

Dear Parents/Guardians

ATTENDANCE PUNCTUALITY & ABSENCE

Excellent attendance at school is at the heart of educational achievement and central to the well-being of young people, and in addition to this, at BRIT, it is a professional expectation and part of our young people's vocational training. Attending regularly and punctually is essential if your young person is to make the most of opportunities available to them and to meet our minimum standard of 96% attendance. Students who start school with good attendance usually continue this throughout their school and working life; they usually develop stronger peer relationships, have higher levels of resilience and are more confident, independent and successful in school.

When students do not attend school regularly, there is clear evidence to support the link between poor attendance and fewer qualifications, and lower achievement outcomes.

The school commissions its own Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who tracks and monitors our student's attendance and punctuality.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF NON-ATTENDANCE – WHAT THE LAW SAYS

Regular attendance at school is a legal requirement and Section 444 (1) and 444 (1a) of the Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children's Act 1989 already exist to enforce attendance through the Courts in appropriate circumstances. The legal responsibility for compliance with these Acts rest with the parents and the courts have the power to fine, imprison or impose various orders. The statutory guidance from the government [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) outlines the range of support schools must provide to support attendance to school, including attendance contracts, educational support plans and, ultimately, fines.

Where difficulties arise with school attendance The BRIT School & our Education Welfare Officer are available to discuss reasons for absence alongside offering support and guidance to help improve attendance. Support is, and always will be, our preferred route to improve attendance.

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

The Principal will **NOT** grant any leave of absence during term times, unless there are exceptional circumstances. **Please note we have different term dates to other schools.**

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If exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, then a Leave of Absence must be completed by the parent, explaining the reasons for the request. If leave is taken without the authorisation of the school, a referral will be made to our Educational Welfare Officer who will consider issuing an attendance contract, an education supervision order or a fixed penalty notice, depending on circumstances.

SCHOOL ABSENCE

There are two types of school absence – Authorised and Unauthorised. For an **authorised** absence there must be legitimate reasons for your young person to be absent from school. This includes

- Illness
- Medical or ortho dental appointments (please endeavour to make these appointments outside of school hours)
- Days of religious observance

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS/Leave Requests

Please complete a **Leave of Absence Form**, which is located outside the Attendance Office. We require **3 days' notice** for any whole day or half day planned absences. **We do not accept emails as requests for leave in KS4.**

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS UNWELL

On the first day of absence, parents/guardians must make contact with the school to explain the absence. We can then code the absence as authorised in the register. We would ask that you keep us updated as to the progress of your young person; if the absence lasts more than 3 days we may ask for medical evidence.

Remember

On the first day of absence – telephone the Attendance Officer on **0208 665 8623**.

If your young person is going to be late or absent, parents/guardians of KS4 students/P16 Students should leave a clear message before 9.00am with the reason for the absence.

If you need to speak to me because you feel that there are any special circumstances that I should be made aware of, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The school will **not authorise** absence for

- Birthdays
- Holidays - please note our term dates are different from other school holidays particularly from February onwards
- Paid Employment

- **External Performances**

If you do not let us know why your young person is not in school, the absence will remain unauthorised. (O) Regular unauthorised absence can lead to prosecution.

PUNCTUALITY

- We expect our young people to arrive on time. If **KS4** students arrive at school after 8.45 am then they will be marked (L) Late in the register. If they arrive after 9.30 am without a valid reason, they will be marked as (U) which is an unauthorised absence. Persistent lateness will be monitored.

Good timekeeping in the mornings helps your young person get into good habits that will set them up for excellent attendance.

Poor timekeeping could result in

- Your young person missing out on joining an 'out of class' group that has already begun working
- A young person can feel anxious if they disturb quiet learning in a classroom
- Your young person may miss the teacher's explanation of the lesson's work, making it difficult for them to understand.
- Your young person will miss vital parts of their education.

Thank you for your compliance with the above expectations.

Kind Regards

Laurie Sutton

Attendance Officer/First Aid Administrator

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