

CATOR PARK SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Revised July 2009

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The school aims to ensure that all students attend regularly so that they are able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Unauthorised absence is discouraged as it leads to educational disadvantage and may place children at risk.

Good attendance is encouraged by a termly prize draw. A certificate is awarded each week to the tutor group with the best attendance the previous week. Any tutor group with 100% attendance in a week will be awarded with prizes.

Students with 100% attendance in a half term will also be awarded with certificates.

PARENT/CARERS:

Parent/carers have a legal duty to send their children to school regularly and risk prosecution by the London Borough of Bromley if they fail in this duty. Only *the school*, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parent/carers.

- on the first day of a student's absence from school, parent/carers or carers are expected to contact the school office, by telephone, giving a reason for the absence and a date when the child is expected to return to school;
- on a student's return to school, parent/carers should provide her with a letter to explain the absence;
- parent/carers should attempt to arrange appointments for their child outside school time whenever possible;
- when the appointment is local, the student will be expected to attend school before and/or after the appointment;
- the school strongly advises that family holidays should not be taken during school time as this has an adverse effect on a student's education.
- parent/carers should write asking for permission for time off school, prior to the event.

STUDENTS:

Each student should make every effort to attend school regularly and punctually in order to gain the maximum benefit from all the educational opportunities open to her.

She should ensure that she is in her tutor room by 8.30 a.m. each day. She must also attend all timetabled lessons punctually, and not leave school without permission from her Year Leader. Girls who truant will be placed on report and their parent/carers will be informed.

TUTORS:

Tutors are responsible for recording attendance at the start of each morning and for recording reasons for absence. Folders and Wallets may be collected from the office from 8.00 a.m. in the morning. The registers should be completed at 8.30 a.m. unless otherwise instructed, and sent at 8.40 a.m. Anyone not in the room by 8.40 a.m. must be marked absent. Afternoon registration will be taken during period 5. Registers will be taken electronically. Where this is not possible, a paper register should be taken and delivered immediately to the Attendance Officer.

Registers are legal documents and **must** be marked accurately. No girl should take a register. (If a tutor is late, the Form Representative should make a list of those present and take the list to the office).

The following codes should be used to indicate **authorised absence** and should replace the absence circle upon receipt of authorisation:-

/	Present
N	Absent (no reason given)
B	Being educated elsewhere – includes flexi schooling
C	Other circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code)
D	Dual registration (i.e. student attending another establishment)
E	Excluded
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess)
H	Family Holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late
M	Medical/dental
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
V	Educational visit
W	Work experience

The school will generally consider the following reasons to be **unauthorised absence**, even if supported by a letter from a parent/carer, **unless there are exceptional circumstances**:

minding the house
shopping
birthdays

looking after siblings
caring for parent/carers

The register code for truancy is "O".

If you are in doubt about which code to use, please ask your Year Leader.

Registers must be accurate. It will not be possible to amend registers once they are recorded.

It is essential that the register is as complete as possible because it is used to discuss attendance with the Education Welfare Office (EWO).

In addition, tutors should ensure that the following occurs, in liaison with the Attendance Officer:

- sending home a "reminder" when a student returns to school with no absence letter; (see Letter L1)
- informing Year Leader when no absence note has been received, a week after
- returning to school and after sending home Letter L1;
- reminding students who have been absent that they will need to copy up missed work;
- telephoning home if a student is absent for 3 days and no information has been received;
- alerting Mrs. Ibbs if known truants are absent for any registration.

ATTENDANCE OFFICER

- enter details on pink form on receipt of telephone message concerning an absent student and enter on computer.
- send out appropriate letters (Letters A1 – 3) as directed by Deputy Head Teacher – Student Development or Key Stage Directors;
- check registers each morning for known truants and telephone parent/carers of those who are absent;
- send home 80% letters at the end of each half term;
- liaise with tutors over following up absence;
- carry out some random telephone spot checks of absentees if asked by Year Leader;
- inform parent/carers of truancy from school if required by the Year Leader.
- monitor the automated "Truancy Call" contact with parent/carers.

YEAR LEADERS

- raise the profile of good attendance and monitor the attendance of students in their year;
- check registers weekly for overview of attendance problems and check that tutors are completing registers correctly;
- meet with EWO each week in order to discuss attendance problems;
- if parent/careral contact does not lead to improved attendance refer the student to the EWO;
- if an out of borough student is referred to the EWO and there is no confirmation of referral within 2 weeks, refer to Bromley EWO;
- When truancy is discovered Year Leader should:
 - a) discuss the reasons with the student offering counselling, learning support etc if necessary;
 - b) place the student on report for two weeks;

- c) inform her parent/carers the same day;
- d) inform her tutor;
- e) enter O in register;
- f) ensure student copies up missed work.
- will carry out spot truancy checks on random lessons and assemblies;
- will countersign and post letters from subject teachers about sixth form attendance, after checking the details;
- will keep a record of letters sent home about sixth form attendance and will inform the relevant tutor.

EWO

- come into school every 2 weeks for a timetabled meeting with each Year Leader in order to exchange information about attendance problems;
- check registers weekly, highlighting any problems and referring them to the Year Leader;
- visit homes of students with attendance problems in order to encourage their return to school as soon as possible;
- meet with the Director of Key Stage 3 and Director of 14-19 to discuss serious attendance problems and action to be taken;
- liaise with other agencies when necessary;
- Look at register print-outs weekly and liaise with HOY to monitor attendance.

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER - STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- Oversee the implementation of the Attendance Policy.
- Monitor persistent absentees half termly.

DIRECTORS OF KEY STAGE 3 AND 14-19 EDUCATION

- Oversee the implementation of the Attendance Policy;
- liaise with HOY to monitor attendance;
- liaise with the Attendance Officer over appropriate letters to send;
- meet with EWO to discuss attendance problems as and when necessary.

HEADTEACHER

- liaise with HOY to monitor attendance;
- meet with EWO to discuss serious attendance problems as and when necessary.

SUBJECT TEACHERS

- take electronic register at the start of each lesson;
- follow up suspicious absences informing tutor and HOY of any discrepancies immediately;
- query persistent or frequent absences with tutor to ensure that it is not selective truancy;
- support students who have been absent in making up missed work;

- have a positive attitude towards returners;
- should write a note of explanation in the Contact Book of a student who has been given permission to leave the room during a lesson and give a pass to the students;
- should sign the Contact Book of a student who has been given permission to attend a club or sports practice in the Sports Hall or at the school playing fields at lunchtime;
- should record a student who is late in the register and should sanction that student.

SIXTH FORM TEACHERS

- use prepared letters to inform parent/carers of absentees. (Letters are kept in filing trays in the Staff Room).
enter details on a copy of Letter 3, of any sixth former who has not attended that subject's lessons for one week. The letter will then be passed to HOY, who will check whether the absence has been authorised and if not, will then countersign and post it.
- will inform HOY if the sixth former still fails to attend lessons;
- will enter the relevant details, on a copy of Letter 4, of any sixth former who regularly misses the occasional lesson. The letter will then be passed to HOY who will countersign and then post it;
- will inform HOY if the sixth former's attendance fails to improve.

HEADS OF FACULTY

- check the registers of subject staff when checking lesson plans.

GOVERNORS

- monitor attendance.

Letter A1

Dear

Re:

I am becoming increasingly concerned at your daughter's frequent absence from school.

She has been absent from school on _____ days in the past three weeks.

This poor attendance will be seriously affecting both her academic and social development at school. If it continues, it may also adversely affect her future references for employment or further education.

I shall continue to monitor the situation closely over the next two weeks and I hope to see an improvement.

Please could you talk to your daughter about her attendance.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Headteacher

Letter A2

Dear

Re:

I write again concerning your daughter's attendance this term.

Since I wrote to you there has been no improvement.

As I stated in my previous letter, your daughter's academic and social development is being affected by her frequent absences.

Please could you contact me urgently to arrange an appointment in school to discuss how we can improve your daughter's attendance. Your support is essential if we are to succeed.

If I do not hear from you and/or if your daughter's attendance continues to cause concern over the next two weeks, I shall refer her to the Education Welfare Officer.

I look forward to hearing from you in the next few days.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Headteacher

Letter A3

Dear

Re:

I write again concerning your daughter's attendance this term.

There has been no improvement, despite bringing my concerns to your attention. I have, therefore, referred her to the Education Welfare Officer who will contact you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Headteacher

Letter A4

Dear

Re:

I am the Education Welfare Officer attached to Cator Park School. _____ has been referred to me as a cause for concern due to ongoing poor attendance. Her percentage attendance for this academic year is _____ %.

I would, therefore, like to see _____ on _____ at _____ in the room adjacent to the Conference Room at Cator Park School. If you would like to attend the meeting to discuss your concerns and explain any difficulties that you think may be preventing _____ attending school, I would be please to see you. Please bring this letter with you to enable the Reception Staff to direct you to the interview room.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of your legal responsibility towards _____ in respect of her receiving appropriate education. Under section 7 of the Education Act 1966 you, as the parent/carer, are responsible for ensuring _____ receives the education that is provided. Failure in this is an offence created by section 444 of the Act, which has only four defences in law. These are:

1. Absence due to genuine sickness (medical corroboration necessary).
2. Leave of absence authorised by the school (annual holiday or exceptional circumstances such as bereavement).
3. Religious day of observance of the parent/carer.
4. The travelling distance to the place of education is too far (this only applies if the Authority fails to supply transport or provide the cost if the distance is too far when the LEA places the child).

If you would prefer to telephone me, my direct number is 020 8313 4157. I will, however, expect to see _____ at the time requested.

Yours sincerely,

Education Welfare Officer

Letter A5

Dear

Re:

According to our registers, _____ has not attended school since _____.

Numerous unsuccessful attempts have been made to contact you by telephone but your number is unavailable. It is essential that we have at least one telephone number where we can contact you easily.

Upon receipt of this letter please contact the school's attendance officer to explain the reason for your daughter's absence and advise us when she will be returning to school. In addition,

_____ has had absences on _____.

Your confirmation of the reasons for these absences would also be appreciated.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Headteacher

Letter A6

Dear

Re:

Thank you for forwarding absence notes to the school regarding _____ absence.

Because of your daughter's poor attendance record, her case has been referred to the Education Welfare Officer. She has advised us that we should not authorise any further absences unless we receive a doctor's note or certificate to confirm the reason for the absence.

The Education Welfare Officer will, no doubt, be in contact with you.

We hope to see an improvement in _____ attendance at school.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Headteacher

Letter A7

Dear Parent/carers/Guardians

Re:

According to our registers, your daughter was absent from school on the days shown.

There appears to be no record of an explanation of the absence(s).

Please complete and return the slip below as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Form Tutor

Please return to the school office

Daughter's Name:

Tutor Group

Date(s) of Absence	Reasons for Absence

Signed:
(Parent/carer/Guardian)

Date:

Letter A8

Dear

Re:

Appointment:

Your daughter's attendance is ____% for the current academic year. This is of great concern to us.

The above appointment has, therefore, been made for you to come into school for a meeting with me and the Education Welfare Officer. This is to discuss the reasons for your daughter's poor attendance and to put strategies into place to support her in improving it.

It is essential that you attend this meeting. There is a legal obligation on parents to ensure that their children attend school on a regular basis. Failure to meet this obligation can result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Education Authority, with a possible maximum fine of £2,500. This meeting is important in ensuring that this does not happen.

Please work with the school to ensure that your daughter makes the most of her opportunities at Cator Park. We look forward to meeting with you.

If this time is not convenient, please contact me urgently to see if it is possible to re-arrange it.

If you are unable to attend, the Education Welfare Officer will contact you at home .

Yours sincerely,

Head of Year.

Letter A9

Dear

Re:

Appointment:

Your daughter's attendance is ____% for the current academic year. This is of concern to us.

The above appointment has, therefore, been made for you to come into school for a meeting with me and the Education Welfare Officer. This is to discuss the reasons for your daughter's poor attendance and to put strategies into place to support her in improving it.

We are aware that most/all of the absences have been authorised, but feel that it is necessary to look into this matter.

Please work with the school to ensure that your daughter makes the most of her opportunities at Cator Park. We look forward to meeting with you.

If this time is not convenient, please contact me urgently to see if it is possible to re-arrange it.

If you are unable to attend, the Education Welfare Officer will contact you at home .

Yours sincerely,

Head of Year.

Form 5

CATOR PARK SCHOOL ABSENCE RECORD

TO FORM TUTOR _____

DATE _____ TIME _____

STUDENT'S NAME _____

PARENT/CARER TELEPHONED	
WAS SENT HOME	

DETAILS: _____

LIKELY TO BE AWAY FOR _____

SIGNED: _____