



Attendance Policy

Bancroft's
Prep

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Policy Statement

For the welfare, health and safety and educational benefit of our children, Bancroft's Preparatory School requires regular attendance and the children's presence is checked twice daily at the start of morning lessons and in the afternoon. Registers are completed electronically via iSAMS. In effect they are completed in ink because the registers can be printed out. The electronic register is backed up at least once a month and is retained for the three years after the school year in question. The attendance register is a legal document subject to the *Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*.

Children's absences are followed up promptly on the day of absence and parents/carers are required to notify absences in accordance with the procedures set out below.

This policy applies to all children in the Prep School.

The policy and procedures are informed by the following guidance:

- Children Missing in Education (DfE, 2016)
- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE August 2024)

This document is available to all interested parties via the School's website and on request from the School Office. It should be read in conjunction with:

- Admissions Policy
- Missing Student Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- First Aid Policy

The School is fully committed to ensuring that the implementation of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

2. Key Personnel and Responsibilities

- 2.1 All members of teaching staff must be familiar with the following procedures and must know how to access and complete the attendance registers in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.
- 2.2 The Attendance Administrator (School Office) is responsible for the initial following up of unexplained absences.
- 2.3 Class Teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance and following up on unexplained absences and/or poor patterns of attendance.
- 2.4 In some cases (e.g. absence that gives rise to concern or repeated failure to provide a reason for explaining an absence), the Deputy Head, Pastoral may also contact parents/carers.
- 2.5 In extreme cases (e.g. more than 5 school days of unexplained absence in a term or where the School has reason to think the student may be at risk)

- the Deputy Head, Pastoral or the Head may take responsibility for following up absences and, where appropriate, informing the local authority.
- 2.6 Parents are, in law, responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education.
- 2.7 Parents should advise the school office of any unplanned absence by **8.25am**.

3 Completion of the registers

3.1 Key Information for Children, Parents and Carers:

- 3.1.1 Children should be in their form room at 8.25am for morning registration and at 12.55pm for afternoon registration.
- 3.1.2 All pupils will be marked as either present or absent.
- 3.1.3 Any student arriving after 8.25am must sign in at the Prep Office writing their name and class clearly along with an explanation for their lateness.
- 3.1.4 Children should then proceed to their form room where their tutor should record them as "late – before register closed".
- 3.1.5 Children arriving after 8.30am must sign in at the Prep Office writing their name and form group clearly along with an explanation for their lateness.
- 3.1.6 Any pupil who has permission to leave School for a medical or similar appointment, must always sign out at the Prep Office and sign back in at the Prep Office.

Note:

If a student feels unwell, or is involved in an accident, they must tell a teacher who will arrange for them to go to the Prep Office or the Medical Centre as appropriate. The School Office will arrange for the pupil to be collected if they are too unwell to stay in School.

3.2 Key Information for Staff:

- 3.1.1 Class teachers, or those teachers registering a class, should be in their classroom at 8.25am for morning registration and at 12.55pm for afternoon registration.
- 3.1.2 All teachers must complete a class register by 8.35am (AM registration) and 1.05pm (PM registration) and notify any absences and NIL returns to the Prep Office.
- 3.1.3 Unexplained absences are followed up and monitored according to the process set out below [Section 9].

3.3. **Process of Registration**

- 3.3.1 The attendance register includes the children's class and records if they are absent or present at any given registration session. The codes used in registers are listed below with their meanings.
- 3.3.2 The register will be open from 8.25am to 8.35am and 12.55pm to 1.05pm
- 3.3.3 Take the register using the symbols for present '/' \or absent 'N'. If a student arrives late the 'N' should be changed to 'L' and the number of minutes late entered.
- 3.3.4 If an absence has been authorised or is known about enter the appropriate code and record the reason.
- 3.3.5 The Prep Office will record any pupils arriving after 8.35am with a code U – arrived after register closed
- 3.3.5 If you require help with using iSAMS to register, please contact IThelpdesk@bancrofts.org

3.4 **Register Codes:** (for a full explanation of each code see appendix 1)

Present

- / The pupil is present in school AM.
- \ The pupil is present in school PM.
- L Late arrival before the register is closed.
- A Authorised late.

The following codes will be used to explain authorised absence from school:

- B** Off-site educational Activity.
- C** Absence from School that has been authorised by the Head.
- E** Excluded but no alternative provision made.
- H** Leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school.
- I** Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- J** At an interview with another educational establishment.
- K** Registered in the Library.
- M** Medical or dental appointment.
- N** No reason provided.
- O** Absence from School that has been taken without authorisation from the Head.

- P** Sporting activities – where it has been approved by the Head that the student may be absent from School for external sporting activities, or where the PE department has a fixture off-site.
- Q** Pupil at music or speech lesson
- R** Religious observance - where a request has been made to, and authorised by, the Head.
- U** Student arrived in School after registration has closed.
- V** School organised Educational visit or trip.
- Y** Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances as defined in the DfE *Working together to improve school attendance guidance document. (see appendix 1)*
- #** School closure.

When the School is closed to students, for example for weather reasons, INSET days, Bank Holidays or end of term times, the registers will be marked as "School Closed" (#) by the Prep Office.

The following codes will be used to record unauthorised absence from school:

- G** Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school
- N** Reason for absence not yet provided
- O** Absent without authorisation
- U** Arrived in school after registration closed

4. Signing Out when leaving the School site during the day

- 4.1 Children should sign out at the Prep Office if they need to leave the School premises for treatments or appointments. Such absences must be explained by the parent/carer and the register updated to explain the absence. If such absences are not notified in advance, the Prep Office will mark the register as 'N' and update it with the appropriate symbol once the nature of the absence has been confirmed.
- 4.2 If the School Nurse has contacted the parent/carer to pick up a sick child, the Prep Office will mark them with 'I' for that day/session. Parents/carers are required to follow standard procedures for notifying the school of any subsequent absences relating to this illness.

5. Holidays and other personal absence during term time

- 5.1 The Prep School requests that family holidays are not arranged during term time. If this is unavoidable, requests for authorised absences should be made in writing to the Head well in advance of the date.
- 5.2 Other absence for personal reasons are sometimes unavoidable. In these circumstances, parents/carers should write to the Head requesting leave of absence in advance of the date, using the email address prepoffice@bancrofts.org

6. Following up Unexplained Absences and Monitoring Attendance

- 6.1 Parents/carers are required to contact the School before 8:25am to advise of absence or illness by email.
- 6.2 Any unexplained absences are followed up by the Prep Office as soon as possible on the day via telephone calls to parents/carers in the first instance and the attendance records updated.
- 6.3 Any students designated as vulnerable are followed up as a priority and for any student with a Child Protection Plan, the Local Authority will be notified within 48 hours.
- 6.4 The Deputy Head Pastoral or the Head may also be involved in following up absences, particularly where there is a pattern of poor attendance or where the school has particular concern for the safety of a child.
- 6.5 Should a child be missing from school without authorisation or explanation and there has been no contact with parents/carers or the student, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head will be informed and a decision taken about how to proceed.
- 6.6 To support pupils returning after a long period of absence (illness or other reasons), the pupil's needs are considered and adjustments made by the School in liaison with, but not exclusively, the child and their family. Such adjustments are regularly reviewed and amended as appropriate.

7. Monitoring Attendance

- 7.1 The Deputy Head, Pastoral receives regular reports of student attendance 'to date'. Appropriate actions are then initiated.
- 7.2 Where there is cause for concern, parents are informed about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- 7.3 A referral may be made to the Local Authority if a child's termly attendance falls below 90% and all attempts to work with the parents/carers to improve attendance have failed.
- 7.4 The School will also report the following attendance issues to the Local Authority:
 - 10 school days unauthorised absence per academic year

- Non-return within 5 school days after authorised absence of 10 school days or more
 - Failure to attend regularly.
- 7.5 Notification of deletion from the School's Admissions Register will be done in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

8. Maintenance of the Attendance Register

- 8.1 The attendance register records the following information:
- Original and amended entries;
 - Name or title of any person making an amendment and the date the amendment is made.
- 8.2 The iSAMS manager is responsible for creating an additional back up of the Attendance Register at least once a month and this is retained for three years after the school year in question.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body is ultimately responsible for the effective oversight, review and amendment of this policy and understands its legal obligation to do so.

Day to day management and responsibility for the strategic approach to attendance in school is delegated to the Deputy Head, Pastoral.

This policy will be reviewed and updated bi-annually by the Deputy Head, Pastoral or as events or legislation requires.

Appendix 1- Contents of the Attendance Register

All schools, except those where all the pupils are boarders, must keep an attendance register in accordance with regulation 6 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended. 198. Schools must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder) is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity as defined in regulation 6(4); or
- Unable to attend school due to exceptional circumstances as defined in regulation

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education.

Present

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(i)

Code / 1: Present in school / = am 1 = pm

Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate.

Absent

Authorised Absence from School

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(ii), 6(1)(b), 6(2), 7(1) and 7(2)

Authorised absence means that one of a specific set of circumstances applies, as set out below:

Code C: Leave of absence granted by the School

Only exceptional circumstances warrant granting a leave of absence. Wherever referred to in this guidance a leave of absence should not be, and from certain types of school must not be, granted unless it has been applied for in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the headteacher believes the circumstances to be exceptional. Schools must consider each application for a leave of absence individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Specific leaves of absence may also be granted where:

A pupil is participating in a performance

A school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence for a pupil to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance, within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 if the local authority have given the pupil a licence for that performance.

Legislation sets out that a local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. There are some exemptions, including the granting of Body of Persons Approval (BOPA). BOPAs can be issued by the local authority where a performance is to take place, or by the Secretary of State (generally only if there are to be many children involved and a number of different locations, but legislation does not limit this to those situations).

Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where the licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. However, where the terms of the licence or BOPA do not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to grant leave of absence.

A pupil is subject to a temporary part-time timetable

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

Code H: leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the School

Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

An application for leave of absence should (and from certain schools must) not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are suspended from school or excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register.

When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive day of any suspension or exclusion. Where alternative provision is made schools should record this using the appropriate code for attending an approved educational activity.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools must record absences as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).

In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointments system particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Pupils with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. This applies whether or not the child is registered at a school and whatever type of school they attend. The education must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 school days or more during the school year, whether consecutive or cumulative. Local authorities should have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs.

Code M: Medical or dental appointment

Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours.

Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents). As a general rule, we would interpret 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' as a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance. If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day as authorised on this basis; the rest of the request would be a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as:

- Setting term dates around days for religious observance;
- Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance;
- Schools taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and
- Providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(ii) and 6(3)

Unauthorised absence is where a pupil's absence is not one of the types of absence listed as authorised in regulation 6(2) or where the reason for a pupil's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school

Where the school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer than the period of leave granted.

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not (and from certain types of school cannot) be granted.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has been established the school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant code. Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code should be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 working days after the session. Code N should not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established after 5 working days, schools should amend the pupil's record to Code O.

Code O: Absent without authorisation

Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.

Attending an approved educational activity

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(iii), 6(1)(c), and 6(4)

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered or taking part in off-site activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or unregistered alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it is approved by the school, of an educational nature and supervised by someone authorised by the school. Ultimately, schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils taking part in an off-site educational activity so it would be reasonable to expect that the school would only authorise someone who was answerable to the school to supervise an activity. The activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded and for pupils of compulsory school age the school must record the nature of the activity.

Attending another school at which the pupil is registered

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(a)(iii) and 6(4)(b)

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows for a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the school in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absence are promptly followed up.

Attending an educational activity that takes place outside the school

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(iii), 6(1)(c) and 6(4)(a)

Code B: Off-site educational Activity

Attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. For pupils of compulsory school age, schools must also record the nature of the activity, examples are:

- attending taster days at other schools;
- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision arranged or agreed by the school.

The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should

ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code. This code must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity i.e., when a pupil is at home doing some schoolwork.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school. If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. However, the final decision on approving the activity rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

Attendance at an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school. The educational visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the organiser of the visit or trip notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Relevant regulation: 6(1)(iv), 6(1)(d), 6(5), 6(7) and 6(2)(b)(i)

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because:

- the school site or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause at a time when pupils are due to attend; or
- the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance; or
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

Schools must also record the nature of the circumstances in which a pupil is unable to attend school.

Walking distance

In relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available safe route.

Pupil in custody Code Y is also used where the pupil is in custody; detained under a court order for a period of less than 4 months or is returning to the school at the end of their custodial period.

Administrative codes

Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school

Where a pupil not of compulsory school age is attending school part-time. For example, where parents have chosen for their 4 year-old child to attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age.

Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register

To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must enter a pupil's name on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place offered, the local authority can inform schools on behalf of the parents and notify the school when the parent has agreed that the pupil will attend school. This can also be the case where the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications for school places. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must establish the reason and record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms;
- half terms;
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of school as a polling station.

Partial school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- 'staggered starts' or 'induction days' where different term dates have been agreed for different year groups - this code is used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend; and
- Use of part of the school as a polling station.