

Belvue High School

Attendance Policy



Reviewed: October 2025
Reviewed by: K Waterton

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages every young person to achieve their academic and personal potential.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that your child should be at school, on time, every day that the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning:- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding:- Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:-

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-bullying

Failing to attend Belvue school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter. Children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

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2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Children Missing Education \(England\) Statutory Guidance 2016](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the day (8.45am) and in the afternoon (1.30pm) of each school day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

* See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45 on each school day.

The register will be taken at 8.45 and will be kept open until 9.15am. Any child arriving between 9.00-9.15 will be marked in as L (late). Any pupil arriving after 9.15 will be marked as a U (Pupil arrived at school after the register closed). Registers will be taken again in the afternoon between 1.30pm - 1.40pm.

The class teacher is responsible for taking the register for both AM and PM sessions. Teaching Assistants may support with the registers but ultimately it is the class teacher's responsibility. The receptionist at each site will cross reference the pupils missing with the absence list for the day. At 9.00am Teachers should make calls home to find out why a child is absent and send this information to the receptionist. Any variation or where a teacher cannot make contact, the receptionist or Family Worker responsible for the registers, will be followed up immediately.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.00 a.m. or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the each day of absence and clearly state the reason for the absence;
- Write a note in your child's diary on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the class teacher, a member of the attendance team and/or the family worker.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority Attendance Officer if attendance moves below 90%.

Attendance Contacts and Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Key contacts for Attendance

Name	Role	Contact details
Admin	Reporting absence	admin@belvue.ealing.sch.uk

Class Teacher	Class Teacher	Please ask admin for direct e mail addresses
Sana Bhopal	Headteacher	sanab@belvue.ealing.sch.uk
Kellie Waterton	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Lead	kelliew@belvue.ealing.sch.uk
Denis O'Brien	Family worker, Deputy DSL and Deputy Attendance Lead	deniso@belvue.ealing.sch.uk
Elizabeth Niles	Family worker and Deputy DSL	elizabethn@belvue.ealing.sch.uk
Alison Blair	Safeguarding Governor	allisonb@belvue.ealing.sch.uk
Bineta	Send Administrator	binetat@belvue.ealing.sch.uk

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Medical/dental appointments should be made for the start of the day, in order that your child can come into school after the appointment or at the end of the day, to avoid any disruption to your child's learning. The school will not authorise for students to have an entire day off school for an appointment. We ask parents to inform us of the appointment in advance of the day and not on the morning of the appointment.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late (between 8.50am -9.15am) but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after 9.15am will be marked as arriving after registration has closed, using the appropriate code.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons and it can be embarrassing for the child. It can also encourage absence. Parents should set up good evening and morning routines so that their child arrives alert and ready to learn.

The school day starts at **8.45am** and we expect your child to be in the school playground by this time.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of the School Attendance Team to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Unauthorised absence will be followed up by the teacher, admin or Family Worker in a timely manner and the explanation recorded on SIMs.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Tutor Time will keep pupils informed of their attendance rates and targets. Class teachers will discuss attendance with parents and carers at termly Learning Conversations and Annual Reviews. Where there are concerns, further information will be sent to parents and carers via letter, e mail or an arranged meeting.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. This does not include holidays.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an absence for the bereavement of a close family member, a funeral or important religious observances.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably a note written into the pupil's diary.

- Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Parents should try to arrange such appointments for after school however if this is not possible then the child should not be kept off school for the whole day.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping students off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA students and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor or a Connexions worker, school counselling service or family worker support, use of tutor time, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. Where concerns raise safeguarding issues, a referral to social care will be made.

The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, includes informing parents and carers of how access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Please see Ealing's penalty Code of Conduct on the provisions for fixed penalty notice for school absences: https://www.egfl.org.uk/sites/default/files/Services_for_children/Attendance/Ealing%20Council%20code%20of%20conduct%20on%20the%20provisions%20for%20fixed%20penalty%20notice%20for%20school%20absences.pdf

Please note the following penalty charges:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first.
- In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance via letters, parent workshops and information displayed on the school website.
- Report to you termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments. This will be shared in Annual reviews and Learning Conversations.
- Celebrate good attendance via our rewards attendance rewards programme. This is currently being reviewed this year but includes rewards such as certificates, prizes and school trips.
- Run parental workshops which include information on the importance of attendance and information on how parents and carers can receive support.
- Remind parents and carers of the importance of attendance during Autumn term of each school year and when there are any updates regarding attendance.

6. Attendance monitoring

Attendance is monitored daily by the receptionists and class teachers. The SEND administrator monitors pupils attendance weekly and the attendance team monitors attendance every two weeks.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO CALL THE SCHOOL EACH DAY A CHILD IS ILL.

Parents and carers will be contacted each day of absence if they have not informed the school of the reason for their child's absence.

Social workers will be made aware of absence for any pupil with a social worker.

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, without a reason for absence, a member Family Worker will continue to try and make contact which may include a home visit or liaising with the wider network.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an Local Authority Education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school collects and stores attendance data, to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. Attendance is considered a safeguarding issue, so the Governing Body Safeguarding Lead – Allison Blaire is the named governor for attendance.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff, in particular the attendance team, in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance team

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. The school has a dedicated attendance team who can be contacted to discuss any issues with and who will assess any additional support that can be given to pupils and families. The attendance team comprises of the HT, DHT/DSL, Family Workers, Send administrator and receptionists. You can arrange an appointment with a member of the attendance team through the school office on 0208 845 5766 or through your child's class teacher.

The attendance team is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority's Education Social Work (ESW) officer. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the student's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

7.4 Family Workers:

The Family Workers will work with families who need additional support in dealing with a wider range of issues that have an impact on attendance. The Family Workers will work with the Persistent Absentee students and their parents in various ways to raise attendance. Where concerns raise safeguarding issues, a referral to social care will be made. Family Workers will inform a child's social worker if they are absent and if they are going to be or are considering, along with approval from the LA, deleted from the school register.

7.5 Class Teacher:

All staff understand that non-attendance is potentially a safeguarding issue, therefore registers are taken in a timely and accurate fashion.

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office..

Class teachers are responsible for following up on an absence at the beginning of the day by contacting the parent or guardian and recording the reason on SIMs.

Class teachers will:

- Make enquiries about attendance
- Inform the parent or guardian of their child's attendance on a termly basis during the young person's Learning Conversation or Annual Review.
- Make appointments, where appropriate, to discuss attendance issues
- Make referrals to the safeguarding team where appropriate

7.6 SCHOOL RECEPTION staff

School reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. The school reception staff will follow up on any absence where the class teacher has been unable to contact the parent during the registration period. Following this, Family Workers will also provide support to find out reasons for absence.

8. CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

8.1 We will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in Children Missing Education – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (DfE September 2016)

The schools' responsibilities:

8.2. Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

8.3 Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. Any removal from Belvue School would require authorization from SENAS. Before a child's name is removed, the case is

referred, by the school, to the CME to ensure that the 'reasonable enquiry' has been completed correctly. Where concerns raise safeguarding issues, The Family Workers will make a referral to social care.

8.4 If the child /young person already has an allocated social worker, the DSL must contact them (or their team manager) to discuss concerns about nonattendance.

8.5 Schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the 'Keeping children safe in education, Sept 2018' statutory guidance.

8.6 Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the 'Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' statutory guidance.

9. Recording information in the school's admission register

9.1 It is important that the school's admission register is accurate and kept up to date. Schools should regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur, through using existing communication channels such as regular emails and newsletters. This will assist both the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

9.2. Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, all schools are required to record in the admission register:

- a. the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;
- b. the new address; and
- c. the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

9.3. Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record in the admission register:

- a. the name of the new school; and
- b. the date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

Sharing information with the local authority

9.4. Schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register at a non-standard transition point **under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the regulations**, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply at standard transition points – where the pupil has completed the school's final year – unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

9.5. Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with:

- a. the full name of the pupil;
- b. the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- c. at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- d. the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- e. the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- f. the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).

9.6. All schools are required to notify the local authority **within five days** when a pupil's name is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. Schools will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year

of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Attendance Leads. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day