



THE BRUNTS ACADEMY

Attendance Policy

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1. The value of high attendance

The Brunts Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent academy attendance for all. This is based upon the belief that only by attending academy regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Academic and personal development relies on good attendance.

Everyone – including students, parents and carers, all academy staff, Local Authority, external agencies – **has a responsibility for ensuring good academy attendance and have important roles to play.**

We are committed to working in partnership with families and other agencies to achieve the best outcomes for children via the early help pathways available. Parents and carers play a fundamentally important role in securing high attendance. We believe Brunts Academy is a successful, welcoming academy which you and your child/children plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of our academy community to achieve excellence. For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and your child should be at academy, on time, every day on which the academy is open.

All staff (teaching and support) at our academy have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent academy attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our students are eager to learn, feel valued members of the academy community and look forward to coming to the academy every day.

Regular attendance is so important as it gives your child the best opportunity to learn. Any absences will affect the pattern of your child's education and consistent absences may seriously affect learning. Any child's absence disrupts teaching routines, not only for your child but for others in the same class. The academy liaises closely with our Local Authority and other agencies using an Early Help pathway (Early Help Referral) which assists in the assessment of need for appropriate support to be given. This initial pathway enables further referrals to external agencies to be made and further support acquired to support families to remove any barriers that are preventing regular attendance. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at academy is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from academy without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

External Validation

Being around teachers and friends in an academy environment is the best way for students to learn and reach their potential. Time in the academy also keeps children safe and provides access to extra-curricular opportunities and pastoral care.

That is why academy attendance is so important and why the Government is committed to tackling the issues that might cause some children to miss academy unnecessarily. **(DfE May 2023)**

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to improving attendance. Knowing and understanding students, their families, their influences, and their specific challenges can help diagnose some of the underlying causes of absence and more clearly define the problem. It can also help to understand individual barriers to attendance and learning and help choose effective targeted approaches. **(EEF 2024)**



Impact of absence on education

This table shows the impact of days missed and annual attendance percentages

	Days missed at 98%	Days missed at 95%	Days missed at 92%	Days missed at 89%
Half term 1	0.5 days	1.5 days	2.5 days	3 days
Half term 2	1.5 days	3.5 days	5.5 days	7.5 days
Half term 3	2 days	4.5 days	7.5 days	10 days
Half term 4	2.5 days	6 days	10 days	13.5 days
Half term 5	3 days	7.5 days	12 days	16.5 days
Half term 6	4 days	9.5 days	15 days	21 days

2. Academy daily structure

Time	Activity
0820	Arrival
0825	Tutor period
0845	P1 Lessons
0945	P2 Lessons
10:45-11:10	Break
11:10- 12:10	P3 Lessons
12:10- 1:10	P4 Lessons
1:10-1:45	Lunch
1:45-2:45	P5 Lessons
2:45-3:45	Enrichment

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust recognises its responsibility for overseeing attendance issues within the Academy and for setting and reviewing appropriate strategic targets.

The Principal and senior staff understand their role and recognise that many conditions encourage good attendance; they will therefore seek to ensure that the conditions and climate are appropriate. Due consideration will be given to the quality of the Academy, its ethos and classroom experience; appropriate curriculum opportunities; effective pastoral care; quality relationships; and good communication systems with parents and external agencies.

Parents/ carers have a duty to ensure that their children receive full time education. The Education Act 2002 places the responsibility for enforcing academy attendance on the Local Authority. This responsibility is delegated to the Academy.

Legal action will be instigated against parents/carers in relevant circumstances using the wide range of available options including:



- Family Services referrals
- Penalty Notices
- Attendance parent meetings
- Attendance panel meetings
- Court Action under Section 444(1) and (1)(a) of the Education Act 2002

Court action can be initiated swiftly should the Local Authority deem it necessary.

The responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure the following:

- Your child attends the Academy regularly and on time;
- To contact the Academy immediately on 01623 623149 option1/Bruntsattendance@bruntsacademy.org if their child is going to be absent; on each day of absence.
- Absences of 5 days or more will require medical evidence. All evidence must be dated accordingly and have clear details including the student's name. Failure to produce evidence following 5 or more days absence will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.
- To notify the Academy of any known absence in advance i.e. Medical appointments with evidence.
- Refrain from taking their child out of the Academy in term-time. The Academy does not authorise absence unless for medical purposes or exceptional circumstances. The Academy will determine if an absence can be authorised and reserves the right to decline any request for absence that is deemed to be detrimental to a student's attendance and affect their education e.g. holidays. It is also encouraged that if a student is going to be absent from the Academy, they collect work from the relevant teachers, complete this and hands the work to the teacher/s for marking upon their return, to help them avoid falling behind in lessons.
- Please ensure their child arrives at the Academy by 8.15am. Students who are late due to a late drop off, will be sanctioned in line with the Academy's policy.
- Parents whose children truant from the Academy, or who take holidays within term time or whose child/ren is found to be in a public place during the first five days of exclusion may be issued with a Penalty Notice.
- Provide the academy with more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child.



Summary of the roles and responsibilities

Parents/Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support our culture of high attendance and punctuality • Notify the academy of absence in a timely fashion • Celebrate high attendance with your child/children • Work in partnership with the academy where absence becomes a concern • Support the academy and other agencies with actions to improve attendance
Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Regularly celebrate high attendance – Support students if attendance declines – Liaise with parents as required – Progress ongoing issues to Achievement Leaders and Heads of Year – Priority students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100-96%
Achievement Leaders and Heads of Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Support tutors to celebrate high attendance – Track and monitor attendance to support timely implementation of the attendance policy – Work closely with tutors and students should attendance decline – Work closely with the attendance officer, academy leaders and parents to implement the attendance pathway – Priority students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95.9-90%
Attendance Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communicate daily for student absence – Regularly celebrate good attendance – Track and monitor attendance to support timely implementation of the attendance policy – Work with academy leaders, parents and external agencies in cases where there is persistence absence – Priority students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students at risk/vulnerable • Looked after children • Serious absentees 90%>
Deputy Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work with academy leaders to ensure attendance is tracked and monitored effectively and to ensure timely implementation of our attendance policy – Analyse stakeholder voice to support policy development
Principal/Executive Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work with academy leaders and all stakeholders to develop a culture of high attendance

4. Legal considerations

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that ‘the parent/carer of every child of compulsory academy age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable: (a) to age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs, they may have either by regular attendance at academy or otherwise’. It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a academy or by education otherwise than at a academy.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at academy, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that academy regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the academy is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the academy.



The academy rules are determined by the academy and are the days and hours that they are open for students to attend. Under this judgment all children registered at a academy should attend 100% of the time unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent this. Section 175 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18. Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend academy regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this academy, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -

- Attendance
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour Management
- Access to the Curriculum
- Health and Safety
- Wellbeing
- The Law relating to attendance and the right to a full-time education

5. Celebrating high and improving attendance

To help us all achieve high attendance we will:

- Adopt a whole academy approach to attendance: "Attendance is everyone"
- Develop a culture of high attendance through our Tutor and personal development input, every week
- Provide details on attendance in our communications to stakeholders
- Report to you regularly on how your child/children are performing in the academy, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment and rate of progress
- Update you at parent/carers evenings'
- Celebrate and reward good and improving attendance through weekly, half term and term events, recognise good or better attendance through rewards systems and through Class-Charts. Additionally, through our assemblies and displays throughout the academy.

6. Punctuality

All students are expected to attend the Academy when it is in session. Students are expected to be on site by 8.20am at 8.21 a student will then be marked as late. Registration begins from 8.20am onwards until 0845.

Students arriving late will be given a late mark.

The Academy operates a 'late gate' system during the course of the year to improve punctuality. The Academy reserves the right to apply an appropriate sanction such as monitoring report, detentions, including no notice end of day detentions, and referrals, but each case is judged upon its circumstances. In any case, parents/carers will be informed.

Students are expected to stay on the premises all day, including lunchtime and only leave at the end of the Academy Day, unless other arrangements have been made with the Academy. Failure to comply with this will lead to parent/carers being notified that the student has left the premises without permission, as we cannot be responsible for their safety or welfare. This may also trigger a call to police where concerns exist for a child's safety



The Punctuality Process

Arrival to the academy daily, is via Bath Lane. This entrance has staff on duty for late gates until 8.45 am. All students arriving at the academy later than 8.30am need to sign in at student reception (where they will be given a late slip detention (unless parental communication is made to suggest a valid reason for lateness. They will also be issued with a pink slip, for their class teacher on arrival to class.

Morning (AM) registers close at 9.15 am and afternoon (PM) registers close at 12.30pm. Students arriving after these times will be coded U (Late, after registers close) on that register. U codes are classified as non-attendance and will impact a student's overall attendance figure.

Class teachers will record students who are late to other lessons. There is a graduated response to be adhered to for repeat problems with punctuality

- Tutor conversation and phone call home
- Punctuality report to tutor for 3 weeks
- Meeting with parents
- Consideration for penalty notice (where appropriate)
- Internal consequences such as detentions considered

Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or not appropriate (such as an unauthorised holiday in term time), the local authority can take forward legal intervention to formalise support and / or enforce attendance. This includes fines or a penalty notice. The arrangements for these procedures are found

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/127161/code-of-conduct-for-penalty-notices.pdf> The Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from academy, where the child is of compulsory academy age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £140 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Principal, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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 student is found in a public place during academy hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice

7. Safeguarding

During the checks in the morning those students that are on the Red List will be made a priority if that student is not in attendance, then a phone call will be made home if this hasn't already happened. If there is no answer, then a Home Visit will be completed. The red list children are those who are classed as our most vulnerable and additional checks are made to ensure they are safeguarded effectively, when absent.

If a child has been absent from academy for 3 days without any positive phone calls or evidence, then that student will require a home visit that day to make sure all is well and there is nothing untoward, or a safeguarding issue has arisen.

If a child has been absent for 5 days or more, even if parents have given notification of illness, the academy will conduct a home visit, for safeguarding purposes, to establish the child is safe and get 'eyes on' the child



Completing the Home Visits is a team of trained staff who understand what is required to make sure all our students are safe and well including following the procedure below.

Two staff to conduct **home visit** (visits normally commence around 10:45am daily)

Home Visit Protocol:

- ring parent/carer to advise visit (this is not always possible)
- check with DSL (designated safeguarding lead) regarding any issues that may present a risk to adults visiting the home.
- Carry a charged mobile phone
- Go to the door and show your ID when an adult answers to prove identity
- DO NOT enter the home if you perceive this to be a risk and never alone.
- try to get 'eyes on' the child and positive communication.
- discuss the child's return to normal attendance.
- try to check the condition of the home and circumstances in which the child is living (to record later)
- if adults at the property are aggressive or confrontational, try to de-escalate or leave as soon as it is safe to do so. Do not put yourself at risk
- if there is no answer at the door see if it is possible to check with a neighbour if child/family have been seen, or try another door, if there is one
- check for recent signs of occupancy (open windows etc)
- If there is no reply, leave a standard calling card (available from attendance team) by posting through letter box. The card has details of the visit and requests contact with the academy
- If positive contact made- thank parents/carers/adults for their time
- update DSL/DDSL if significant concerns and report to police/MASH accordingly
- Record visit and outcome on CPOMS (safeguarding database)

Children Missing in Education

If no notification has been received from parents/carers regarding their child's absence after 10 academy days, the Academy will report the child as 'missing from education' to the Local Authority for them to immediately investigate.

After 5 days of absence and continued non-response, the Academy will issue a potential holiday letter.

Absent from Education

A child who may not be missing from education (prolonged absence 10+ days), may have patterns of absence that cause concern. For example, one day of the week that is frequently punctuated by absence. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) gave clarification that being absent, as well as missing, from education can be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or child criminal exploitation. Worrying trends in absence are therefore also subject to safeguarding actions to protect children, including home visits and referrals into the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)



8. Daily routines

Each day, the academy attendance team:

- Process absence messages from email, voicemail and App communications
- Ensure completion of AM registers from Tutors
- Send relevant absence messages to parents and carers

9. Absences

Unplanned absence

Parents and carers are required to notify the academy of absences due to illness or other factors by 0830am, by calling the absence line: 01623 623149 (option 1), or by using the parent messaging App, WeDuc, or by emailing: bruntsattendance@bruntsacademy.org

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, or the student is under attendance monitoring.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the academy may ask the student's parent/carer 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 academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

The Principal will not authorise for any of the following reasons:

- Term-time holidays (including visiting family abroad)
- Study leave
- Trivial illnesses
- Looking after the house or waiting for tradespeople/deliveries etc
- Looking after siblings, including dropping them off at academy or nursery.
- Helping with housework or a family business.
- Being unhappy or not getting on with other students in academy.
- Being up late the night before, including family problems.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the student's parent/carer notifies the academy in advance of the appointment and supplies evidence to support. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments **out of academy hours where possible**. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of academy for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:



- Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student’s parents belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveler students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travelers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveler family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the academy, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.

10. Holidays in term time

Holidays in term time will not be authorised by the Academy. The law says that parents do not have an automatic right to take their child out of academy for holidays during term time. All requests must be submitted in writing to the attendance team before the requested absence. The Academy will not authorise term-time holidays unless in exceptional circumstances authorised by the Principal.

Leave of absence

A leave of absence is granted at the principal’s discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

We define ‘exceptional circumstances’ as but not limited to:

- Death or serious illness of a parent or sibling.
- Return of a parent from active service (forces).
- Approved public performances.

If your request for a term time holiday or other absence is refused and your child is still taken out of the academy, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a penalty notice will be actioned.

The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. Evidence may be required to support any request for leave of absence.

11. Recording attendance

We will keep an electronic attendance register using our MIS (Management Information System), SIMS, and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each lesson of each academy day including tutor time.



We will use the DfE codes to detail the attendance and absences.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

12. Reasons for Absence

See Appendix 1

13. How we monitor attendance

The Brunts Academy will:

- Share attendance data daily with the DfE, LA and Trust.
- Engage with termly Target Support Meetings with the LA Academy Attendance Support Team.
- Work with Social Care, Police and Health as Attendance Partners.
- Deliver Home Visits and Parent Contract meetings as necessary.
- Lead and participate with EHA and TAF with an Attendance Improvement focus.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require support with their attendance and implement effective strategies.
- Work with each identified student and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-academy barriers to attendance.
- Where out of academy barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.
- Agree a joint approach for all severely absent students with the local authority.
- Work with other academies in the local area, such as academies previously attended and the academies of any siblings.
- Where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as home visits, an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the student's EHCP is accessed.
- Inform the student's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.

Student-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's academy absence national statistics releases. The underlying academy-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The academy compares attendance data to the national average, and shares this with the governing body.

Monitoring attendance

The Brunts Academy will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the academy and at an individual student level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.



Student-level absence data will be collected each term by the trust and DfE and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's academy absence national statistics releases. The academy will compare attendance data to the trust and national average.

Analysing attendance

The Brunts Academy will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

Using data to improve attendance

The Brunts Academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to the class teachers and other academy leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of academy, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of academy.

The academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, at risk of or persistently or severely absence to discuss attendance and engagement at academy.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance such as Early Help.



14. Addressing Poor or Declining Attendance

At the Brunts Academy we work diligently to help students attend well. We will communicate regularly with parents/carers and always provide support to overcome barriers to good attendance.

The following outlines our graduated response to poor or declining attendance:

% Attendance	Impact on learning	Graduated Response
99%-100%	Children are accessing all learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily absence messages/phone calls communicated via attendance team - Weekly celebration texts messages - Inclusion in half termly attendance incentives/rewards - Half termly attendance recognition certificates
96%-98%	Some learning opportunities are being missed – Risk of underachievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance to be monitored by tutors - Tutors to notify students when attendance falls below 98% and discuss reasons for unauthorised absence. - Tutors to contact parents/carers to discuss any concerns/patterns of absence
93-95%	Multiple learning opportunities missed – <u>high risk of underachievement</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance to be monitored by achievement leaders and heads of year - Parent/carer letter 1 communicates high attendance concerns - Year team to develop an attendance plan with student and parent and set targets for students with unauthorised absence meeting thresholds
90-92%	Significant learning opportunities missed - <u>Significant risk of underachievement</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance to be monitored by year team and attendance team - Parent/carer letter 2 communicates further decline in attendance - Attendance Officer develops an attendance support plan with student and parent/carer - Parent/carer letter 2 communicates further decline in attendance - Referral to local authority enforcement team considered
Under 89%	<u>Severe risk of underachievement</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parental contract meetings to take place with members of the SLT. - Referral to local authority enforcement team considered



15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Trust or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Principal.

16. Reintegration Policy

When long-term absentees return to academy it is important that they are sympathetically treated by all staff.

Re-integration sometimes fails because it is unplanned; the student is sent back to their original timetable without the appropriate support. Staff should be reminded to be sensitive, confine any remarks about the absence to 1:1 situations and to bear in mind the context of the attendance issue.

For each student, the Head of Year/Achievement Leader should liaise with others to draw up a re-integration action plan, this may include a 'phased return'. The plan will acknowledge the reasons for the student's absence and may involve a reduced timetable in the first instance and temporary additional support in the Student Development Centre. Additionally, it may include external support, according to need.

All staff who teach the student need to be advised in advance of an anticipated return so that they can plan how to re-introduce the student to their lessons. A risk assessment may be completed with the student where necessary.

17. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
H	Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance



S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
J	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an interview
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance
X	Not required to be in academy - for non-compulsory academy age children
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial academy closure - NOT counted in possible attendances