



**Melland
High School**
BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE AND SCHOOL PROCEDURES

(to be read in conjunction with Bright Futures Educational Trust Attendance and Punctuality Policy)

This should go in the school handbook, parent information booklets etc.

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1. Aims

- To ensure that overall school attendance is above National Average for SEND.
- To raise the profile of the importance of high-level attendance among students, parents/carers and all staff
- To outline a procedure for monitoring attendance and punctuality and intervention strategies
- To reduce persistent lateness
- To explain the legal processes for persistent lateness and absence

2. Identified Staff

Link Governor for Attendance – Colin Shepherd

Principal – Sue Warner

SLT member with responsibility for Attendance/Attendance Champion – Rob Barlow (Assistant Principal)

Pastoral Leads (Heads of Department) – Gheftar Jan Ahmed, Dan Hughes, Charlotte Johnson.

3. Legislation and guidance

By law, all children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) must receive a suitable full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens - either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. As a last resort schools and local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance.

Melland High School seeks to operate in ways which maximise student potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

The school fulfils its responsibilities in respect of taking a morning and afternoon session registration; of being open for the required 190 student school days unless prevented by extreme weather or other unforeseen exceptional circumstance, and by using the nationally recognised attendance codes.

4. School procedures

4.1. Attendance register

In line with Department for Education guidance, Melland High School will take the attendance register 9:20am The morning register will close at 9:45am, meaning any subsequent student arrival will be coded as an unauthorised absence unless there is sufficient reason for this to be authorised.

4.2. Unplanned absence

If a student is absent from the school, it is vital that a parent contacts school at the earliest opportunity to provide a reason for absence, and no later than 9:45am. Primarily, student absence should be communicated via *telephone on 0161 223 9915*. In the event that absence cannot be communicated via *telephone*, please email admin@mhs.bright-futures.co.uk.

Absence can only be authorised where there is good cause. If no adequate reason for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. The decision and authority to authorise an absence lies with the school in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1996. Parents/carers cannot authorise absence. Where deemed necessary, the school reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness.

4.3. Medical or dental appointments

It is an expectation of the school that medical and dental appointments are taken out of school time. Missing lessons, even for medical and dental appointments, has a detrimental impact on student progress and achievement.

Melland High School recognises that it is not always possible to schedule appointments out of school time. In the rare occasion that a student must attend a medical appointment during school time, parents must notify the school office in advance and provide evidence of the appointment. Patterns of medical and dental appointments during school sessions over a period of time will result in further follow up investigation and action. Regardless of the reason, all medical appointments are recorded as an absence, and will impact upon the student's overall attendance percentage.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance is a whole school initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, students and all members of school staff.

The table below highlights the whole school approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. This is led by Assistant Principal/strategic lead for attendance who works with school staff to monitor and improve attendance, while raising the profile and emphasising the importance of attendance at individual and whole school level.

Colour	Attendance %	Concern/Intervention
Green	96-100%	No concern-best chance of overall success
Yellow	94-96.9%	Some concern - Individual monitoring and intervention
Amber	90-93.9%	Significant concern - Personalised interventions/Multi agency involvement
Red	0-89.9%	Serious concern – Personalised interventions/Multi agency involvement/Legal proceedings

In order to promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, Melland High School uses a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies. As appropriate to student age these include:

The school will do the following to promote and celebrate good attendance:

- Updating the whole school community about attendance matters.
- Celebrating good attendance in assemblies and house points to spend at rewards shop.
- Raising the profile of excellent attendance and punctuality in student assemblies.
- Creating a school ethos that students want to be part of.
- Developing procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- Building strong relationships with families.
- Awarding the class with the best attendance for the week.
- Communicate our high expectations to students and parents/carers.

- Provide support and strategies to families who need additional support.

6. Attendance monitoring

Melland High School has an escalating approach to reinforcing high levels of attendance and intervening in respect of attendance concern.

The principles underpinning the model will be used to promote consistency both across the different year groups of compulsory school age and within each year group. In summary these are as follows:

- The attendance statistics for every student at the school will be shared during tutor time weekly.
- Attendance matters will receive positive reinforcement in tutor time, assemblies and celebrations.
- The Head of Department/Pastoral Lead is responsible for the overview of attendance in their group; however, they are supported by tutors, and SLT.

In cases that levels of attendance decreases, the school will make use of the following escalation guidance:

1. **Green 96% - 100%, or increased attendance-** Students whose attendance is within these parameters should be congratulated and receive positive encouragement to maintain high levels of attendance. Tutors will celebrate these students' attendance weekly, and the school will recognise and reinforce their level of attendance.
2. **Yellow 94% – 95.9%, some concern** - Attendance at this level is beginning to cause concern. Early intervention is a preventative measure. The tutor has a key role in supporting students and communicating with parents/carers. Heads of Department to provide advice and support to ensure students' holistic needs are met. Attendance lead to consider the need for a parental meeting/home visit.
3. **Amber 90% - 93.9%, significant concern** - There are significant concerns regarding attendance at this level. A personalised approach is required. The Heads of Department will take the lead role with parents/carers and student if appropriate and will hold a meeting to identify the issues affecting their attendance. A multi-agency approach may be required.
4. **Red 0 - 89.9%, serious concern** - A student with this level of attendance will receive intervention and support from the strategic lead for attendance in addition to the wider Senior Leadership Team. The team will meet weekly to discuss students whose attendance is declining. A series of actions to support improvement will be agreed, delegated and recorded. A personalised approach including multi-agency involvement/legal proceedings will be considered at this point.

1. Lateness and punctuality

It is the school's responsibility to provide the best education possible. This can only be achieved if a student attends regularly and punctually. Melland High School expects all students to arrive at school, registrations and lessons on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Occasional and/or patterns of lateness to Melland High School will result in further follow up investigation and action.

All students should arrive at school by 9:20am ready for registration. The register will close at 9:45am, and subsequent student arrivals will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, unless there is valid reason for this to be authorised.

7. Following up absence

Parents/carers of a student who is not present in school will be notified of their absence. Parents/carers have the responsibility to inform Melland High School of student absence. It is a safeguarding priority for us to know the whereabouts of all students.

Absences will be followed up through the attendance intervention system, which will include, but is not limited:

- i. Phone calls to parents/guardians
- ii. Attendance Letters
- iii. Meetings with tutor/HoDs/SLT
- iv. Home Visits
- v. Attendance Trackers
- vi. Attendance Contracts

7.2 Reporting to parents and carers

In order to support parents/carers in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual student attendance, Melland High School seeks to keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance and to actively involve parents/carers on attendance issues.

Methods include:

- First day calling
- Tutor support
- Parental meetings
- Escalating letters warning of concerns
- Attendance percentages included on student reports and reported annually
- Discussion at EHCP reviews/progress evenings

8. Authorised and unauthorised absence

8.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

In order to maximise individual achievement, parents/carers should avoid making routine appointments for students during the school day. Parents/carers should not take family holidays during term time.

Parents/carers should be advised that leave of absence can only be authorised at the discretion of the Principal and will only be agreed in very exceptional circumstances. Further information regarding this can be found in the Bright Futures Educational Trust Attendance and Punctuality Policy. On the rare occasion that absences are requested, this should be submitted in writing to the Principal.

8.2 Legal sanctions

All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school on a regular and punctual basis. Should any student's attendance or punctuality become a concern we will take the appropriate actions as required. Melland High School and Manchester City Council will work in partnership where legal action is required.

Legal action includes:

- **Penalty Notice:** A Penalty Notice may be issued for each student who has unauthorised absence or lateness. Following 6 sessions of unauthorised absence, a Penalty Warning Letter will be issued. There will be a review for three weeks, and should the student's attendance continue to decline, a Penalty Notice will be issued once the pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.

A fixed penalty notice can be issued without warning in whereby:

A leave of absence of 5 days (10 sessions) or more was taken during term time without the school's consent.

If an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken and there have been instances of previous unauthorised absences in an 8 week period. This can be one day.

Where a parent has taken the pupil on holiday during term-time with the school's authorisation and has failed to return the pupil to school on the date agreed.

The penalty is a £80 fine, if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £160 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within the 42 day period, a prosecution will be sought.

- **Prosecution for unauthorised absence:** It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the School. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. If a student's attendance continues to decline, and unauthorised absence increases despite efforts by the School to support the pupil in attending school, a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Service, upon which a Court Panel meeting will be convened.

Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

9. Children at Risk of Missing Education

Policies and guidance related to Children at Risk of Missing Education can be found on the Manchester City Council website.

The contact for Local Authority Attendance issues is cme@manchester.gov.uk

10. Students leaving the school and Removal from Roll

Melland High School has a commitment to safeguard students. Therefore, destinations of all students who leave the school will be monitored and confirmed with Manchester City Council and the relevant receiving LA.

School leaders will ensure that detailed records are kept for students who stop attending the school and are removed from the roll/admissions register.

