

Attendance protocol

Beckfoot Priestthorpe is committed to maximising educational achievement for all our pupils. To gain the best from their time with us, it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality.

- Beckfoot Priestthorpe recognises that parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school every day, (section 444 Education Act 1996)
- As a school we aim to ensure that our pupils access full education which meets their needs and allows them to realise their full potential
- We will work with families to ensure all pupils attend regularly and punctually
- We will challenge those families that give low priority to attendance and punctuality

Legalities

Only the school, and not parents/carers, can decide whether to authorise an absence; even if you send in a note or leave a message. This is written down in the Education Registration Regulations 2006. Parents/carers are responsible under the Education Act 1996 for ensuring their child's full and regular attendance at the school while they are of compulsory school age. We can ask the Local Authority to take legal action if we have not authorised your child's absences from the school. Legal action can include prosecution, the issue of a fixed penalty notice, or an application for an Education Supervision Order in the Family Court, which can lead to prosecution and/or a fine.

Safeguarding

As a school we recognise that some of our pupils may be especially vulnerable. If your child does not attend school regularly, they may be at risk of harm. Safeguarding the interests of all pupils is the responsibility of everyone. Within the context of the school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses attendance, behaviour management, health and safety and access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils may be at risk of harm if they are not in school regularly. Learners who are missing from school are at significant risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and underachieving (even at primary school age).

What can you expect from Beckfoot Priestthorpe School?

- We will work closely with families where a pupil's absence is a cause for concern
- We will support pupils who are having emotional difficulties
- We will promote excellent attendance and punctuality and investigate any unexplained absences which may result in a home visit

What Beckfoot Priestthorpe expects from parents/carers

- Talk to your child about school and education, taking a positive interest in their learning.
- Value education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Encourage your child to look to the future and have aspirations.

- ALWAYS inform school if your child is unable to attend (by 9am where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return. If no indication of a return date has been given, parents/carers must contact the school on each day of absence.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask school for help if your child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on your child's attendance
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bedtime, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before. Talk to your child about forming these habits
- To not keep your child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking your child out of school during term-time.
- Ensure school has 2 up-to-date contact numbers.

How we respond to absence/lateness

- We take our safeguarding duties very seriously and if a pupil is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer, to explain the absence, the school will contact parents/carers for a reason.
- A text will then be sent to parents/carers if no contact has been made.
- If there is still no contact made with parents/carers, the attendance team may carry out a home visit to ascertain the reasons for absence and confirm there are no safeguarding issues. Until school is provided with a valid reason for your child's absence, this will be an unauthorised absence.
- All absence notes will be recorded.
- Where a student's absence is cause for concern, the school will write to parents/carers and/or invite the parents/carers into school in accordance with our Graduated Attendance Strategy
- The school gates will close at 8.40 am and any children arriving after this time will need to come through the front office and will receive a late mark. If, however, children arrive after 9.05am this will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Persistent absence

All pupils whose attendance meets the threshold for persistent absence (less than 90%) will be given priority for intervention via the following:

- Beckfoot Trust Graduated Attendance Strategy will be initiated (see attached document)
- An initial meeting with families to discuss absences may lead to an attendance contract to improve attendance being drawn up.
- Where families fail to co-operate with school to improve attendance, further advice will be sought which could lead to sanctions being imposed

All Beckfoot Trust schools have a target of 97% and at the end of last academic year, Beckfoot Priestthorpe stood at 94.71% with persistent absence being high at 15.2%.

We fully appreciate all our families have different situations and as a school, we hope parents/carers will work with us so we can provide you with any support that you may need. If you wish to discuss any aspect of your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to get in touch via the school office. We hope our families will work with us to improve our attendance throughout the academic year.