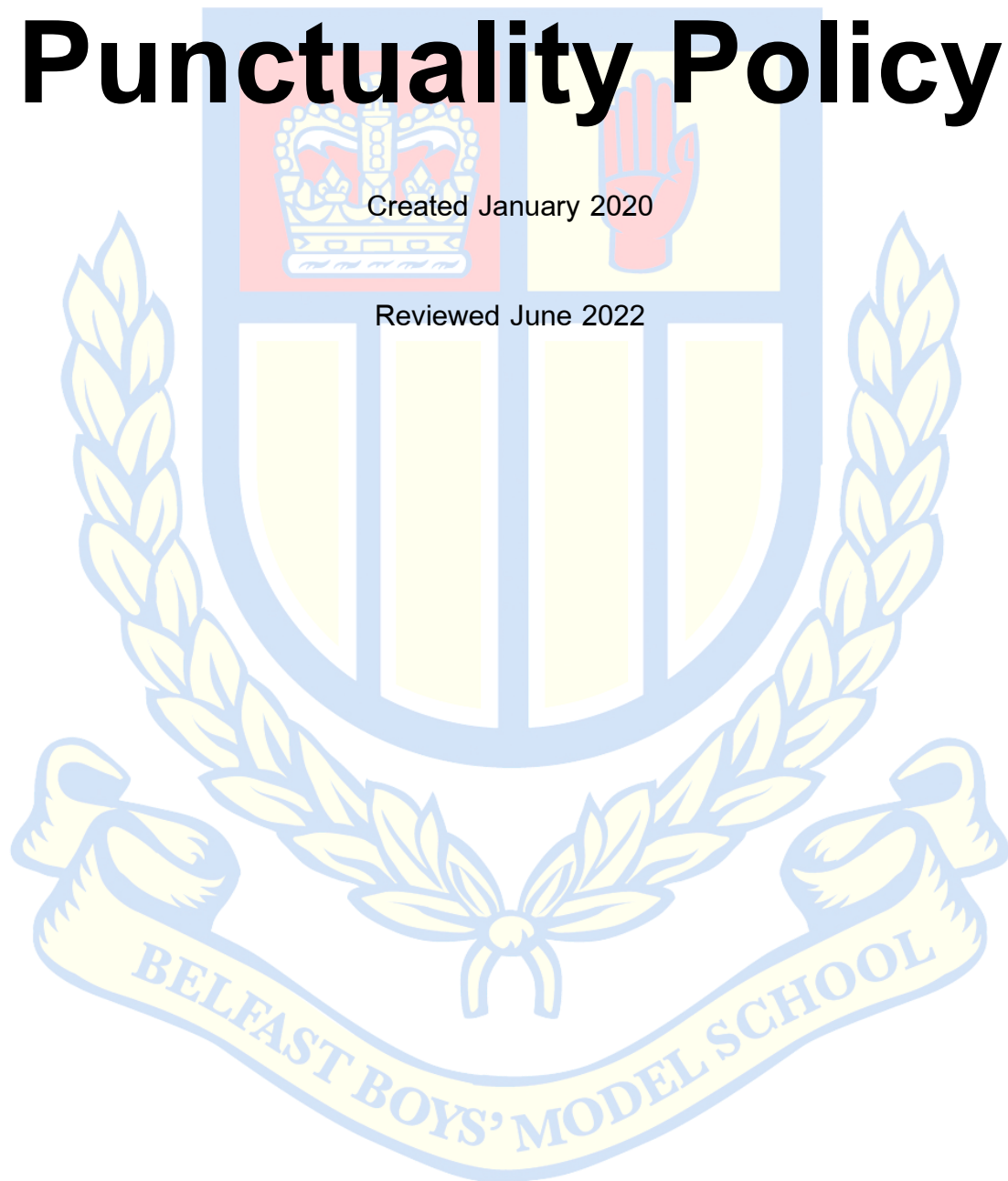


Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Created January 2020

Reviewed June 2022



Introduction

Regular school attendance¹ is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

Belfast Boys' Model School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Belfast Boys' Model School.
2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

Role of the School

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance; the Vice-Principal (Pastoral or Curriculum) should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his/her attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as a regular agenda item.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of each period.

To accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2018/12, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/DE%20Circular%202018%2012%20%20Attendance%20Guidance%20%26%20Absence%20Recording%20by%20Schools%20-%20Updated%20for%20Sept%202018.pdf>

Belfast Boys' Model School is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

¹"regularly" means "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school" – Lady Hale - Isle of Wight Council v Platt 6
April 2017

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents/guardians have a legal duty² to ensure their child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.

If a child is registered in school, their parent/guardian has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.

It is a parent's/guardian's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence. This should be confirmed with a written note when the pupil returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Pupils are expected to be in school at 8.45am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on your child's attendance record.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school please discuss the matter promptly with the form teacher, Counsellor or Head of Year to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at Belfast Boys' Model School must attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a written note from a parent/guardian must be provided to your form teacher when you return.

Family holidays during Term Time

Belfast Boys' Model School discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

If a pupil's attendance is between 90-95%, the Year Counsellor will speak with the pupil and/or his parents to establish the reason for absence(s).

If a pupil's attendance is between 85-90%, the Attendance Officer will work with the pupil and/or his parents, providing support and guidance to help improve the pupil's attendance.

² Article 45(1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986



Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have a legal duty to make sure that parents/guardians meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

If a pupil's absence causes concern, and/or if their attendance falls below 85% and there is also a concern, they will be referred to the EWS, if appropriate. EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

Procedures for Managing Punctuality

If a pupil is late for school, they will complete a breaktime detention that day. If they fail to show for this detention, the pupil will be placed in a payback detention that afternoon.

Rewarding Good Attendance

It is important to recognise and celebrate excellent attendance and we do this through our awards system.

1. Rewards presented in Assembly

One Term: 100% attendance: small reward

Two Terms: 100% attendance: small reward

Three Terms: 100% attendance: small reward

2. Prize Day Awards

(i) Bronze/Silver/Gold badges: 100% attendance

(ii) Excellent attendance: 98% or better

(iii) Improved attendance – 5% improvement on the previous year to bring the attendance above 90%

(iv) Four years 100% attendance – Honours Tie

(v) Seven years 100% attendance – Principal's Cup

(vi) Full KS3 attendance – parents and pupils will be invited to afternoon tea with the Principal

(vii) Full KS3 and KS4 attendance – parents and pupils will join the Principal for lunch.