CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

VISION STATEMENT
To provide outstanding, inclusive educational provision that prepares students for a fulfilled life.

School Motto: Together Aspire • Together Achieve

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1. SCHOOL CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

All students at Baskerville School have autism spectrum conditions across a range of abilities and experience greater challenges with social understanding and communication than their peers. Regular attendance is essential for students to achieve their potential, develop lifelong learning habits, and maintain social connections.

The correlation between attendance and achievement:
- **Above 97%** (fewer than 6 days absence): Excellent attendance supporting optimal achievement
- **95%** (fewer than 10 days absence): Good attendance likely to achieve target grades
- **90%** (19 days absence): Missing one month per year, may fall behind
- **85%** (29 days absence): Missing six weeks per year, significant impact on progress
- **Below 80%**: Missing one day per week, severe impact on learning and potential legal action

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2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This policy complies with current legislation and statutory guidance:

Primary Legislation
- Education Act 1996 (sections 7, 434-458)
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Children Act 1989 and 2004

Statutory Regulations
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)

Statutory Guidance
- School Attendance Guidance (DfE, September 2023)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, May 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version)

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3. POLICY AIMS

To enable all students to aspire and achieve, the school will:
- **Promote excellent attendance** through positive reinforcement and clear expectations
- **Act early** to address attendance concerns and analyse data to inform interventions
- **Ensure equitable access** to full-time education for all students
- **Work collaboratively** with parents, carers, and external agencies
- **Provide a welcoming environment** where students feel valued and secure
- **Monitor and support** students with attendance difficulties through tailored interventions

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4. SCHOOL PROCEDURES

4.1 Registration Requirements

Legal Requirement: All schools must maintain an admission register and attendance register.

- **Morning Registration:** 9:00am - 9:15am
- **Afternoon Registration:** 1:40pm - 1:55pm
- **Arrival Deadline:** Students must arrive by 9:00am

4.2 Recording Attendance

All attendance records will:

- Use DfE statutory attendance codes (see Appendix A)
- Be preserved for three years following the date of entry
- Include amendments showing original entry, new entry, reason, date, and authorising person

4.3 Reporting Absence

Parent/Carer Responsibilities:

- Contact school by 8:50am on each day of absence
- Telephone: 0121 427 3191 (answered from 7:30am)
- Provide specific reason for absence
- Contact must be made directly by parent/carer (not via student guides)

4.4 Medical Appointments

- Schedule appointments outside school hours wherever possible
- Provide advance notice with appointment documentation
- Student should attend school for part of the day when possible
- Medical evidence may be requested for frequent medical absences

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5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

5.1 Authorised Absence

Valid reasons include:

- **Illness** (medical evidence may be required if authenticity is questioned)
- **Medical/dental appointments** (with advance notice and documentation)
- **Religious observance** (days exclusively set apart by religious body)
- **Exceptional circumstances** (see section 6)

5.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unacceptable reasons include:

- Feeling tired or general malaise
- Birthday celebrations
- Shopping trips or day trips
- Caring for siblings or family members
- Family holidays during term time (unless exceptional circumstances apply)

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6. TERM-TIME LEAVE REQUESTS

6.1 Legal Position

Headteachers **may not** grant leave during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Each request is considered individually.

6.2 Exceptional Circumstances

Strictly defined as:

- Death of parent/carer or sibling
- Life-threatening illness of parent/carer or sibling
- Parent/carer recovery from critical illness (within 6 months, with medical evidence)

- Armed forces personnel unable to take leave at other times
- Previously granted leave by another school (within 6 months with documentation)

6.3 Application Process
- Complete Term Time Leave Request Form (Appendix C) in advance
- Provide supporting documentation
- Allow sufficient time for consideration
- Decision rests entirely with the Headteacher

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7. PERSISTENT ABSENCE AND INTERVENTIONS
7.1 Persistent Absence Threshold
Below 90% attendance is classified as persistent absence and triggers intervention.
7.2 Intervention Framework
Stage 1: Early Intervention (95-90%)
- Pastoral Manager contacts family
- Offer of support and guidance
- Home visit may be arranged

Stage 2: Formal Intervention (Below 90%)
- Meeting with Inclusion Manager
- Formal attendance plan developed
- Regular monitoring and review
- External agency involvement if appropriate

Stage 3: Legal Intervention
- Fast Track to Attendance procedures
- Potential penalty notice (£60 within 21 days, £120 within 28 days)
- Possible prosecution resulting in fines up to £2,500 per child

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8. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION
8.1 Reasonable Enquiry Procedures
When a student's whereabouts are unknown:
Immediate Actions (Days 1-5):
- First day absence call to parents
- Staff consultation and sibling/friend enquiries
- Contact with involved professionals
- Home visit within first five days
- Letter to last known address

Formal Referral:
- Contact Birmingham City Council CME Team: 0121 303 4983
- Referral within five days of unexplained absence
- Follow Birmingham CME Policy procedures

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9. ATTENDANCE MONITORING AND WELLBEING
9.1 Mental Health and Attendance Link
The school recognises the strong correlation between attendance and mental wellbeing. Our approach includes:
- Early identification of attendance-related anxiety

- Collaboration with mental health services (Forward Thinking Birmingham, Malachi)
- Tailored support plans for students with emotional-based school avoidance
- Regular wellbeing checks during absence periods

9.2 Data Analysis and Reporting
- Weekly monitoring of attendance registers
- Termly reporting to Governing Body through KPI reports
- Analysis of attendance patterns across different groups
- Comparison with national benchmarks
- Annual reporting to parents through student reports and reviews

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
10.1 Governing Body
- Monitor whole-school attendance figures termly
- Challenge and support through KPI scrutiny
- Ensure policy compliance and effectiveness

10.2 Headteacher
- Ensure consistent policy implementation
- Authorise term-time leave requests
- Report to governors on attendance matters
- Make decisions on legal interventions

10.3 Strategic Lead for Attendance
- Lead the attendance team and develop strategies
- Quality assure attendance data and coding
- Monitor registers weekly and authorise Code C usage
- Analyse half-termly KPI reports and identify trends

10.4 Strategic Lead for Inclusion and DSL
- Follow up safeguarding concerns from attendance team
- Oversee provision for non-attendees
- Authorise part-time timetables as intervention
- Liaise with SENAR regarding placement changes

10.5 Inclusion Manager
- Develop attendance raising strategies
- Monitor attendance and implement intervention policies
- Maintain family links and conduct home visits
- Produce data and KPI reports

10.6 Pastoral Manager - Family Support and Engagement
- Manage daily attendance monitoring
- Conduct first-day absence calls
- Code absences according to DfE guidance
- Follow absence procedures and maintain records

11. RELATED POLICIES
This policy should be read alongside:
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Birmingham City Council CME Policy
- School Behaviour Policy

- SEND Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

APPENDICES
Appendix A: DfE Attendance Codes
Appendix B: Absence Procedure Flowchart
Appendix C: Term Time Leave Request Form

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure continued compliance with legislation and best practice guidance.