

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY & PROCEDURES

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
DfE	Department for Education (UK government)
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead; named person within the School with responsibility for co-ordinating and overseeing child safeguarding
ISI	Independent School Inspectorate (body that inspects the School)
ISSR	Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education (government document)
SAO	School Attendance Officer
SAS	Guernsey School Attendance Service
SMT	Senior Management Team
TAC	Team Around the Child
WT	Working Together to Safeguard Children (UK government document)

Policy Statement

Regular and punctual attendance at school is essential for achieving the best outcomes for pupils. Pupils who do not attend school regularly are at risk from a range of factors that may lead to poor outcomes including low attainment and social exclusion. The link between poor school attendance and academic achievement and limited life outcomes has been well established in national research, indicating that:

- Nationally, only 3% of pupils with 50% or less attendance manage to achieve five or more GCSE grades A*-C (including English and Maths).
- Nationally, 73% of pupils who have attendance above 95% achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English and Maths).

It is essential that all pupils attend regularly and on time and that they access all of the opportunities education offers.

Blanchelande College's expectation is that all pupils will achieve an attendance of at least 95%.

The Legal Framework

Section 17 of the Education [Guernsey] Law 1970 (hereinafter referred to as the '1970 Law') places a legal duty on parents/carers of every child of compulsory school age¹ to ensure that they are receiving efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by attendance at school or otherwise.

The word 'otherwise' refers to educational provision that does not take the form of attendance at school. The majority of these cases will apply to pupils who are being home educated or receiving home tuition or having an individualised learning programme as prescribed by a Determination of Needs.

This policy also has regard to the DfE's [School Attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities](#) (November 2016), [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (September 2016) (KCSIE) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (March 2015) (WT).

Blanchelande College has a responsibility to inform the School Attendance Service (SAS) of parents/carers who fail to secure their children's regular attendance at school, and attendance management is integral to the College's safeguarding responsibilities.

¹ Compulsory school age is defined by Section 16 of the 1970 Law, as amended by The Education (Guernsey) (Amendment) Law, 2009 and the Education (Compulsory School Age) (Guernsey) (No2) Ordinance 2008. Compulsory school age is defined as the start of the term commencing on or after child's fifth birthday, until the last Friday of June in the school year in which they reach 16 years of age.

Managing School Attendance

Accountability

Attendance is an important whole-school issue and involves pupils, parents/carers and all members of staff.

Pupils

Pupils have the following responsibilities:

- To attend school regularly.
- To be punctual and arrive on time, appropriately dressed in school uniform and prepared for the school day.
- Inform a member of staff about any barrier to school attendance.
- Sign in at the Main Office if they arrive at school after morning registration.
- Sign in at the Main Office if they miss morning registration due to before school clubs such as literacy or numeracy support, or music lessons.
- Sign in at the Main Office if they arrive at school after the close of afternoon registration.
- Sign out at the Main Office if they leave the school during the day (e.g. for medical appointments).
- In addition to daily attendance, pupils must also attend:
 - Michaelmas Term – Carol Service
 - Trinity Term – Speech Day

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers have the following responsibilities:

- Under Section 17 of the Education (Guernsey) Law 1970, to ensure that any children of compulsory school age receive an efficient and suitable full-time education, especially in the following ways.
- Encourage their son/daughter to attend school every day and on time.
- Contact the Main Office by phone or email before 9.00 am whenever their son/daughter is unable to attend school.
- Ensure their children arrive in school appropriately dressed and fully prepared for the school day.
- Provide the school with up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Endeavour to make medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible.
- Ensure that family holidays do not take place during the school term if at all possible.

- Inform the Main Office / their child's Form Tutor/Class Teacher of any problem which might affect their son or daughter's attendance.
- Provide a medical certificate/doctor's note for absence due to illness if the absence lasts for three days or more and the son/daughter's attendance is below 90%.
- Provide a medical certificate for absences due to illness if their son/daughter is absent for three or more separate periods of absence due to illness during a half term and their attendance is below 90%.

College

Blanchelande College has the following responsibilities, under the Pupil's Registration (Guernsey) Regulations, 1970:

- Maintain school records.
- Accurately record the presence or absence of all pupils at the commencement of each morning and afternoon session.

Furthermore, Blanchelande College shall:

- record each pupil's attendance accurately;
- make every reasonable effort, on the first day of absence, to contact the parent/carer when their child fails to attend school without good reason;
- support pupils and parents/carers in promoting attendance and punctuality and resolving issues which may be contributing to poor attendance and/or punctuality, setting individualised targets to promote good and improving attendance;
- monitor attendance and provide appropriate interventions when attendance is a cause for concern;
- notify Children's Services if a child is absent without notification from parents/carers and attempts to contact parents/carers have been unsuccessful.

Attendance Lead responsibilities

School attendance data is held on Blanchelande's information system (iSAMS). The College is responsible for the accuracy and maintenance of this data. The Head of Pastoral Care in the Senior School and the Vice Principal of the Primary School are the College's Attendance Leads, and have responsibility for making every effort to support pupils who fail to maintain regular attendance at school by:

- Establishing and implementing, with form tutors/class teachers and other colleagues, effective systems, procedures and interventions.
- Issuing letters to parents/carers where there are concerns about the level of attendance.

- Arranging school attendance meetings with parents/carers as part of the staged escalation procedure for the management of attendance and punctuality.
- Meeting at least half termly with the Education Department's designated School Attendance Officer for the school to discuss whole school and individual cases.
- Attendance at Education Department attendance interviews when required.
- Preparation of written reports and statements for legal purposes and representing the school in the Magistrates Court of the Child Youth Community Tribunal.

The College will report certain attendance issues to the School Attendance Service:

- ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence);
- failure to attend regularly;
- and deletion from the school register when the next school is not known.

The School is aware that 'a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.'² The welfare of a pupil repeatedly absent from School will be carefully considered, specifically whether there are any signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation. Further important guidance on the possible issues behind pupils missing from school is contained in APPENDIX A of KCSIE. The School also has regard to [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities](#) and the government's [missing children and adults strategy](#).

Data Analysis

The College will regularly collate and analyse attendance data for the purpose of identifying attendance and absence patterns. This enables intervention strategies to be put in place for the purpose of intervention and forward planning and the setting of meaningful targets for improvement on an individual and whole-school basis.

Analysis of data will include consideration of:

- patterns with particular subjects, classes or year groups;
- individual pupils with punctuality problems, broken weeks of attendance or post-registration truancy;
- the attendance of different groups of pupils such as Special Educational Needs (SEN), Looked After Children and other vulnerable groups;
- difference in attendance and absence of boys and girls;
- analysis of absence by registration code;
- the number of pupils having short but regular absences;
- the impact of a few pupils with very high levels of absence.

² KCSIE, APPENDIX A.

Attendance Registers

Schools are legally required to maintain accurate registers of attendance. Blanchelande College operates an electronic register through iSAMS.

Registers should indicate whether the pupil is present or absent and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the College has given approval in advance for absence or has accepted an explanation afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence. Only the Principal of Blanchelande College (not parents/carers) can authorise absence.

Blanchelande will record separately if pupils are participating in an approved educational activity using the correct code in iSAMS. This will count as a present mark. Such activities might include work experience, field trips, sporting activities or Year 6 pupils attending 'taster days' at the Senior School.

Registering pupils

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the School has a legal duty to register the attendance of all pupils twice a day. This is carried out by the Form Tutors in the Senior School and the Class Teachers in the Primary School.

Seniors

- Morning registration is at 8.35 am – 8.40 am on Monday and Tuesday.
- On Wednesday and Thursday, morning registration is at 8.40 am.
- On Friday morning registration is 8.35 am and is carried out by the subject teacher of Period 1.
- Afternoon registration Monday – Friday is at 1.55 pm – 2.00pm.
- All pupils are registered in their relevant form rooms, except on Friday, when they will be registered in the relevant subject classroom for Period 1.
- It is necessary that Form Tutors/Subject Teachers see each pupil *in person* to mark them as present and do not rely on any second-hand information. This is recorded on the School's registration system, iSAMS.

Infants

- Morning registration is at 9.00 am Monday to Friday.
- Afternoon registration is at 1.30 pm Monday to Friday.

Juniors

- Morning registration is at 8.35 am Monday to Friday.
- Afternoon registration is at 1.30 pm Monday to Friday.



Recording absences

Form Tutors are responsible for recording pupil attendance on time and accurately. In cases of unexplained absences, the Main Office should telephone parents on the first day of absence to obtain a reason.

The Form Tutor should monitor any persistent unauthorised absences, lateness or any other attendance issues and should discuss with the Head of Pastoral Care.

Authorised Absence includes:

- Illness, medical and dental appointments. Parents/carers should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours and ensure that their child returns to school as soon as possible following the appointment. (See separate section for further explanation)
- Interviews with prospective employers, or for a place at another school including exam entry for that school
- Study leave, for Year 11 only. Study leave is not authorised absence but approved educational activity.

Unauthorised Absence includes:

- Holidays in term time: Blanchelande College does not have the legal power to prevent parents/carers arranging term time holidays for their children but requests for holidays or other events in term time will not be authorised, except under exceptional circumstances. For safeguarding reasons, if parents/carers do intend to arrange for their child to have holiday in term time, they will be required to notify the Principal in writing of their intention and the dates of the intended absence.
- The College will always make clear to parents/carers the impact that term-time holidays have on a child's attendance and quality of education.

Medical Absence – illness and medical or dental appointments

The staged process for managing illness absence is as follows:

- When a pupil is absent from school, parents/carers are required to contact the school before 9.00 am on the first day of any absence with an explanation for their child's absence.
- Parents/carers are asked to keep the school informed of the reason for the ongoing absence from day one – day five in order for the school to record the absence as 'I' (illness).
- Where an absence persists beyond five days and there is no reason provided, then the Head of Pastoral Care will contact parents/carers to discuss any difficulties which may be preventing the pupil from attending school. Parents/carers will be

invited into school to meet and discuss these difficulties. A written record will be kept on the pupil's file.

- Where an illness absence extends beyond six days or where there are repeated medical absences which reach the threshold (four separate illness absences during a single half term regardless of length of each) then Blanchelande College will request that parents/carers provide medical evidence in support of their child's future medical absences from school. Evidence can take the form of medical certificates, medical notes, letters from medical practitioners or appointment notifications.
- In the case of regular short term illness absences which reach the cumulative threshold of four separate illnesses within a half term that are not supported by medical evidence, then the school will arrange a meeting with parents/carers to address the reasons for these absences.
- If the College has concerns about the frequency or duration of a medical absence, then parents/carers and/or the pupil will be invited to discuss with the Head of Pastoral Care.
- If a pupil has a medical/dental appointment at the commencement of a morning or afternoon session then this will be recorded as 'M'. If the appointment is during a session then the pupil should sign out at the Main Office to record when they have left school. We would ask that as far as is possible, medical/dental appointments be arranged outside College hours. Parents/carers are asked to advise the Main Office by email or phone in advance of any appointment.

Home Education

Parents/carers have the right to educate their children other than at school. If a parent decides they wish to home educate then they must write to the Director of Education at Education Services. An Education Development Officer (EDO) and a School Attendance Officer (SAO) will then arrange to make a home visit to ensure that the parent is able to provide an appropriate alternative education programme and that the home is a suitable environment for this programme. Blanchelande will not remove a pupil's name from the school roll until they are notified to do so by Education Services. Further information can be found [here](#).

Admission Register

In accordance with guidance laid out in KCSIE APPENDIX A and [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities](#), the College shall ensure the admission register is accurate and kept up to date using the pupil contact form. Updated forms are issued to parents/carers at the start of each new academic year and parents are encouraged to inform the school of any changes as they occur.

With regard to the safeguarding of all pupils, Blanchelande College shall inform the Guernsey School Attendance Service (SAS) when a pupil's name is going to be deleted



from the admissions register in cases where the family has moved away, when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend; when the child has been permanently excluded.

Blanchelande College shall also inform the Guernsey School Attendance Service when a pupil's name is either removed or added to the admissions register after the beginning of the school year.

Maintaining records

In accordance with Department of Education advice (October 2014) the School will keep a record of both the admissions register and the attendance register for a period of three years. The data is backed up electronically at the end of each day.

APPENDIX 1

Blanchelande College staged attendance process and responsibilities (summary overview)

Office

- Receive email/phone call by 9am on first day of absence – explanation and indication of length of absence.
- No reason received - parents/carers to be contacted as soon as practicable.
- Notify Form Tutor and Head of Pastoral of reason for absence.

Form Tutor

- Accurately record the presence or absence of all pupils in their tutor group at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- Monitor absences and attendance percentage.
- **Stage 1 - attendance at 95% - 90%:**
 - Contact parents/carers with concerns (Letter 1) – invitation to discuss any issues and put in place strategy for improvement
 - Advise Head of Pastoral Care of concerns and actions taken.
- **Punctuality** should also be monitored and discussed with pupil and/or parent/carer and escalated as appropriate (e.g. as a rule of thumb, three sessions within fortnight and following a detention given for 3 demerits received for lack of punctuality?).

Head of Pastoral Care (Attendance Lead)

- Monitor absences and attendance percentage.
- Oversee Form Tutors' intervention where attendance is 95% - 90%
- **Stage 2: Attendance 90%-85%** - issue letter 2 to parents + invitation to discuss any issues and put in place strategy for improvement (discuss with Principal, SMT, SENCO, Form Tutor, Class Teachers)
 - strategy for improvement developed with pupil, targets set, weekly monitoring
- **Stage 2+ Attendance <85%** - discuss with Principal + SMT, involve SAO.
 - strategy for improvement developed with pupil, targets set, weekly monitoring.

APPENDIX 2

Intervention measures

It is the responsibility of the College Attendance Lead to ensure that the following procedures are followed:

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3: ongoing monitoring
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal recognition that there is an issue • Prevent drift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue is serious • Examine pattern of attendance • Discuss causes of poor attendance • Record key points • Agree attendance targets for pupil for next 4 weeks • Agree and record action to improve attendance 	<p>When Stage 2 has had some impact but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There continue to be concerns about level of attendance • The attendance action plan can be carried out by school staff without involvement of SAS.
Reason	<p>When any of these thresholds are reached:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance <95% • Lateness recorded at least 3 sessions within a 2 week period. • Attendance situation (as observed in iSAMS or from other sources of information) gives cause for concern e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular same day absence over time. ○ Greater clarity about medical absence needed. ○ In school, but not attending certain lessons. ○ High incidence of going home sick during school day. 	<p>When Stage 1 Impact Review indicates that Stage 1 has not led to improvement in attendance</p> <p>Be aware that targets will be different each time, based on the context of the perceived barriers and each individual pupil profile.</p> <p>Head of Pastoral will discuss strategies within the routine SAO meetings.</p> <p>SAO will intervene to reinforce level of concern about attendance.</p>	<p>When a Stage 2 impact review indicates that this is the appropriate course of action.</p>
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form Tutor to monitor using iSAMS and discuss 	<p>Head of Pastoral Care to verify and issue Stage 2 letter. Decision to be made for next step:</p>	<p>The same as for Stage 2, except without SAO attendance at meetings with parents/pupil.</p>



	<p>concerns and actions with Head of Pastoral Care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form Tutor to issue Stage 1 letter (<95% attendance) or Punctuality Letter as appropriate, stating nature of concern and possible outcomes if attendance does not improve. • Meet with pupil and/or parents to discuss barriers to school and improvement strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Head of Pastoral meeting with parent and/or pupil. b. Head of Pastoral meeting with parent, pupil and SAO. School must inform parent with 2 days' notice that SAO will be meeting their child. c. If there is a TAC, Convenor, Child Protection Framework, matter must be raised with relevant agency and decide next step. <p>Other professionals, eg School Nurse, CAMHS, Youth Justice could be invited to any of these meetings with the aim of improving attendance.</p>	<p>The pupil will continue to be "known" to SAS.</p>
Record Keeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of letter on pupil file • Written record out outcome of any meeting on pupil file • Discussed with Head of Pastoral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of letter on pupil file • Written record out outcome of any meeting on pupil file • Discussed with SMT and Principal. 	<p>As Stage 2</p>
Impact Review	<p>Within 4 weeks of sending written communication: Head of Pastoral reviews any change in attendance and judges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Well done" written communication where sustained improvement has been noted or • Continue Stage 1 action for another 4 week period, or • Move to Stage 2 action • Written record of decision to be placed on pupil file. 	<p>Within 4 weeks of sending written communication: Head of Pastoral reviews any change in attendance and discusses with SMT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Well done" written communication where sustained improvement has been noted or • Continue Stage 2 action for another defined period. • Continue to review with SAO. 	<p>As Stage 2</p>

APPENDIX 3 – Letter templates

Letter for Unexplained Absence – to be issued by Main Office / Head of Pastoral

Dear

Absence from School

I am pleased to see that your son/daughter, (name), has returned to school following a period of absence. We would be very grateful for a note explaining the reason for the absence.

The school is obliged by law to maintain accurate records of pupil attendance and the reasons for any absence. Such records contribute to the process of promoting regular school attendance among pupils.

I should, therefore, be grateful if you would contact the school at your earliest convenience with an explanation for (name's) recent absence from school.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Letter for Punctuality – issued by Form Tutor / Head of Pastoral Care

Dear

Punctuality at School

I am writing to you to express concern regarding your child, (name's) punctuality at School. Our attendance records reveal that since (date), (name) has arrived late for school on (number) occasions.

I should like to emphasise the importance of pupils arriving punctually at school for both morning and afternoon sessions. This ensures that pupils do not miss out on important information at the beginning of each session, and it avoids disruption to the learning of other pupils.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further with me, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Tel (number)

Email (address)

Your co-operation in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Letter for Illness/Medical Reasons

Dear

Absence from School – Illness

I am grateful to you for having notified the school of your son/daughter, (name(s)) ill health, which has been responsible for (his/her) recent absences from school. These absences have been recorded as ‘authorised’ in the school attendance register. However, in order to continue recording (name’s) absences as ‘authorised’, the school will require confirmation of (name’s) continuing ill health from a medical practitioner.

I should, therefore, be grateful if you could provide the school with a letter or medical certificate from your family medical practitioner regarding (name’s) current state of health.

To discuss this matter further, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Tel 237 200

Email ecclesl@blanchelande.sch.gg

Yours sincerely

Ms Louisa Eccles
Head of Pastoral Care

Letter for 95% attendance rate from Form Tutor

Dear

Attendance at School

I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance is giving cause for concern. At present, your child's attendance for the current school year is (number)%.

Our expectation is that all students achieve an attendance percentage of at least 95%. Students who do not regularly attend inevitably fall behind in their subject areas and so regular attendance is crucial particularly at this vital time in your child's education.

I understand there may be good reasons for your child's absence which we may not be fully aware of. If you feel your child is experiencing any issues related to school that are affecting their attendance, please telephone me on (number). This will enable us, as a school, to support your child to the best of our ability and also to ensure your child receives positive experiences with the school.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this or require further information.

Please find enclosed a copy of your child's attendance certificate for you information.

Yours sincerely

Letters for 90% and below from Head of Pastoral Care
(Letter to be approved by Principal before sending)

Dear

Attendance at School

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your child's attendance was (number) % last half term and is currently (number) % for this academic year. Any child whose attendance falls below 90%, for whatever reason, including sickness absence and holidays becomes a cause for concern.

We understand that most parents and carers always inform school of any absences but it is our duty to let you know whenever your child's absence falls below an acceptable level. If you are experiencing any difficulties and attendance is becoming a problem, please contact school as there are many ways in which we can provide support and help. All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually. If there is no improvement in attendance, a referral may be made to the School Attendance Officer (SAO) concerns list. In extreme circumstances legal proceedings can be entered into. In the meantime, the School would welcome the opportunity to meet with yourself and (name of pupil) to discuss how to overcome any barriers to school (name) may be experiencing to help improve their attendance.

As you know, frequent absences have a serious effect on educational progress. If your child is ill, please continue to inform the school on the first morning of absence. Please remember that you must leave a reason for the absence including the nature of the illness. In cases where there are frequent absences due to illness, we may ask you to provide medical evidence from your GP in order for the school to authorise the absence. Please get in touch with the school if you have concerns about your child's health impacting on their attendance so that we can discuss ways in which we can help.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX 4

ATTENDANCE CODES

Form Tutor will use:

- / present
- N not in front of you (absent)
- L late (after 8.35am/1.55pm but before the end of registration)

Codes which count as authorised (important for 100% attendance):

- B educated off site
- C other authorised circumstances
- J attending interview
- O other authorised reason
- P approved sporting activity
- R religious observance
- S study leave
- V educational trips organised by school
- W work experience
- # school closed to all pupils

Codes which count as unauthorised:

- E excluded
- F agreed extended family holiday
- G family holiday not agreed
- I illness
- M medical or dental appointment
- N no reason for absence (these **must** be changed to relevant reason)
- U Late arrived after register closed

ATTENDANCE CODES – ALPHABETICAL

/	present
B	educated off site
C	other authorised circumstances
E	excluded
F	agreed extended family holiday
G	family holiday not agreed
I	illness
L	late (after 8.35am/1.55pm but before the end of registration)
J	attending interview
M	medical or dental appointment
N	no reason for absence (these must be changed to relevant reason)
O	other authorised reason
P	approved sporting activity
R	religious observance
S	study leave
V	educational trips organised by school
W	work experience
#	school closed to all pupils