



Attendance Policy

As a community we grow





Barrhead High School Attendance Matters

Part 1 Policy

Rationale

At Barrhead High, fostering inclusion and equality is at the heart of our school community. When young people feel included and engaged, their likelihood of attending school increases. Regular attendance is crucial, as absences disrupt learning and negatively affect participation, academic achievement, peer relationships, health, wellbeing, and ultimately, positive life outcomes for our young people.

Aims

- Promote regular and punctual attendance as essential to ensure effective learning and safeguarding
- Create a whole-school culture that values and rewards good attendance
- Ensure learners attend school every day unless there is a valid and authorised reason
- Identify and address attendance concerns early through monitoring and intervention
- Work in partnership with parents/carers, learners, and external agencies to improve attendance
- Reduce levels of persistent and severe absence
- Provide appropriate support for learners facing barriers to attendance
- Create opportunities for families to fully engage and participate in the life of their school to encourage attendance.

Policy context and legislation

This policy and all associated procedures apply to all stakeholders. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- ERC Standard Circulars, including (57) Child Protection, (5) Attendance at School, (57b) Absence/ Missing from Education.
- Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Section 30:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/44/section/30>
- Scottish Government. (2022). Getting it Right for Every Child
<https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>
- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2009)
- Scottish Government. (2021, updated 2023). National Child Protection Guidance
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023/>
- Scottish Government. (2019). Included, Engaged and Involved
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/included-engaged-involved-part-1-positive-approach-promotion-management-attendance-scottish-schools/>



Why is school attendance important?

- The National Child Protection Guidance stresses the importance of promoting good attendance at school as a protective measure for young people that may be at risk.
- Full school attendance is more likely to lead to academic success and open up exciting future pathways.
- Full school attendance will help develop a young person's relationships with their peers, opening up opportunities to make friends and be involved in the school community.
- Full school attendance will help to develop a young person's relationship with their teachers, who they can trust to support them in reaching their full potential.
- Maximum school attendance is one of the key factors affecting a person's employability.

The tables below demonstrates how absence can impact over an academic session.

Attendance

Range	Attendance Aug - July	Actual Number of School Days Missed	Approximate Number of Lessons Missed
High	95%	9	59
Medium	90%	19	125
Low	85%	28	185
Very Low	80%	38	251
Exceptionally Low	75%	47	310
Serious Concerns	70%	57	376

Promoting attendance is a shared responsibility. Staff should:

- Understand that it is a legal responsibility to accurately record the attendance and timekeeping of learners.
- Be aware of early signs or concerns which may cause absence: to ensure absence does not become a pattern or habit following a specific issue.
- Develop positive and trusting relationships to prevent difficulties arising and to ensure difficulties are discussed and resolved when they do take place.
- Respond quickly to absence to ensure young people are safe and well.
- Review attendance data to ensure any issues are addressed, supports are in place and information is shared with year heads.
- Support reintegration into learning on returning from absence.
- Follow the Attendance Support Stages.



Late Support Strategies

Punctuality is crucial for staying on track with learning and preparing learners for the workforce. Poor timekeeping disrupts both the individual and the learning environment: it may also signal other underlying issues. Maintaining good timekeeping is essential for all.

The following table demonstrates the impact of persistent late coming and should be shared with learners and their parents/carers to highlight the importance of arriving on time.

Impact of late coming over an academic session.

Range	When your child misses just...	Each week that is equal to...	Which over a year is...	From S1 to S6 this equates to...
Medium	10 mins per day	50 mins of learning	1 week	1.5 months of learning
High	20 mins per day	1 hour 40 mins of learning	2.5 weeks	4 months of learning
Exceptionally High	30 mins per day	2 hours 30 mins of learning	3.5 weeks	5 months of learning
Serious Concerns	40 mins per day	5 hours of learning	7 weeks	10 months of learning

If timekeeping does not improve, the Pastoral Support Teacher should investigate the reasons and implement suitable supports or interventions, collaborating with parents and carers.

Monitoring & evaluation of policy

The monitoring and evaluation of the attendance policy involves reporting annual statistics on attendance and absence to East Renfrewshire Council, parents/carers, and The Scottish Government. These statistics are detailed in the annual report to parents/carers and the Education Department's annual Standards & Quality report.



Part 2 Procedure

Recording of attendance

Refer to Revised Standard Circular 5 for detailed information on attendance codes and guidance regarding educational provision for young people who cannot attend school due to ill health. The document also includes guidance on the rationale and process for implementing a reduced or adapted timetable for learners. Summary of codes can be accessed via <https://www.gov.scot/publications/included-engaged-involved-part-1-positive-approach-promotion-management-attendance-scottish-schools/pages/12/>

Maintenance of registers

Parents/Carers should:

- Call or email the school office by 8.30am stating the reason for absence.
- Discuss any absence with their pastoral teacher or year head where there are concerns.
- Only permit absences for valid reasons: taking a full day for a short appointment or a birthday are **not** valid reasons.

Teachers should:

- Be present at the start of each lesson to welcome learners.
- Ensure registration is accurately recorded on SEEMIS at the start of each period.
- Send a paper register to the school office if they do not have access to SEEMIS.
- Advise the office of any attendance discrepancies via email.
- Update registers if a learner arrives late to class.

Office staff should:

- Record on SEEMIS all calls and emails regarding learner absences and promptly amend attendance records to take account of individual circumstances.
- Collate daily attendance reports and share with all teachers am and pm.
- Liaise with pastoral staff and classroom teachers to ensure attendance is accurate.
- Follow up on any incomplete registers with teaching staff in a timely manner each period.
- Call home for all absences not accounted for.
- Provide requested reports to PTPS/DHT.
- Support with distribution of any required attendance support letters.

Risk assessment process for absence

If a child does not arrive for school and no contact can be made with parent/carer and Pastoral/SLT are concerned for the safety of the child, a home visit should be conducted or call Request for Assistance and/or Police. The following process should be adhered to in order to establish the category of risk for the child/young person. There are 3 grades of risk:

- High - the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the young person is in danger through their own vulnerability or may be the victim of a serious crime.
- Medium - the risk posed is likely to place the young person in danger or they are a threat to themselves.
- Low - the apparent threat of danger to the child/young person is regarded as minimal.

On every occasion of first day absence without explanation, a risk grading requires to be undertaken. This applies even where the young person is a frequent absentee.



Morning and Afternoon Registration Processes



Tracking and Monitoring of Attendance Data

Attendance data will be monitored daily. Monthly reports will be downloaded from SEEMIS and shared with the pastoral team. The pastoral team will analyse the data for their caseload and record any updates to be shared with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The SLT will address any concerns with the relevant pastoral teacher.

The local authority collects attendance data at the end of each of the four school terms to identify emerging patterns and themes and report on this. There is a specific focus on key equity groups including learners who are care experienced, learners residing in SIMD 1 and 2, learners in receipt of free school meals and learners with additional support needs. PowerBi dashboard will be used to track attendance, to plan appropriate supports and interventions and to identify and address whole school trends and individual needs. Business Intelligence will be used regularly to monitor patterns of attendance.



Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers

Families are [more] likely to encourage full attendance when they feel part of the school community and where school works alongside them as equal partners (Scottish government, *Included, Engaged and Involved*, 2019). Ensuring parents/carers are supported and involved at every stage is key to supporting positive attendance and to ensure that any barriers are removed. Attendance at school therefore adopts the wider Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), considering the holistic needs of the young person.

Ensure parents/carers understand:

- where in the support system they are
- the meeting is supportive
- the actions you decide have the overall aim to improve their child's attendance
- the next steps in the support system

Always ask parents/carers for their opinion

- what do they identify as the reasons why their child's attendance is too low
- what actions have they taken to improve their child's attendance
- why the learner feels their attendance is too low – include contributing factors

Look at the learner's school day

- it may be useful to review the school day for the learner
- discuss what they have to do to be prepared for the school day
- explore in school provisions available to help support the learner to attend school
- make sure they have a friend/ buddy/ identified staff member they are checking in with each day
- discuss any triggers / non-school related concerns which could impact their arrival at school
- consider the use of coping mechanisms at this stage for any barriers they face
- find an activity / club they enjoy as a potential hook in

Final steps

- schedule a review for the learner and the parent/carer
- identify small steps to success
- give small, tangible rewards / actions for when the success criteria are met
- make sure the child knows who to speak to if things start to go wrong



Attendance Support Stages

Stage 1

- **Early concerns and pattern emerging.**
- Pastoral to call parents to monitor and identify any concerns.
- GroupCall issued by Pastoral (*Appendix 1a*)
- Pastoral to send Attendance Support letter 1 (*Appendix 2*) if no improvement.
- Early intervention is key at this stage. Groupcall sent to recognise if improvement (*Appendix 1b*)

Stage 2

- **No improvement from stage 1**
- Pastoral to send Attendance Support letter 2 (*Appendix 3*) to arrange parental meeting
- Share attendance summary at meeting
- Pastoral to arrange to meet learner to discuss reasons and record targets prior to meeting (*Appendix 6: Attendance Review - learner Meeting*). Pastoral to complete family contract.
- Targeted approaches based on wellbeing needs. Groupcall sent to recognise if improvement. (*Appendix 1b*)

Stage 3

- **Continued pattern of non-attendance**
- SLT to send Attendance Support Letter 3 (*Appendix 4*) to arrange to meet parent/carer.
- Update Assessment of Wellbeing Plan and review targeted approaches. Refer to JST to consider wider interventions/supports.
- Complete *Appendix 7: Attendance Meeting Record* and *Appendix 8: Learner Re-Engagement Form* during meeting.
- Targeted approaches based on wellbeing needs. Groupcall sent to recognise if improvement. (*Appendix 1b*)

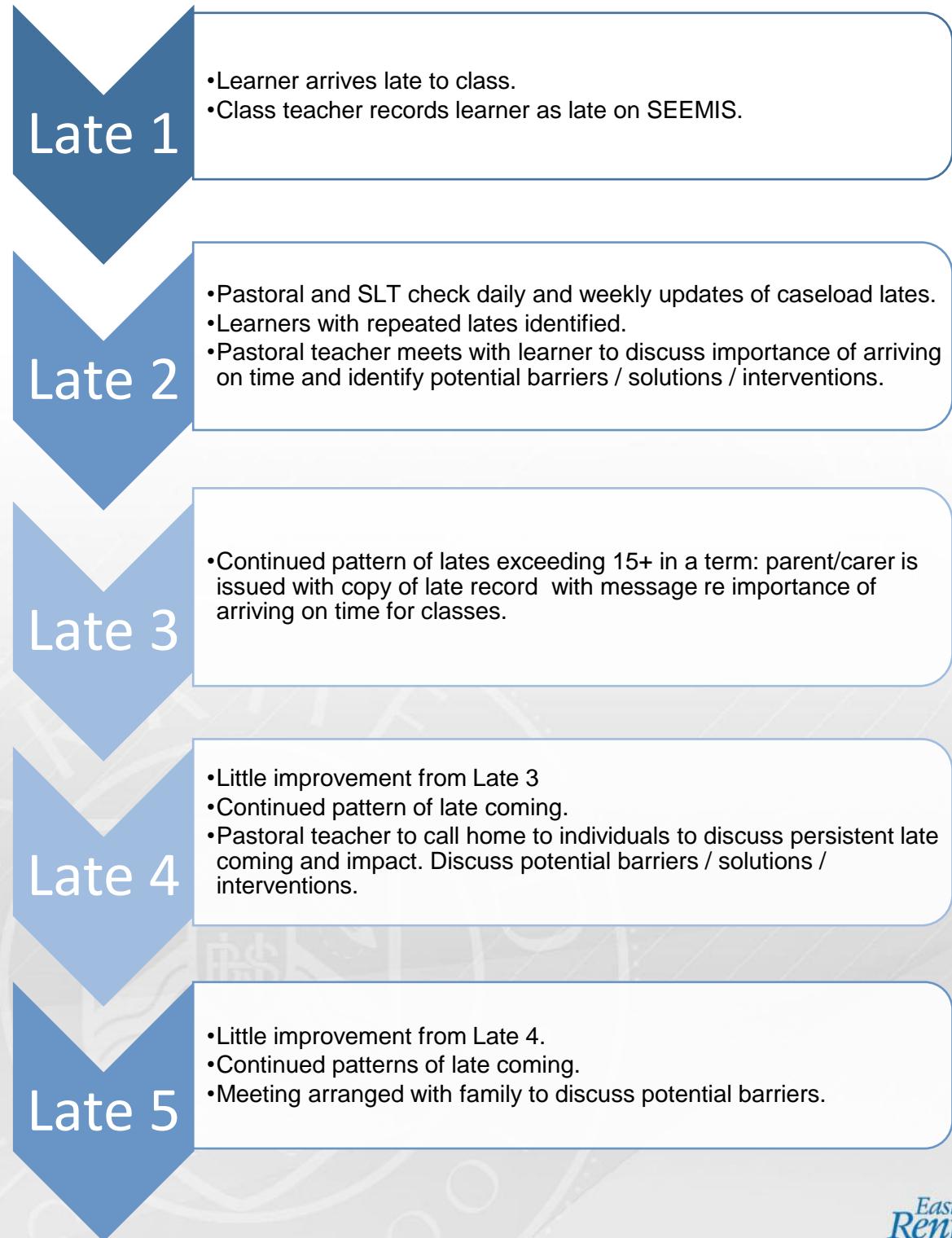
Stage 4

- **Continued pattern of absence/ attendance continues to decline**
- Send Attendance Support Letter 4 (*Appendix 5*).
- Refer to JST to consider wider interventions/supports.
- Discuss potential for SCRA referral at JST & social work: for referral guidance go to: <https://www.scra.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/A-Guide-to-Referral-to-the-Childrens-Reporter.pdf>



Late Support Stages

Be aware that persistent late coming could be an indication of a safeguarding issue or could lead to a safeguarding issue.





Part 3 Appendices

Appendix 1a: Attendance Support Groupcall

Your child's attendance is currently x. Please support us to provide them with best possible start in life by ensuring they maintain high attendance at school.

Appendix 1b: Attendance Support Groupcall

Dear x

At Barrhead High School, we celebrate excellent attendance and recognise the achievements of our young people. We are pleased to report an improvement in attendance over recent weeks. Thank you for your continued support. We will continue to work together to promote attendance. I would encourage you to contact the school if you have any concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 2: Attendance Support Letter 1

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Attendance Concern

At Barrhead High School we value excellent attendance and recognise the connection between regular attendance at school and the achievements of our young people.

I am writing to express concerns about your child's attendance at school. Currently, your child's attendance is below our expected level.

We understand that there are often valid reasons for absences, and we aim to work in partnership with families to support our learners. However, regular attendance is crucial for your child's progress, wellbeing, and future success.

I am sure that you will share our concerns and I hope we can work together to bring about an improvement. If there are particular challenges affecting your child's attendance, please contact us. We are here to help and I know that if we work together we can find and provide the support that is needed to improve [Student's Name]'s attendance at Barhead High School.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,



Appendix 3: Attendance Support Letter 2

Dear (insert name)

As a school, we have responsibility to monitor attendance. Despite our previous communication, we remain concerned about [Student's Name]'s attendance.

Parents and carers are by far the most important influence on their child's lives and learning and it is parents and carers who are responsible for making sure their child is educated until they reach the mandatory school leaving age. However, we recognise that a partnership approach is essential in ensuring young people are included, engaged and involved throughout their education.

To help improve your child's attendance, we invite you to visit the school to discuss and identify appropriate support strategies.

I would be grateful if you could attend a meeting at Barrhead High school on (insert date and time). If this time and date is not suitable please contact me via schoolmail@barrhead.e-renfrew.sch.uk

I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely,

DHT

Appendix 4: Attendance Support Letter 3

Dear (insert name)

Barrhead High School has a legal responsibility to ensure all our young people receive an education to develop their talents and to prepare for the world of work.

Despite our previous communication, we remain concerned about [Student's Name]'s attendance and the impact this is having on their progress.

Parents and carers are the most important influence on their child's lives and learning. Under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 Section 30, it is the responsibility of parents and carers to make sure their child is educated and attends school regularly.

I would therefore be grateful if you could attend a meeting at Barrhead High on (insert date and time) to discuss our ongoing concerns.

Yours sincerely,

DHT



Appendix 5: Attendance Support Letter 4

Dear (insert name)

I am writing to follow up on our recent correspondence and meeting regarding concerns about [Student's Name]'s attendance at school.

Despite efforts to improve your child's attendance through collaboration, there has unfortunately been no improvement. Your child's attendance remains a concern (please see the attached report), and no reasonable excuse has been provided as outlined in Section 42 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

Please be reminded of your parental responsibilities and the consequences of non-attendance:

SECTION 30, EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 1980 outlines the parental duty to provide efficient education for a child, suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude, by causing him/her to attend school regularly.

SECTION 35 of the Act states that a parent or carer is guilty of an offence if a child fails, without reasonable excuse, to attend school regularly.

Due to ongoing concerns, this matter will be referred to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA). The Children's Reporter will decide if a referral to a Children's Hearing is necessary, where compulsory measures may be considered.

I encourage you to maintain contact with the school and work together to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs F. Johnston
Head Teacher



Appendix 6: Attendance Review – Learner Meeting

Name:	Class:	Date:
Current % Attendance/Openings missed:	Number of late marks :	
Attendance Target:	Review Date:	

What do you like about school? (rank subjects)
What would make school better for you?
What do you need to improve or maintain your attendance?
To improve my attendance to the agreed target I will need to: 1. 2. 3.
Agreed actions for the school:
Views of the parent/carer:

Learner Signature



Appendix 7: Attendance Meeting Record: Family contract Form

Name	
Year Group	
Date of the Meeting	
Purpose of the meeting	

Attendees:-

Attendance Overview:-

% Attendance/ Openings missed	% Unauthorised absence	No. of late marks

Attendance overview report shared - Yes No

Reason for low attendance – please identify current barrier to attendance and parent/carer views

Summary of actions already in place – Parent/ carer and school

Agreed Actions- please agree an attendance target

Date of review meeting-

Signed: Parents/carers: _____

PTPS/DHT: _____

Learner: _____



Appendix 8: Learner Re-Engagement Plan

Name	Stage	Date of plan

Major/minor concerns in school

Concern	Solution

First day provision

The night before	What needs to be done to prepare for the day ahead?
On my arrival	Who will meet me? Where shall I go? What time?
First lesson (s)	Include lessons/1:1 provision/group work/specialist learning area
Break time	What shall I do during social time? Where shall I go? Arranged to meet a friend/key member of staff?
Lesson (s)	Include lessons/1:1 provision/group work/specialist learning area
Lunch time	What shall I do during social time? Where shall I go? Arranged to meet a friend/key member of staff?
Lesson (s)	Include lessons/1:1 provision/group work/specialist learning area
After school	Who is picking me up? Shall I go to see a key member of staff first?



Agreed actions

- 1: _____
- 2: _____
- 3: _____
- 4: _____
- 5: _____

Agreed roles:

Child	_____
Parent/Carer	_____
School	_____

How do I track my success?

- Traffic light system to show teachers what I understand
- Journal to write down my thoughts
- Time out card
- Other

When will my reviews take place?

Child-Parent/Carer review	Child- teacher review	Team around the child review
_____	_____	_____

Success criteria:

In _____ day we would like to see _____

In _____ days we would like to see _____

In _____ weeks we would like to see _____

A copy of this plan should be shared with the learner and their parent/carer



Appendix 9: Exemplar Late Email

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please find attached a copy of your child's attendance report for last term which also includes a summary of the occasions when they have been late. Last term your child was late on 15 occasions or more (*please note some of the lates may be between classes*).

As a school we work hard to encourage young people to arrive on time, however, increasingly lessons are being disrupted as learners arrive late - often without reason. Not only is your child missing valuable education; this is having a detrimental impact on teaching and learning for others as it interrupts the flow of the lesson.

When a young person does not arrive on time for class it also means time is taken up by staff trying to locate them to ensure they are safe. It is important learners take responsibility for getting to lessons on time. We would be extremely grateful if you could impress upon your child the importance of arriving on time for all lessons.

If you have any queries regarding the attached, please contact your child's pastoral teacher.

Understanding the Report

- Days of the week are shown across the top
- The start date of each week is shown down the left side.
- Each period of the day is shown by a dash, e.g. there are 7 dashes on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday because we have 7 periods on these days but only 6 on a Wednesday and Friday. If the dash has been replaced by a J this means your child has been late for class.
- The legend across the top explains all other codes.

Yours sincerely,