

Reviewed: July 2021
Review period: Biannual

Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School



Sixth Form –Attendance Policy & Procedures

ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES – SIXTH FORM

Reviewed in June 2021

Reviewed biannually

Aims

The Sixth Form strives to provide a welcoming, caring environment of which each member of the school community feels a part, and is secure. We seek to ensure that all our students receive an education which maximises the opportunities for each student to realise his/her true potential. All Sixth Form staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.

To meet these objectives an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies is in place to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Safeguarding: These measures aim to ensure that any student who has not arrived in school without the prior knowledge of parents/carers is identified and a reason sought.

Years 12 and 13

1. We aim to maintain a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

- Students are registered each morning and in every timetabled lesson. Marks are recorded electronically in SIMS.
- Students are marked as present only if they are physically in attendance at the registration period. In all other cases they are registered using the code N (No reason for absence yet provided).
- Prefects who are working with their forms are required to “sign in” at the Sixth Form Office before 8.30 and their marks are then entered into SIMS by the Office staff.
- N codes are dealt with by the Secretaries working in the Sixth Form Office, and altered where a reason for absence has been received.
- If a student has not arrived in school by 10am, and no reason for absence has been given, then the parents will be contacted immediately to ensure the student is safe.
- Clearly defined late registration procedures are in place: students to sign into the Sixth Form Office immediately on arrival after register has closed. Response to lateness: late arrivals incur sanction points and/or time is reclaimed in extra Private Study sessions. It is the responsibility of tutors to ensure lates/absences are accounted for. All notes should be passed on to the Sixth Form Office for filing. When parental notes are not received or are unsatisfactory, the matter is passed on to a Head of Year who may then involve the Director of Sixth Form.
- Students needing to leave during the school day for appointments must show their appointment card or letter from parent to staff in the Sixth Form Office before they are allowed to sign out. Students arriving late because of medical appointments must also on arrival show their appointment card or letter from parents. Those members of staff are empowered to make further enquiries should they be suspicious.
- Where students have a free period they are allowed to sign out and leave the school site, signing back in on their return.

Dealing with absence Years 12 & 13

- N codes are dealt with by the sixth form admissions’ secretary working in the Sixth Form Office.
- Parents/carers of the student should telephone school before ten o’clock with reasons for student absence. Where these are provided, they are inputted by the Sixth Form Office staff.
- If a parent/carer/student has not phoned school by ten o’clock, they are contacted by the office staff and reasons for absence are sought.
- Form tutors must hand in to the Sixth Form Office letters from parents/carers providing reasons for absence which each student should bring upon their return to school.

- Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents. The fact that a parent has offered a note or other notification in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation, doubt remains about the explanation offered - or where no explanation is offered at all - the absence must be treated as unauthorised. Where a school has reason to doubt the validity of an explanation offered in respect of a particular absence, further information should be requested from the parents. If the school continues to be dissatisfied, then the absence should be treated as unauthorised.
 - If a student has not attended for over 4 weeks, then DfE funding regulations stipulate that we must withdraw the student from their programme of study, irrespective of the reason for absence (See appendix C).
- 2. We aim to provide quality and impartial support, advice and guidance to parents and students**
- Tutors, Heads of Year, the Learning Support Manager and Director / Deputy Director of Sixth Form work together with students and parents to improve attendance where there is a problem.
 - Attendance is reviewed on a weekly basis by the sixth form office, passing concerns to Heads of Year.
 - Holidays should not be taken in term time and will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
 - Absences can only be authorised under exceptional circumstances – see appendix A (amendments to the 2006 regulations).
 - Parents may make specific requests for absence to the Director of Sixth Form, each of which will be considered on an individual basis (for example, to allow participation in formal sporting or musical activities etc. where the student is clearly involved in a pursuit which will benefit their educational development). Request for family holidays cannot be authorised. Attendance at family funerals/weddings, etc. will be dealt with on an individual basis.
 - The Sixth Form will make all efforts to work with the parent to solve the issue
 - Removal from the programme of study for non-attendance – see Appendix C
 - Parents are asked to provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for the Sixth Form.
- 3. We aim to recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.**
- Tutors, Heads of Year, the Learning Support Manager and Director / Deputy Director are sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.
 - Parents and students are all consulted in reintegration process.
 - All staff are involved/informed in/of reintegration process.
 - Opportunities for counselling are provided.
 - Timescale for review of reintegration plan should be agreed by all parties.
- 4. We aim to maintain the Overall Percentage Attendance of Students in Sixth Form.**
- Sixth Form Attendance policy is applied consistently.
 - Sixth Form maintains a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
 - Attendance issues feature in the Sixth Form’s values, ethos and curriculum.
 - Progress in attendance is monitored against measurable outcomes.
 - School reports attendance figures to the local authority on a regular basis
- 5. We aim to make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school.**
- Attendance and punctuality are featured as a regular item in monitoring and end-of-term letters to parents and in induction / intervention meetings.
 - Attendance figures for each student are available via Insight to parents.
 - Attendance issues are one of the main focusses in weekly Pastoral Meetings.

6. We aim to develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.

- Computerised registration is fully utilised in analysis of attendance data.
- Recording is standardised with respect to:
 - authorised/unauthorised absence
 - educational activity
 - presence
- Information is available for:
 - governors – provided with data annually
 - pastoral staff
 - other school staff
 - parents via school report, or on request
- Tutors, Heads of Year and the Learning Support Manager should be enabled to identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

Strategies to improve attendance

- Good attendance is rewarded via references
- Persistent lateness attracts sanction points or loss of free time
- A weekly meeting of the Pastoral Team raises immediate concerns. Heads of Year also liaise with the sixth form office staff.
- In the case of persistent absence, school works closely with students and parents.
- Student support and target-setting is used when appropriate.
- Parents have immediate access to attendance data via Insight.

Appendix A (Amendments to the 2006 Regulations).

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 allowed headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Appendix B: Raising of the participation age

The government have increased the age to which all young people in England are required to continue in education or training.

- pupils who left year 11 in summer 2014 or later have to continue until at least their 18th birthday

This does not mean young people must stay in school. They will be able to choose from:

- full-time education (eg at a school or college)
- an apprenticeship or traineeship
- part-time education or training combined with one of the following:
- employment or self-employment for 20 hours or more a week
- volunteering for 20 hours or more a week

It is the duty of the student to participate in education. Where a student no longer chooses to participate, then it is the school will report to the local authority, via a migration report, that the student is no longer participating.

It is the duty of the school to exercise their functions, where possible, so as to promote good attendance to enable young people to meet their duty to participate.

Appendix C

Removing sixth form students from their programme of study

According to DfE funding regulations, "Institutions must ensure that students are withdrawn from a programme where they have not attended classes for 4 continuous weeks, excluding holidays. Withdrawals must be actioned in a timely manner, and where a student has not been withdrawn but has been absent for more than 4 weeks, there must be auditable evidence of an intention to return."

- Funding guidance for young people 2021 to 2022: Funding regulations, DfE

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987632/16_to_19_funding_guidance_Regulations_2021_to_2022-final.pdf