

Braunton Academy - Attendance Improvement Strategy 2024-27

1. **Mission:** To return attendance to pre-pandemic levels

2. **Targets 2024 – 27:**

- Attendance to be above the pre-pandemic national average 94.2%

3. **Aims**

- To communicate and continually reinforce the importance, to all students and their parents/carers, of maximum attendance at school as an essential pre-requisite for academic achievement.
- To make explicit to all relevant parties (staff, parents/carers and students) school expectations for attendance.
- To promote a consistent approach towards all matters relating to attendance.
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance.
- To build a culture of 'everyone's responsibility' around attendance.
- To communicate to all relevant parties the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed "authorised".
- To communicate the need for families and school staff to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance.
- To reduce the absence rates for vulnerable and disadvantaged students

Braunton Academy supports children and parents by:

- Promoting the value of high attendance and reducing absence and particularly persistent absence.
- Ensuring every child has access to full time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to support high attendance and address absence.
- Ensuring school is a safe and supportive environment in which children can thrive.
- Promoting a sense of belonging and therefore enhancing the wellbeing of all students.

1. **Why regular attendance is important**

- Any absence impacts on the progress of a child and disrupts learning, relationships with peers and academic, personal and social development.
- Absence from school undermines the wellbeing of students.
- Repeated absence is detrimental to children and seriously impedes their learning and limits their future opportunities.
- Any child's absence disrupts teaching and may, therefore, affect the learning of others in the same class.
- Safeguarding - a child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Failing to attend school on a regular basis is therefore a safeguarding concern.

2. **Why Do Student's benefit from 'High' attendance?**

- Achieving high school attendance is a national priority. Braunton Academy data clearly shows a correlation between high attendance rates and high achievement.
- Most of our students achieve excellent attendance in line with national average. Illness usually appears as a block of time off school.
- We review attendance patterns each week and look for unbroken and broken weeks as a key indicator. We would not usually expect that students would have more than one or two broken weeks in an academic year.
- Regular broken weeks are a cause for concern, and we will offer support to families where there are more frequent broken weeks, in line with our attendance procedures. The impact broken weeks can have on a child's education is illustrated below:

If your child misses...	That equals at least...	Which is the same as around....	And over 13 years of education that's...	Or at least...
1 day a fortnight	78 lessons per year	4 whole school weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 whole years	1014 lessons
1 day a week	156 lessons per year	8 whole school weeks per year	Over 2.5 whole years	2028 lessons
2 days a week	312 lessons per year	16 whole school weeks per year	Over 5 whole years	4056 lessons
3 days a week	468 lessons per year	23 whole school weeks per year	Nearly 8 whole years	6084 lessons

- We want all students to achieve a minimum attendance of 97% because of the following impact on academic achievement:

Attendance in Year 11 of 95%+	Attendance in Year 11 of between 90% and 95%	Attendance in Year 11 of less than 90%
Percentage of students achieving five grades at 9-4 (inc. English and Maths) 81%	Percentage of students achieving five grades at 9-4 (inc. English and Maths) 70%	Percentage of students achieving five grades at 9-4 (inc. English and Maths) 23%
Percentage of students achieving five grades at 9-5 (inc. English and Maths) 64%	Percentage of students achieving five grades at 9-5 (inc. English and Maths) 49%	Percentage of students achieving five grades at 9-5 (inc. English and Maths) 0%
Average GCSE grade achieved 6	Average GCSE grade achieved 5	Average GCSE grade achieved 3
Students scoring one grade higher than their peers across 9 subjects can earn £200,000 more across their lifetime		

- Furthermore, we want students in school on time and attending every lesson.
- Lateness to school and lessons will be tackled through a robust response.

3. Tiered Approach to Supporting High Attendance

Tiers of support	Strategy Actions
Tier 1: Universal Support – everyone's responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Year, tutors, class teachers and pastoral support workers follow up absence on a student's return to school and provide additional support. The focus is on welcoming back / positive reinforcement / supporting to break down barriers. • Heads of Year, tutors, class teachers and pastoral support workers will support students (and parents/carers) to break down barriers to school. They will be proactive in supporting children to return to school after a broken week or a short absence. • Teachers always welcome students back to class and support with the catch up of missed work • Professional curiosity from <u>all</u> members of the school staff is displayed towards frequent absence e.g., more than two broken weeks • Receptionists/Attendance Officers routinely ask parents for reasons for absence and nature of illness when taking absence calls • Daily absence management and tracking by school staff is accurate. • A high attendance culture is promoted through assemblies, adult role modelling, personal development programmes and tutor time. • Schools make a high profile of good attendance through rewards (96%-100%) and communicate this to parents/carers regularly. • Schools communicate and continually reinforce to all students, parents and carers the impact of poor attendance in terms of the number of lost days and on academic achievement using the charts above.
Tier 2: - intervention / broken weeks focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register monitoring by Attendance Officer / school administrators – daily absence management process in place • Follow up calls by Attendance Officer and/or Pastoral Support Workers to students absent now with two broken weeks. • Weekly attendance hub meeting in the school – led by Senior Leader. Attendance Officer and Pastoral Officer(s) attend. Forensic focus on students starting to cause concern / records kept for monitoring • Simple action plan in place to address barriers to school – work to remove the barriers for students and their parents / carers • Absence of students with two or more broken weeks is followed up by the Attendance Officer or Pastoral Support Worker. • Monitoring of disadvantaged and PA students, any PA not within broken week criteria reported to Assistant Vice Principal - Inclusion • Early Help offered
Tier 3: Wave two – intervention by pastoral team / AO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral team support to consider and remove barriers to attendance • Pastoral team talk to the students regularly who are displaying broken week attendance • Attendance officer is following the Escalation Protocol for missed sessions– Letters A1 and A2 issued/ Medical evidence advised • Meetings with parent/carers and professionals -action plans recorded in CPOMs • Complete 'review' of action plans after 4 weeks • Early Help offered
Tier 4: Wave three – pastoral/legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is now classed as Persistently Absent (PA) • Attendance letters 3 and 4 are being issued • Formal legal meetings are being held / EWO processes referral • Early Help offered

4. Braunton Academy Escalation Process

School support attendance escalation Process

HoY/Tutor/class teacher/pastoral support workers to have a supportive "back to school" conversation with the student the day that they return to school or as soon as possible after this date if exceptional circumstances mean that it cannot happen on the first day. Aim of conversation:

- See the student on his/her return to school to show a genuine interest in their wellbeing and to ask how they are.
- Check that they are feeling sufficiently fit to be in school
- Gently explain what actions/events have taken place in their absence which have had an impact on their learning and to "bring them up to speed" with events in school
- Offer support if required for those students whose absence may be linked to personal/domestic problems and escalate if appropriate.
- If there is any suggestion of a school related absence, the causes of this must be discussed and solutions sought.
- Relate absence percentage and time off to attainment.
- Highlight any patterns of absence
- Any relevant information from discussions must be recorded on the school system

Braunton Academy Absence Escalation Protocol

Considerations for each absence

- Is the level of absence in line with the reasons given by parents?
- Does the student have an ongoing medical condition that needs further clarification?
- Do you have evidence or any medical professional guidance that it may affect attendance?
- What was their attendance last year?
- Is it ad hoc absence or 1 bout of illness?
- **OR** is it just a pattern of unauthorised absence
- The triggers below need to be reviewed before action is taken. It may not be appropriate to impose where certain circumstances exist (i.e., long term hospitalisation)

<p>97%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Intervention 	<p>Tutor/PSW intervention: Supportive return to school and development of professional relationship to support return to school. Tutor/PSW to have supportive conversation with home and student. Record on CPOMS</p>
<p>95%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Absent Sessions 	<p>(A1 Letter) Initial letter sent to parent advising concern regarding the amount of absence due to illness or unauthorised absence reminding them of their duties to ensure their child is in school and on time, to report absence every day their child is absent. Explaining that U codes are unauthorised late marks. Staff intervention - Record of letter A1 being sent is recorded in SIMS</p>
<p>93% Telephone Conversation Requested</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 Absent Sessions 	<p>(A2 Letter) Further illness or unauthorised absence. Letter invites the parent/carer to make a telephone meeting, possibly explaining that all absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Staff intervention - Letter A2 being sent is recorded in CPOMS / Meeting recorded in CPOMS Meeting: Pastoral Support Worker to meet with parents to discuss concerns and identify strategies to improve attendance. Develop a plan of action for parents/child/school/PHN/other professionals, include an Individual Healthcare Plan if appropriate Supporting students with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Offer Early Help. Discuss the unauthorising of medical absences depending on the individual circumstances of the student.</p>
<p>Review meetings/conversations after the A2 letter and meetings</p>	<p>Reviews following the A2 letter and planning meeting will take place in a variety of ways. For examples Attendance Officers and Pastoral Support Workers will be in constant touch with parents and carers to review the implementation and impact of the plans. Review notes may be recorded in CPOMS. This could include IEPs/ Student Plans that outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target met, continue to review

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absences were changed to authorised as further documentation received Targets not met, confirm that it could be escalated to consider legal action if nothing changes Some changes have been made, but further support and actions required
Absence continues – below 90% Meeting Requested <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 Absent Sessions 	(A3 Letter) to parent to confirm that despite the plan and review conversations the absence continues. A further review meeting date may be put in place , but this is optional and only if you feel that adjustments made to the plan at the initial review may have an impact on attendance, or you feel that it may keep the parents on track with the improvements. Offer Early Help Staff intervention – record on CPOMS and email meeting notes to parent/carer sign posting support.
Absence continues – Severely absent below 90% and Persistently Absent (PA) SLT Meeting Requested	(A4 Letter) Letter sent when attendance is below 90% and therefore Persistently Absent (PA). Staff intervention - Senior Lead for Attendance and Pastoral support worker to meet with parents and discuss final options to improve attendance and support student. Record on CPOMS and email meeting notes to parent/carer sign posting support. Formal legal meeting (if there are 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence). Following the above letters/stages, meetings have been offered, and absence has continued to deteriorate then invite to a formal legal meeting . Offer Early Help
Failure to attend formal meeting	(A5 Letter) Failure to attend formal legal meeting. Offer Early Help. Record in CPOMS
Final warning	(A6 Letter) Referral to DCC for prosecution. Offer Early Help Record in CPOMS
Additional letters	End of year concern letter L1 – Late letter B1, B2 & B3 – Broken week letter
Keep a copy of all letters on school system including the Plan(s)	
Consider legal proceedings – at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of letters sent to parents Copy of supportive plan (including IHCP if appropriate) Outcome of support given Registration Certificate

To ensure flexibility for individual students, when the escalation process is not being followed for a student, attendance lead should be notified, consulted and reasons to be recorded on the school system. School system should have logged:

- Active support plans to improve attendance
- Support plans must be actioned, reviewed, and renewed robustly

The percentage and sessions of absences can conflict with each other; therefore, it is recommended that for weekly monitoring you obtain a percentage report and then look at each students' records on an individual basis alongside O code and U code reports.