

Brixham College

Attendance Policy

December 2021

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Prepared by	Kara Bridgeman
Ratified by	The Trustees
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Introduction

Brixham College is committed to providing an outstanding educational experience for all students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, outstanding attendance is crucial. Poor attendance undermines progress and attainment and can lead to social disadvantage. As a College we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible through our absence review process.

It is the goal of our College to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful College career and establishes a good pattern for later life. Our College will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our students. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-College links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

Objectives

- To encourage 100% attendance and punctuality for all students
- To ensure that parents and carers are aware of attendance and punctuality concerns promptly
- To work with tutors, Heads of Year, SLT, the Attendance Officer (AO), and other appropriate agencies to support 100% attendance & punctuality
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies for improvement
- To acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance through the Class Charts
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the College
- To improve attainment and achievement of students through improved levels of attendance.

Statutory Duty of College and Parents

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective, full-time education, either by regular attendance at College or otherwise. Colleges are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. At Brixham College an electronic registration system is in place. Student attendance is recorded for every lesson.

Principles

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend College. This extends to ensuring that students arrive at College on time, properly attired, with correct equipment and in a condition to learn. The College will make every effort to promote good attendance, giving advice and support where needed.

What happens if your child does not attend College regularly (and their absence is not authorised?)

It is a criminal offence for a child not to attend College regularly and, as the parent, this is your responsibility. A Penalty Notice may therefore be issued, requiring you to pay a fine of up to £60 per parent/carer, per child if their attendance is below an acceptable level. In certain circumstances you may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where you could face up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2,500. You will be given every opportunity to improve your child's attendance and you will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

Statutory Attendance Responsibilities

There is a legal responsibility to have a morning and an afternoon registration.

The College will:

- Record and monitor attendance and absence. Legally we are required to do this twice a day.
- Use electronic registration system to record and monitor attendance of all lessons during the College day to ensure the safety and welfare of all students.
- Record and monitor the punctuality of all students and, where necessary, inform parents of persistent lateness and apply appropriate consequences (Red Cards) There may be reasonable and personalised adjustments made from time to time.
- Only authorise student absence in exceptional circumstances.
- Maintain a strong home-College relationship to inform and support parents with their child's attendance. The College uses an automated system to follow up daily absences.
- Help to investigate, identify and resolve any issues with children and their families, which prevent full attendance at Brixham College
- Do everything possible to help return students to full attendance.
- Promote the importance of attendance through weekly assemblies, tutorial time and subject lessons.
- Celebrate and reward students who achieve 100% attendance and punctuality.
- Report attendance categories 3x a year through the academic reporting process

Parents will:

- Ensure their children arrive on time to College with the correct equipment and full uniform.
- Be aware that any person who has the care of a child or who has parental responsibility is responsible for ensuring good attendance.
- Ensure that they are fully aware of College attendance procedures.
- Ensure contact details are kept up to date.

Up to three Days' Absence

- It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the College of the reason for a student's absence by 9:00am on the day of absence and each subsequent day either by email or through our dedicated absence line .
- The College will operate the Truancy Call system or equivalent and the parents/carers of every absent student will be contacted.

More than three Consecutive Days' Absence

- Parent/carer must contact the College on the first day of absence giving expected date of return.
- Where there has been no parental/carer notification after three consecutive days, the College should contact parents/carer as a safeguarding concern
- In the case of long term illness the College should be notified so that teachers can set work. If it is known that the student will be absent for more than two weeks, the Attendance Office should be notified - this will be forwarded to the Head of Year

Methods of Reporting Absences

In any case of absence, parents/carers should contact the College by one of the following methods:

1. By phone to the College – There is a dedicated absence line option through 01803 881228
2. Email from an agreed account (i.e. the registered home email address)
3. Personal contact through the attendance office, via reception where a note will be passed to the Tutor.

Authorised Absence

Be aware that absence from College will only be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness.
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after College if at all possible).
- Days of religious observance.
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement.
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces.
- External examinations.
- When Traveller children go on the road with their parents.

Holidays in term time

Brixham College does not support holidays taken during term time.

Holidays in term time are not a universal entitlement. They are only granted at the discretion of the Principal and only in exceptional circumstances.

In most cases this decision is delegated to the Vice Principal - Miss K Bridgeman

Parents who take their child out of College for a holiday without authorisation could receive a Penalty Notice.

Exceptional circumstances would include:

- When a parent in the armed forces returns from deployment.
- When the holiday is related to bereavement or serious/terminal illness of a family member.
- Circumstances where the Covid pandemic has meant that plans have changed through no fault of the parents

Truancy

- It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends all lessons as required. The College will inform parents/carers if their child has been identified as truanting and this will be treated as a serious breach of the college's behaviour policy
- Students who truant will be issued with a day's isolation and may be expected to sign in every lesson with the attendance Officer/ Pride in Progress centre .
- Persistent cases may be referred to the Vice Principal who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice .

Punctuality

- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attend full time education and arrives at College on time.
- The College monitors punctuality and parents will be contacted if their child is not arriving on time through the Class Charts system. Persistent cases of poor

punctuality may be referred to the Principal who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice .

Roles and responsibilities

Tutors and Heads of Year will be accountable for attendance matters within their respective Years and complete Absence Reviews at entry level (10 sessions absence).

The responsibilities of the Tutor will include:

- Consistently following the College's attendance procedures.
- Accurately recording and monitoring attendance and absenteeism of students in their Tutor Group and alerting the Head of Year to any concerns.
- Ensuring that all unexplained absences in their Tutor Group are cleared by the end of each half term.
- Encouraging 100% attendance and punctuality in their Tutor groups. Use the merit system appropriately
- Rewarding students with a successful record of attendance through the College's rewards system.

The responsibilities of the Head of Year will include:

- Consistently following the College's attendance procedures.
- Ensuring Tutors are clear on their responsibilities and that they consistently follow College attendance procedures.
- Encouraging 100% attendance and punctuality in their Years by reporting on attendance and status of absence reviews at each coaching session
- Ensuring that parents and carers are aware of attendance and punctuality concerns promptly.
- Working with the Vice Principal, and other appropriate agencies to support 100% attendance and punctuality.
- Recording and monitoring attendance and absenteeism for all students (including analysis of sub-groups) within their Years and applying appropriate strategies.
- Acknowledging and rewarding a successful record of attendance through the College's rewards system.
- Improving attainment and achievement of students through improved levels of attendance.
- Holding Tutors accountable for attendance data and procedures.

The responsibilities of The Vice Principal I/c Attendance will include:

- Promoting 100% attendance and punctuality across the College.
- Monitoring attendance data

- Monitoring that Heads of Year are following the College's attendance procedures, which include ensuring all unexplained absences are cleared up by the end of half term within their year /tutors.
- Holding Heads of Year accountable for attendance data and procedures.
- Monitoring whole College attendance data and key indicators.
- Monitoring adherence to the College's attendance procedures.

The responsibilities of subject Teachers will include:

- Promoting 100% attendance and punctuality across the College.
- Consistently following the College attendance procedures.
- Ensuring that lesson registers are taken consistently and are accurate for each lesson.
- Monitoring the attendance of students in their class.
- Rewarding students for high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Alerting the relevant Tutor to attendance concerns.

The responsibilities of Faculty Leaders will include:

- Promoting 100% attendance and punctuality across the College.
- Rewarding students for high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Consistently following the College attendance procedures.
- Monitoring that lesson registers are taken consistently and are accurate for each lesson across the department.
- Working with Heads of Year to raise attainment and achievement of students through improved levels of attendance.
- Holding subject Teachers accountable for lesson attendance data and adhere to College attendance procedures.
- These roles and responsibilities are supported by the Attendance Officer and AO and Vice Principal

The responsibilities of the Attendance Officer will include:

- Input attendance data into SIMS where appropriate.
- Initiate and manage the College's Truancy Call system or equivalent.
- Produce daily fire registers for AM (morning) and PM (afternoon) registration.
- Produce attendance data (including sub-groups) for Tutors and Heads of House .
- Alert Tutors and Heads of House to attendance concerns at key trigger points - 10 20 and 40 sessions
- Alert the Vice Principal to consecutive absences of 3 days or more
- Check and prepare letters to parents regarding unauthorised absences

When Attendance causes concern

- Tutors / Heads of Year will set targets to encourage good attendance and to address any concerns in the first Absence Review
- Contact will be made with parents to advise them of poor attendance - parents will be invited to participate in absence reviews at key trigger points
- Students may be put on an Individual Attendance Support Plan for lateness or poor attendance.
- Parents will be asked to provide medical evidence if there are a high number of absences due to illness.
- A referral will be made at 20 sessions or more .
- Penalty Notices may be issued.

Action to improve attendance

Absence Review 1 (AR1) – 10 sessions missed

- Tutor/Head of Year review the absences and discusses attendance with student and parents. Notes are recorded on the Absence Review spreadsheet in SIMS
- Tutor/Head of Year identifies issues affecting student and supports appropriately.
- Attendance will become a student target to improve.
- Unauthorised absence letters will be sent out if appropriate

Absence Review 2 (AR2) - between 15-20 sessions missed.

- Tutor support for student continues.
- Head of Year to discuss attendance with student and parents - AR2 completed
- Threshold Letter 2 (including reference to legal obligations) sent to parents/carers with Attendance certificate included.
- A variety of pastoral support strategies will be used to improve attendance.

Persistent Absenteeism 25+ sessions missed

- Tutor support for student continues.
- Threshold letter issued by Vice Principal – Attendance certificate included.
- Head of Year and Vice Principal meet with parents/carers to discuss strategies to improve attendance – minutes of the meeting to be recorded.
- Penalty Notice discussed.
- Deadline set for improvement.
- Possible implementation of a TAF
- Pastoral Support Programme continues and involvement of the Team Around the Child (TAC) Team

- If there is no improvement the Vice Principal will recommend that the Principal issue a Penalty Notice.

Monitoring

- Weekly Year briefings are scheduled for Thursday mornings. Year meetings to include discussion on Year attendance data and identification of students causing concern. Strategies for improvement shared.
- Two weekly Attendance meetings between Head of Year and the Vice Principal held to monitor Year attendance and identify concerns and implement support strategies.
- Year attendance will be a standing item on all Year meetings.
- Reports will be produced comparing the attendance levels of groups of students.
- The Vice Principal will provide attendance information to the Brixham College Safeguarding group and the Trustee portfolio holder

Comparison will be by:

- Year group
- Gender
- SEN
- Ethnicity
- Disadvantaged

- Tutors and Heads of Year will monitor attendance levels continuously.
- Tutors will take the initial steps to reduce levels of absence. The Head of Year will monitor this.
- Follow-up work will then be undertaken by the Head of Year where appropriate.
- Heads of Year will monitor the attendance of all sub-groups within their Year Group.
- The Vice Principal will monitor Year group attendance levels (Including subgroups) with Head of Year during meetings
- A weekly and monthly audit on overall percentage attendance will take place for the whole College by the Vice Principal.