



### Contents

<b>Summary</b> About this policy Who is this document for? Key points Key definition Effective date Related Policies and procedures Further resources	Page 2
<b>Policy</b>	
1. Roles and responsibilities	Page 3
2. Aims	Page 3
3. Legislative background summary	Page 3
4. Encouraging a culture of high attendance	Page 3
5. 95% attendance target	Page 4
6. Medium to Long-term absence	Page 4
7. Short-term absence	Page 4
8. Late attendance and repeated lateness to school	Page 5
9. Standard communications for reporting attendance	Page 5
10. Improvement in attendance	Page 5
<b>Appendix 1 – Legislative background</b>	Page 6
<b>Appendix 2 – Attendance recording &amp; reporting including:</b> 2.1 Arbor reporting 2.2 Authorised absences 2.3 Unauthorised absences 2.4 Recording of students who are late 2.5 Recording standard communications with parents/carers for reporting attendance	Page 7 Page 8 Page 9 Page 9 Page 10
<b>Version Control</b>	Page 12

## SUMMARY

### About this policy

Ballakermeen High School recognise that high attendance at school is associated with both students' academic success as well as their personal development.

### Who is this document for?

Students, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

### Key points

This policy aims to set clear targets for attendance at school and is in accordance with relevant Isle of Man and UK legislation, particularly [Education Act 2001 \(gov.im\)](#).

This policy should be read in conjunction with any other relevant policies issued by the Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC/ Department) or school, including DESC's [Microsoft Word – Policy on Attendance of Pupils 2011 final](#)

### Key definitions

Initials used throughout the policy include:

**AHT** Assistant Headteacher (with responsibility for Student Attendance)

**DSL** Designated Safeguarding Lead

**KSL** Key Stage Leader

**SLT** Senior Leadership Team

**Year Leader** (formerly titled HOY Head of Year)

### Effective date

This document is effective from November 2025. It will be kept under review and updated at least every two years.

### Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies issued by the Department of Education Sport and Culture (DESC) [Policies](#) or school [Policies](#)

### Further Resources

Links to relevant legislation and reporting:

[Education Act 2001 \(gov.im\)](#)

[Human Rights Act 1998](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 2006 Statutes of the Isle of Man \(1 August 2011\)](#)

[Race Relations Act 2004](#)

[Safeguarding Act 2018 \(gov.im\)](#)

[Link between attendance and attainment – GOV.UK](#)

*95%+ attendance almost doubles odds of GCSE pass: DfE research finds missing just 10 days of year 11 halves the odds of getting a grade 5 in English and Maths.*

## POLICY

### 1. Roles & Responsibilities

- 1.1. All staff have involvement in supporting this policy e.g. taking of registers.
- 1.2. Parents/carers should work collaboratively with school to achieve the best attendance for their child
- 1.3. The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of the school are responsible for the implementation of this policy, with specific responsibility for student attendance delegated to an AHT
- 1.4. The Governing Body will monitor the overall effectiveness of the policy and on occasion, may recommend adjustments guided by DESC policy statements

### 2. Aims

This policy reinforces the importance of high attendance at school, as this is linked to both students' academic success as well as their personal development. We aim for our students to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults, able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. The school is committed to working collaboratively with families to address attendance issues and views attendance as a shared responsibility across the whole school community, integrated with other key policies like safeguarding, bullying, and behaviour.

### 3. Legislative background summary – Refer to Appendix 1

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school. The school cannot ignore non-attendance from either a legal or moral perspective. As is usual procedure, any safeguarding or wellbeing concerns raised through aspects of the implementation of this policy, will be informed to YLs and DSL on the same day.

### 4. Encouraging a culture of high attendance – The school will:

- 4.1. Keep accurate attendance records – refer to Appendix 2, including Un/Authorised absences and student lateness
  - 4.1.1. Records will be reviewed weekly resulting in communication with students and parents/carers and supporting attendance wherever possible
  - 4.1.2. Report to parents/carers on how their child is performing in school, to include their attendance percentage. Attendance and punctuality records will be reflected on student snapshot or full reports and discussed at Academic tutoring days.
  - 4.1.3. improve attendance by recognising that attendance may be impacted by matters linked to any of:
    - 4.1.3.1. Physical/ mental health issues
    - 4.1.3.2. Low wellbeing
    - 4.1.3.3. Behaviour, including the behaviour of others
    - 4.1.3.4. Special or Additional educational needs
    - 4.1.3.5. Curriculum and options choices

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy | November 2025

- 4.2. look to resolve issues or make improvements to individual student experiences, through ongoing communication with the student and their parent/carers. If available and appropriate, support will be provided within school or from outside agencies.
- 4.3. celebrate good attendance by communicating individual and group achievements
- 4.4. reward good or improving attendance through recognition at celebratory year group and house assemblies, as well as outings/events. Praise points are automatically awarded to students who show positive attendance.  
if needed, work closely with outside agencies to improve school attendance. Students whose attendance continues to cause concern will be referred to the DESC's Education Liaison Officer

## 5. 95% attendance target

- 5.1. The school has a target for each student to achieve at least 95% attendance over the course of a school year
- 5.2. Targeted work, including that set out in section 4, will take place to improve or maintain standards of attendance
- 5.3. Systems to improve attendance will be reviewed regularly

## 6. Medium to long-term absence

- 6.1. Occasionally a student may be absent for an extended period of time, for example due to ill health. Parents/carers should liaise with the Form Tutor and YL where the absence period is likely to be greater than one week.
- 6.2. Some adjustments can be discussed with your child's YL, if this will be helpful to support their return to school after a longer-term absence. A phased return or part-time timetable may be helpful, or different provisions such as Bridge or Outreach may be discussed and considered, if there is capacity.

## 7. Short-term absence

When a student is absent it is the responsibility of the parent/carers to inform the school on the first day of absence as early as possible and certainly **before 8.50am** with a valid medical or other reason. If known, parents/carers should let the school know when the student is likely to return.

- 7.1.1. Notifying student absence [Contact](#)
- 7.1.1.1. Parents/carers **should not** use a social media platform, send messages to the school's Facebook page or ask another student or adult to inform the school about absence
- 7.1.2. Where absence levels are high or patterns of absence emerge, we may request supporting information from you e.g. doctor's note, appointment cards, consultant letters etc.

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy | November 2025

## 8. **Standard communications with parents/carers regarding attendance** Refer to Appendix 2

- 8.1. If a student's records show that they are regularly late to school, parents/carers may be contacted by their child's tutor and asked to meet with them, the relevant YL or KSL to try to resolve the problem

## 9. **Improvement in attendance**

- 9.1. Realistic attendance targets and time frames will be agreed during meetings with students and parents/carers. If students achieve a set target then they are removed from the cycle and Letter 1d (Appendix 2.5.9) will be issued. Attendance continues to be monitored and actioned in order to help students achieve their best possible outcomes from their time at school.

## 10. **Lateness to school** Refer to Appendix 2 detailing the recording of late attendance

- 10.1. Students will be considered late for school if they arrive after 8.50am. Lateness to lessons during the day will also be recorded, monitored and addressed. (Refer to appendix XX detailing the process for dealing with issues of punctuality)
- 10.2. If a student's records show that they are regularly late to school, parents/carers may be contacted by their child's tutor and asked to meet with them, the relevant YL or KSL to try to resolve the problem
- 10.3. We encourage parents/ carers to approach school (your child's tutor in the first instance), for support if you are experiencing barriers in getting children to school on time

## APPENDIX 1 – LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

1. Legal responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school rests with parents.
  - 1.1. Within [Education Act 2001 \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/acts/education-act-2001) 'parent' includes any person who has parental responsibility for a child and any person with whom a child is living and who has care of the child.

Section 24(1) of the 2001 Act states that *'it is the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause them to receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise' and the Department is required to enforce this duty. 'Suitable education' is defined in the Act as 'efficient full-time education suitable to [a child's] age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have'.*
  - 1.2. In the case of registered pupils, section 29(1) of the 2001 Act states that *'if any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent of the child is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000'*
  - 1.3. Failure to attend regularly includes failure to arrive punctually at the beginning of each session without either 'leave' (see following section) or 'reasonable excuse'.
  - 1.4. In addition to prosecuting parents, section 30 of the 2001 Act also allows the Department, after consultation with the Department of Social Care, to apply to a juvenile court for a child to be made the subject of an education supervision order.
2. The school cannot ignore non-attendance from either a legal or a moral perspective.

Isle of Man Government's School Attendance Policy here:  
[Microsoft Word – Policy on Attendance of Pupils 2011 final](#)
3. Teacher's have a responsibility, as set out within the [Teachers' Standards](#), to encourage, monitor and act upon school attendance. Specifically sections 1 (Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils), 2 (Promote good progress outcomes by pupils) and 8 (Fulfilling wider professional responsibilities)

## APPENDIX 2 – ATTENDANCE RECORDING & MONITORING

### 2. The school will record and monitor attendance in the following ways:

- 2.1. Registration using Arbor will take place at the start of each lesson, keeping up to date school attendance records

CODE	DESCRIPTION
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
A	Attending in-school alternative lesson
B	Attending alternative education provision
C	Attending college
D	Sent home – disciplinary
E	Formally suspended
G	Family holiday not agreed
H	Annual family holiday agreed
I	Illness or med/dental full session missed
J	Interview
K	Not prepared for lesson
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental part session
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance/family reasons
S	Study leave
T	Truancy including post registration
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work Experience
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Y	Department enforced school closure
-	All should attend/no mark recorded
@	Late after registers closed

- 2.1.1. From Registration records, the Attendance Officer will on a weekly basis, supply student absence data to Year group pastoral staff.

- 2.1.1.1. Pastoral staff will review details to consider persistent absence or patterns of absence. Any concerns (including unexplained absences or attendance below 95%) will be noted and the SLT year link informed.

- 2.1.1.2. If appropriate Parents /carers should be contacted to discuss strategies to improve the situation, with their child's tutor and YL or KSL.

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy | November 2025

## Role of YLs and notifications from school

- 2.1.1.3. YL will arrange for school to send a notification to parents/carers of students whose attendance is below 90%, for the previous week. This notification will invite parents to contact the YL if they require any support with attendance.
- 2.1.1.4. Messages should not be sent to parents/carers of students who are absent through suspension, one-off medical appointments, approved events, are known to be absent long-term for ill health or those who have suffered a family bereavement
- 2.1.1.5. Messages will be sent to those who have taken a family holiday, even if approved

## Role of Tutors

- 2.1.1.6. Tutors will also be advised about data for attendance, if this falls below 90% for the previous week, for those within their tutor group
- 2.1.1.7. Tutors will arrange to have a brief supportive conversation (welfare check) with students about their absence, as soon as possible. If appropriate, contact with parents/carers will be made to discuss any concerns highlighted
- 2.1.1.8. Conversations with parents/carers should be aspirational with the focus on the value of high attendance and supporting the removal of any potential barriers to the child, to improve their attendance
- 2.1.1.9. Any communication with parents/carers will be noted on Arbor
- 2.1.1.10. Tutors, YLs and SLT will continue to monitor student attendance and meetings with students and parents/carers will take place as necessary

## 2.2. Authorised absences include:

- 2.2.1. Formal suspension
- 2.2.2. Sent home for other disciplinary reasons (but not formally suspended)
- 2.2.3. Sent home for any other reason (e.g. illness)
- 2.2.4. Attending interview (e.g. with prospective employer or with another educational establishment)
- 2.2.5. Illness (where the explanation given is considered to be satisfactory)
- 2.2.6. Medical (doctor/hospital) or dental appointment or treatment
- 2.2.7. Approved out-of-school activity (e.g. representing the Island in sporting activities, attending a music examination, etc.)
- 2.2.8. Day of religious observance of the religious body to which the family belongs
- 2.2.9. Family reasons (e.g. funeral of a relative) / other exceptional circumstances
- 2.2.10. Newly enrolled but on temporary leave of absence pending arrival of student records and assessment by the Special Needs & Psychology Service
- 2.2.11. Work experience organised by the school
- 2.2.12. Authorised study leave
- 2.2.13. Adverse weather conditions. School closures are announced via Manx Radio before school is due to open in the morning. If students are to be sent home during the day due to adverse weather, parents/carers will be notified officially by the school



# Attendance & Punctuality Policy | November 2025

## 2.3. Unauthorised absences

These cover all absences which do not fall within the definition of 'authorised' absences in 2.2.

These will include absences

- for truancy
- where no explanation has been given or
- where the explanation given is deemed to be unsatisfactory

## 2.4. Recording of students who are late

**Period 1** (8.50am – 9.10am Mon – Thursday, Fridays: 8.50am – 9am with PHSE 9am – 9.45am) Line up and Tutor Time

Registration begins at 08:50am with **year group line up**.

Line up and Tutor period is a compulsory part of the school day. It is an important time where students register but also meet in their tutor group, receive important information, prepare for the day, take part in tutor time lessons or attend assembly.

- 2.4.1. If a student is late to school during period 1, they must immediately report to **line up** or to their **Tutor group room** to sign in
- 2.4.2. Students reporting to their line up/ Tutor group room during Period 1 will be marked as arriving late by their Tutor
- 2.4.3. Two late marks in a week will result in an after-school detention
- 2.4.4. Students arriving **during period 2- from 9.10am and before 9.30am** –should report to **School reception** in the first instance
- 2.4.5. Students will be marked late (L) for their current lesson and T (for Truancy) for Tutorial *unless* electronic or physical proof of an appointment can be shown, which will result in an M (Medical) recorded for both.
- 2.4.6. A T mark will result in an after-school detention at the next available opportunity.
- 2.4.7. The student will also have their planner stamped with a red late stamp. A **red late stamp** is proof of having signed in. They must then go straight to their lesson and report to the timetabled classroom teacher.
- 2.4.8. If students arrive at the lesson without a red late stamp then the classroom teacher must send them back to school reception to firstly sign in, before returning to class with a red late stamp.
- 2.4.9. **At 9:30am the registers will be closed.** All students must sign in at school reception where they will be given an **@ symbol**.
- 2.4.10. The **@ symbol** will result in an SLT detention being assigned at the next available time. They will have their planner signed with a red late stamp
- 2.4.11. Oversleeping, missing the bus, caught in traffic etc. are not satisfactory explanations
- 2.4.12. Adverse weather conditions such as snow, where roads have been severely affected, will be accepted as a reason for being late to school.

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy | November 2025

## 2.5. Recording standard communications with parents/carers for reporting attendance

At the beginning of each new half term the YL will request that the school office send the following to parents of students who have achieved these attendance %s in the previous half term:

### 2.5.1. Message for Attendance 95% and above

Dear parent/carer

We are writing to inform you that <<name>> achieved \_% attendance last term which is a tremendous achievement – well done!

### 2.5.2. Exemplar letter 1a re: attendance below 80% (note comments in Appendix 2 2.1.1.4)

Dear parent/carer

At Ballakermeen we strongly believe that a high level of attendance is essential for <<forename>> to succeed at school. As such, we would very much like to see all of our young people strive to achieve 95% attendance or above.

We are writing to inform you today that <<forename>> achieved ( ) % attendance this last half term.

Statistics show us that 75% of students who achieve an average of 95% attendance over Key Stage 3 and 4 achieve 5 GCSEs at grades A\* to C. That figure falls to just 26% for those students with an average attendance of 88% or lower.

Of course, there are varied and valid reasons for absence from time to time. As such, we hope that <<forename>> will be able to achieve an improved attendance percentage over the next half term.

However, if you feel that you would benefit from any support with improving <<forename's>> attendance then we would like to invite you to speak about this with our Pastoral Team or get in touch with <<forename's>> Tutor in the first instance to arrange an appointment.

### 2.5.3. Letter 1b: Subsequent half term attendance if attendance remains below 80%

The YL will speak with the student and get in touch with parents/carers to discuss attendance and ways to assist. Potential barriers will be discussed and a further target will be agreed with Letter 1c then issued.

## Attendance & Punctuality Policy | November 2025

Dear parent/carer

At Ballakermeen we strongly believe that a high level of attendance is essential for <<forename>> to succeed at school. As such, we would very much like to see all of our young people strive to achieve 95% attendance or above.

We are writing to inform you today that <<forename>> has achieved ( ) % attendance this last half term.

Statistics show us that 75% of students who achieve an average of 95% attendance over Key Stage 3 and 4 achieve 5 GCSEs at grades A\* to C. That falls to 26% for those with an average attendance of 88% or lower.

<<Forename's>> attendance has not improved significantly since the last time we wrote to you and we would like to discuss how we can support you further.

As such, YL, KSL, AHT <<forename's>> will be in touch, to talk about positive steps that can be taken to help. If easier, we can arrange a time for a short meeting or telephone call about this.

We appreciate that time is valuable but we want to ensure that <<forename>> achieves the best possible outcomes from their time at school.

- 2.5.4. Following 2.5.3 if no improvement is seen at the start of the *following* Half Term the YL will then escalate the case to the KSL who will send a further letter 1b and arrange to meet parents/carers.
- 2.5.5. Fortnightly targets are then set for the next half term. Follow up Letter 1c (2.5.8) will be issued.
- 2.5.6. If the student fails to meet the fortnightly targets set within 2.5.6 then the KSL refers to the AHT for Attendance
- 2.5.7. In the case of school refusal or if a child is missing from education then the case will be fast-tracked to AHT who will liaise with DSL and/or the DESC's Attendance Officer

### 2.5.8. **Letter 1c: Follow up letter, with targets agreed with YL/ KSL/ AHT**

Dear parent/carer

Thank you for your time on <<the date>> where we discussed how we might improve <<forename's>> attendance moving forward. During the discussion we agreed that:

I hope that you found the meeting helpful and I would like to thank you for committing to work together with us to ensure that <<forename>> is able to fulfil their full potential.

We have agreed that we will review <<forename's>> progress in two weeks. If there is still no improvement we will be in touch once again at that time.

## Attendance & Punctuality Policy | November 2025

### 2.5.9. Letter 1d: Student has achieved Attendance target set by YL/ KSL

Dear parent/carers

I am delighted to inform you that <<forename>> has achieved their attendance target of \_% agreed at our meeting on *date*.

I hope you will join us in congratulating <<forename>> on their outstanding achievement.

Thank you for working with us to improve <<forename's>> outcomes at Ballakermeen and we hope that they will continue to work hard towards Striving for 95% attendance over the coming weeks and months.

### VERSION CONTROL

Version:	Date:	Changes:
V1	November 2025	