



Attendance Policy

Date of Review:	September 2026
Reviewed By:	Kath Barclay
Date of Next Review:	September 2028

Bridge the Gap Malvern (BTGM) is a Specialist Alternative Provider providing bespoke programmes of education and personal development for young people with SEND who have an EHCP. Placements with BTGM are commissioned by Local Authorities.

BTGM recognises that regular attendance and engagement are essential to achieving positive educational, social, emotional and employment outcomes for all students. As an alternative provision, we understand that many students face complex barriers to attendance and require a personalised, supportive and trauma-informed approach.

This policy aims to:

- Promote a culture where attendance, participation and engagement are valued by students, families and staff.
- Support every student to access their individualised programme of education, training and support.
- Identify barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity and work collaboratively with students, parents/carers, local authorities and other professionals to overcome them.
- Develop positive relationships that encourage students to attend, engage and achieve success.
- Ensure that attendance arrangements are flexible, reasonable and responsive to individual need, including SEND, EHCP outcomes, health needs and social, emotional or mental health difficulties.
- Monitor attendance, punctuality and engagement consistently and take timely action where concerns arise.
- Safeguard students through effective attendance monitoring and robust follow-up procedures where students are absent from agreed provision.
- Reduce persistent and severe absence through early intervention, supportive strategies and partnership working.
- Prepare students for adulthood, employment, further education and training by developing positive attendance habits and personal responsibility.



- Ensure compliance with statutory guidance relating to attendance, alternative provision, safeguarding and children missing education.

BTGM-Specific Attendance Ethos Statement

BTGM is committed to creating an environment where students feel safe, respected, supported and motivated to attend. We recognise that attendance is often a reflection of a young person's wellbeing and circumstances. Our approach focuses on understanding and addressing the reasons behind absence, whilst maintaining high expectations and promoting positive engagement with learning.

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers have the primary responsibility to ensure that student of compulsory school-age attend planned sessions regularly. For those students aged 16 to 18 or are over 18 and entitled to educational support in accordance with their EHCP, it is expected parents/carers will continue to encourage the student to support BTGM staff.

Students can miss sessions if they are too ill to attend. If a student is unwell, a member of staff from BTGM should be informed, ideally at the start of the day or, at the very latest, an hour before the session is due to start. Parents/carers or students should inform the centre why and when sessions are hoped to resume. It is important to remain in touch with the centre regarding longer term illness so that we can work with parents to minimise disruption to the student's learning.

Punctuality

Punctuality for all agreed appointments, remote and face to face, is important. Parents/carers are expected to support the student with all time keeping. Parents /carers may prefer to personally take and collect the student to meet BTGM staff for one-to-one appointments or activities and should meet at the agreed times. When an arrangement has been made for a student to be collected by BTGM staff for a session, it is expected that the student will be ready.

Absences

Parent/carers or students over the age of 18 must:

- Let the centre know on the first day of absence, as soon as possible. Parents can report an absence to their Transition Coordinator by contacting their mobile or phoning the centre on 01684 353588.
- Liaise with the centre as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness to a session.



Illness/Medical Absences

In addition to the points above, if a student is repeatedly absent due to illness, the centre may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc.

Absence for Holidays

All holidays taken during term time will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Absence for Other Reasons

There may be other reasons for an absence such as:

- Religious observance
- Close family bereavement
- Weddings or funerals

Please inform BTGM as soon as possible when sudden circumstances occur.

Unexplained Absence

When a student is repeatedly absent from sessions and no satisfactory reason is given, this will be raised as a safeguarding matter to the DSL. The DSL will arrange a meeting with parents/carers and students to discuss and address any concerns.

Registration of Students

As an alternative provision offering a bespoke programme to each student, attendance expectations will differ from student to student. Therefore, all students will have an individualised weekly timetable issued to them on a weekly basis which parents/carers and students should refer to.

Registration of attendance is taken by each Transition Coordinator daily, and individual session attendance will be tracked and monitored via an online management information system. Due to the dynamic nature of students' programme this can mean that some students will be undertaking planned provision at other venues such as alternative provisions, care farms and external tutors etc.

It is the Transition Coordinator's responsibility to acquire attendance data daily from those establishments and mark attendance by the end of each day.

Attendance will be taken at the planned start time of the sessions. For instance, a planned session due to start at 11am and finish at 1pm will be entered as an AM (morning) session. Sessions starting after 12noon will be entered as a PM (afternoon) session.



Student attendance and engagement will be monitored and recorded daily and reviewed weekly in leadership meetings.

Should there be a continued cause for concern, after support has been given, and all options exhausted, an interim EHCP review will be arranged with the parents, young person and the Local Authority to determine the support required for the student to attend their programme and whether BTGM can continue to meet the needs of the student. Please note this may result in the placement being terminated.