



Broughton Hall Catholic High School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Policy produced with reference to: DfE Guidance

Working Together to Improve Attendance (2024)

Version	Date	Action
Previous Version	Oct 2024	Reviewed
Policy Revised	01.12.2025	By L Narey, Assistant Headteacher/Attendance Lead
	11.12.2025	Agreed by Governors

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

1.0 Introduction

Broughton Hall Catholic High School recognises the clear link between attendance, punctuality, and attainment. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality to support learning and achievement. The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment. To gain the greatest benefit from education, pupils should attend every day that the school is open and arrive punctually. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance, with an expectation of at least 97%.

Broughton Hall believes teachers, parents, carers, pupils, and all members of our school community have a shared role in improving attendance and punctuality. This policy sets out how we will achieve this collaboratively, following the DfE's principles of early intervention and a graduated approach to removing barriers to attendance.

2.0 Aims

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality across the school community.
- Maximise overall attendance and punctuality rates.
- Reduce persistent (below 90%) and severe (below 50%) absence.
- Provide support, advice, and guidance for parents, pupils, and staff.
- Maintain accurate and timely registration.
- Ensure attendance data is effectively monitored and acted upon.
- Promote consistency of practice and a proactive whole-school approach.
- Strengthen partnerships with families, the Local Authority, and external agencies.

3.0 Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

Every absence is treated as a safeguarding concern. Parents and carers must inform school of any absence, giving the reason and expected duration. All absences are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a pupil's historical attendance and individual context.

3.1 Expectations of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance (Section 444, Education Act 1996). They must ensure pupils arrive on time, notify school of absences before 8.00am, and schedule non-urgent appointments outside of school hours. Requests for exceptional leave must be made in writing to the Headteacher. Only exceptional circumstances such as bereavement or religious observance will be authorised.

3.2 School Procedures

If a pupil is absent and no reason has been received by 9.00am, the school will contact parents via text and phone. If there is still no response, a home visit may be undertaken. Continued absence may result in meetings, formal monitoring, and potential legal action in partnership with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

3.3 Graduated (Staged) Approach to Improving Attendance

In line with DfE guidance, Broughton Hall operates a staged graduated approach to addressing attendance concerns. Each pupil's attendance is reviewed individually, considering barriers, context, and historical patterns. This structured response allows for early intervention and escalating support as needed.

Stage	Description
Stage 0	Pupils are within the threshold (97% or above). Preventative work by SSM and form tutors identifies barriers early through phone calls and conversations. Attendance response completed by the attendance team. Welfare visits conducted at day 3 of absence.
Stage 1	Pupils have fallen below 97% or received an I, O, U, or G code in the last 10 days. Parents receive a letter informing them that attendance has dropped. Preventative work and welfare visits continue at day 3 of absence.
Stage 2	Pupils remain below 97% following Stage 1. Parents are invited to a meeting and informed that further absence may lead to referral. Medical evidence required for illness. Welfare visits continue at day 3 of absence.
Stage 3	Pupils remain below 97% after Stage 1 and 2. Pupils enter a 20-day monitoring period. Parents receive a letter. Welfare visits continue at day 3 of absence.
Stage 4	Pupils have failed the monitoring period and are referred to the Education Welfare Service. EWO conducts home visits, meetings, and may escalate to legal proceedings.

4.0 Understanding Types of Absence

Absences are categorised as authorised or unauthorised by the Headteacher. Unauthorised absences include unexplained absences, avoidable situations such as shopping or birthdays, and late arrivals after registration closes.

4.1. Coding of Attendance and School Discretion

In line with the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve Attendance* (2024), Broughton Hall Catholic High School is responsible for ensuring that attendance codes are used consistently, accurately, and in line with DfE regulations.

Attendance coding is a professional judgement made by the school and is applied following a case-by-case review of evidence. This includes medical documentation, parental communication, and the pupil's historical attendance record. The Headteacher, Designated Attendance Lead, and Attendance Team hold the discretion to determine whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Working Together to Improve Attendance (2024) highlights that schools should take a balanced approach, considering the individual circumstances of each pupil while maintaining high expectations for regular attendance.

This means that:

- The school will always seek to understand the reason for absence before deciding which attendance code to apply.
- Medical evidence will be required where absence due to illness becomes frequent or prolonged.
- Even when evidence is provided, the decision to authorise absence remains at the school's discretion.
- Where coding is uncertain, the Attendance Team will review the case collaboratively with the Designated Attendance Lead.
- All coding decisions are recorded on SIMS and monitored as part of the school's attendance quality assurance process.

By exercising professional discretion in this way, the school ensures that attendance data reflects a true and accurate picture of pupil engagement while maintaining a culture of high expectations and accountability.

5.0 Punctuality

Good punctuality underpins success. The morning gate closes at 8.30am, after which students must enter via the late gate. They provide their name, hand in their phone, and attend a 30-minute same-day detention. If this detention is missed, it escalates per the Behaviour Policy. All lateness is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The purpose is to promote strong routines, responsibility, and readiness for learning.

6.0 Rewards and Recognition

Broughton Hall promotes a culture of positivity through:

- Weekly positive points on ClassCharts for excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Opportunities for trips and experiences linked to excellent attendance.
- Half-termly and termly celebrations recognising pupils for high attendance or significant improvement.

7.0 Legal and Welfare Responsibilities

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) supports families, conducts home visits, and monitors attendance. Where informal support fails to improve attendance, legal measures may be taken, including Penalty Notices or prosecution.

8.0 Leadership, Monitoring and Governance

In line with the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve Attendance (2024), leadership at all levels will drive a culture where excellent attendance and punctuality are the norm. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Designated Attendance Lead, and Governors maintain oversight of attendance and punctuality performance across the school.

Governors receive termly updates on attendance, persistent absence, punctuality, and intervention impact. The Designated Attendance Lead provides half-termly reports to SLT to identify trends, evaluate strategies, and ensure a consistent, whole-school approach.

9.0 Early Help and Partnership Working

The school is committed to providing early help to remove barriers to attendance and punctuality. Following DfE expectations, Broughton Hall works collaboratively with external partners such as the Education Welfare Service, Early Help, CAMHS, School Health, and Children's Services to identify and address underlying causes of absence.

Where pupils face persistent or complex difficulties, multi-agency meetings and support plans are used to ensure coordinated intervention. Attendance support will be proportionate, evidence-based, and regularly reviewed to ensure progress.

10.0 Vulnerable and Priority Groups

Broughton Hall monitors attendance closely for pupils who face additional barriers to education, including pupils with SEND, EHCPs, those in receipt of pupil premium, young carers, and looked-after children. The Designated Attendance Lead meets regularly with the SENCO and DSL to coordinate support and ensure equity of provision.

In line with DfE guidance, data for these priority groups is analysed separately to ensure attendance strategies are inclusive and effective in closing gaps.

11.0 Communication and Engagement with Parents and Carers

Attendance is everyone's business. Broughton Hall Catholic High School prioritises positive communication with parents and carers to promote regular attendance. The school builds strong relationships that encourage trust, transparency, and early dialogue. Parents are contacted through Edulink messages, phone calls, letters, and attendance meetings to ensure information is timely and supportive.

The school provides guidance and resources to help families overcome attendance barriers, reinforcing shared responsibility for pupil success.

12.0 Data Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance and punctuality data are reviewed daily by the Attendance Team, weekly by the Designated Attendance Lead, and termly by SLT and the Governing Body. Analysis focuses on year groups, tutor groups, vulnerable cohorts, and patterns of absence to inform intervention.

This systematic use of data reflects the DfE's emphasis on evidence-led practice. Findings are used to refine strategies, celebrate improvement, and inform school improvement planning.

13.0 Safeguarding and Welfare

Attendance is a core component of safeguarding. The safeguarding team receive daily attendance updates and are immediately alerted to any unexplained or concerning absences. Attendance concerns are logged within the school's safeguarding system and contribute to overall welfare tracking.

Where patterns of absence raise safeguarding concerns, school will liaise directly with parents, the DSL, and external agencies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil.

14.0 Sanctions and Escalation Framework

Sanctions related to attendance and punctuality are applied fairly and proportionately. Persistent issues are escalated to the Education Welfare Officer if supportive strategies do not lead to improvement.

Formal measures, including Penalty Notices or prosecution, are considered only after all supportive interventions have been implemented. This reflects the DfE's emphasis on support before enforcement.

15.0 Review and Policy Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Attendance Lead and the Senior Leadership Team, ensuring alignment with the latest DfE guidance and local authority procedures. The Governing Body will ratify updates and monitor the policy's impact through measurable improvements in attendance and punctuality data, stakeholder feedback, and external evaluation.

Appendix: Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities

All school staff, parents/carers, and pupils work as a team to support attendance and punctuality. The table below outlines the key expectations at each level.

When	Who	Actions Expected
Daily	Pupils	Arrive on site between 8.00am-8.30am
Daily	Form Tutors	Complete accurate registers; discuss absences; promote good attendance.
Daily	Pastoral Staff	Monitor registers, contact parents for unexplained absences, conduct first-day calls, and log punctuality data.
Weekly	SSM / Attendance Team	Identify attendance concerns, monitor late arrivals, and coordinate interventions.
Half Termly	Designated Attendance Lead	Analyse data, identify priority pupils, and review interventions with EWO and pastoral leads.
Termly	Headteacher / SLT	Review attendance and punctuality as part of school improvement planning and report to governors.