

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

What is our objective as a body of learning? At BCA, we value each student as an individual and as part of a community; we develop all aspects of their personhood with excellence, according to God's highest purpose for their "heart, soul, and mind."

KEEPING YOUR SEAT WARM

Educational studies consistently show a link between regular student attendance and the successful achievement of learning outcomes; kids who are in class generally do better.

Students who skip classes miss out on important instructional time; our policy invites parents, students, mentors, teachers, and administrators to work together to help students develop conscientious and healthy attitudes towards class attendance. Our intention is to be primarily regenerative rather than primarily punitive.

TOUGH LOVE AND GODLY GRACE

We recognize that we are training students who are in the process of learning, so we seek to extend to them godly grace; we also value cultivating within them a set of skills and attitudes that will nurture them towards maturity and independence—hence the tough love.

"Love the Lord your God with all your mind...": As a community of learners, we challenge all students to develop an attitude of excellence towards their studies in order to prepare them to be lifelong learners in their sphere of influence. We care about the development of students' attitudes towards their work and their colleagues, not just their performance. Attending classes responsibly and being prepared to work diligently is important, as is arriving punctually.

THE POLICY

BCA teachers will contact parents, guardians and/or dorm personnel when students have unexcused absences for the purpose of working together to promote positive student attendance patterns.

- The teacher will send a standard email when a student has an unexcused absence. The email may be copied to the BCA dorm and/or guardians, as appropriate.
- In the email, the parent will be informed about the pertinent details relating to the student's absence and will be invited to work with their child to address the issue. The parent and the student are both welcome to contact the teacher for further discussion. As our intention is primarily regenerative, we are concerned that the student's needs be taken into consideration;

to this end, we are committed to working together to aid the student in whatever way possible to promote future success.

- The student will be required to make up the equivalent lost learning time; the teacher will, therefore, require the student either to demonstrate a particular learning outcome by means of an activity or task, or to compensate for the missed class time by working on an assignment or receiving instructional assistance outside of the regular class period.

In the event that a student accrues repeated unexcused absences from the same class, or demonstrates a general pattern of unexcused absences, the BCA administrative team will contact the student's parents, guardians, and/or dorm personnel.

- The parent and student will be invited to work together with the school team to develop an action plan to address the student's educational needs, and to promote healthy attendance patterns and academic well-being.
- Every effort will be made to work proactively with the student towards success; we desire that all of our students be meaningfully engaged and immersed in their classroom learning experiences.

If a student accumulates 3 or more unexcused absences in a class, the student will be removed from the class. To be reinstated in the class, the student will have to reapply within 24 hours.

- If the student lives with their parents in Moose Jaw or Caronport, the reapplication letter will require a parent signature and have to be returned to the office within 24 hours.
- If the student lives in the dorm, their parents will be sent the reapplication letter in an email, and they will then have to call the school within 24 hours to allow the student to re-enter the class. It will be the responsibility of the dorm student to contact their parents to let them know that they need to call the school.
- If the letter/phone call is received within the 24-hour period, the student will remain in the class as long as they do not have another unexcused absence. If the student has another unexcused absence, the student will be permanently removed from the class.
- If the reapplication letter is not returned or the phone call received within 24 hours, the student will be permanently removed from the class.

Semester Three Considerations

Since most classes during semester three are a half-day in length, missing a half-day of the class will be considered to be two absences.

Since our grade nines take four classes in the third semester, three unexcused absences would involve missing one class on each of three days.

Possible Scenarios

- If a student is taking two classes and is permanently removed from both classes, they will be dismissed from BCA.
- If a student taking two classes is permanently removed from only one class, they will be required to spend 2.5 hours a day at school in a supervised study hall. If they make the choice not to attend this study hall, they will be dismissed from BCA.
- If a student is only taking one class and is permanently removed from that class, they will also be dismissed from BCA.

THE LOGISTICS

Please consult the BCA Attendance Policy for important foundational information. Included in that information is the following request: When your child will be absent from school for one or more periods in a day, please phone our office by 9 a.m. on the day in question.

We care about the well-being of our students; it is important for us to communicate with you in the event that a child is not accounted for in order to ensure his/her safety.

An unexcused absence may result in the assumption that the student was skipping class and will be addressed accordingly; for more information, please see our policy statement on “Unexcused Absences”.

Dorm students and their parents are advised to consult the policy for reporting absences due to illness from within the dormitory context.

Please help us to help you stay informed by regularly visiting “Briercrest Live”, along with the Marks Page on the BCA website at www.briercrestchristianacademy.ca. Attendance information is entered daily, so tracking your child’s progress should be easy.