

Bedales Attendance, Student Supervision and Missing Child Policy, including study leave

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Tick relevant box(es) ✓ how this Policy should appear:

Website	Upload	✓
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Bedales Senior School Attendance, Student Supervision and Missing Child Policy

This policy sets out the School's arrangements for attendance, the supervision of students and our response in the event of a missing student. It is our belief that students being present in school and attending lessons and co-curricular activities provides the best outcome for learning and development. Therefore, students, parents and staff must work together to enable students to be present in school and in lessons and co-curricular activities.

The Governing Body seeks to ensure that the needs of students are prioritised and that they are properly supervised through appropriate deployment of School staff for their health, safety and welfare.

All staff have a duty of care to all students at Bedales. It is their responsibility to ensure that students are safe and to take action if they are absent. Staff are also required to ensure high standards of behaviour are maintained throughout the day in School and on trips beyond School.

In the writing of this document we agree to working within the guidelines of the latest statutory guidance for schools published by the DFE Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

ATTENDANCE AND REGISTRATION

Attendance at school is directly related to academic achievement. At Bedales, we see education as a partnership between the family and the School. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for our students and look to parents to support this objective. Given these factors, this policy aims to promote students' welfare.

Any pattern of non-attendance, or frequent, regular or prolonged absence from School is viewed as a safeguarding concern by the School and local authorities. Therefore, staff work with parents and students to ensure that attendance is within the average range or better. Where it is not, we (led by houseparents) do what we can to improve it or support a student who is unable to come into School. This may include sharing information with other agencies, including social care and GPs.

Outstanding attendance 98% and above

Good Attendance 96%-97%

Average attendance 94-95%

Below average attendance 90%-93%

Persistent low attendance below 90%

Chronic low attendance Below 80%

Parents are informed of attendance expectations and attendance percentages are celebrated where they are excellent and discussed with parents where they are below expectations.

Attendance is analysed according to groups and trends on a half-termly basis. Houseparents respond to cases where attendance is persistent or chronic with a personalised approach dependent on circumstances.

The School adheres to local safeguarding guidance regarding absence. There are further details in the Bedales School' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy', found here: [Policies | Bedales School](#)).

Absence is always followed up and the Missing Child procedures are set out at the end of this document.

Registration

Schools must take an attendance register twice a day (AM and PM), which is a legal document that is kept for five years.

The 'AM' log is taken at morning registration on Flat/in the Day House Monday to Saturday. AM registration can also be taken as Period 1 attendance and the sign in deadline and the start of P1 are both at 09:00. We encourage day student early sign in as a touch base with Houseparents as a wellbeing check. The 'PM' log is taken at the start of period 7 in lessons. Students without a lesson sign in at reception, in the studies, or on Flat. There is no 'PM' registration on Saturdays as School finishes at 13:00.

Any absences will be recorded with the DFE recommended code depending on the type of absence. Absences fall into two main categories:

- **Authorised** – those which schools can give permission for
- **Unauthorised** – those which they will not

Registration Codes 2024-25

Symbol	Title	Note	Government Code	Statistical Definition	USE on AM/PM Register	Shows in Registration	Available for OOS
Present Codes							
^	Present		^	Attended	✓	✓	✓
<	Present but absent from timetabled lesson	Use for rehearsals, workshops on site or for students not in sport - this is not for use on AM/PM Registers.	^	Attended	✗	✓	✓
Absence Codes (student off-site)							
I	Illness (Offsite)		I	authorised absence	✓	✓	✓
M	Medical/Dental Appointment (offsite inc. Med Centre)		M	authorised absence	✓	✓	✓
P	Participating in a sporting activity (offsite)		P	Attending an approved education	✓	✓	✗
V	Educational visit or Trip (Offsite)		V	Attending an approved education	✓	✓	✓
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance		C	authorised absence	✓	✓	✓
C2	Leave of Absence for compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	Can be used for non-attendance at lessons where a temporary reduced timetable has been agreed. MUST NOT BE USED IF STUDENT MISSES LESSONS THEY ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND. IN THIS INSTANCE USE THE APPROPRIATE ABSENCE CODE	C2	authorised absence	✓	✓	✓
X	Not required to attend	Use for Nursery pupils who are not of compulsory school age or for Sixth Form students where they have no lessons during the session they have not attended	X	Not a possible attendance	✓	✗	✓
E	Suspended or Excluded (Offsite)		E	Authorised absence	✓	✗	✓
R	Religious Observance		R	Authorised absence	✓	✗	✓
S	Study Leave (Offsite)		S	Authorised absence	✓	✓	✓
N	No Reason Yet Provided for Absence	This code must not remain on the register longer than 5 days. If no reason for the absence can be established within 5 days the code must be changed to "O".	N	unauthorised absence	✓	✓	✓
G	Holiday Not Granted by the school		G	unauthorised absence	✓	✗	✓
O	Unauthorised Absence		O	unauthorised absence	✓	✗	✓
U	Arrived in school after registration closed (later than 30 mins after start of session)	Use of this code will mark student absent for entire AM or PM session. This code should not be used for Lesson Registration	U	unauthorised absence	✗	✗	✓
Absence Codes (student on-site)							
I2	Illness (Boarding House)	Use where student is ill in boarding house and will miss a lesson. NB - student must be marked present on-site for AM/PM registers	I	Authorised absence	✗	✗	✓
F	Study Leave (on-site)	Use where a student will not attend lessons because they are studying for an exam. NB - student must be marked present on-site for AM/PM registers	S	authorised absence	✗	✗	✓

Students are registered for lessons and Tutor Time by the class teacher or Tutor on iSAMS. Activities are registered on SOCS. The Duty Staff follow up on any reported absence during the day

Attendance data is stored in our electronic databases. The attendance register on iSAMS records whether students are present or absent, including the reason for absence and whether it is authorised or unauthorised. Where a reason is not known, an 'N' code is recorded and the reason is sought and the code is amended, usually during the same AM/PM session. If a reason cannot be established within five working days, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The iSAMS record is backed up.

Study Leave Attendance

Please see Annex 1 for detailed information regarding the Schools attendance policy and registration instruction during periods of study leave.

At Risk Students

The pastoral team compile a list of any students considered to be 'At Risk'. This list is logged on iSAMS using the traffic light system so that all staff can be particularly vigilant should any students on the 'At Risk' list not be registered. Reception is also made aware of names, for Registration purposes. These students are flagged with traffic lights on ISAMs

Arrangements for Absence from School

Requests for absence must be made in writing to the Houseparent at least three days in advance (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone Reception, or email BedalesAbsence@bedales.org.uk). Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. beyond Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) at least two weeks in advance.

With the exception of students in Years 12 and 13, students are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, except Wednesday afternoons, unless for a trip or sporting fixture, as detailed on the School calendar. Post 16 students, with prior agreement with Houseparents, may have adjusted hours that do not require them to miss any learning using the X code.

Sixth formers can visit Petersfield during any afternoon when they are free from school commitments between 13:00 and 16:00. They are also allowed supper leave – see Behaviour of Students Policy or House and Staff Handbooks for details.

We send parents the term dates in advance in order that holidays and special occasions can be arranged without disrupting their child's education. Dates are on the School website. Please note that it is the School policy usually not to allow holiday to be taken during term. Please refer to the Parent Handbook ([Bedales Schools](#)) for more information around absence requests. All term time holidays will be recorded as a code G on the absence register 'term time holiday, not granted by the school'. We encourage excellent attendance and holidays during term time negatively impact student progress.

Day Students

All Day students are required to be in School by 08:45 (Block 3) and 08:50 all other students Monday to Saturday, registering in the Day House. The School is responsible for Day students from 08:50 and follows up on any unreported absence. If a Day student arrives before 08:00 am they should let their Houseparent know and sign in at the Day House between 08:15 and 08:50.

The end of the School day depends on the day of the week and the student's programme; the student can leave after their last timetabled activity (whether that is a lesson, assembly, Jaw or an activity on the activities programme) and parents are responsible for them after that time. Day students remaining in School should sign in on the Day House by 19:00 before going to a School Activity. Parents should seek permission from Houseparents if they wish for their child to stay after 19:00 and they have no organised Activity. Day students are normally expected to leave by 21:00 (22:00 for 6.2s, and 6.1s by prior arrangement).

If your child is ill, please e-mail or telephone the School before 08:30 on the first day of absence to **BedalesAbsence@bedales.org.uk**. Parents should give a reason for absence. We will always telephone home in the case of an unexplained absence.

If a student becomes ill at School, Day parents will be contacted by the Health Centre or Houseparents to make appropriate arrangements, including going home.

Houseparents and the administration team are responsible for following up on absence and have the mobile numbers of students so that they can be contacted in an emergency or to help find them if they are missing.

Boarding Students

Attendance of boarding students is covered by National Minimum Boarding standards. There is a legal requirement upon staff who have Boarders in their charge to know their whereabouts at all times (or to know where to find them). A sign-in system operates with set times throughout the day and Boarders sign out when they leave School premises. This is to ensure that we always know where they are during term-time when they are under our care. All Boarders are registered in the morning on Flat, and then again on Flat and at 19:00, 21:00 and 22:00..

Boarders give their mobile phone number to the House team (Houseparents, Deputy Houseparents and House Assistants) for ease of communication. This number is also used by administrative staff who are responsible for following up on absence. Staff only communicate with students using their official work phones and devices.

Boarding houses (or 'Flat' as they are called at Bedales) are central to Boarders' life at Bedales. All students are cared for by Houseparents and a team consisting of Deputies, House Assistants and Visting House Tutors. Together, they are responsible for students during term, including ensuring that they are safely occupied outside normal School hours.

Students should live with and be supervised by parents or a guardian (as per our 'Whole School Educational and Legal Guardianship Policy' which is provided to all boarding parents and available on request) when they are away from School and outside the normal School hours. This means that they are not in the care of the School from 13:00 on a Saturday until 21:00 on a Sunday during term-time, unless a parent indicates that they will be in school every weekend or contacts their child's Houseparent in writing to advise that they will be exceptionally staying in or leaving school that weekend. Parents are also responsible for their children in all non-School times, as indicated on the School's term dates on our website [here](#).

Houseparents should be contacted if a student is taken ill during a weekend, giving a reason for the absence. The School follows the Missing Child procedure below if students are late in returning from a weekend.

All students are expected to return to their boarding houses by 21:00 apart from students in Years 12 and 13 who may be in a place of work up until 22:00 with prior permission.

Contact with Local Authorities

The School complies with local authority procedures¹ and its statutory duties in relation to students' arrival, attendance and departure from school. Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to identify children of compulsory school age who are not in education. Schools may therefore receive an enquiry about whether they are educating a specific child. Before deleting a student's name from the register, the School is required to alert the student's Local Authority as soon as possible after a student of compulsory school age is taken out of School for any of the following reasons:

- to be home educated,
- when the family has apparently moved away,
- when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend,
- when the child is in custody for more than four months or has been permanently excluded,
- when the child has been absent without authority after 10 consecutive days of authorised leave,
- when the child fails to attend school regularly,
- or when the child is removed from the school roll without his or her next school being known.

In addition, the School notifies the local authority if it cannot establish a reason for a student's absence or has concerns about the reason.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS AT SCHOOL

Activities

Activities take place during Badley Time (15:05 – 16:10) and Powell Time (19:15 – 20:15).

Activity registers must be completed at each Activity on SOCS. Absences are reported via SOCS. If staff are concerned about a student's welfare call Houseparents or the Duty Senior Team member who will instigate the Missing Child procedure as appropriate. Activity leaders are responsible for establishing the reason for the absence and updating SOCS accordingly. Sign in happens for boarders on flat just before activities and then on return to flat.

Boarding

All staff working on boarding houses have a job description which sets out their duties, have induction and their work is reviewed as part of the appraisal process, as well as informally on an ongoing basis.

¹ [Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612211/Children_Missing_Education_-_Guidance_for_Local_authorities.pdf)

The role of adults who are resident in accommodation attached to boarding houses but not staff, is set out in the 'Bedales School Adults Staying in Accommodation Linked to Boarding Houses Policy'.

At least one member of the House team is on Duty at all times. Duty staff photographs are displayed on Houses and students have the mobile numbers of House Assistants and Houseparents, as well as a door bell to contact them day or night. When the boarding houses are open for students, staff are also on Duty until bed-time. There are two or more adult members of staff sleeping in each boarding house at night who are responsible for the Boarders in the House. A Senior Staff On Call system operates at all times that the School is open.

Staff have private living accommodation and do not share any facilities with Boarders. Groups of Boarders visit Houseparents accommodation for organised 'at homes'. One-to-one pastoral conversations take place as appropriate, these may be in the communal areas of staff accommodation but are typically on Flat. Students are treated equally with no favouritism. Risk assessments are in place for times when students access staff accommodation.

Bounds

Most of the site is open to students at all times during the day. There are certain areas that are always Out of Bounds as they are considered a risk. Such areas are set out in the 'Bedales School Security, Access Control and Workplace Safety Policy', and in the 'Bedales Behaviour of Students Policy' (on our website [here](#)). Bounds are changed in winter so that students can be safely supervised in lit areas at the centre of the School.

Duty Staff

Staff are expected to be proactive in supervising students whether they are responsible for a School Activity or simply on site. In addition, there is a specific staff duty rota in order to provide suitable supervision for the students throughout the School week.

Lessons and Tutor Time

Absence and late arrival must be recorded on iSAMS, as must attendance in all lessons and Tutor Time. If a member of staff is concerned about a student's welfare they call Houseparents or the Duty Senior Team member who will instigate the Missing Child procedure as appropriate.

Medical supervision

A qualified nurse is contactable through the Health Centre and an On Call system outside opening hours. House Assistants are available on 6.2, Steephurst and Boys' Flat boarding houses at all times. Houseparents are available at all times. A number of staff are trained 'first aiders' and first aid bags are available at a number of locations throughout the School.

Senior Staff On Duty

A member of the Senior Team is always On Duty and within 20 minutes of the School. The On Call runs from 08:00 until 20:00 and any member of staff can call for assistance. The iSAMS Daily Bulletin sets out who is On Duty and gives their mobile number.

Supervision on Educational Visits and School Trips

This is dealt with in the 'Bedales Educational Visits Policy' ([Bedales Senior School Policies | Bedales School](#)).

Supervision on School buses

On the School minibus morning run, students are supervised by a driver from the Facilities Department or a private company who carry out their own safeguarding checks.

Cover for Absent Colleagues

The Deputy Head (Operational & Co-Curricular) is responsible for allocating staff to cover lessons, activities and duties for absent colleagues.

Sponsored Students (i.e. those who are not UK citizens)

All overnight absences of sponsored students must be reported in advance to the student's Houseparent. Absences of 10 consecutive days or more - we must notify both the Local Authority and the Home Office (UKVI) if such an absence occurs.

Visitors to the School

This is dealt with in the 'Bedales School Visitor Policy' (on our website here: [Bedales Schools Visitor Policy.pdf](#)).

MISSING CHILD PROCEDURES

A student who is not present for a scheduled on site School Activity or lesson, is recorded as absent. The staff responsible records the absence in iSAMS. The 'Bedales Educational Visits Policy' (on our website: [Bedales Senior School Policies | Bedales School](#)) sets out arrangements for students missing on trips.

If there is reason to be concerned about the welfare of a student at these times, staff should **speak directly and immediately** to Houseparents or a member of the Senior Team.

If a student does not sign in on Flat, Houseparents contact them via mobile phone and ensure their whereabouts.

If a student is deemed to be missing, Houseparents (or Senior Team in their absence) take the following action:

- The location the student is supposed to be in is checked first
- House and Reception sign-out sheets are checked and Health Centre is called to check whether the student has an appointment

- Repeated attempts are made to contact the student including going to their last known location (if local and is when they are in the care of the School), contacting them via their peers, including phone and social media, contacting other staff to see if they have seen or know where the student may be
- A thorough search of the School is made, involving any other staff needed
- If the student isn't found within two hours, the parents and the Designated Safeguarding Lead are informed and then a Whole School Evacuation may take place, thus enabling registers to be taken
- Local police have advised the School that they would not normally look for a missing student until after two hours but the School will contact them before that if that is felt to be necessary
- Once a student has been located, they will be given an appropriate level of comfort and care
- An investigation into the circumstances will be carried out, with any witnesses asked to provide a written statement
- A report should be made under RIDDOR to the Health and Safety Executive as necessary
- Children's Services, Ofsted, Charity Commission and School insurers are informed as necessary

NB: All School Policies are available to staff and can be found here:

[Policies](#)

[Whole School Policies - Whole School Policies Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

ANNEX I

Study Leave and attendance coding

Study leave is intended to be used as an option to support students to prepare at home for their internal and external assessments. This is not the best approach for all students but some students find it very helpful.

1. Attendance Coding

During study leave, schools use the 'S' code to mark attendance, which stands for "Study Leave" and is considered an authorised absence

This means that students are not physically present in school, but their absence is officially recognised and permitted.

For students who are 6th form age we can use X for the sessions where they are not required to attend (where there is no formal teaching being provided).

For internal exams such as mocks, the timescale where this is the case should be kept to a minimum and should, ideally, be less than a full school week.

When a student attends a morning or afternoon exam, they will be marked present. Where a student is in school and studying, they will be marked present for am and pm and F (studying in school) for other lesson marks.

2. Impact on Attendance Rates

Since study leave is marked as an authorised absence, it can lower the overall attendance percentage for the school and the student.

Schools are advised to use study leave sparingly to minimize this impact. Study leave is not granted for Block 4 exams. Study leave may involve students leaving early at the end of the day but all other absences are discouraged.

3. Alternative Approaches

Where appropriate, Bedales will opt for structured revision sessions instead of traditional study leave to ensure students remain engaged and supervised.

How Long is Study Leave for GCSEs and A Levels?

Study leave for GCSEs usually begins a day before the start of the exam period. At Bedales, this usually falls in the second week in May and aligns with the start of the MFL oral exams. If the oral exams happen before study leave begins then students can take study leave for the morning or day before these exams to prepare.

Support during Study Leave: GCSE teachers will be available during their timetabled lesson times to support students in their exams up to half term and will provide some targeted support following the May half term

holiday where possible. Students are able and encouraged to be in school full time up to and including their last GCSE exam. Block 5 parents will be sent a form by Houseparents to indicate when their child should be expected in school during the exam period.

Study Leave for A Levels begins formally at May half term. The final two weeks in the run up to May half term is a 6.2 Revision transition period. This means that the teachers will be led by the students' needs, being available to give feedback on practice papers and to respond to student requests for support in their revision of the topics that they have identified as their weaker areas. Students are able and encouraged to be in school full time up to and including their last A Level exam.

All boarders are requested to move out of the boarding house on the evening of their last exam to ensure an appropriate working environment for students remaining in school to complete their exams.

Parental responsibility during Study Leave?

Parents are encouraged to help their child to make the best choices about where they study. If the home environment is best, meaning the student has good independent learning strategies, or would benefit from parental support and supervision then we agree that home is the best place for them to study. Likewise, if a student works better at school, we encourage them to continue to attend.

