

## Bank View School



## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

### Document Status

<b>Review Period</b>	Annually
<b>Person Responsible for Policy</b>	Senior Leadership Team
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## Introduction

Bank View School recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of learners. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for learners within Bank View School to support learning and achievement. Any absence affects education, and regular absence will seriously affect learners' learning.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our young people every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all learners attend regularly and on time. Learners should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all learners to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all learners achieve at least 97%. ***As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.***

The DfE has published a strong link between poor school attendance and low levels of achievement.

Bank View School believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Learners and all members of Bank View School community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring learners attend to achieve.

This policy sets out how we will achieve this working together.

## Aims

- Maximise the overall percentage of learner attendance and punctuality at Bank View School
- Reduce the number of learners who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, learners and staff
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for learners
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

## Promoting Regular Attendance at Bank View School

It is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and learners to promote regular attendance.

To help us all focus on this, Bank View School will ensure:

- Appropriate interventions are in place to deter poor punctuality

- An appropriate curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly
- High quality teaching and learning throughout the school, this is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance
- Learners are provided with appropriate support to minimise disaffection from both Bank View School and multi-agency provision as appropriate
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided
- Parents/carers are kept informed of learners' attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual learner incentives
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with learners in form time and at assemblies
- Attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff ensure they are followed.

### **Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures**

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

#### **Expectations of Learners**

- Arrive to lessons on time
- Always attend every lesson
- Never leave the school site without permission.

#### **Expectations of Parent/Carer**

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carers' legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

We ask that parents and carers support us by:

- Making routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible
- Contacting school, preferably by 8.30 am, on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school. This by telephoning the school office
- Contacting the form tutor if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact
- Ensuring school has up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of two emergency contact details be provided)
- Making any requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence in writing to the Principal. These can only be authorised by the Principal. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include

general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays. Absence Forms can be requested from the school reception.

### **The DFE states that:**

*Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.*

### **Expectations of School**

Bank View School will telephone a Parent/Carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9.30am.

If no response is received, a member of school staff will conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.

If a learner's absence is increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carers will be invited to meet the head of their child's Key Stage.

If the parent/carers does not attend the meeting and the learner has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence school will issue the parents/carers with a Penalty Notice warning letter in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct and in agreement with the EWO.

If unauthorised absences persist, Bank View School will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.

There is a flow chart of actions in the appendices, showing who is responsible for these actions.

### **Absence Recording**

Bank View School has to legally record every absence a learner has from school. This is why it is important that parents/carers advise school regarding the reason for absence, preferably by phone on the first day of absence and in writing on the learner's return.

### **Authorised Absence**

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Principal, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school following a parental request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for
- shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have not been explained
- Learners who arrive at school too late to get their mark.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. School will issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer the case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

### **Persistent Absence**

Learners are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects Schools to intervene well before learners reach a level of persistent absence.

90% attendance is equivalent to a learner missing one half day of lessons per week.

Whilst we understand that learners can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a learner is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parent/Carers are asked to contact the form tutor in the first instance for support.

### **The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**

The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carers and advice on problems relating to attendance and encourages good communications between home and school.

The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the learner's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists the EWO will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings which include; Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

Bank View's EWO is Jennifer Rooke.

### **Leave of Absence in Term Time**

The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Principal must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice fine for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively.

Principals cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Principal will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

### **Lateness – for independent travellers only**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a learner misses the start of the day, they can miss work and late arriving learners disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the learner arriving late and can encourage future absence. School will work together with all stakeholders to support to learners who consistently arrive late to school without reason.

### **How we manage Lateness**

The school day starts and registers are taken by the Form Tutor by 9.00am.

- Learners who arrive late to school need to report to the office
- If a learner arrives late to School parents/carers receive a text message to inform them of their child's late arrival.

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact their form tutor who will offer support to resolve the problem.

### **People Responsible for Attendance Bank View**

All school staff, parents/carers and learners need to work as a team to support the attendance and attainment of learners. This continued support is vital in making every learner's journey through school a success.

The appendices give details of the roles and responsibilities within school.

### **Removal from Roll**

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

### **As a school we are now required to:**

- Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a learner's name from the admission register

- Inform the LA of the learner's destination school and home address if the learner is moving to a new school
- Provide information to the LA when registering new learners, including the learner's address and previous school.

**If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:**

- Give the attendance officer comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing
- If learners leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

## Appendices

### Table of Escalation of Interventions

<b>Attendance %</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>
100% Attendance is excellent	Rewards and praise	Form team Pastoral HLTA Key Stage Lead
99% - 97% Attendance is good	Rewards and Encouragement	Form team Pastoral HLTAs Key Stage Lead
96% - 90% Attendance is a concern	Talk to learners and contact parent / carers Meetings with Pastoral HLTAS Support to Return to School Safeguarding visits when 10 and 20 sessions (a session is a half day) have been missed	Form team Pastoral HLTAs Key Stage Lead (EWO as requested at meetings)
Below 90% Attendance is a serious concern	Action planning meetings / targets given 10 and 20 sessions safeguarding visits and persistent absence warning letters sent home EWO involvement Attendance panels (with EWO and SLT) Early Help Social Care Support or possible legal intervention	Key Stage Lead Vice Principal Principal Safeguarding team EWO Governors

# Attendance Flow Chart

