they are involved in an off-site activity with staff members. The school's Absconding Procedures and RMFHC protocols will be followed and will include the following:

- the member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform the Headteacher immediately
- the office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- a member of staff will stay with the rest of the class and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - all classrooms
 - all toilets
 - residential areas
 - the school grounds
 - any other likely area
- available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises; the local town and railway station and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted
- if the student has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents/carers of the student will be notified to see if they have received any communication from their son
- if the parents/carers have had no contact from the student and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- if the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- when the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well

- parents/carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located
- a report of the incident will be entered onto the BehaviourWatch system

The Headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises and sanctions might be applied, if necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, if appropriate.

The Headteacher or his designate, will carry out a full investigation and record the events and actions on BehaviourWatch and any other appropriate, school document.

12. Attendance intervention

Positive attendance promotion:

The school promotes attendance through celebration assemblies, certificates, and individual recognition.

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance
- monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work
- attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures
- establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - sending letters to parents/carers or contacting them via phone/text or School Ping.
 - having a weekly tutor/mentor review
 - engaging with the Attendance & Welfare Officer of the LA
 - using fixed penalty notices

Bowden House School will comply with the DfE statutory guidance on 'Working Together to Improve Attendance, 2024' and will always consider the particular needs of its students.

The school aims to improve attendance across the cohort by acknowledging and celebrating good attendance and rewarding students for regular attendance. Individualised targets will be set to ensure that students with health needs or complex home circumstances are not unfairly excluded from attendance recognition and rewards.

13. Working with parents/carers to improve attendance

Bowden House School will continually work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents/carers and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with students and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, e.g. Social Services.

Holidays and Leave in Term Time – advice to parents/carers, is an additional document to this policy to help them understand their responsibility in ensuring good school attendance.

Our school has at least two means of contacting parents/carers to ensure staff have additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a student where the student is absent without notification or authorisation.

Our school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents/carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised in advance, by the Headteacher. The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality and will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the student and their parents/carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the student from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for student absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the student's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer and any relevant school staff, e.g. the Headteacher and Deputy Head, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the student's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA and will encourage parents/carers to access support that they may need.

14. Persistent Absence – the DfE's definition of PA

There are various groups of students who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Students who are eligible for FSM
- Students with EAL
- Students with SEND
- Students who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

Our school will ensure it provides support to students at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant, external authorities, where necessary.

Our school will use a number of methods to help support students at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning

- meeting with the student and their parents/carers to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance and any other problems they may be having
- establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support
- leading weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support
- making regular contact with the student's parents/carers to discuss progress
- considering what other support mechanisms to aid re-engagement might be needed, including additional vulnerability.

Our school will focus particularly on students who have high of rates of absence and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these students are facing.

Where a student at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, our school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the student in line with the school's duty of care. Our school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the school's Safeguarding & the Protection of Children Policy.

15. Penalty notices and legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve students' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the Attendance & Welfare Officer for the LA
- working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place
- engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents/carers to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a student reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice, or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where parents/carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents/carers will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

parents/carers who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

The measures detailed above will only be used in extreme cases with discussion including whether the school can no longer meet the student's needs and/or that he might be better placed in alternative provision.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the student and parents/carers to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and student, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents/carers to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents/carers to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents/carers to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

16. Monitoring and analysing absence

Attendance data will be benchmarked against local and national averages to identify trends, target interventions, and evaluate the impact of attendance strategies. The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence.

Our school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- the school cohort as a whole
- individual year groups
- individual students
- demographic groups, e.g. students from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds
- students at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- patterns in uses of certain codes
- specific days of poor attendance
- subjects which have low lesson attendance
- historic trends of attendance and absence
- barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to members of the school's SLT so that they are aware of absences and the interventions in place to improve attendance.

The Governing Body will regularly review attendance data at their bi-termly meetings, including examination of recent and historic trends and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

17. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk students as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

- Training will cover at least the following:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
 - The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
 - The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for students who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting students to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

18. Deletions of names from the admission register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A student's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when students' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of students whose name has been deleted from the

register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a student's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the student will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the student normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parents/carers the student normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the student's future address, the full name and address of the parents/carers who the student is going to live with and the date the student will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the student's other school and when the student began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the student's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered student and their attendance at any given time. Students' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

19. Monitoring and review

Attendance will be monitored throughout the year as detailed in this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every **year** by the Headteacher and the Governing Body. The next scheduled review date for this policy is Spring 2026.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Bowden House School

HOLIDAYS AND LEAVE IN TERM TIME – ADVICE TO PARENTS/CARERS/CARERS

The Department for Education's document on 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance, 2024' is aimed at schools, Local Authorities and parents/carers promoting good school attendance and reducing the incidents of school absence. The school defines absence as 'not attending school for any reason'.

The parents/carers of the students of Bowden House School are responsible for their son's regular school attendance unless there is a very good reason why this may not be possible. If a student has been absent due to illness or a medical/dental appointment, parents/carers are responsible for the prompt return to school of their son and any delay to their return will be marked as unauthorised. The school will always consider assisting parents/carers in their son's return to school.

Any applications for holidays in term time will be refused by the Headteacher unless there is evidence of very exceptional circumstances as to why the leave must be taken in term time instead of in the school holidays.

Holidays in Term Time

The guidance from the Department for Education states that applications from parents/carers for students to take leave in term time for the purpose of a holiday should not be authorised. Parents/carers are expected to arrange holidays during school holiday periods when children can enjoy them without their education being disrupted.

Leave in Term Time for Other Reasons

Requests for leave in term time for other reasons can only be agreed in exceptional circumstances and for the shortest possible period. The school's Governing Body expects applications for leave in term time for other reasons, to be generally refused particularly if the student is new and settling into school life or the time requested is before or during assessment/exam periods. However, in exceptional circumstances, e.g. bereavement or serious illness, discretion may be appropriate and no more than 10 days will be agreed.

Non-attendance for birthdays, shopping, day trips or looking after other children, etc., are not good reasons for non-attendance.

Applications for Leave in Term Time for other reasons:

- must be submitted to the Headteacher at least 10 days in advance
- all applications will be considered carefully including how the student's educational progress could be affected
- applications received during or after a student has been taken on leave during term time cannot be considered and the absence will be unauthorised

Taking of Unauthorised Holiday or Leave in Term Time

Where parents/carers choose to take their child on an unauthorised holiday or leave in term time, the child will be referred to the Attendance & Welfare Service for follow-up and consideration for action using the LBTH Penalty Notice Scheme to address attendance-related concerns particularly if there is persistent absences.

A Penalty Notice and/or fine may be served on an individual parent/carer per individual student when the student has had 6 sessions (3 days) of unauthorised leave. There is no right of appeal.

The school defines **authorised absence** as inclusive of the following circumstances:

- sickness for which the school has granted leave
- medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave
- religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- an absence due to a family emergency

The school defines **unauthorised absence** as inclusive of the following circumstances:

- parents/carers keeping their son away from school without sufficient reason
- truancy.

The school defines **persistent absence** as:

- missing 10% or more education for any reason, across the academic year

I have read and understood the above.

Name of student _____

Date of birth _____

Signature of parent/carer or guardian _____

Date _____

BOWDEN HOUSE SCHOOL

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE IN TERM TIME FOR EXCEPTIONAL REASONS

Student's name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Parents/carers name(s) _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Mobile: _____

Last day of expected attendance in school: _____

Date of expected return to school: _____

Please give details of the purpose and exceptional circumstances for this application for leave in term time and why the leave cannot be taken in school holiday time. Please attach any supporting evidence:

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Please provide the address of where you and your son will be staying:

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e-mail address for contact:

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