



## **Beaumont School Attendance Policy**

### **1. Mission Statement**

Beaumont School seeks to ensure that every student receives a full-time education which maximises opportunity to realise his/her true potential. Excellent attendance and punctuality are essential for students to achieve all that they are capable of and our aim is an attendance rate of 97% or more.

### **2. Aims**

Specifically the school aims:

- To improve the overall attendance of students at school
- To ensure that attendance and punctuality are a priority for all associated with the school, whether students, parents/carer, teachers, support staff or governors
- To implement a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related to data
- To provide appropriate support for parents and carers
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions and other strategies to improve individual attendance and punctuality
- To challenge the behaviour of those students and parent/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality
- To work with the Attendance Team and other services and agencies to promote attendance
- To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

### **3. Parental Rights and Responsibilities**

- Parents/carers are responsible in law for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance
- Parents/carers are responsible for informing the school of the reason for absence on the first morning of any absence, whether by personal visit, letter or calling the absence line
- Parents are responsible for ensuring their children stay at school once they have registered
- Parents can expect the school to keep accurate records of their child's attendance and to keep them informed about their child's progress.

### **4. Roll-call ( Years 7-11)**

Roll-call is taken during tutor time in the morning (8.30) and at the start of period 6 (1.50).

Students arriving at tutor time after 8.30 or 1.50 will be marked as late. Registers close at 8.40 and 2.00 pm respectively. Students who arrive after this time can no longer be marked as present by their tutor or class teacher but must sign in the late book at reception.

Students must be in the classroom promptly at the beginning of each roll call. Students who arrive late in the morning will be detained at break-time on the same day. Duty staff will record any students who arrive at 8.30 or later in the late book and will issue the detention. Students who arrive on site before 8.30 but arrive at tutor time late will be issued a detention by their form tutor. Further sanctions will be imposed where students are persistently late.



Students who are regularly late to lessons in the school day may be placed on a punctuality monitoring card. Year 11 students may have off-site privileges withdrawn.

We recommend that students arrive on site by 8.25 at the latest to ensure a smooth start to the day. The school is open from 8.15.

If there is a legitimate reason for a student's absence in the morning (e.g a medical appointment), parents are requested to write a note to this effect in the planner. Where parents drive their children to school or where students come to school on public transport, traffic would not usually be acceptable as a reason for lateness unless there was a very specific incident which had caused exceptional problems. Parents and students are expected to plan their journeys to allow leeway for traffic conditions.

### **5. First-Day Response (Years 7-11)**

The school operates a First Day Response System whereby the parent/carers of a student who is registered as absent without an explanation will receive a phone call before 11am to determine why the student is not at school.

### **6. Authorised/Unauthorised Absence and Penalty Notices**

Only the school may decide whether an absence will be authorised. Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a student to be absent or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory. Should school staff have reason to doubt that an explanation for a particular absence is genuine, the absence will be treated as unauthorised. This decision will be communicated to parents/carers by the school

Absence from school may be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances, for example bereavement
- Attendance at special events with educational value

Absence will not be authorised for:

- Holidays
- Domestic requirements
- Birthdays
- Caring for sick siblings or parents/carers

The school would request that medical/dental appointments are made outside school hours wherever possible. The school may also request a doctor's note to support an absence due to illness where the illness is of over 5 days duration or if the student has had repeated short term absences for illness. The school may refuse to authorise an absence if requested evidence to support the absence is not supplied. Where a student has a long-term absence due to illness or has repeated absences due to a medical



condition, the school will work to support the student's continued progress either through in-school strategies or by working with outside agencies as appropriate.

Due to new government legislation which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the school will no longer be able to authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. All such requests must be made on the Leave of Absence Request Form available from reception or the school website. Headteachers no longer have the discretion to allow up to 10 days in a school year for a family holiday or to agree to extended leave for parents to visit their country of origin. If a student is absent from school because of a holiday, this will be classified as an unauthorised absence and the parents/carers may be fined or legal action taken against them. Where a student's attendance is below 95% the school is unlikely to authorise any leave of absence requests, regardless of circumstance.

Where parents request leave of absence in order to travel to an event for which leave of absence has been granted, the school will only authorise the minimum amount of time needed. This would mean a maximum of two days for a mid-week event and one day for an event at the weekend depending on the distance travelled. Parents will be expected to provide details to justify why the absence is necessary: cheaper or more convenient travel would, for example, not be accepted as a justification. Any additional days requested beyond the minimum necessary will be treated as holiday and not authorised.

Changes to the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct and Guidance for Schools and Academies February 2016 came into force as of 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.

If the number of unauthorised absence sessions (a session is a half day) reaches 15 or more in the current and/or previous term the Local Education Authority may issue a Penalty Notice.

The Penalty Notice requires parents/carers to pay a fine of £60 within 21 days, increasing if the fine is not paid until this period has passed. Parents may potentially be liable for an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act of 1996 for failure to secure their child's regular attendance at school.

## **7. Persistent Absence**

An individual student with an attendance record of less than 90% is deemed to be a persistent absentee whether or not any absences have been authorised.

## **8. Sixth Form arrangements**

Students will be registered in lessons and must attend tutor time on the mornings where they have a lesson in period 1 at Beaumont. All students must also attend extended tutor time and assemblies on Thursday mornings. Where students have study periods, they may study at home with parental permission. This privilege will however be withdrawn if students fail to complete home learning or if there are other concerns about their progress or effort. Student must be available to be in school if required at any point during school hours. They must under no circumstances undertake paid work in that time. Students who undertake paid work during school hours cannot be classed as full-time students and may not remain on roll.

Students or parents should call the 6<sup>th</sup> form office to notify a student's absence and should notify the Sixth Form office of any medical appointments in advance. Leave of absence for all other events should be requested in the same way as for years 7-11.



All students in the Sixth Form must have a minimum number of timetabled hours per week. Where students do not meet these requirements they may no longer stay on roll. Where average attendance falls below 85% over two consecutive half-terms, students will be required to leave the Sixth Form. Poor attendance as a result of ongoing illness will be treated on a case by case basis with the aim of ensuring the best outcomes for the student. A doctor's note may be required to authorise any absences of over 5 days or repeated short-term absences due to illness.

#### **9. Missed work, long term absence and part time timetables.**

The student has the primary responsibility for catching up work and home learning missed due to absence. Where the absence is of a longer duration for medical reasons, the school will provide appropriate work in consultation with parents or make an application to ESTMA (The Education Support Teams for Medical Absence) to support the student's learning at home. The school will also make every effort to ensure that a student has the opportunity to catch up on key examination assessments where the student is involuntarily absent due to illness or for other reasons which have made the absence unavoidable.

For extended absence due to medical reasons both an ESTMA application and part-time timetable may be used to help re-integration.

A part time timetable will only be used with the consent of the parents/carers. The school will notify the county in regards of the part time timetable and there will be a plan outlining the increase in the timetable back to full time. Part time timetables may also be used when there are behavioural problems or where there are planned off site activities for the student.

The school is under no obligation to reorganise assessments, provide work or make any other special arrangements for students who are absent due to unauthorised holiday or for other voluntary reasons. This applies whether or not leave of absence has been granted.

#### **10. Truancy**

Truancy is always recorded as unauthorised absence. The school has a number of strategies in place to manage and minimise truancy.

- Students are made clearly aware that this behaviour is unacceptable
- An appropriate sanction will be put in place.
- Students may be placed on a report card to monitor attendance and punctuality
- Parents/carers will be informed
- Support to improve attendance will be offered as necessary

#### **11. The Attendance Improvement Officer**

The fundamental purpose of the AIO is to maximise attendance rates for individual pupils and to discharge the County Council's legal duty to ensure that all pupils of compulsory school age are in receipt of suitable education. AIOs will also assist in removing barriers which may prevent a child receiving education. As a rule, students will be referred to the AIO where they have become persistent absentees (where there is no clear medical reason for the absence) or where they have below average attendance which school interventions have failed to improve.



## Strategies for promoting attendance and punctuality

- The school will reward all students and tutor groups whose attendance /punctuality is excellent or much improved
- Data on attendance and punctuality will be regularly analysed and acted upon by pastoral staff
- Students with below average attendance will be set targets for improvement. These targets will be reviewed by the Head of Year or Form Tutor
- Regular structured meetings will be held with the schools' Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) in order to maximise intervention for those students whose attendance/punctuality is a source of concern.
- Students will be reminded of the importance and value of good attendance through tutor group discussions and attendance meetings
- Parents/carers will be kept informed of all concerns regarding a student's attendance and punctuality.
- All issues which may cause a student to experience attendance difficulties will be promptly investigated and followed up by the Form Tutor or Head of Year as appropriate

*This policy has undergone an equality impact assessment in accordance with the school's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.*