

POLICY STATEMENT

At BJAB we aspire to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances. BJAB has an expectation that all pupils will be striving for a culture of 100% attendance and 100% punctuality. Poor levels of attendance will negatively impact the personal, social and academic development of the pupil and may well disrupt the learning of others in the class too. It may also be an indicator of abuse or neglect or in itself may indicate that a child is at immediate risk of harm. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms, including crime. Consequently, the attendance and registration arrangements set out in the document below are hugely important. The school however appreciates that some pupils have specific needs and there may be barriers to them achieving high levels of attendance and punctuality.

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
- to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
- to recognise the links between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding
- to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence. It has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

- Standards for British Schools Overseas (2023)
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Children Act 1989;
- Childcare Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
- Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, September 2023);
- Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, September 2023);
- 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);

- Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);
- School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);
- Children missing education (DfE, September 2016);
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
- 3.2.13.
- Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023); 3.2.14.
- Remote education guidance (DfE, updated February 2023);
- 3.2.15. SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

This policy is published on the School website; it is also available in hard copy on request.

The importance of good attendance: BJAB recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

- the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;
- the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;
- the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents;
- that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies;
- children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

1.0 ARRIVAL TIMES, LATENESS AND ABSENCE

From Reception class until Year 10, pupils are required to arrive at school by 825 am – this is to enable all teaching and learning to start by 830am. They are required to attend all registrations, lessons and activities on their timetable, as well as assemblies and other events. In Pre-K and Kindergarten children should arrive by 9am.

At BJAB the Headteacher reserves the right to authorise only absences that are necessary and for reasons that the school considers valid. If a pupil is absent without warning/agreement then the school office will contact parents on that day to inform them the child is not in school.

Pupils arriving late or leaving school early must sign in and out at the school office on the relevant site. If a pupil is unwell or has to leave during the school day, the pupil may not leave the school without speaking to

the school office, who will ensure that permission from the parent has been obtained. If pupils leave school without following these procedures, their absence will be recorded as unexcused.

2.0 PROVIDING REASONS FOR ABSENCES AND AUTHORISING ABSENCES

2.1 Reasons for absences

- always need to be provided promptly, no later than two days after the first day of absence, otherwise it will remain unauthorised
- must be provided by the parent or legal guardian for **pupils under 18**
- stated as “family reasons” are only authorised for exceptional or compassionate reasons and where a full description is provided

2.2 Planned Absences

If a pupil cannot attend school for reasons known in advance, the parents or legal guardians or pupils over 18 must submit a request for leave well in advance of the absence according to the schedule below. It is very unlikely that requests for absences not made within these timescales will be granted. Also parents should not make firm plans to take pupils out of school until permission has been obtained

Length of absence	Minimum Notice required
Part of a day	2 full working days
From 1 full day to 9 school days	1 month
10 school days or more	6 months

Planned absences of over three days will be reviewed by SLT; those over a week will automatically be considered by the Headteacher.

Planned absences due to:

1. **study leave** may only be authorised where pupils are taking external or language exams. For this type of request a full description must be provided
2. **university related** reasons, e.g. interview, external admissions test (SAT, LNAT, etc), or university visit, in addition to submitting the request in the way outlined above the information must be directed to the Headteacher via the school office (office@bjab.org)
3. **school trips** led by teachers at BJAB are automatically authorized.
4. **Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs)** will be automatically authorised if the events are organised by a member of staff.

2.3 Absences will be dealt with in the following way

- Class teachers and tutors may talk to any of their tutees if they have absences for which a reason has not been provided and will remind them that they (or their parents) need to provide this reason.
- The school will review the reason for absence in order to determine if it will be authorized or unauthorized. It will make this decision based on the frequency and distribution of the absences and nature of supporting documentation provided.
- For pupils over 18: In cases of reasonable doubt over the reason for their absence, the school may request additional documentation for absences of one day or longer in order to consider authorising it. This may include a doctor’s note or other evidence.

- In cases of repeated unauthorized absences, the matter will be referred to the Deputy Head. At this stage a variety of actions may ensue: parents will usually be requested to come into school for a discussion with the Headteacher or other member of SLT.
- In the case of a high number of unauthorized absences similar to that for unexplained absence applies. The Headteacher invites the parents or legal guardians for a meeting with SLT.

2.4 PE lesson attendance

- If a pupil is unable to participate in a PE lesson, they are still expected to attend the class.
- They will be required to participate in the lesson, either by undertaking non-playing responsibilities or by completing written work reflecting on the lesson they are observing.
- If a pupil is likely to be off PE for **two weeks or more** a parent request including a medical note to that effect needs to be emailed to the Headteacher at office@bjab.org. The Headteacher will then consider allowing the pupil to register and work under supervised conditions in the Library or another appropriate area.
- Absences that do not follow this procedure will be recorded as unauthorized. If your child is not feeling well enough to do PE, then they should not be in school.

2.5 Consequences for unexplained absences

- **Unexplained absences:** Reminders to explain absences will be sent to parents. When there is no reason for an absence provided by a legal representative or an adult pupil, this absence remains unexplained. The school can address the unexplained absences in different ways, depending on the number of unexplained absences. Any unauthorised absence without a reason provided in any half year will be mentioned in the termly report.

3.0 PRACTICALITIES: HOW WE MONITOR ATTENDANCE

Registration and attendance checks

Morning registration is in period 1 at 8.30am. At Lower School (BSM) morning registration is in Form Time at 8.30. At Upper School (BLS) it is at the beginning of lesson. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes after the start of morning registration.

Afternoon registration will be at 2.10pm during period 5. At Upper School afternoon registration takes place in the first lesson after lunch.

The School uses iSams for registration and record keeping.

4.0 SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

BJAB acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community. The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and parents. Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.

The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure

intervention is regularly reviewed. The School has robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues. The School will carry out regular spot checks of the attendance registers and recording processes to ensure compliance with the systems set out in this policy.

4.1 Staff Responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. As part of her remit as Designated Safeguarding Lead, Rachael Digby will have oversight of and analyze attendance data.

Together, Francis Retter (Headteacher), Rachael Digby (DSL) and the other members of the Senior leadership Team:

- set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;
- establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;
- monitor and evaluate progress regularly, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;
- communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and parents.

4.1.1 Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance

The DSL and Headteacher are supported by the office administration team, who have day to day responsibility for inputting all data regarding attendance and punctuality. They should: have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon; seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School; parents will be required to provide explanations of their child's absence; make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day and follow up to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School; look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the school of any specific concerns; deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly.

SLT will consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies, discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasize the importance of punctuality and attendance.

4.1.2 All Staff

The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it. The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

4.2 School Arrangements

The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. These registers must be kept electronically. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the School's arrangements can be found in Appendices

4.3 Monitoring attendance

The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them.

Such analysis may include:

- monitoring and analysing monthly attendance patterns and trends via CPOMS and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;
- using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);
- conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;
- benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented;
- providing data and reports to the Proprietor to support its work.

5.0 PUPIL AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to *reward good attendance* and *manage poor attendance*. Pupils should be aware that they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day, they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons, they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules; they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy; any unexplained absence will be followed up; persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School.

This may take the form of:

- offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;
- communication with parents;
- reporting to other agencies such as children's social care;
- sanctions against them or their parents in line with the School's behaviour policies.
- If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their Form Tutor or those staff identified in Appendix 1 in the first instance.
- Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

Additional needs:

- The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

- The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.
- It will also work with parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil education, health and care plan is accessed.
- Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.
- Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.
- The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

5.1 Parent / carer responsibilities

- The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.
- This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the School.
- The School will help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.
- Expectations the School places on parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy
- Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

6.0 TRAINING

6.1 Staff

The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is frequently a symptom of wider circumstances;
- the School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.
- Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders.

7.0 THE ROLE OF PARENTS / CARERS

The School expects all Parents to:

- make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
- notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this;
- cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.
- Reporting absence: If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the school by emailing office@bjab.org before the start of the school day or at the earliest opportunity and certainly by 9am at the very latest
- Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.
- Pupils who suffer long term health or medical conditions, or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. Phase Leaders and SLT will have sensitive conversations to develop the right support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions, making reasonable adjustments and creating individual care plans as required.
- Where necessary we will consider whether referrals to specialist services in Brussels (where available) might be appropriate. Sometimes a planned and managed phased return may be necessary, possibly with a reduction to the curriculum, or a part-time timetable. In every case we recognise the value of an individualised approach that meets the pupil's specific needs.
- Persistent and Severe Absenteeism: A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Persistent absence is flagged with the DSL. This degree of absence is likely to have a damaging effect on the pupils' ability to achieve, thrive and reach their true potential at school. The School will work closely with parents to support the pupil and encourage a return to more regular attendance.
- Pupils Missing during the School Day: When a pupil is deemed to be missing from lessons the following procedures should be followed:

The member of staff noticing the absence should raise an alert – this can be done either through ISAMS (generating an automated alert to designated staff – Phase Leader and SLT) or by the staff member contacting a member of the admin team/SLT.

Reception to inform them that the pupil is missing.

- Once a pupil has been flagged as 'missing' those receiving the alert will respond and attempt to locate the pupil.
- SLT will check on iSAMS register to see when the pupil was last registered.
- A check will be made to identify if the pupil has signed out for a legitimate appointment or been sent home (unwell)
- If the missing pupil has not been accounted for after such checks have been made a search will be undertaken focusing on classroom areas and toilets in the first instance. Peers of the pupil will be questioned to see if they know where the pupil might be.
- All teaching and support staff will be alerted by email or telephone to look out for the missing pupil.

- A search of the entire School buildings and grounds will be organised by the Headteacher/Deputy Head Pastoral/Phase Leader.
- If the pupil cannot be found, consider a fire drill to ensure not on site. It may be possible to check CCTV footage in the BLS entrance-hall to determine where the pupil may have gone after their last sighting.
- If this initial investigation fails to reveal the whereabouts of the missing pupil, the Deputy Head will inform the Headteacher and then contact the parents and the Police.
- The School will then act in accordance with Police advice.
- Once a missing pupil has been located this will be communicated to her parents and the Police, as well as all teaching and support staff by email or telephone.
- When the pupil has been found a member of SLT or other senior teacher will discuss with them the incident and determine whether further support may need to be put in place or whether any sanctions are appropriate.

The following should be considered in this discussion:

- What led to the pupil absenting themselves from lessons/an activity?
- Was the absence deliberate and did the pupil realise they were breaking school rules and that therefore sanctions may apply?
- Was/is the pupil distressed about some element of school life, and if so, what action might be needed to resolve or alleviate the situation?
- Whether there are safeguarding concerns, in which case the matter should be referred to the Deputy Head Pastoral or the DSLs.

8.0 AUTHORISED ABSENCES

Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Applications for an authorised leave of absence: leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Headteacher via office@bjab.org The Headteacher will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request. Apart from illness, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Headteacher.

Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays except in cases of emergency when info@bjab.org should be informed.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head to determine the length of the time the pupil is permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence.

The DSL monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024. The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance

and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations. The attendance register is kept.

The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupils:

- physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken;
- absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended;
- attending a place other than the school; OR
- absent.

The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

- Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
- For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
- Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
- Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
- Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

9.0 RECORDING ABSENCE

Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance.

The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

- holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;
- the reason for absence has not been provided;
- a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
- a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

Absence Codes Present Codes:

- / \ - Present during registration
- D- Distanced learning
- L arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
- P Sporting activity with prior agreement from school

- N - No reason yes provided for absence
- I- Illness
- IN- Illness with medical note
- M- Medical/Dental appointments
- H- Family holiday (Agreed)
- G- Family holiday (Not Agreed)
- C- Other authorised circumstances
- O- Unauthorised Absence
- S- Study leave
- V- Educational visit or trip
- W - Work experience
- Z- Pupil not yet on roll
- E- Excluded
- P- Approved sporting activity
- Q- Lack of access arrangements by LA
- X- Non-compulsory school age absence
- Y- Enforced closure
- #- School closed to pupils
- T- Covid-19 positive test
- C1- Regulated performance
- C2- Temporary reduced timetable
- J1- Employment/Educational interview
- K- Educational provision arranged by LA
- Y1- Normal transport unavailable
- Y2- Widespread travel disruption
- Y3- Part of school out of use
- Y4- Session cancelled- school closed
- Y6- Infection or disease
- Y7- Other unavoidable cause

10.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

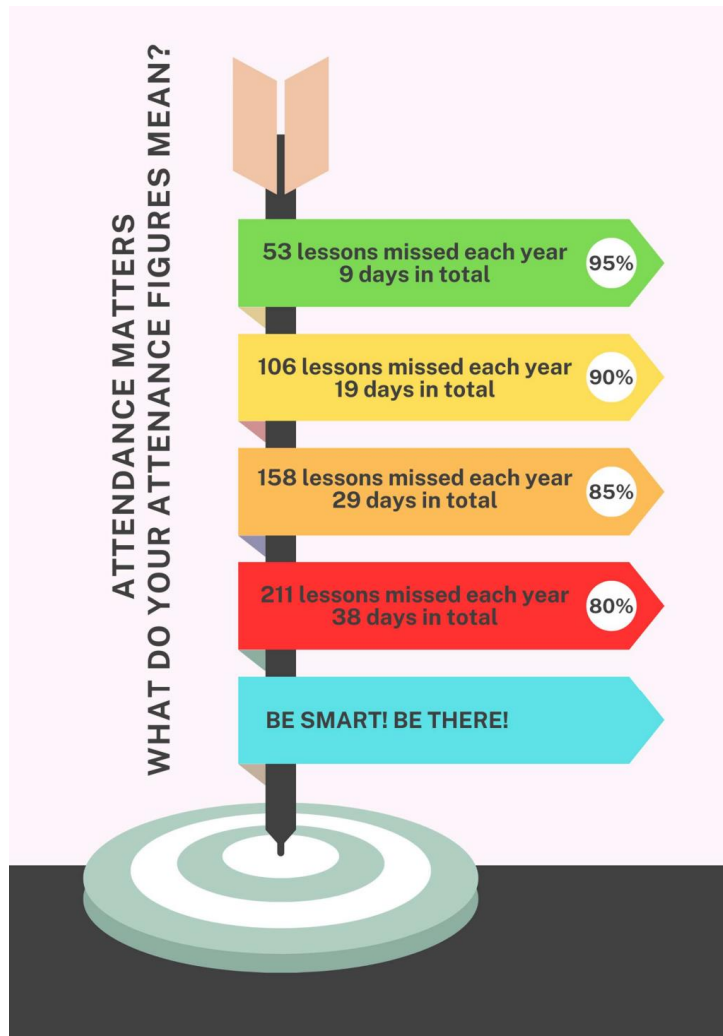
This policy is the responsibility of Mr Retter, the Headteacher and Madame De Maertelaere, the Proprietor.

Headteacher: (Francis Retter)	
School Proprietor (Madame De Maertelaere)	
Updated: May 2025	To be reviewed: May 2026

APPENDIX A: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents:

- We expect pupils to attend school for 100% of the academic year.
- You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:
 - Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn.
 - Pupils must be in school by 8.25am; in KG by 9am.
 - Avoid taking holidays during term time.
 - Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
 - If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early

APPENDIX B:



APPENDIX C: Flowchart:

