



Attendance Policy	
Lead Governor & Member of SLT:	Mr C Radford & Mr D Spicer
To be approved by:	Strategy Committee
Frequency of review:	Annual
Date approved:	September 2023
Next review date:	September 2024

Queensbridge School – Based on DFE attendance guidance 2022

AT QUEENSBRIDGE, OUR MISSION IS TO EQUIP OUR STUDENTS WITH THE CHARACTER, SKILLS, AND ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE THEY REQUIRE TO LIVE HAPPY AND FULFILLED LIVES

Definitions & Links

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply.

Term	Definition
Attendance	Full time education means attendance for the period described by the school and a student may be marked absent/late if they arrive after the time when the school closes its register. Coding distinguishes between 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absences
Attendance Register	The register is taken within 5 minutes of the start of every lesson. The use of Attendance Codes will be used to record individual student's attendance at school.
Admission Register	The Roll Register of all students at the school. It includes the date of admission and the name and address of the school that the students last attended. If a student leaves, then details of the school that they go to must be recorded.
Persistent Absence	Attendance which is less than 90%.
SIMS	School Information Management System
EduLink	School / Parent Communication portal and management system
Links	
DFE Guidance Document	Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

As a school staff, we commit to:

- Listening, understanding, empathising and supporting
- Building relationships with pupils in order to develop and maintain a whole school culture which promotes significantly high levels of attendance.
- We will regularly celebrate attendance through form time, form notice boards, assemblies, recognition certificates and connect pupil newsletter.
- To ensure that registers are completed promptly and accurately every lesson.
- Ensuring effective, robust and consistent systems are implemented, in line with the stepped response document, on a daily basis.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance.
- Sharing attendance information with key stakeholders (whole staff, governors, pupils and parents).
- Using recognition to celebrate excellent levels of attendance.
- Welcoming pupils back into school following a period of absence.
- Communicate effectively with parents when a child is absent from school and initiate first day calls for any un-authorised or unexplained absence.

Why is good attendance important to us?

- To ensure we have safe, healthy and successful pupils
- To provide every pupil with the best possibility of academic success
- To provide every pupil with character developing experiences and opportunities.



97% attendance = Increase in achieving or exceeding expected standard in reading, writing and maths

97% attendance = increase in the ability gain a grade 9-4 in Maths at English at GCSE level

What can pupils expect from us?

- To be greeted with a smile on the door and on a daily basis
 - Recognition of excellent levels of attendance.
 - Support where attendance levels start to decrease.
 - A clear and agreed action plan to support in promoting high levels of attendance.
-

- Pastoral support on a daily basis from a designated form tutor.
- A breakfast club on site, for any pupils who arrives at school from 8.15am.

What can parents expect from us?

- Communication as to a child's current levels of attendance.
- Communication of a first day phone call from school when a pupil is absent and we have not received notification from a parent/carer. This is to ensure that we can verify the pupil is safe and well, in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Contact made, in line with our stepped response, when attendance starts to become a concern and this contact could take the form of a phone call, parent meeting or with an external agency should specific support be required.
- Support from both school (pastoral and school nurse) and external agencies when attendance levels show signs of ongoing concern.
- A safe and well safeguarding home visit will take place on 3 days of unexplained or unauthorised absence.

What do we expect from pupils?

- To be punctual and arrive on school site by 8.40am every day.
- To ensure every lesson is attended punctually.
- To talk to form tutors, heads of year or other key listed individuals should any concerns arise around punctuality or attendance.

What do we expect from parents?

- To ensure that their child/children attend school, punctually, on a daily basis.
- To inform school through EduLink or if this is not possible via telephone by 8.15am as to the reason behind any pupil absence.
- To ensure that holidays are not taken in term time and that if unavoidable a request is made, in writing, directly to the headteacher.
- To be aware that pupils who arrive after 9.15am and or are absent without reason are issued with an unauthorised absence which can lead, as stated in this policy, to Fast Track proceedings.

Who are the key individuals in school in relation to attendance?

- Mrs Blake – Attendance Officer
 - Heads of Year
 - Mr Spicer – Assistant Headteacher - Attendance
-

- Mr Horgan – Deputy Headteacher – Personal Development

Please contact via enquiry@queensbridge.bham.sch.uk

This is how we do it here:

Queensbridge School believes that punctual and regular school attendance is essential for effective learning.

The school is committed to ensuring that all students attend school regularly and have an attendance of above 97% for the academic year. Regular school attendance is vital if students are to benefit from the experiences which the school offers them and we believe that students should attend school regularly because this is where they learn and this is where they are safe. Employers and other reference seekers value attendance and punctuality as an indicator of reliability; in an ever-competitive world, it is crucial that our students are equipped to compete with others by having outstanding attendance and punctuality.

We will communicate with families, as stated in our stepped response framework and once pupils reach specific levels of absence a variety of supporting mechanisms will be actioned. In order to support high levels of attendance, the school will utilise the fast track process should attendance be for unauthorised reasons. The process would require a formal SARM (School attendance review meeting) would take place and an action plan generated. Should a child continue to be absent from school this would lead to a referral to the ELIT (Education legal intervention team) and possible fine or court hearing. Parents will be informed of our commitment to excellent attendance and punctuality via a letter at the start of the year, repeated each term, outlining the responsibility for parents/guardians in ensuring high levels of attendance. Should an absence be medically based, specifically around school-based anxiety the new element of Fast Track to support GP involvement, run through BCC will be utilised in all cases.

A parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, has a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Section 444, Education Act 1996).

** The Pastoral guide provides staff with the clear processes of the management of all aspects of attendance and punctuality and required actions.*

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student 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 student's educational prospects and parental support is vital in tackling 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 parents/carers will be informed immediately.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system. PA students and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include allocation of additional support through individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities after school around raising attendance.

Roles & Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for rewarding pupil attendance through messages home on EduLink and use of the Attendance postcards.

The school Governors along with the Headteacher will, at the beginning of each school year, set an attendance target for the school. The school Governors are also responsible for ensuring that pupils' names are recorded on the school admissions and daily register.

The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that the daily register of pupils attending the school is taken and delegates the monitoring and reporting on attendance to a senior member of staff.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure their child(ren) attend(s) school regularly.

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents and carers meet this responsibility, and the service can seek legal redress to secure a pupil's attendance if a parent or carer fails in their duty.

Managing and Monitoring Pupil Absence

At Queensbridge School the attendance of pupils is recorded electronically through EduLink and SIMS. This helps us to produce data which we use to track and monitor attendance of our pupils. It also helps the school provide information on pupil attendance for data analysis and to identify pupils for whom we can celebrate attendance and those who require additional support. Each reason for pupil absence has a special code and this assists the school to monitor persistent absentees. (See Appendix 1)

In our school, we expect pupils to have outstanding levels of attendance. Parents/carers of pupils attending this school have a responsibility to make sure their child(ren) is/are as close as possible to reaching the school target and above.

Through data analysis, we track which pupils fall below the threshold and take appropriate action as can be seen in our stepped response document. Pupils with a pattern of poor attendance (below 95%) will be contacted. Parents/carers will also be invited to school to meet with a member of their child's pastoral team. If there is no improvement and attendance continues to decline parents/carers will once again be invited in to school to create an action plan and discuss further options of support.

Should a child accumulate 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, they will be placed on to the initial stages of the Fast Track process (see appendix 3). A session is counted as half a day and so if a pupil arrives after 9.15am this would be counted as 1 session of unauthorised absence.

Pupils' attendance patterns are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and any patterns, issues or significant absence will be further investigated. Absence and punctuality is reported to the Governing Body at the end of each school cycle (4 times a year).

The Local Authority has statutory powers to issue Penalty Notices which may lead to prosecution. If attendance does not improve after meetings with parents/carers, the court section of the Education Welfare Service will issue Penalty Notices. In the case of fines not being paid, this may lead to prosecution.

Punctuality

We expect all pupils to arrive on site by **8.40am** each day and be prompt to the beginning of all lessons and tutor periods. **Register will close at 9.15am** each day and therefore should a child arrive after this time, they will be coded 'U' and therefore have a session of unauthorised absence on their attendance record. Patterns of lateness to both school and lessons will be monitored by the Head of Years for each year group and actions undertaken as per the pastoral guide.

Truancy

Should a child be absent from school and parents/carer unaware of their location or have given an unsatisfactory reason for an absence, this would be classed as truancy. The pupil would be given an unauthorised absence and the following actions would be undertaken:

- If the pupil cannot be located within the first hour of the school day, parents/carers would be contacted and if no location can be established the police will be informed.
- Following discussion with a truant to establish the circumstances surrounding the truancy, sanctions and support will be actioned. This could include the pupil being required after school to complete all work that had been missed, and/or other proportionate sanctions depending on the level of truancy.
- If the truancy becomes a persistent offence, external support through an Early Help referral would be sourced as well as further attendance action as the pupil would have accumulated a number of unauthorised actions leading to Fast Track.
- If the child has not left home but not arrived at school we would ask that parents contact the police

Internal Truancy

Should a child not go to a lesson in school and therefore 'truant' the lesson, the pupil will be required after school to complete all work that had been missed, and/or other proportionate sanctions depending on the level of truancy.

Absence From School

If your child is absent from school, parents/guardians must contact school, through EduLink, by 8.15am on each day of absence. If EduLink is not available please call 0121 464 5566 and select reporting attendance.

As part of our duty to safeguard children, any absence without informing the school will result in a phone call/text/home visit from the school.

As school attendance is a very serious matter, we aim to have good communication about attendance matters with parents/carers through our website, EduLink, structured conversations and meetings as set out in the stepped response document (Appendix 8). If there is a problem, it is better if a parent or carer speaks to a member of the pastoral team rather than allow a situation to escalate.

Unauthorised Absence

At Queensbridge School we have an expectation that parents will contact the school to inform us of their child's absence. We may not accept a parent/carer's reason for absence, especially if he/she has had 3 separate individual absences. Regular unauthorised absences where a parent/carer has not provided a reason for absence, mean that a parent/carer may be breaking the law and could be:

- issued with an Education penalty charge notice of £60 - £120 by the Local Authority
- found guilty in a magistrates court and fined up to £2,500

If a pupil is regularly absent due to sickness, a parent/carer may be invited in to school to discuss their child's absences, this discussion may include the school nurse. When a pupil is regularly absent due to illness (after 3 separate individual absences), the school will request that a parent/carer provides medical details from their doctor before continuing to authorise further absences.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

School will actively discourage parents making requests to take their child(ren) out of school during term time. The school is closed for 14 weeks of the year and families are expected to use this time for taking holidays and visiting family abroad.

Parents/carers wishing to take their child out of school must write to the Governing Body and Headteacher in advance. The Headteacher has the authority to authorise this, but only in exceptional circumstances. Families, who take their child(ren) out of school for unauthorised leave during term time must complete a formal leave in term request form and risk receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice. Queensbridge School has the full support of our Governors and the Local Authority in this matter.

Religious Observance

Parents/carers may request an absence from school for their child on the day of the religious observance, so that families can enjoy celebrations together. The school is unable to sanction leave of absence for longer than is required, as we follow the advice of the Local Authority (see Appendix 7)

Parents taking their child(ren) out for more than one day, will have the absence recorded as unauthorised and appropriate measures will be put in place to catch up with the work that has been missed during the unauthorised absence and additional support put in place depending on the child's current attendance, as stated in Appendix 8.

Dental and Medical Appointments

Wherever possible, parents/carers should make every effort to avoid making medical or dental appointments during the school day. It is preferable to try and arrange these during holiday periods or at the beginning or end of the school day. Notification in advance is required should any pupil require a medical appointment during school hours. This should be avoided where possible and most medical appointments do not necessitate a full day of absence and it is the parents/carers' responsibility to collect their child from school to take them to appointments and to bring them back to school once their appointment is over.

The appointment card/letter should be taken to reception prior to the day of the appointment. An out-of-school pass will then be issued on the day at a time appropriate to the appointment.

Safeguarding Children

Our school must be able to demonstrate that it knows the whereabouts of each pupil and the reason for their absence. It is very important for the **Local Authority** to be able to track pupils if they are not attending school and in some cases for schools to make a referral to **Social Care**.

If a family is moving house, we need to be informed that a school place will no longer be required, with the date the pupil will be leaving. We will also need the new address and the name of the new school that the pupil will be attending or, if moving abroad, we require evidence of flight tickets/new school name and address and the new family address. If this information is not known at the time the pupil leaves school, a forwarding address and telephone number **MUST** be left so that we can contact you.

Pupils who leave the school and their whereabouts are unknown, will have their details forwarded to the **Children Missing in Education Team** after we have made every possible effort to find out where the pupil has gone.

Appendix 1

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
B	Educated off site (<i>not</i> dual registration)	Approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (ie when student is attending another establishment and is permitted, when a student is at a Pupil Referral Unit, attends a special school on a part-time basis or temporarily received education in a hospital special school)	Approved educational activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (<i>not</i> agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed following the procedure and at the discretion of the CA, Headteacher and SA)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (<i>not</i> medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview for example with prospective employer	Approved educational activity
L	Late (before registration closed)	Present
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity

Appendix 2

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»
Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup»

I'm writing to you to express concern about **«ChildFirstName»** attendance in school. As you may be aware, it is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure children attend school regularly.

Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Attendance of over 97% increases a pupil's ability to meet their expected reading, writing and maths standard and, in Key Stage four, increases a pupils ability of achieving grades 9 to 4 in English and Maths.

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. An absence of 10 school days is the equivalent to 52 hours of learning time lost. Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events
- are more likely to become involved in crime

If you feel your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues you are advised to approach your doctor urgently and to inform the school. If your concerns relate to Covid-19 we can provide support and advice. If there are other difficulties affecting your ability to ensure your child attends school regularly that you would like support with, we may be able to help and offer an Early Help Assessment so please contact us urgently to arrange a meeting.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child's attendance please contact the school. If you call and there is no one available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely,

«Name»

Head teacher

Appendix 3

Queensbridge School - Attendance – Fast Track Procedure

The following procedures must be followed in to instigate Fast Track and possible legal action.

Key Individuals

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) – Mr D Spicer DSL – Mr I Horgan

PM – Stage 1 Attendance Coding/Comments/Data – Mrs A Blake

Before any stages can be completed the statutory LEA attendance letter must be sent out and made available on the school website. This must not be altered in anyway.

Stage 1 – Early Help (PM/DSL and ABL to complete this stage)

‘Pupils with concerning attendance that is coded as unauthorised’

Action	Completed
1 st day phone calls made and outcome logged (comments)	
Standard letter sent – attendance concern - ABL	
My concern logged to initiate Early Help assessment / Right Help Right Time	
Pupil meeting utilising three house proforma	
Informal parent meeting / Home visit undertaken	
Timed support/intervention provided (6 weeks)	

All outcomes and minutes must be logged. Evidence of what early help was provided must be kept and logs of reasons provided for absence must be placed in comment bank.

Stage 2 – SARM Meeting (this must be completed by DLP with support from PM)

If no improvement has been seen as a result of stage 1

Action	Completed
A set legal letter, including an attendance print out, must be sent to each parent individually providing 7 day’s notice of a meeting. (a photocopy must be taken on each letter)	
SARM proforma must be fully completed and signed by all parties. Any section in which a parent refuses to answer or signed must be marked as refusal.	

At this point the pupil is required to have had 10 unauthorised sessions.

Stage 3 – Formal Warning Notice (to be completed by DLP only)

This notice will be given if any further unauthorised absence takes place post SARM,

Action	Completed
Formal Warning Notice letter is issued. This must be the standard LEA letter and include an attendance report. (photocopy must be taken)	

Stage 4 – ELIT/Court Referral

If post Formal Warning Notice a further 10 unauthorised sessions are experienced the referral is made by the DLP for further proceedings.

Date referral made:

Additional Fixed Penalty notice can be given by DLP for 10 consecutive G codes or 5 consecutive and 5 unauthorised over a 12 month period.

Appendix 4

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
 «AddressLine1»
 «AddressLine2»
 «City»
 «PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName»

Your child, «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» has been identified as having poor punctuality at «School_name» School.

As you may be aware, the law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

Poor punctuality can lead to your child...

- *Feeling embarrassed in front of their friends*
- *Missing the beginning of vital lessons*
- *Missing important instructions for the rest of the school day*
- *Learning bad habits which could affect their employability in the future*

If your child is having any difficulties that you wish to discuss, contact me immediately. Your child's punctuality must now improve or the school may have no option but to take further action against you.

Yours sincerely,

<<Name>>
 Head of Year

Mr D Spicer
 Assistant Headteacher

Appendix 5

Islam	Eid al-Adha	one day
	Eid al-Fitr	one day
	Day of Ashura	one day
Christianity Eastern orthodox churches	Julian Calendar Christmas day	One day
Judaism	Yom Kippur	one day
	Jewish New Year	one day
Sikh Faith	Birthday of Guru Nanak OR Vaisakhi	one day
Rastafari	Birthday of Emperor Haile Selassie	one day

