



# BENSHAM MANOR School

## Attendance Policy

Last reviewed: January 2018

Review January 2020



## Introduction

Bensham Manor School wishes to promote the best level of attendance achievable by our students. We recognize that good attendance facilitates effective learning and that promoting good attendance is one of the School's duties of care for its students. Ideally all students should achieve a good level of attendance (over 95%) with as many achieving 100% as possible.

Three considerations offset this position to some degree.

1. Some students at Bensham have significant medical conditions that make it unlikely they will achieve attendance at this level. The School does not consider it appropriate or beneficial for students who are unwell to attend School.
2. The School recognizes the importance of the student's family to their well-being and progress. We accept that some families can only manage to arrange family holidays in term time (due to work or other commitments) and, while we would prefer family holidays to be taken in the allocated holiday time, we will sometimes authorise family holidays to support the wellbeing of our students and their carers. The maximum amount of time we can authorise is 10 school days in a school year.
3. Religious Festivals.

## Promoting Attendance

- The School will actively monitor the attendance of students. Parents/carers must call the school office by 08:45am on each day their child is absent. If the parents/carers do not contact the school the office will text the family or phone if appropriate. If necessary this will be followed up by the Attendance Officer.
- If the child has a medical appointment the parent/carer should let the school know in advance and bring in the appointment card. This will be photocopied and attached to the records.
- Any planned absence, including family holiday, planned medical procedure or religious festivals must be communicated to the school via the leave of absence form (Appendix A).
- The Attendance Officer will follow up all cases where the School is concerned about either the reasons for absence or the amount of absence.
- All students with below 85% attendance will be referred to the Deputy Head who will consider these on a case-by-case basis with the Attendance Officer. The Attendance Officer, in conjunction with the Deputy Head, BEIT and any relevant external agencies will try to resolve all cases where attendance is a concern.
- The School will celebrate the achievement of classes and year groups half termly and termly for those classes who have the highest attendance and the most improved attendance.

## Targets and Review

- The Governors' Student Support Committee is responsible for setting and reviewing aspirational targets for students' individual attendance and the School's overall attendance target. This committee is also responsible for reviewing the level of attendance (with the Deputy Head) and keeping an overview of the implementation of this policy.
- School attendance 2016-17 was 92.3% (1% above national average for Special Schools). The aspirational target for 2017-18 is 92.5% for the School and 95% for each student.

## APPENDIX A – STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM



# BENSHAM MANOR School

## Request for Pupil Leave of Absence

Parents and Carers are required to inform the school of any absence due to illness, hospital appointments, religious festivals or holidays.

In respect of holidays the Department for Education does not allow schools to give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of the leave. Parents can be fined by the Local Authority for taking their children on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

The LA will be monitoring all school absences during term time and will challenge those schools who do not follow the new legislation.

If you wish the Headteacher to consider your request under 'exceptional circumstances' you may write to the head teacher requesting leave of absence or complete the form below.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Pupil		Class	
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Reason for leave of Absence

First Date of Absence		Last Date of Absence	
Signature of Parent /Carer		Date	

Head teachers Comments and Signature