



## **Bishop Milner Catholic College**

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE**

**“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it”**

**(Proverbs 22:6; NKJV).**

**REVISED: September 2020**

**PRESENTED TO DIRECTORS: September 2020**

**TO BE REVIEWED: September 2021**

## Attendance Policy

### Introduction

Bishop Milner Catholic College works in partnership with parents, students and directors to maximise opportunities for each student to realise their full potential. The college has expectations of high attendance levels and celebrates good attendance and achievement.

*Bishop Milner Catholic College is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all students and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.*

*We will provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome.*

*For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of college attendance and punctuality is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.*

*School attendance is subject to various education laws. The college will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the college will use to meet its attendance targets.*

At Bishop Milner Catholic College, we strongly believe that good attendance and punctuality are important in helping students achieve the best they can – **Education is important**. Students should be at college, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. All research shows that students who attend achieve well

- 6 out of 10 students with over 95% attendance gain 5 GCSE's grades 9 – 4
- Only 1 in 10 students who are poor attendees gain 5 GCSE's grades 9 – 4
- 2 in every 10 students who are poor attendees leave school with no qualifications at all

Descriptor	Attendance	Equals absent number of days per year	Learning Hours lost per year
<b>Excellent</b>	100%	0	0
	99%	2	10
<b>Good</b>	98%	4	20
	97%	6	30
	96%	7.5	37.5
<b>Satisfactory</b>	95%	9.5	47.5
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	90%	19	95
	89%	21	105
	88%	23	115
	87%	25	125
<b>Cause for concern</b>	86%	27	135
<b>Serious cause for concern</b>	85%	28.5	142
	84%	30.5	152
	83%	32	160
	82%	34	170
	81%	36	180

The Government has laid down guidelines which they expect students at Secondary School to achieve in terms of attendance – they are set at 96% attendance.

**A student will fall below 95% attendance if they miss as little as half a day over a 2 week period**

It is the expectation of the College that all students achieve at least 96% attendance. There are a variety of reasons for students missing college. Some are unavoidable but we would ask that you support us in ensuring that your child's attendance meets both the colleges and governments expectations. Any problems with regular attendance, especially any concerns about possible bullying or learning difficulties are best sorted out by the college, the parents and the student at an early stage. We will closely monitor your child's attendance and alert you if we feel there is an issue. The college undertakes a wide range of measures to support students where attendance at college is an issue. Where there may be an issue and we fail to see an improvement it may be necessary to make a referral to an appropriate external agency to ensure the student receives the support required to bring about an improvement.

At Bishop Milner Catholic College, we expect students and parents to be **Attentive and Discerning** about attendance:

<b>Excellent</b>	<p><b>Your child's attendance is above 98%</b>  They are <b>Attentive and Discerning</b> about their attendance  As well as being an excellent attender your child will almost certainly achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education or the world of work.</p>
<b>Good</b>	<p><b>Your child's attendance is 96-97%</b>  They are <b>Becoming more Attentive and Discerning</b>  Your child is likely to achieve their grades that will give them real opportunities to continue their studies or in the world of work.</p>
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<p><b>Your child's attendance is 95% and just below national expectations.</b>  Your child is likely to achieve their target grade but their outcomes will be improved further if their attendance improves.</p>
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<p><b>Your child's attendance is 94-90%.</b>  <b>They are below the national government threshold of 96%</b>  <u>Your child will miss up to 18 days each school year</u> and this will make it difficult for them to achieve her best</p>
<b>Concern</b>	<p><b>Your child's attendance is between 85-90%.</b>  They <b>Need to be more Attentive and Discerning</b> as attendance is <b>significantly below</b> expectation!  <b>You will face a fixed penalty fine or further legal prosecution if your child's attendance does not improve!</b>  <u><b>Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be difficult for them to keep in touch with lessons or work</b></u></p>
<b>Serious Concern</b>	<p><b>Your child's attendance is below 85%</b>  You need to <b>BE MORE ATTENTIVE AND DISCERNING AND TAKE ACTION NOW</b> as you will face a fixed penalty fine or further legal prosecution if your child's attendance does not improve!  <u><b>Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be almost impossible for them to keep in touch with lessons or work!</b></u></p>

## **Procedures**

1. The college register is taken twice a day; at 9.00am and at 2.15pm. The college register is opened at 9.00am and closed at 9.30am, in line with recommendation by the Secretary of State that 30 minutes from the beginning of registration would be reasonable. In the afternoon, because, with the exception of sixth formers, students remain on site at lunchtimes. The afternoon register closes at 2.25pm.
2. In circumstances such as bad weather and difficulties with public transport, the college may keep the register open for a longer period.
3. It is the responsibility of the register marker (Form Tutor) to record the student as / \ present, N absent, X study (Sixth Form only).
4. When a reason for absence is known, the N mark will be amended by the Attendance Officer, using the appropriate code.
5. Registration data is entered onto the college data system by Form Tutors/Class Teachers electronically at 9.00 am and 2.15 pm.
6. Sixth Form students arriving in college for lessons will sign in at Reception.

## **Reporting an Absence**

If your child is ill or absent from College A parent /carer must inform the college before 10am each day of the child's absence.

College will contact parents if we are not informed. Failure to send an explanation will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'.

If your child will be late in or has to leave college for a medical appointment please inform the college beforehand.

**To report an absence, call the college on 01384 889422 and choose Option 1 – Attendance. Then to leave a message use 'Option 1' or to speak to Mrs Heath, Attendance Officer, choose 'Option 2'**

Please clearly state:

- the child's full name
- tutor group
- the reason for the absence and how long you expect the absence to be for.
- who is reporting the absence

You may also use the SchoolComms app to report your child's absence/attendance at an appointment. Mrs Heath may call you back to clarify the reason for the absence or for further information.

## **Condoned Absence**

If your child is reluctant to attend please do not cover for them by condoning their absence. Please be aware that the college DOES NOT have to accept the reasons you give for your child's absence, and ONLY the college can authorise the absence, it is not an automatic right. We reserve the right to investigate any student absence.

## **Medical Appointments**

Wherever possible please arrange appointments outside of college hours.

If your child will be late in or has to leave college for a medical appointment, please inform the college prior to the appointment. Please provide an appointment card or letter as proof of the appointment. Without this your child may not be released from college or the leave will be unauthorised.

It is expected that usually a student will not be absent for a whole day due to an appointment, and the student is expected to return to college after the appointment time. College may not authorise the absence if it is reasonably expected that your child could return to college and does not.

### **Punctuality**

1. Students must sign in at Reception if they arrive after 09.00am. Late arrivals are recorded as L on the register.
2. Late arrival at afternoon registration i.e. after 2.15pm is recorded as L (late) by the Teacher. L means that they are present.
3. Students who arrive late due to medical appointments/ other appointments must provide evidence on their arrival at college or parents/carers have informed the college prior to the appointment taking place.
4. Students who arrive after 09.30am are recorded U (late after registers are closed). This will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that college session and statutory action may be taken.
5. Late arrivals must be recorded on the Tutor Group register so that all students can be accounted for in case of an emergency.
6. Students who arrive late to college may be placed into a detention. This will also be recorded on their college record.

We monitor lateness on a daily basis and if a student is late they will receive a college detention. Repeated lateness will result in a meeting with parents/carers and possible further sanctions given. Unfortunately, lateness is sometimes down to parents dropping students off late. Please support your child's learning by leaving home slightly earlier to get them here on time. Research shows a link between attendance at college and a child's achievement. Being late adds up to a loss of learning.

#### **Minutes late per day Equivalent of missing**

**5 mins 3.4 college days a year = 17 lessons**

**10 mins 6.9 college days a year = 35 lessons**

**15 mins 10.3 college days a year = 50 lessons**

**20 mins 13.8 college days a year = 70 lessons**

**30 mins 20.7 college days a year = 100 lessons**

### **Post registration truancy/non-attendance at lessons**

1. All Class Teachers are required to take a register in every lesson.
2. Spot lesson checks are followed up by the Attendance Officer.
3. The Attendance Officer patrols pick up students who are late to lessons and those who may be truanting.
4. Parents are always informed about truancy and non attendance at lessons.
5. Students who truant are issued with a College sanction.

6. Absence from individual lessons – should a student be present for registration but then fail to attend subsequent lessons (without permission) college reserve the right to amend the register code for that session to unauthorised to reflect the absence. In the event of this happening parents would be notified by telephone the same college day.

### **Registration Codes**

1. Bishop Milner Catholic College uses the registration codes in the DFE Absence Guidelines (Appendix 1)
2. The responsibility of processing explanations/notes, amending registers and entering these codes lies with the Attendance Officer. This is done daily and more frequently, as the need arises.

### **Early Intervention**

1. First day contact with parent/carer will take place for all students without a known reason for absence (e.g. telephone/ text/ email).
2. There will be early contact with parents in relation to attendance matters.
3. A Letter will be issued to parents for any student who is late twice in a week. Subsequent follow up meetings will then be arranged if lateness persists. The Attendance Officer and a member of Senior Staff may conduct a Home Visit for unknown incidents of non-attendance.
4. A weekly attendance data print out will be produced by the Attendance Officer and provided to the Assistant and Deputy Principal.
5. Regular meetings take place between the Assistant Principal and the Attendance Officer.
6. A letter will be sent out every term to parents of students who fall below 96%.
7. Once a student's attendance drops below 96% a meeting will be arranged between the student, Attendance Office and relevant Head of Year.
8. A follow up meeting will be offered at the end of each term for students with continuing absence. Those students with attendance at 94% or less will be required to provide medical evidence for authorised absence.

### **Monitoring individual students with poor attendance/punctuality**

1. The college will regularly monitor those students with less than 96% attendance/ poor punctuality, working with parents to ensure improvements in attendance and punctuality.
2. Students will be referred to the EIS according to the current referral procedure. The EIS will work with the students and their families to encourage better attendance and to set attendance targets.
3. Students with poor attendance/punctuality and their parent/carer will be invited to attend Meetings with the Attendance Office and HOY/SLT
4. Students with 90% attendance or less may be referred to the EIS and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

## **Monitoring Long Term Absence**

1. In the event of an authorised long term absence e.g hospitalisation, the Head of Year will co-ordinate the sending of college work to the student. If the authorised absence was with advanced notice (2-3 months) the college may be able to liaise with the Home and Hospital school for home tuition.
2. In the event of unauthorised long term absence the Head and Year and Attendance Officer should maintain contact with the parents at all times and in consultation with the LEA and Education Investigation Service to discuss other strategies to support the student back into college. This may involve consulting with other agencies and personnel.
3. The college is committed to supporting parents and students who have difficulty in maintaining good attendance due to medical needs.

## **Unauthorised Absence**

An absence will be recorded as unauthorised if:

1. College has not given approval in advance for a student to be absent.
2. College does not accept a given explanation as satisfactory justification for absence. E.g:
  - ❖ A student's/family members birthday
  - ❖ Shopping for uniform
  - ❖ Closure of a sibling's school for Inset or other purposes
  - ❖ "couldn't get up"
  - ❖ Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend
  - ❖ Family holidays/relatives visiting
3. Medical evidence requested by college is not forthcoming.
4. No explanation of absence is received within 2 weeks.
5. Only designated members of college staff can authorise student absence; a parent/carer may not authorise any absence. In cases where parents/carers seem to condone unauthorised absence, college may involve the EIS.
6. The college adopts the Government initiative of imposing Penalty Notices in cases of persistent unauthorised absence and persistent lateness to registration. Parents/Carers will receive a written warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued. Failure to ensure improvement in their child's attendance/punctuality will lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice.
7. Penalty Notices are issued by the EIS. This fine stands at £60 per parent/carer, per child, if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120, if paid after 21 days, but within 28 days of receipt. Non-payment of the Penalty within the 28 day time limit will trigger the prosecution process under the Provisions of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act. In circumstances where a Penalty Notice has been served and there is no improvement in attendance this may result in prosecution through the courts.

## Leave of Absence

There is **NO** automatic entitlement in law for students to take leave during term time.

Any request for leave of absence **MUST** be made in advance in writing to the Principal by the parent/carer showing **exceptional circumstances** and **supplying additional evidence**. If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time then it would not be normal to authorise the absence. **Absence during term time for holidays is, therefore, not considered an exceptional circumstance**. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event please confirm the date of the event and your travel arrangements.

Absence for a bereavement of a **close family** member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral only, NOT extended leave.

***Only the college and its' Academy Committee have the discretion to authorise any absence in a college year.***

The college has the right to take into consideration any others factors as deemed appropriate on application.

If the family choose to take the leave without authorisation, they must accept it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence is carefully monitored and leave of absence taken without authorisation may result in a fixed penalty fine of up to £120 per student for each responsible adult.

If the leave is authorised the student must return within the agreed leave period. The college has the right to delete the student from the admission register if the student does not return within the agreed time. The parents/carers may also be issued with a penalty notice for the unauthorised period of absence.

Re-admission to college cannot be guaranteed.

## Legal Sanctions

The College can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, each responsible adult must pay £60 per person per child within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Principal, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during college hours without a justifiable reason
- From September 2006 Parenting Contracts/Orders have been in place to support and help parents/carers address their child's behaviour and attendance at college. These are entered voluntarily and consist of a two sided formal agreement between the parent/carer and the LA or Governing Body of the college.

### **How Bishop Milner Catholic College promotes good attendance**

1. Using the college planner, parent evenings, student reviews and home - college agreements to engage parents/carers.
2. Using the college Newsletter / website to notify parents about attendance matters.
3. Report to you termly on how your child is performing in college, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
4. Communicating clearly with parents and students about the consequences of absence and truancy.
5. Reminding parents of their legal obligations and the potential sanctions e.g. Penalty Notices.
6. Promoting positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence and making arrangements for students to catch up work that they have missed through absence.
7. Providing work for posting home/collection by parent/carer during periods of absence due to illness or exclusion.
8. Supporting the work of other agencies such as Home and Hospital Services to support the student.

### **Rewards**

1. The college celebrates and rewards good attendance through the college's Celebration Newsletter.
2. 100% attendance is rewarded with a certificate at the end of each half term. Students with a 100% attendance for full academic year receive a gift voucher and a certificate at the college's annual Awards Presentation.
3. The Tutor Group and House with the highest attendance each term are rewarded with treats and a certificate. The winning House is also presented with the Attendance Trophy for the coming term.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

1. Attendance and punctuality is reviewed weekly by the Attendance Officer and regularly in discussions with the Assistant Principal.
2. Attendance and punctuality are discussed at Pastoral Board.
3. Late detentions are recorded on the data base of students.
4. The success of Attendance Clinics is evaluated in the period after the clinic by the Attendance Officer/Assistant Principal/Head of Year.
5. Absence requests are monitored by the Attendance Officer and collated on a data base. Requests for Leave of Absence during the college year are no longer approved. Requests must be put in writing to the Principal and further evidence provided to support the application.
6. The parents of new intake students are informed at the meeting before entry that holidays must be booked during college holidays. Parents are also reminded via newsletters and on the College website.
7. Students who return after a long absence are supported in re-integrating into the college community.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Students

1. To attend college every day regularly and punctually, unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
2. To arrive in college by 9.00am and Period 5 by 2.15pm
3. Those students who arrive after 9.00am are to report to reception where they will be given a late mark. Students who arrive to Period 5 after 2.15pm will also be given a late mark.
4. Students arriving late to college will be given a same day break time detention.
5. To sign out at the office when leaving the site for approved appointments. Appointment letters/cards must be produced in order to approve an appointment during the college day. Students will not be released without college receiving a form of notification for the appointment.

### Parent/ carer

1. To ensure their child has excellent attendance, punctually, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
2. To notify the college by 10.00am on the first day of absence/attendance at an appointment and give the specific reason.
3. To discuss planned absences with the college in advance and seek the appropriate leave of absence by placing the request in writing to the Principal at least 2 weeks prior to the leave.
4. To take their family holidays in the college holiday periods.
5. To make non-urgent medical/dental/optician appointments outside college times, wherever possible. If appointments are attended during the college day, students must return to college after their appointment time.
6. Appointment letters/cards must be produced in order to approve an appointment during the college day. Students will not be released without college having a form of notification for the appointment.
7. To provide the college with a telephone number on which they can be contacted. If a parent does not supply this information and the college has concerns, they may contact Social Services and/or the Police.

**These responsibilities will be included in the Home - College Agreement.**

### Form Tutor and Teaching Staff

1. **All members of staff are** responsible for keeping an accurate attendance register.
2. **The Form tutor is responsible for ensuring the morning register is marked by 9.15am. The Period 5 teacher is responsible for ensuring the afternoon register is marked by 2.25pm.**
3. Form Tutor to mark a student as late if they arrive after 9.00am **and Period 5 teacher if students arrive after 2.20pm).**
4. To praise students for good attendance and punctuality.
5. To take action, through discussion with students, use of break time detentions for students to make up the time, phone calls home and referral to the Head of Year when students are late.
6. To monitor student absence.

## **College Management**

1. The Principal will set clear and challenging attendance targets as part of college self review.
2. The Assistant Principal will be responsible for the strategic management of the attendance agenda and for reporting absence to the DFE intervening early when individual student absence gives cause for concern.
3. The Attendance Officer will work with the LA EIS and other appropriate agencies in order to support the attendance agenda.

## ATTENDANCE CODES

### Present

CODE	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
/	Present (AM)	
\	Present (PM)	
L	Late (before registers closed)	Arrived within 30 minutes of registration. (May be extended in severe weather)

### Approved Education Activity

CODE	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
V	Educational visit or trip	
W	Work experience	Attendance confirmed with placement
J	Interview	Must relate to FE, HE or employment.
P	Approved sporting activity	
B	Educated off site	e.g. vocational courses at college
D	Dual registration	Very rare. Student is registered at 2 schools.

### Authorised Absence

CODE	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
H	Family holiday	Must be agreed in advance. Max 10 days per year.
F	Extended family holiday	Must be agreed in advance. Used in exceptional cases only.
I	Illness	NOT medical or dental appointments, but does include hospital stays.
M	Medical/Dental appointments	NOT hospital stays.
R	Religious observance	
S	Study leave	
T	Traveller absence	
E	Excluded	
C	Other	Not covered by codes above. Very rare

### Unauthorised Absence

CODE	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
U	Late (after registers closed)	Arrived more than 30 mins after registration started.
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed)	
N	No reason yet provided for Absence	Used for short period (fortnight) only.
O	Unauthorised absence	

### Other

CODE	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
#	College closed to students	e.g. Weekends, Holidays, Elections, INSET days
Y	Enforced closure	e.g. Exceptional bad weather
X	Non-compulsory college age Absence	Sixth form student absent for a session which they are not required to attend. (e.g. they go home before p.m. registration because they have no timetabled lessons in the afternoon)
Z	Student not yet on roll	

If students are present at the time of registration, but then leave afterwards (e.g. for an appointment or due to illness), then they will count as present for statistical purposes.

