**Attendance Policy**

This policy is written in accordance with “[*Working together to improve school attendance*](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)” the DfE guidance for schools (DfE September 2022 / updated September 2023).

“There is a strong correlation between the amount of absence and the qualifications children achieve” - DfE.

**Rationale**

* To ensure that every student succeeds whilst at the Academy
* To ensure that every student has access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave the Academy
* To ensure that every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
* To ensure that every student uses every day to gain knowledge and understanding
* To promote students’ welfare and safeguarding

In order to achieve those goals, it is the view of the Boxing Academy that it is **essential** that students are not absent from school.

Our aim is to **foster a sense of responsibility, a joy of learning and to create a community** where learning is felt to be important and crucial to securing well-being and increased life chances. Attendance is a safeguarding issue - the health, safety and wellbeing of students is paramount.

Boxing Academy staff work closely with link agencies to ensure maximum attendance and therefore achievement for all students. Staff work with parents/carers to achieve good attendance and involve the services of the Educational Welfare Service in the best interests of the child. Students who attend regularly will succeed and secure economic wellbeing in the future.

There are 195 statutory school days per year and there are then 170 other days available for holidays which would not have a negative effect on a student’s education. The Academy is of the view that taking a student on holiday in term time inevitably conveys to the student the unspoken message that education is not important.

**Categorisation of absence**

When a student is absent from school, the law categorises that as either ‘authorised’ or ‘unauthorised’. The law states that it is for the Academy to determine into which category any absence fits, it is for the Academy to decide whether any absence is ‘authorised’ or ‘unauthorised’.

**Authorised absence**

Examples of the type of absence which may be authorised:

* Sickness
* Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (although these should be made wherever possible out of school hours.)
* Exceptional family circumstances (at the discretion of the school)

**Unauthorised absence**

Examples of the type of absence which will not be authorised are:

* Lateness – but arriving late is better than not arriving at all
* Birthdays
* Shopping
* Haircuts
* Special treats
* Looking after family members
* Holidays in term time

**The need for parental explanation**

All absences must be explained either by telephone call, text message, email or letter by a parent or carer. However, this does not automatically authorise the absence.

It is for the Academy to decide whether to accept the explanation offered. Parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence of a doctor’s visit (e.g. appointment card or prescription).

Long term absences must be discussed with Academy staff to enable them to offer the student access to education to which they are entitled. Where a parent/carer anticipates in advance that his or her child will be absent then as much advance notice as possible should be given.

**Holidays during term time**

Parents/carers are reminded that they do not have any right or entitlement to take their child out of school for holidays. Holidays will only be granted if the Principal considers that there are special circumstances. The DfE guidance updated in October 2014, makes it clear that “Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances”.

Examples of circumstances which by themselves are very unlikely to be considered as special and thus leading to a grant of permission include:

* To fit in with parental working patterns
* Economic reasons, such as cheap flights and/or accommodation
* To overlap with beginning or end of term.

**Roles and responsibilities**

**The Boxing Academy**

Attendance is a student welfare and safeguarding issue. The Academy takes its safeguarding responsibilities in these areas very seriously.

* Should a student not have arrived at school by 10.30am and no explanatory telephone call has been received, a member of staff will contact the child’s parent or carer via a text messaging service or phone call. If students have not arrived by lunchtime registration a follow up call will be made. In addition to this if a child arrives after an absence text has been sent another message will be sent to parent/carer informing of their arrival.
* We always notify parents/carers if students abscond from school premises and if necessary, notify the police.
* If a student becomes unwell whilst at school, parents/carers are informed. Depending on the age of the student and the severity of the illness a decision will be made as to whether the student should be collected by a parent or carer or sent home on their own.
* When students join the Academy they will attend an induction where their needs are assessed. The Academy records attendance from the first day of induction.
* Where a student has not attended school for one week, and the Academy staff have not been able to make contact with a parent or carer, the Education Welfare Service for their borough will automatically be informed.
* The BA Attendance Lead will closely monitor the attendance and progress of students.
* Attendance of all students is reported to parents/carers on a termly basis through a school report. The report is presented at progress day meetings each term where the impact of attendance on student progress is discussed with individual families.

**Parents/carers**

Strong links and effective communication with parents/carers is vital.

* Parents/carers must telephone the Academy by 10:00am on the first day of any absence to explain the reason for absence and give an expected return date.
* Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child’s regular attendance. Students must arrive on time, in school uniform and ready to learn.
* Parents/carers must provide an up to date contact number and an emergency number that may be used in exceptional circumstances. It is important, that should the need arise, we can contact parents /carers without delay.
* On a student’s return to school, following an absence, a written note or a doctor’s note should be provided.
* The Principal reserves the right to ask for medical evidence before making a decision as to whether to authorise the absence. This must be presented within one week of the last day of absence.
* Data on attendance will be shared with parents/ carers and students regularly and discussed at parent and carer consultation meetings.
* Parents/carers who do not give an acceptable reason for the absence of their child must understand that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
* If children have medical appointments parents/carers must supply appointment cards.
* Parents/carers should note the dates of both national (usually May and June) and internal examination periods. The national dates cannot be changed for any reason. Staff will publish examination dates as soon as they are known. If the national exams are missed, they cannot be retaken during that exam period.
* The journey to school for some students may involve the use of one or more forms of public transport. Parent and carers must ensure that their child leaves in plenty of time to allow for possible delay.
* Parents/carers must commit to ensuring that students attend on a full-time basis unless medical evidence proves that this is not possible.

**Students**

* Students are expected to be responsible and independent. Except where there are exceptional circumstances, they are personally responsible for maintaining good attendance.
* Good attendance also means good punctuality.
* All students will be provided with a timetable showing clearly their own lesson schedule.
* Students must attend all lessons on their timetables. Any absence from lessons will be recorded and this data reviewed regularly to identify patterns or concerns.
* Students are expected to attend punctually every day.
* Students will not leave the Academy site without permission from staff.

**Staff**

* Teachers may arrange for students to attend additional lessons in a subject in order to ensure students catch up on lost learning.
* Pod Leaders discuss progress and attendance with the students in their pod.
* Pod Leaders or the attendance lead will keep parents/carers informed of attendance where there is concern.
* Staff set attendance targets with the students at progress day every term.

**Attendance Procedures**

* Attendance registers are taken from 9.30 in the morning and at 1.20pm in the afternoon.
* A system of first day calling operates: as soon as a register is closed parents/carers are called or texted and notified that their child is absent. It is expected that these calls are responded to as soon as possible in order to ensure the safety of students.
* Records of phone calls to parents/carers are kept and reported to the Education Welfare Service or other agencies when appropriate.
* The BA Attendance Lead supports families in maintaining good attendance at school. To this end, home visits may be made.
* Where there is a repeated pattern of absence it will be considered appropriate for a referral to the Local Authority to be made to obtain a clear picture of difficulties being experienced.
* The attendance of individual students is regularly monitored with reference to the Academy’s absence escalation process.
* At an escalation meeting, the attendance percentage achieved, as well as numbers of authorised and unauthorised absences and the number of late marks, are discussed with parent/carers and targets are made.

**Incentives to encourage good attendance**

The Boxing Academy will seek to encourage good attendance and punctuality with students through a culture of high expectations and recognition.

Good attendance will be an achievement and recognised as such with rewards such as weekly recognition and prizes.

There will be a display of young learners who achieve 100% attendance every week, and end of term prizes for all who have achieved excellent attendance that term. Other rewards include (but are not limited to):

Vouchers \* Friday treats \* Priority for games \*

Extra Boxing training \* Trips and visits \* Letters & phone calls home \*

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