



# Attendance Policy

---

## RATIONALE

BGGs recognises that full attendance by pupils at school is essential for making progress in academic learning. Family expectations around outcomes in SATs or GCSE / A Level examinations are less likely to be achieved if a pupil is not in school for the required amount of time. Furthermore, the school recognises the importance of regular interactions with others of different ages and backgrounds for effective social and emotional development.

The law states that:

*'Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education.'* (Section 7 of the Education act 1996).

Parents / Carers can only allow children to miss school if either:

- They're too ill to go in;
- Permission is obtained from school in advance.

Some pupils suffer from significant medical conditions which impact on their daily lives, including their ability to achieve full attendance. These pupils and their families will receive support and guidance from the additional needs team in order to maximise attendance.

## AIMS

- Overall attendance of 96% or better.
- A reduction of the proportion of children whose attendance falls between 96% and 90%.
- A reduction in the proportion of children whose attendance is classified as 'persistent absence' (lower than 90%) through robust and consistently applied interventions.

### **In striving to meet these aims Bradford Girls' Grammar School:**

- Ensures that pupils' educational and any additional needs are taken into account and appropriate provision put in place.
- Promotes/ celebrates good and improved attendance.
- Communicates clear messages in school and the wider community about the importance of good attendance and how to achieve it, **APPENDIX 4**.
- Works in partnership with parents, the local authority, health professionals, Police and community groups to ensure that poor attendance is tackled quickly and families are supported.
- Makes first-day contact with parents to obtain reasons for all pupil absence and where these cannot be provided/contact cannot be made follows Safeguarding procedures.
- Applies this policy consistently.

***Signing the Home School Agreement demonstrates Parents' support for this policy.***

## Help and Support

BGGs recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. The school will make the decision of whether to follow the attendance procedure on a case by case basis.

Support measures include referrals and signposting to advice from health professionals or Team around the Family meetings. A school representative may lead these, or a professional from another external agency, e.g. the School Nurse or an Early Help worker.

## Leave of Absence during term time

The Principal only authorises absence during term time for the most exceptional of circumstances; this must be supported by evidence in writing.

Roles and Responsibilities are outlined on the pages that follow.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

<b>Attendance Officer:</b>	<b>Year Leader (BGGs) / Key Stage Leader (Lady Royd):</b>
Ensures that families know they must make all absence requests in writing using the form found in <b>APPENDIX 1</b> .	Raises awareness of the impact that absence has on achievement and social development.
Coordinate and arrange the prompt delivery of attendance letters and act as first point of contact for any queries	Provides opportunities for families who request leave of absence to discuss the potential reasons.
Ensures that parents are aware that they do not have a right to take their children out of school for leave of absence.	Liaise regularly with the Attendance Officer, Form Tutor (LR Class Teacher) and Senior Leader in charge of Attendance, discuss any growing concerns and formulate a plan to support the student to improve their attendance.
Explains to parents that if they take extended leave in term without the permission of the school OR take additional days in excess of the agreed number of days, the school will request that Children's Services issue a <b>Penalty Notice</b> under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.	Liaise with the SENDCo regarding any students with particular needs to ensure these are being met
Asks parents for destination and return dates as appropriate.	Liaise with the senior leader for safeguarding to initiate a referral to any external services such as school nurse, counselling, children's services to support families with maintaining good school attendance
Meet fortnightly with the Senior Leader responsible for attendance to discuss the current attendance data, trends in the data and key students with attendance issues	Attend Panel meetings alongside the attendance officer or senior leader in charge of attendance where appropriate
Have oversight of the whole school register and code student's absence appropriately and ensure any missing/incorrect codes are promptly adjusted.	Reward good attendance
Invites parents for a panel meeting, to discuss their child's attendance if it falls below what is expected.	Ensure the list of students with low attendance or persistently absent is scrutinised regularly and appropriate support plans put in place
<b>The Governing Body:</b>	<b>Senior Leadership Team:</b>
Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parents	Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance
Regularly review the school's attendance strategy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy	Ensure that staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and are aware of their role to help promote good attendance and address attendance issues
Link school attendance targets, where appropriate, to the Performance Management of the Leadership Team and other key staff within the school	Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through annual reporting at Governing Body Meetings	Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families
Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead on attendance.	Document interventions used to the standard required should legal proceedings be instigated
<b>Parents/Carers</b>	
Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance	Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
Contact the school if their child is absent on the first day of absence to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return by 8.30am and continue to	Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time unless this is absolutely unavoidable, and there are exceptional circumstances. In these cases, parents are

inform the school on any other subsequent day of absence after the first day	asked to send a leave of absence request to the school in good time using the form ( <b>APPENDIX 1</b> )
Provide the Attendance Officer with destination and return dates when requested.	Attend panel meetings to work with school, to improve your child's attendance.
<b>The Penalty Notice is for £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.</b>	

The school shares and seeks information regarding absence requests and decisions made with other schools that younger/other family members attend.

Locally agreed procedures and national guidance relating to those young people deemed to be 'Children Missing Education' are followed consistently. This involves removing the child from the roll of the school after 20 days of consecutive absence and reporting to the Local Authority.

### Rewards

BGGS pledge to recognise good attendance by rewarding students who maintain a high attendance and including those who make a significant improvement in their attendance. This can be through, but is not limited to; celebration assemblies, letters or achievement points.

### Religious Observance

The school recognises the importance of religious observance. Parents complete the request for legal absence form, **APPENDIX 1**, as soon as they know the date of their religious festival. In these circumstances' consideration will be given to a written request from the parent for an authorised absence.

### Illness and Medical Appointments

Levels of absence due to illness are systematically monitored and analysed. The Attendance Officer ensures that cases where attendance is becoming a problem are discussed with parents in order to review school support measures.

<b>The School:</b>	<b>Parents:</b>
Encourages parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school time.	Make medical and dental appointments out of school time, whenever possible.
Seeks proof of appointments that cannot be made out of school hours.	Provide the Attendance Officer with appointment cards, or electronic messages when requested.
Asks parents to provide medical evidence where there are attendance concerns.	Provide the Attendance Officer with a medical certificate / Consultant's letter when requested or give permission in writing for the School Nurse to access medical records.

The school follows Public Health England guidance regarding number of days' absence for specific conditions.

### Lateness and Punctuality

<b>The School:</b>	<b>Parents:</b>
Closes registers 30 minutes after the start of the session, in line with DfE guidance.	Inform school when their child is likely to arrive at school after 9am and provide the Attendance Officer with the reason for lateness.
Monitors lateness and set targets with parents of children who are persistently late to reduce this.	
Contacts all families who do not inform school that their child will be late after the register closes and seek reasons.	
Recognises improved punctuality and the positive contribution that it is making to a child/ children.	

In usual circumstances (where special arrangements have not been put in place to stagger arrival during the Covid-19 restrictions) all students must be on site by 8.25am. Registration begins at 8.30am, and students arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at 9.00am and students arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late. This will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session and statutory action may be taken where appropriate. On arrival after the close of register, students must report to student reception and sign in so as to ensure we are aware they are in school and reasons for lateness recorded.

**DETENTIONS:**

**Pupils who are late to school after 8.30am in the Senior Phase, will receive a lunch time detention - students will be notified as they sign into school late and this will be recorded on Edulink for parents to view. If pupils miss their lunchtime detention, this will be escalated to an afterschool detention and parents will receive a message to inform them.**

**Unauthorised Absences**

The school has the authority to mark an absence as unauthorised, and informs parents when this action has been taken.

<b>The School:</b>	<b>Parents:</b>
Requests medical confirmation or to access medical records via the school nurse if a child has had multiple periods of illness.	Provide the Attendance Officer with a medical certificate / Consultant’s letter when requested or give permission in writing for the School Nurse to access medical records
Works with the parents of the pupils who regularly have unauthorised absence to create a plan to improve attendance, in line with school procedures. This may include the involvement of an Independent Attendance Consultant and/or “Early Help.”	Meet with the Attendance Officer and/or other professionals in order to work together to improve their child’s attendance at school.
<b>Cases where pupils have acquired more than 10 sessions unauthorised absence in a six-week period are referred to the Local Authority. This may result in a Penalty Notice, as described above. Any further unauthorised absence may result in a prosecution.</b>	

**LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES/ GUIDANCE**

- Attendance procedures for the Senior and Primary phases.
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Support for pupils with medical conditions Policy.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Missing Children Procedures.
- Guidance on School Attendance Department for Education Sept 2018.
- Children Missing Education Guidance for Schools Bradford Council Sept 2017.
- Keeping Children safe in Education Part1 and Annex A DfE Sept 2018.

**Last reviewed: May 2021.**

**Ratified by Governors: TBC**



## APPLICATION FORM For Leave of Absence From School

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The school expects all parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Absences due to holidays, taken during term time can seriously impact on a pupil's academic attainment. BGGGS policy is to only grant leave of absence in the most exceptional circumstances. If permission is given for Leave of Absence the Principal will determine the number of days of absence.

**Taking 'Leave of Absence' without the school's permission could result in you being issued with a Penalty Notice fine of £60. Penalty Notices are issued, per parent per child.**

**Where permission has been given for 'Leave of Absence', if you fail to return your child within 10 schools days of the agreed return date, your child may be removed from the school roll.**

If you wish to apply for your child to be absent from school, please complete the relevant sections of this form and return it to school at least three weeks before the intended departure. Thank you.

### PARENTS SECTION

Surname of child		First name	
Date of birth		Class	
Surname of parent/guardian		First name of parent/guardian	
Address of child			
Postcode		Telephone number	
Reason for absence			
Length of absence applied for (no. of school days)		Destination	
Date of departure		Date due back in school	
Emergency telephone contact in the Bradford district	Emergency telephone contact abroad		
Parent's/guardian's signature			Date

### SCHOOLS SECTION

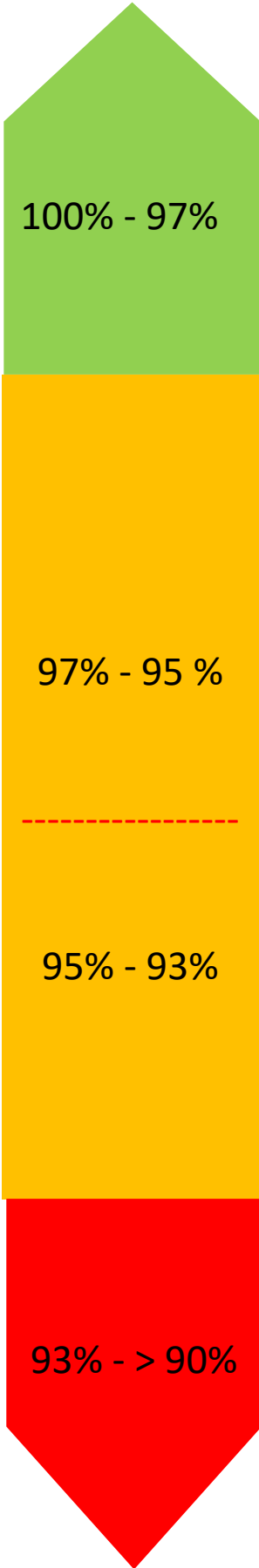
Leave of Absence	Approved for		School days
	Not approved for		School days
Number of previous applications applied for / granted			
Reason for refusing Leave of Absence			
Principal's signature			Date

### Please Retain for School Records

**In the event of the child not returning within 10 schools days of the agreed return date and no satisfactory explanation has been provided, the child can be removed from the school register. A Children Missing Education referral will be made to the Education Social Work Service along with a copy of this form. For further information, please see Bradford Council Leave of Absence, Holidays in Term Time and Extended Leave of Absence – Guidance for Schools or Children Missing Education 'If A Child Goes Missing'.**

APPENDIX 2

<b>Actions – Supporting Good Attendance</b>	
<p><b>Positive Praise for Good/Improved Attendance and Punctuality</b></p>	<p>School to give phone call home for good/improved attendance</p> <p>Attendance Officer to send Well Done Letter for Good/Improved Attendance</p> <p>Form Tutor/Class Teacher to award Achievement Points for Good/ Improved Attendance and Punctuality, and give positive praise in person</p>
<p><b>Stage 1 - Monitor</b></p>	<p>Identify pupils falling below 97% and create watch list for Attendance Officer and Year Leader/Class Teacher.</p> <p>Form tutors/Class Teachers to give encouragement to those falling below. Assemblies and form tutor sessions will continue to encourage good attendance.</p> <p>Safeguarding Lead to monitor vulnerable students' attendance</p>
<p><b>Stage 2 – Informal Discussion</b></p>	<p>Attendance Officer discusses reasons for absence with the parent and suggests strategies for improvement. YL may also speak with parent/carer to see what support can be put in place to support attendance.</p>
<p><b>Stage 3 – Letter</b></p>	<p>Parents will be informed of attendance concern by letter. A response is requested from home. A Home visit by the attendance officer and/or the Safeguarding Lead.</p> <p>If no response and/or attendance drops below 93% a second letter will be sent and invite to an initial meeting with attendance officer.</p> <p>Attendance Contract is put in place with student and parents.</p>
<p><b>Stage 4 - Invite for Parent Meeting</b></p>	<p>Parents will be informed by letter. A response is requested from home.</p> <p>Parents are invited to meet to discuss the attendance issues and to see if school can support an improvement in attendance. Meeting recorded on pupil's file.</p>
<p><b>Stage 5 – Safeguarding Lead Involvement</b></p>	<p>The Senior Leader in charge of attendance makes contact by official letter or telephone and an appointment is made to meet the pupil with the parent, within the school setting. A plan is to be put in place to support attendance.</p> <p>The Senior Leader in charge of attendance may also visit the pupil at home if no response is received.</p>
<p><b>Stage 6 - Legal Sanctions</b></p>	<p>School exercises the LEA's obligation to enforce legal sanctions.</p>



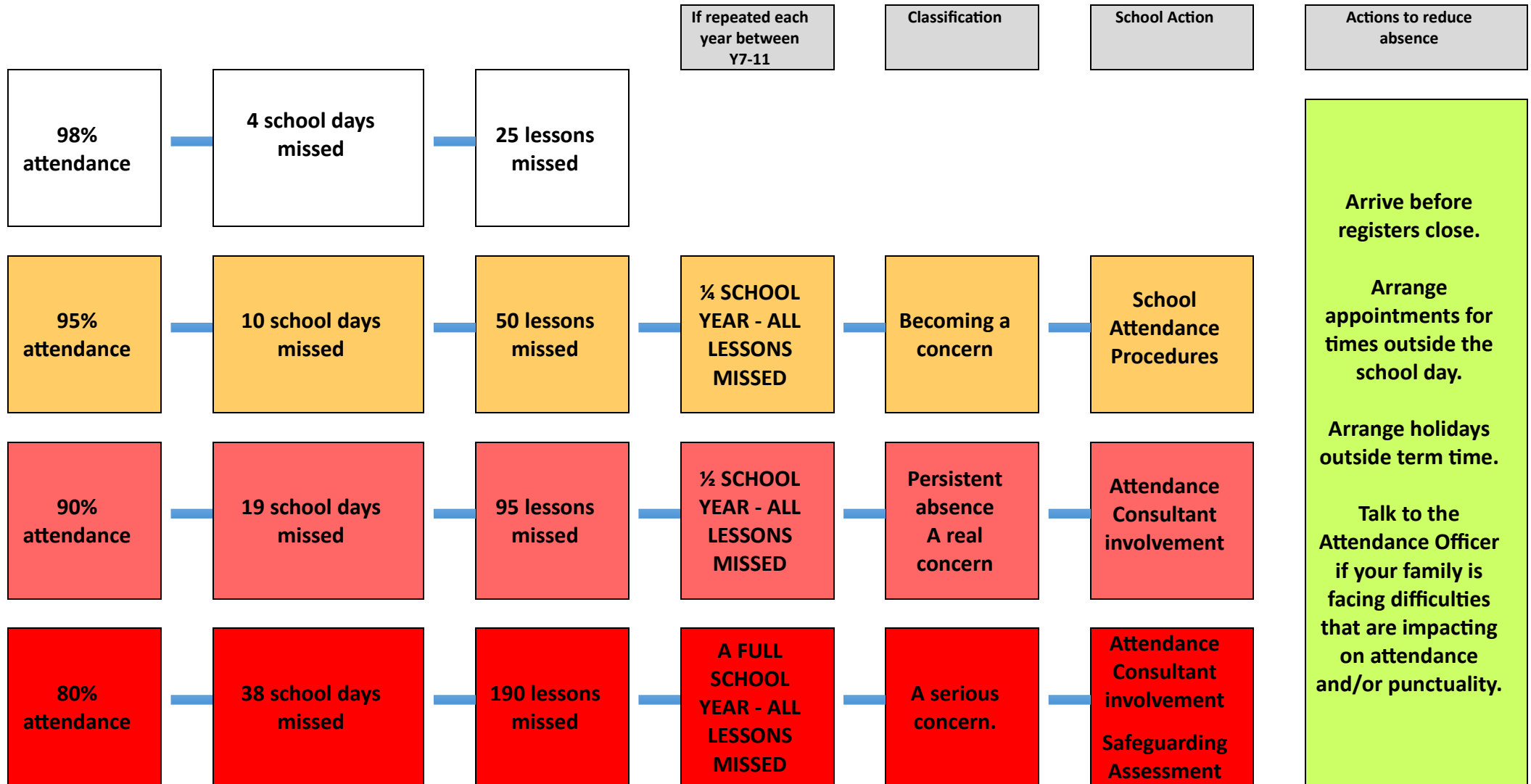
### Appendix 3

#### DfE codes DFE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS DESCRIPTION MEANING

/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
A	Present (Off Timetable/In-School Intervention)	
B	Educated off site (not dual)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration	Not counted in possible attendances
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dentist)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical /dental	Approved Education Activity
N	No reason provided	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after register closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Code X (not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus)	
Y	Enforced closure	Approved Education Activity
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Approved Education Activity # School closed Approved Education Activity

**APPENDIX 4 - Poster for classrooms and the reverse of the request for leave of absence form.**

**THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ATTENDANCE AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT.**



**Please note:** The school is committed to working with children with significant medical conditions, their families and doctors in order to provide appropriate levels of support. Advice from Medical Practitioners will be followed in relation to attendance in these case.



