BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL

WORSLEY, MANCHESTER

M28 2WQ

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR REGISTRATION AND ATTENDANCE

1 Aims

1.1 This is the attendance policy of Bridgewater School (the **School**).

1.2 The School promotes high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.

1.3 The aims of this policy are as follows:

1.3.1 to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;

1.3.2 to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;

1.3.3 to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;

1.3.4 to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and

1.3.5 to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

2 Scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage [**EYFS**).

2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

3 Regulatory framework

3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;

3.1.2 EYFS *statutory framework for group and school-based providers* (DfE, January 2024);

3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;

3.1.4 Children Act 1989;

3.1.5 Childcare Act 2006;

3.1.6 Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);

3.1.7 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

3.1.8 Equality Act 2010; and

3.1.9 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)

3.1.10 Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2026)

3.1.11 Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2026)

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

3.2.1 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, August 2024);

3.2.2 Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, August 2024);

3.2.3 Guidance for Parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);

3.2.4 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);

3.2.5 Children missing education (DfE, 2025);

3.2.6 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);

3.2.7 Behaviour in schools: advice for head teachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);

3.2.8 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);

3.2.9 Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);

3.2.10 Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);

3.2.11 Providing Remote education: guidance for schools (DfE, updated August 2024); and

3.2.12 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

3.2.13 The Independent School Standards Guidance - 2026

4 The importance of good attendance

4.1 The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

4.1.1 the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;

4.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;

4.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and Parents;

4.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and

4.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

5 School responsibilities

5.1 The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.

5.2 The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and Parents.

5.3 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.

5.4 The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

5.5 The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

6 Attendance Monitoring

6.1.1 The School Attendance Champion is Ms C Hemmings (hemmingsc@bwslive.co.uk). The SLT and School Attendance Champion's (SAC) responsibilities are:

(a) to set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;

(b) to establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;

(c) to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;

(d) to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and

(e) to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and Parents.

6.2 **Specific Responsibilities**

The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day-to-day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

6.2.1 have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;

6.2.2 record all absences promptly and accurately using the processes specified;

6.2.3 seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;

6.2.4 make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;

6.2.5 look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC/SLT of any specific concerns;

6.2.6 deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;

6.2.7 consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and

6.2.8 discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and Parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

6.2.9 follow the school's 'Graduated Response to Supporting Attendance' (see Appendix 5).

6.3 **All staff**

6.4 The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and Parents about it.

6.5 The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

7 Monitoring attendance

7.1 The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:

7.1.1 monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;

7.1.2 using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);

7.1.3 conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;

8 Pupil responsibilities

8.1 School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

8.2 Pupils should be aware that:

8.2.1 they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;

8.2.2 they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;

8.2.3 they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;

8.2.4 they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;

8.2.5 any unexplained absence will be followed up;

8.2.6 persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:

(a) offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;

(b) communication with Parents;

(c) reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and

(d) sanctions against them in line with the School's behaviour policies.

9 Additional needs

9.1 The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

9.2 The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

9.3 It will also work with Parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.

9.4 Where a pupil has an education, health and care plan the School will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

9.5 Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

9.6 Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with Parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

9.7 The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

10 Parent / carer responsibilities

10.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

10.2 This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the School.

10.3 The School will help Parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long-term consequences of poor attendance.

10.4 Expectations the School places on Parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy

10.5 Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

11 Information sharing

11.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

11.2 The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

11.3 The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

11.3.1 New pupil and deletion returns;

11.3.2 Attendance returns;

11.3.3 Sickness returns.

12 Record keeping and confidentiality

12.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

12.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website that explain how the School will use personal data.

Reviewed by the Head Teacher and Senior Management Team – November 2026

Appendix 1 School arrangements

1 Managing attendance

1.1 The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.

1.2 The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 08.40am to close at 3.45pm, but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

2 The role of Parents / carers

2.1 The School expects all Parents to:

2.1.1 make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;

2.1.2 notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and

2.1.3 cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

2.2 Parents of day pupils should ensure their child attends School by 8.40am for morning registration in Seniors and by 8.50am in Prep.

3 Registration and attendance checks

3.1 Morning registration is at 8.40am in Seniors. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes after the start of morning registration. Prep registration opens at 8.30am and closes at 8.50am.

3.2 Afternoon registration will be at 2.25pm during tutor time in Seniors and between 1.15pm and 1.30pm in Prep.

3.3 Once the morning and afternoon registers close, a pupil will be recorded as absent if not present in the classroom/lesson.

3.4 If a pupil is absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed they will be recorded as a late arrival (code L).

3.5 If a pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session without a satisfactory explanation e.g. because of an unavoidable cause, then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (code U) and the reasons given/not given will be recorded.

4 Reporting absence

4.1 If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the following below by email / telephone by 08.40am on first morning of absence;

4.2 Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.

5 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence

5.1 Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register.

6 Authorised absences

6.1 Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

7 Applications for an authorised leave of absence

7.1 Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Head teacher.

7.2 The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.

7.3 Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Head teacher

7.4 Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the school day except in cases of emergency when the school office should be informed.

7.5 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head teacher to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence.

7.6 A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

8 Reporting duties

8.1 The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attendance their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.

8.2 In the event that a pupil holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the School under the Points Based System goes missing, the School will report to UKVI if the pupil misses ten consecutive expected contact points.

8.3 Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.

8.4 The report will be made by the School's Level 1 user via the Sponsor Management and in accordance with prevailing UKVI guidance

8.5 Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing child policy and safeguarding and child protection policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

Appendix 2 Admission register

1 Admission register

1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:

1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and

1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.

1.2 The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

1.3 The school must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.

1.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers and details of the school they last attended.

1.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.[1]

1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:

1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;

1.6.2 the address of the pupil;

1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;

1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;

1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;

1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;

1.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 3 Attendance register

1 Attendance register

1.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024

1.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way that complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.

1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.[2]

1.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

1.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every is:

1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or

1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or

1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or

1.6.4 absent.

1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

1.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;

1.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;

1.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;

1.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;

1.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording absence

2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England)

(Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

2.1.1 leaves of absence;

2.1.2 other authorised reasons;

2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;

2.1.4 unauthorised absence.

3 Unauthorised absence

3.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

3.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head Teacher

3.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;

3.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;

3.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

Appendix 4: Bridgewater Registration Codes

Code	Description	Statistical Meaning	DCSF Definition
/	Present (AM)	Present	Present *in school* during registration
****	Present (PM)	Present	Present *in school* during registration
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	
B	Any other approved educational activity (not sporting activity or work experience)	Present - Approved Educational Activity	Educated off-site at a supervised activity approved by the school i.e. Music Exam
K	Education provision arranged by the local authority	Present - Approved Educational Activity	
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Present - Approved Educational Activity	The student is participating in or attending an approved sporting activity and is supervised by someone approved by the school.
V	Educational Visit	Present - Approved Educational Activity	School organised trips and visits & is supervised by someone approved by the school.
W	Work Experience	Present - Approved Educational Activity	Work experience for Y10+ students and should only be used when the student is present in the work experience placement
C	Absent with leave (Exceptional circumstances)	Authorised Absence	Any approved absence not covered by another leave or absence code
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised Absence	
C2	Part-time timetable for compulsory school age pupil	Authorised Absence	Must be agreed with parent and be part of a wider support plan, have regular review dates and a proposed end date.
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	A pupil who is excluded for a fixed period & remains on the school roll
I	Illness (Not medical or dental appointment	Authorised Absence	

J1	Interview for employment / admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence	Applies only to interviews (e.g. not open days)
M	Medical / Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence	Religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong
S	Studying for a public examination	Authorised Absence	Study leave for Year 11+ pupils during mock and public examinations
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised Absence	
7	Illness due to Covid		
8	Self-isolating due to Covid		
9	Shielding due to Covid		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence	
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	No reason for absence. Every endeavour should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. If no reason is provided within 5 school days, Code N should be replaced with Code O
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence	Where no reason is established or school is not satisfied that the reason would be recorded using an authorised absence code
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Pupil has arrived late and the register has closed before the end of the session (after 9.10am)
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances	Students who are less than 5 years old at the start of the term in which the session takes place or were 16 years before the start of the school year. I.e. KG & Sixth Form, and their timetable does not require them to attend.
Y1	Transport normally provided not available	Not counted in possible attendances	e.g. school transport not available

Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Not counted in possible attendances	e.g. severe local traffic/accident
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y6	In accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances	Pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise use 'I') but to do so would be contrary to government guidance or legislation
Y7	Unable to attend due to unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances	This code should be used for temporary exclusion due to non-payment of fees
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances	To enable setting up registers in advance of a pupil joining
#	Planned whole school closure	Not counted in possible attendances	e.g. school holidays

Graduated Response to Supporting Attendance at BWS

Attendance	People involved	Expected school Interventions	Other Information
100%-94% 'In school every day'.	Whole school approach	• Whole school approach. • Monitor any students on the vulnerability map, LAC and SEND register to ensure remain in this banding • Attendance awards as a positive intervention	
94%-89%- Approaching Persistent Absence	As above and FT	• As above • Check in with student in case underlying issues linked to attendance- FT • FT to feedback to PC	
90-80%- persistently absent	FT and PC Parents CH	**Form Tutor:** • Barriers and needs need identifying with student- Form Tutor • Plan to help address any barriers with review every week- **BWS template used** • Letter home- **Stage 1 letter** **PC/Attendance Champion** • If 15 days or more absence (concurrently or separately) for same illness referral to be filled in to Education Attendance officer at LA. **PC:** • PC to arrange meeting with parents to create plan to help with attendance. • Pupil voice involved with targets set • Letter (Stage 2 letter) and a copy of plan sent home. • **Ask for medical evidence rather than just call from parents when unwell.**	

		• Signpost to external support **CH/PLY** • Consider Early Help referral depending on barriers explored.	
80%-70% Persistently absent	PC CH	• As above • Review of plan- what is and isn't working • Home visit from school to help support attendance- Attendance Champion or PC • As above Additional meeting with Attendance Champion with parents and pupil to review plan and inform students of next steps if attendance does not improve.	
70%- 60%	CH PLY/J Nairn	• Meeting with head/PLY regarding ongoing concerns with attendance • Educational neglect considered dependent on reasons.behind absence • As above • Referral to Bridge discussed with DSL.for Educational Neglect	