

St. Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Attendance Policy

2015/2016

Introduction

At St. Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy we aim to encourage all students to achieve their full potential. Regular school attendance and good punctuality are fundamental if students are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and maximise their achievements. Every child has a right to be educated and the academy, in partnership with parents and carers, has a duty to ensure maximum levels of attendance.

In order to achieve excellent attendance we strive to provide a welcoming, safe and secure environment where students feel valued. In addition, we strive to create a stimulating and accessible curriculum with high quality teaching for every student, together with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, in a pleasant, clean and stimulating environment. Attendance is inevitably bound up with the ethos of St. Bede's Academy and the networks of relationships that exist within it.

Principles underlying good attendance

- All staff should actively promote excellent attendance and punctuality. Students need to feel valued so that they want to come to St. Bede's and understand that good attendance and punctuality are valued highly by the school and employers alike. All adults that work in the academy are expected to promote the importance of attendance and punctuality by being good role models.
- The academy must provide opportunities for students to be successful and happy in their work so they are motivated to attend. However, we must have strategies and support systems in place to deal with problems or failure and students need to be aware that adults will support them through any difficulties. Tutors, House Leaders, Pastoral Support and Assistant Headteacher, Attendance Officer, the Education Welfare Service (as and when necessary) and other agencies have vital roles to play in this. Clear and consistent referral procedures are in place to identify and address attendance issues. Other strategies that help to address possible attendance problems include the Peer Mentoring Programme that links older students with younger ones to discuss issues that affect student's willingness to attend St. Bede's Academy.
- Student Leadership Team - Student Voice provides opportunities to express their views on many issues, including factors that affect student attendance and punctuality. Their views are valued and treated seriously.
- We discourage parents from taking their child/children on holiday during term-time as this has a negative impact on their learning. Holidays will only be authorised in the most exceptional of circumstances (in addition to strict guidelines regarding attendance, examination periods, behaviour, etc. being adhered to). Reminders are issued within the Parent Newsletter regarding lateness, Leave of Absence and Illness.
- The recognition and celebration of success in terms of good attendance and punctuality are important to provide positive reinforcement.

Strategies for achieving good attendance and punctuality

- Good attendance is rewarded through the award of certificates/letters home for excellent and improved attendance on an individual and tutor group basis. Good attendance is promoted through the public display of tutor group attendance levels termly. This keeps

attendance high profile amongst staff and students. Assemblies are used to present certificates.

- Students need to understand that it is a legal requirement to be registered for each of the morning and afternoon sessions and any absence needs to be authorised by St. Bede's Academy. This requires a note or telephone call from the parent or carer of a student to the academy on the morning of the first day of absence. If no explanation is received, the Student Liaison Officer for each House will telephone on the first day of absence before 10.30am. Persistent unauthorised absence will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.
- Any student who wishes to leave the school site, having already been electronically registered, must report to their House Office before departure and sign out at the main reception. A medical appointment card must be shown or a letter/phone call from the parent must have been received, and the office notified, prior to the student leaving. Students must sign in at the office on their return from an appointment.
- It is important that students are in their first lesson before 8.40am prompt as lateness disrupts lessons and most importantly, learning. We operate a detention system for students who are late after 8.40am. A letter will be sent to parents in cases of persistent lateness and the parent invited in for a meeting with the House Leader/Student Liaison Officer. If the lateness continues an Internal Referral will be sent to the Attendance Officer and the parent invited in. If there is no improvement a further referral to the Education Welfare Service may be needed
- Attendance figures are presented to the DfE and Governing Body each term and are included in Individual Student Reports which are distributed periodically throughout the year to parents.
- Student Liaison Officer's review attendance on a daily basis monitor constantly producing reports every half term. All teachers should look out for any patterns in absence and investigate or report their concerns to the students House Leader as appropriate. If a student's attendance level drops below 95% the cause will be investigated by the Student Liaison Officer/House Leader who will liaise with parents if no improvement an Internal Referral will be made to the Attendance Officer.
- Where students attend external provision, we receive weekly Registration Certificates from the external providers. These are monitored by the Student Liaison Officer and any concerns reported to the Attendance Officer/Senior Management Team.