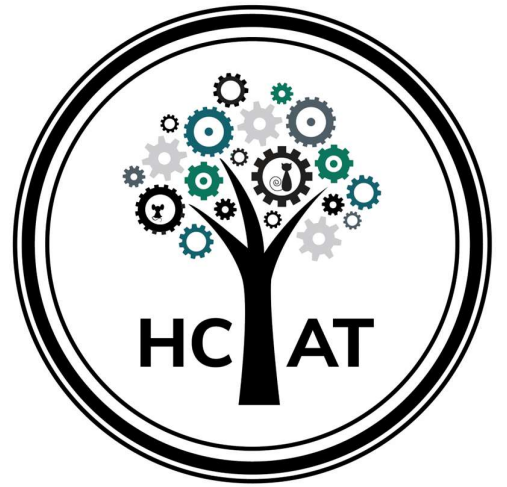




HCAT

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

EDUCATE. EMPOWER. INSPIRE.



Contents

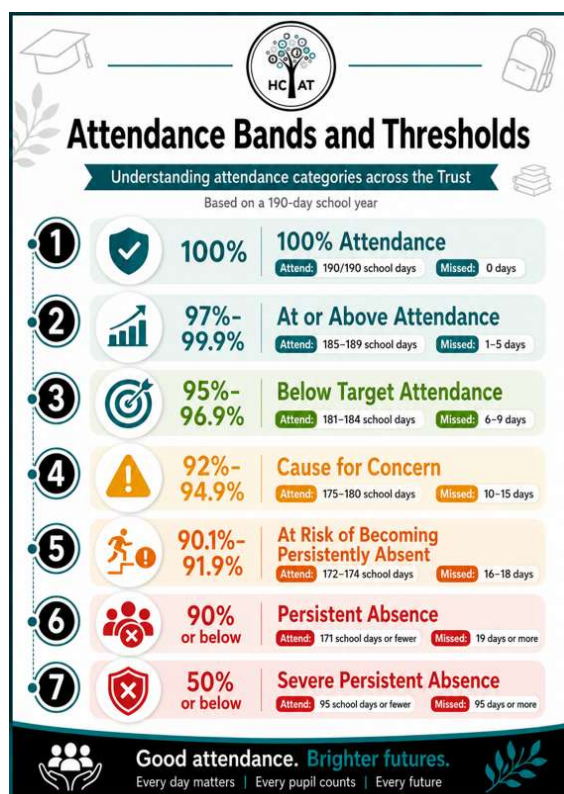
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1	Original	September 2022
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3	Rebranded	June 2024
4	Updated in line with new guidance effective 19 th August 2024	June 2024
5	Amendment made to Page 14, Holidays	March 2025
6	Updated in line with revised DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance July 2026	September 2026

1. Purpose and Principles

Policy Statement

HCAT is committed to creating a culture where excellent attendance and punctuality are valued, expected and actively supported. We believe that regular attendance is fundamental to students' educational achievement, wellbeing, personal development and future success. Every student has the right to access a full-time education, and attendance is a shared responsibility between students, parents, carers, schools and the wider Trust.



All HCAT schools promote high levels of attendance and punctuality and recognise that every school day matters. We encourage all students to achieve attendance of at least 97%, enabling them to benefit fully from the learning, enrichment and wider opportunities available to them.

HCAT recognises that attendance is also a safeguarding priority. Regular attendance helps schools identify concerns, provide timely support and ensure that students remain visible, safe and engaged in education. Where attendance concerns arise, schools will work proactively with students, families and partner agencies to understand barriers and provide appropriate support at the earliest opportunity.

The Trust is committed to a supportive, child-centred approach that promotes early intervention and partnership working. Attendance will be monitored closely, and concerns will be addressed promptly to prevent students from becoming persistently or severely absent. Schools will work collaboratively with families, local authorities and other relevant agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for students.

HCAT's attendance arrangements are informed by current legislation and the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)*. Schools will implement attendance procedures and interventions in accordance with this guidance and any relevant local authority protocols. Staff should refer directly to the statutory guidance for detailed operational requirements, definitions, attendance coding and legal processes.

Aims

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent Trust-wide framework for promoting, monitoring and improving attendance across all HCAT schools. It sets out how schools will work with students, families and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance, provide appropriate support and meet their statutory responsibilities.

Through this policy, HCAT aims to:

- Promote a culture in which excellent attendance and punctuality are expected and valued.
- Maximise attendance for all students so they can fully access their education.
- Identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Understand and address the barriers that may affect attendance.
- Provide timely and proportionate support for students and families.
- Safeguard students through effective attendance monitoring and intervention.
- Reduce persistent and severe absence across all schools.
- Ensure compliance with current attendance legislation and statutory guidance.
- Support vulnerable students and those facing additional barriers to attendance.
- Strengthen partnership working between schools, families, local authorities and other agencies to secure sustained improvements in attendance.



2. Legal Framework

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives a suitable full-time education and, where registered at a school, attends regularly. HCAT expects all students to attend every day that the school is open unless there is a lawful reason for absence.

HCAT schools will promote a culture of excellent attendance, work in partnership with families to remove barriers to attendance and provide timely support where concerns arise. Attendance matters will be managed in accordance with the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* and any relevant local authority attendance protocols.

Schools, parents, carers and local authorities each have defined responsibilities in relation to attendance. Detailed statutory duties, expectations and operational arrangements are set out within the DfE's [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(2026\)](#) and [Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance \(2024\)](#) and should be referred to for further guidance.

Compulsory School Age

The Trust recognises its responsibility to promote and secure regular attendance for all students of compulsory school age. Where attendance concerns persist despite appropriate support and intervention, schools will work with the Local Authority to consider formal attendance measures in line with current legislation and statutory guidance.

The definition of compulsory school age, together with parental responsibilities and available legal interventions, is set out within the [Education Act 1996](#) and the DfE's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* guidance.

Attendance of non-compulsory school aged children (EYFS)

Although children below compulsory school age are not legally required to attend school, HCAT places great importance on establishing positive attendance habits from the earliest stages of education. Schools will work proactively with families to encourage regular attendance and address any barriers that may affect a child's participation, wellbeing or readiness for learning.

Legislative and Statutory Guidance

This policy is implemented in accordance with current attendance legislation and statutory guidance, and should be read alongside:

- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(2026\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Children Missing Education](#)
- [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [Relevant local authority attendance protocols and codes of conduct](#)

Staff should refer directly to the relevant legislation and statutory guidance for detailed requirements relating to attendance registration, attendance coding, data reporting, legal intervention processes and children missing education.

HCAT and its schools will fulfil their statutory responsibilities in relation to:

- Attendance registration and monitoring.
- Early identification of attendance concerns.
- Attendance support and intervention.
- Safeguarding and children missing education.
- Statutory attendance data reporting.
- Partnership working with parents, local authorities and external agencies.
- Attendance enforcement processes where necessary and proportionate.



3. Promoting a Positive Attendance Culture

HCAT recognises that excellent attendance is most effectively achieved through a culture of belonging, inclusion and high expectations. We are committed to ensuring that all schools are safe, welcoming and supportive environments where students feel valued, engaged and able to succeed. Attendance is fundamental to educational achievement, wellbeing and safeguarding and is therefore a shared responsibility across the whole school community.

Attendance will be promoted through high-quality pastoral support, positive relationships, an inclusive curriculum and effective engagement with students and families, including rewards. Schools may recognise and celebrate positive attendance and improvements in attendance where this is appropriate, inclusive and aligned with individual student circumstances.

School leaders will ensure that attendance remains a priority within school improvement, safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion and wellbeing strategies. Attendance patterns will be monitored regularly, enabling schools to identify concerns early, understand barriers to attendance and provide timely support.

Parents and carers will receive regular information about their child's attendance. Where attendance falls below expected levels, schools will work proactively with students and families to secure improvement in line with the Trust's attendance procedures and the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* guidance. As a minimum expectation, on a half termly basis, we will issue every parent/carers with an attendance notification (via email). Each attendance notification will highlight your child's current attendance and the attendance banding categories inc. days missed/days attended. If your child has falling attendance/attendance which is causing concerns, notifications may be sent more frequently alongside additional processes outlined in Managing Absence Procedures.

Where attendance concerns persist despite appropriate support and intervention, further action may be considered in accordance with statutory guidance, local authority protocols and relevant legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is a shared responsibility and everyone has a role to play in promoting excellent attendance and punctuality.

Students are expected to:	- Attend school regularly and arrive on time. - Be prepared for learning and engage fully in school life. - Attend all lessons and learning activities. - Speak to a trusted adult if they are experiencing difficulties that may affect their attendance. - Engage positively with any support offered to improve attendance.
Parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for their child(ren) are expected to:	- Ensure their child attends school regularly, punctually and is prepared for the school day. - Notify the school of any absence in accordance with school procedures. Any unexplained absence is treated as unauthorised absence. - Maintain communication with the school during periods of absence. - Work in partnership with the school to address attendance concerns. - Attend meetings and engage with support where required. - Provide, more than one, up-to-date emergency contact information. - Arrange appointments outside the school day wherever possible.
Staff have a responsibility to:	- Promote a culture where attendance and punctuality are valued. - Build positive relationships with students and families. - Identify and report attendance concerns promptly. - Complete registers accurately and in line with school procedures. - Contribute to appropriate support and intervention for students experiencing attendance difficulties. - Share relevant attendance information with the Attendance Team and safeguarding staff where appropriate. - Amend the register for late comers and add the minutes late.



The Attendance Team will:	- Promote a culture where attendance and punctuality are valued. - Monitor attendance and punctuality regularly. - Follow up absences and unexplained attendance concerns in line with school procedures. - Maintain accurate attendance records. - Analyse attendance data and identify emerging concern alongside the Senior Leadership Team. - Have weekly meetings Head of School/ Senior Attendance Champion and regular meetings with the EWO to discuss students of concern and highlight students who require intervention/support. - Work with students, families and external agencies to address barriers to attendance. - Coordinate and support attendance interventions. - Escalate concerns where additional support or formal action may be required. - Work collaboratively with safeguarding, health and local authority partner
Senior Attendance Champions will:	- Provide strategic leadership for attendance. - Monitor attendance patterns and vulnerable groups. - Oversee attendance systems, interventions and evaluation. - Work closely with safeguarding, SEND and pastoral leaders. - Report attendance information to school and Trust leaders. - Support partnership working with families, local authorities and external agencies.
Heads of School will:	- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently. - Promote a whole-school culture of excellent attendance. - Ensure statutory attendance duties are fulfilled. - Monitor attendance performance and the impact of interventions. - Support staff in addressing attendance concerns. - Work collaboratively with the Trust, Local Authority and external partners to improve attendance outcomes.
Trust Board and Associate Trustees will:	- Promote high expectations for attendance. - Monitor attendance performance and vulnerable groups. - Hold leaders to account for attendance outcomes. - Ensure adequate resources are available to support attendance improvement.

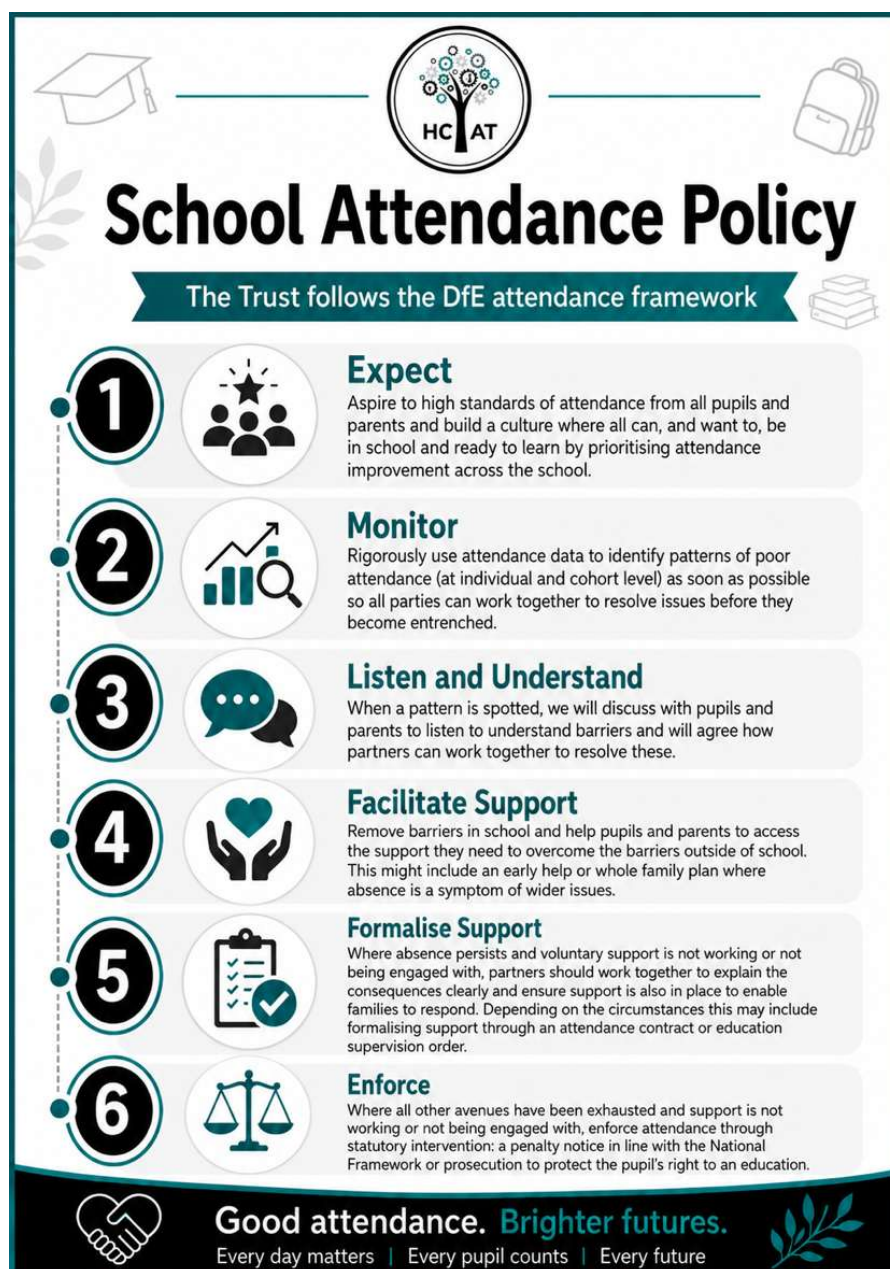
4. Supporting Attendance

HCAT adopts a graduated attendance response based upon the DfE framework of Expect, Monitor, Listen and Understand, Facilitate Support, Formalise Support and Enforce. The primary focus will always be on understanding barriers and securing improvement through support and partnership working.

When attendance concerns emerge, schools will seek to understand the reasons behind absence before implementing intervention. This may involve discussions with students, families and relevant professionals. Where barriers are identified, schools will work collaboratively with families to develop appropriate support plans.

Support strategies may include pastoral support, mentoring, attendance plans, reasonable adjustments, SEND support, referrals to health services, Early Help assessments, family support interventions or multi-agency planning. The level of support provided will increase in line with the level of concern and the complexity of barriers identified.

All interventions will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are having a positive impact. Where arrangements are not successful, schools will work with families and partners to consider alternative approaches.



Registration

Accurate attendance registration is a legal requirement and forms an important part of safeguarding arrangements. Registers will be completed at the beginning of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session in accordance with statutory requirements. The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes. Guidance on applying Education (Student Registration) Regulations can be found in [‘Working together to improve school attendance’](#) published by the DfE.

Register times for each school will be published on school websites and communicated to parents annually.

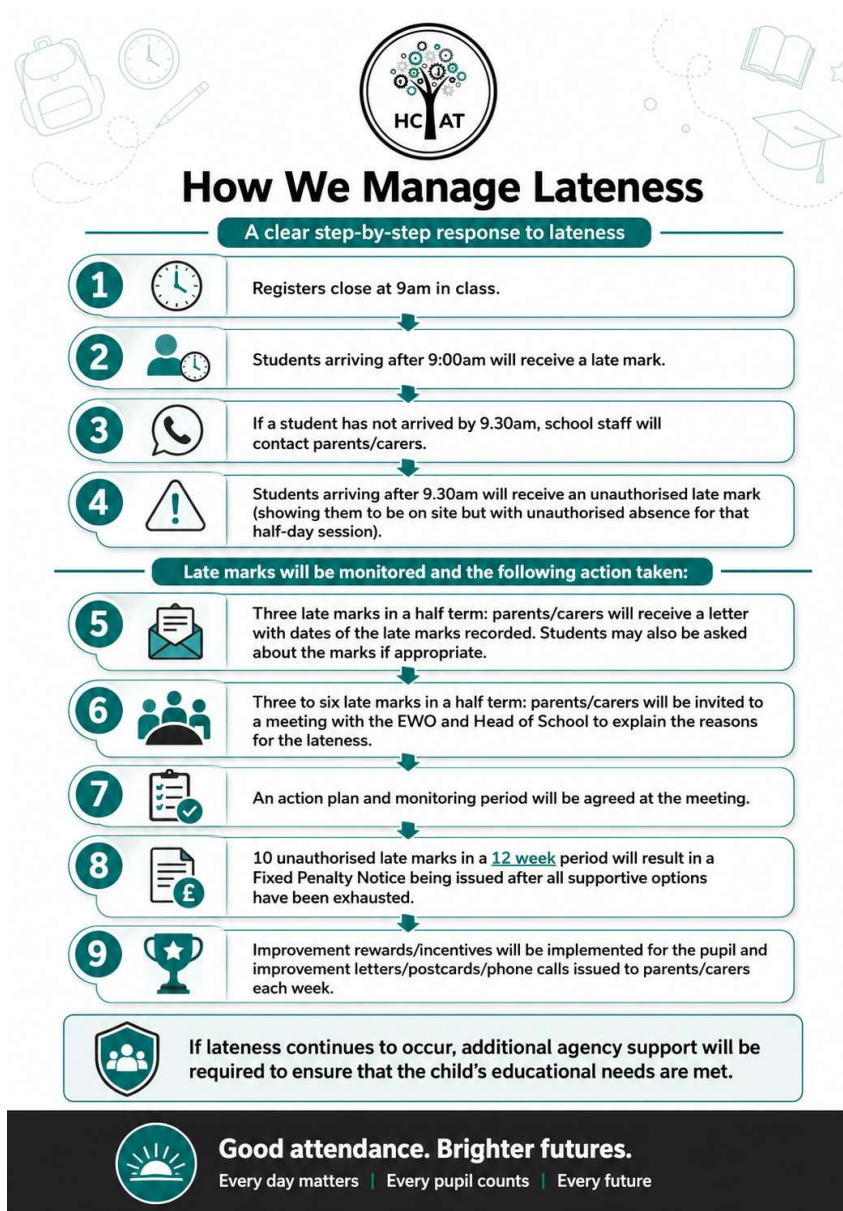
Registers will remain open for no longer than 30 minutes in accordance with statutory requirements.

5. Punctuality and Late Arrival

HCAT recognises that punctuality is an important part of successful school attendance and supports students' learning, wellbeing and future readiness. Students are expected to arrive at school on time and ready to learn each day. Late arrival can result in lost learning opportunities and disrupt the education of both the individual student and their peers. Schools will monitor punctuality closely and address concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Where patterns of lateness emerge, schools will work in partnership with students and families to understand any barriers and provide appropriate support. If punctuality does not improve despite support and intervention, schools may implement further attendance procedures in line with this policy and the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* guidance.

Students arriving after the start of registration will be recorded as late (L). Students arriving after the register has closed will receive an unauthorised late mark after close of register in accordance with statutory guidance (U). Arrivals after 9:00 enter the school through the main door and report to the school office. Parents are required to record the time of arrival and reason for lateness. Parents of unaccompanied late students will be contacted via a telephone call to ascertain the reason for lateness.





6. Absence

Reporting Absence

Parents are expected to notify the school as early as possible on the first day of absence and each subsequent day unless alternative arrangements have been agreed. The reason for absence should always be clearly communicated.

Where no reason for absence has been received, schools will operate a first-day response procedure. A student's non-attendance at school where no reason has been reported, is a safeguarding matter. All unexplained absences will be followed up via a telephone call. School staff will make reasonable efforts to contact parents using all available contact details. Where contact cannot be established, further actions may include additional telephone calls, text messages, emails, home visits or referral to other agencies where concerns exist.

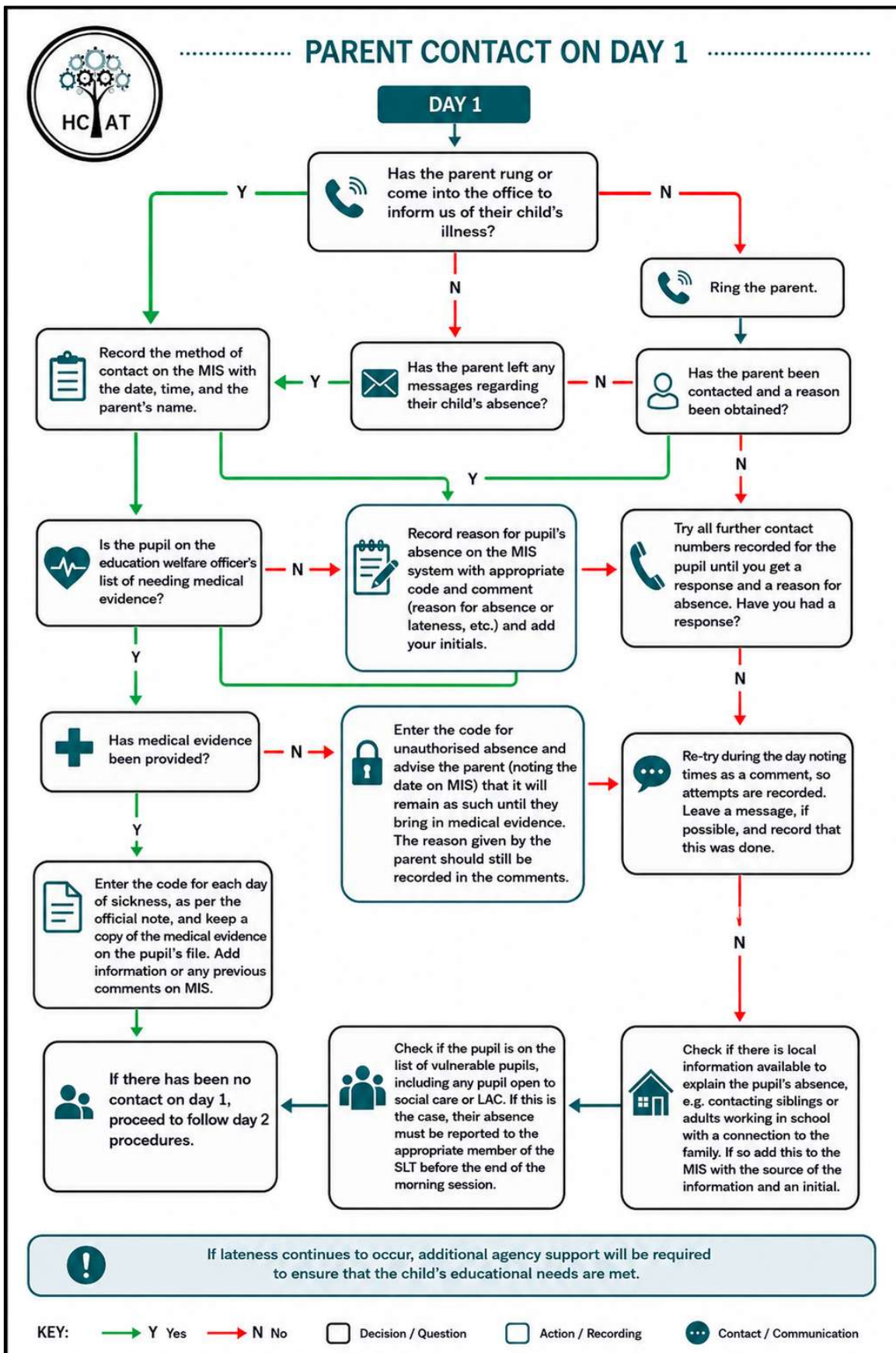
Statutory Safeguarding Response - thirty minutes after close of Registration

If we cannot reach parents in this way, a home visit by the school's pastoral team accompanied by a member of SLT may be necessary. If concerns arise the Head of School or other designated safeguarding may refer matters to the Education Welfare Officer, make a referral to Social Care Direct, or request the Community Policing Team carry out a 'safe and well' check.

The Trust expects all schools to hold more than one emergency contact number wherever reasonably possible. This enables schools to respond effectively when concerns arise regarding a child's whereabouts or welfare.

Schools may request evidence to support absence in limited circumstances where there are concerns about the authenticity of illness, repeated absence patterns or prolonged absence. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis and not through blanket requirements. Such requests will always be made proportionately and in accordance with DfE guidance. Routine requests for medical evidence will not be made.

Daily Absence Procedures





Unexplained Absence Protocol (After Day One):

Where parents fail to notify school on the first day of absence, school will endeavour to make all reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of the student and the reason for absence. Where no contact has been established by the parent and the absence remains unexplained, we will make a home visit on day 2 and 4 of any prolonged period.

Where we have a safeguarding concern and contact cannot be established, a member of the school pastoral team and Designated Safeguarding team will make a home visit on the **first** day of absence. Where we have a safeguarding concern and contact has not been established following a home visit, we may deem it necessary to make a referral to Social Care Direct or request the community policing team carry out a 'safe and well' check.

After 10 days' absence without contact, we will escalate the students' absence as a serious safeguarding concern and will refer this to the Local Authority CME Officer.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Every half-day absence from the school counts as one session and this has to be classified by the school (not the parent/carer) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of absence is always required.

Authorised Leave of Absence is an absence from the school for a valid reason such as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical/dental appointments which fall unavoidably in school time. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of any medical/dental appointments and, wherever possible, arrange these appointments outside of the school day.
- Other emergencies and exceptional circumstances as determined at the discretion of the Head of School

The Head of School, within the context of the law, can authorise absence. An explanation in relation to a particular absence does not oblige the Head teacher to accept it if it is felt that the explanation is not a valid reason for absence. If there are doubts about the explanation that remain after further investigation, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Where parentally condoned unjustified absence appears to be a problem the school will involve the Education Welfare Officer.

Unauthorised Leave of Absence is an absence which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' request has been agreed. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absences, including truancy, are recorded on a student's registration certificate.

Unauthorised absences include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which are not explained properly
- Students who arrive at school after 9.30am
- Students who have been permitted to stay up late the previous night
- Shopping
- Looking after other children
- Birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed

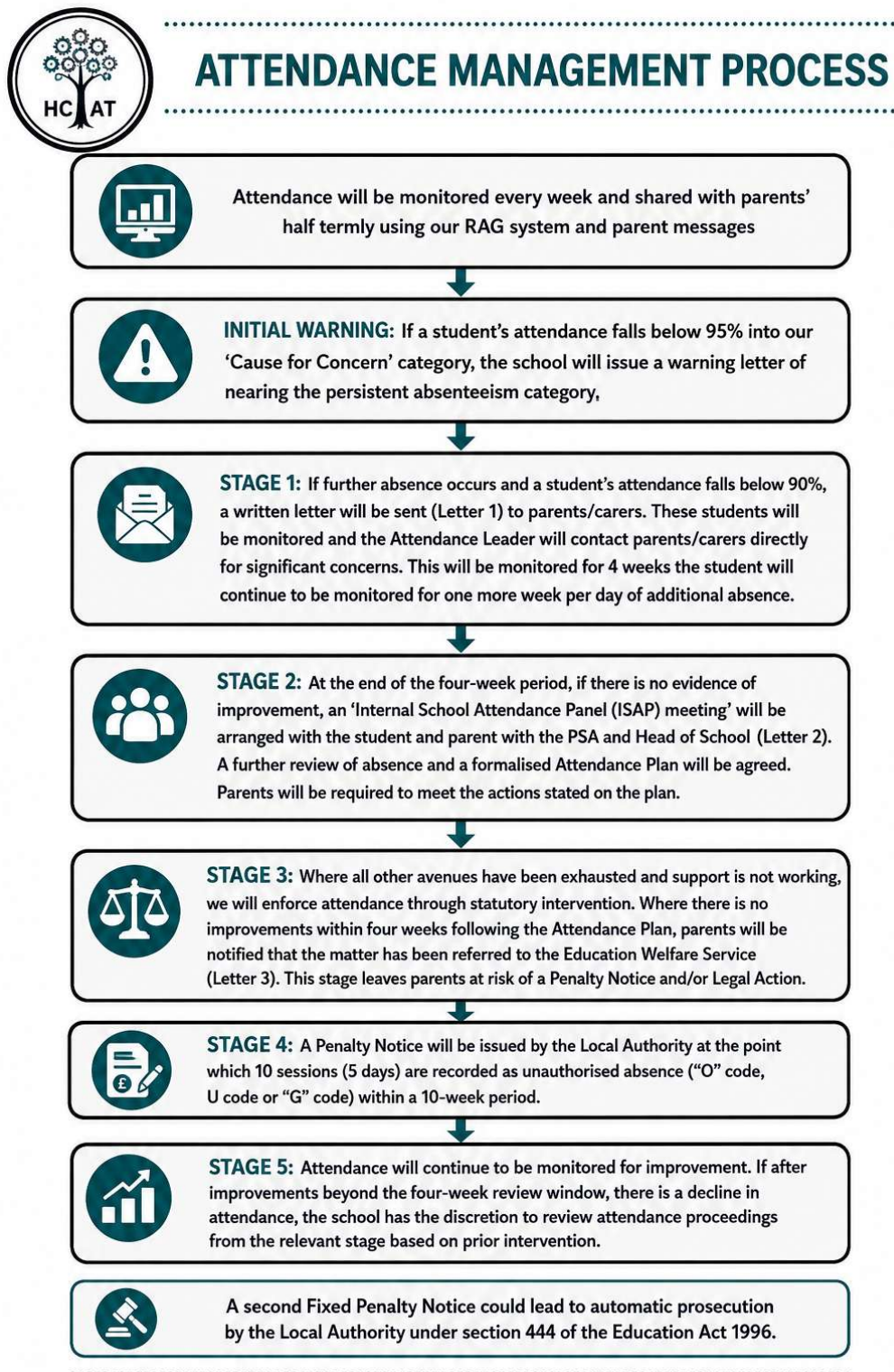
Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance should be addressed between the School / College, the parents/carers and the child.

If the parent/carer thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem.

Managing Absence Procedures

The school will monitor attendance on a daily basis.

The school will take a proactive and supporting approach to working with parents whose child/children who are at risk of persistent absenteeism. The next section of the policy describes the approach we will take to safeguard students from persistence absence. When a student's attendance or punctuality begins to be a concern, parents will be informed and subsequently become involved as outlined below:



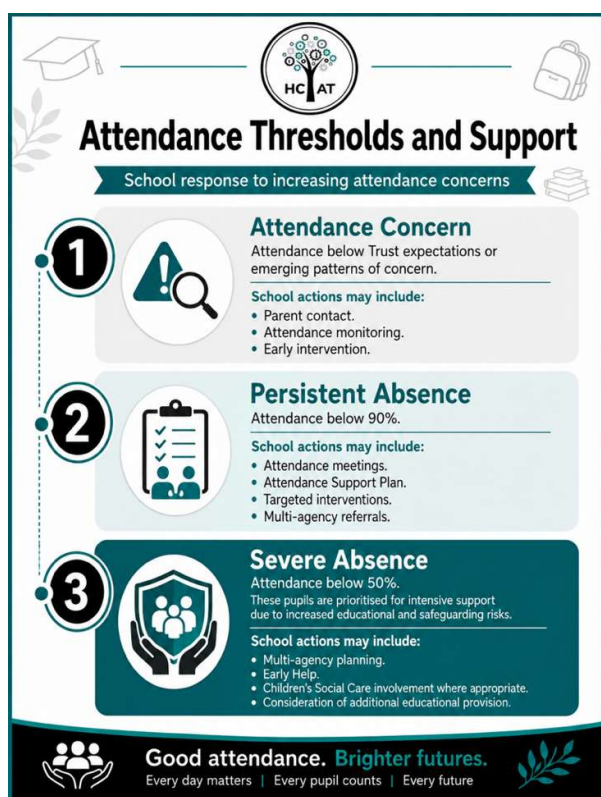
Attendance Meetings Agenda

Internal School Attendance Panel (ISAP) meetings follow a set agenda:

- Meeting date and time.
- Register of people in attendance.
- Identification of key reason for absence.
- Outcomes wanted and why these outcomes are needed.
- How these outcomes will be achieved and the impact of these outcomes on the attendance %
- Agreement of actions on Attendance Plan
- Date and time of review meeting

In addition to the process outlined above, at the start of each academic year, parents will be notified, via letter, if their child's attendance has been identified as a concern based on previous year's attendance data. The purpose of this is to notify parents that their child's attendance is being closely monitored and to offer support (Appendix 5).

7. Persistent and Severe Absence



Attendance patterns and reasons are monitored thoroughly and continually. When attendance begins to decline or concerning patterns emerge, schools will make early contact with families.

Where attendance falls significantly or reaches persistent absence levels, additional support will be introduced. A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they fall below 90% attendance. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. PA students and their parents/carers may be requested to attend an Absence Prevention Plan meeting (APP). The plan may include allocation of additional support through the Education Welfare Officer or the involvement of wider agencies as appropriate. We may use individual incentive programmes, individual targets and participation in group activities around raising attendance. Progress towards the plan will be regularly reviewed.

Persistent Absenteeism can also lead to legal proceedings and the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (fines).

Students whose attendance falls below 50% will be considered severely absent and will receive the highest level of attendance support. Given the significant educational and safeguarding risks associated with severe absence, these students will be prioritised for multi-agency intervention and intensive support.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

HCAT is committed to working in partnership with students, parents and carers to secure good attendance. Attendance concerns will be addressed through early identification, supportive intervention and collaborative working with families to remove barriers to attendance. HCAT follows the DFE National Framework and the Barnsley Code of Conduct 2024 when requesting Penalty Notices to be issued from the Local Authority

Where attendance does not improve despite appropriate support, schools may seek additional involvement from the Local Authority and other relevant agencies. Formal attendance action, including the use of Penalty Notices or



legal proceedings, may be considered where appropriate and in accordance with the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* guidance and the relevant Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Families may also access advice and support from Local Authority Attendance Services and other agencies where attendance concerns persist. Where health-related absence is a concern, schools may seek advice from appropriate health professionals to ensure that students and families receive the support they need.

Legal Intervention

The Trust is committed to supporting families and improving attendance through positive engagement wherever possible. However, where attendance does not improve despite support, or where support is not appropriate because of the nature of the absence, schools may work with the Local Authority to consider formal attendance processes.

This may include:

- Notices to Improve.
- Penalty Notices.
- Attendance contracts.
- Education Supervision Orders.
- Prosecution.

Any legal intervention will be considered carefully and applied in accordance with current legislation, national guidance and local authority procedures.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued to address unauthorised absence, which may include term time holidays, irregular attendance, and poor punctuality. A Penalty Notice will be issued by the Local Authority at the point which 10 sessions (5 days) are recorded as unauthorised absence ("O" code, U code or "G" code) within a 10-week period. The 10 school week period may span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term)

This may include unexplained absence, a term time holiday and/or poor punctuality. The cost of the penalty notice is £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. This rises to £160 per child, if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996 and this could result in a criminal conviction and court costs.

Multiple Penalty Notices may be issued within a term. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

The Local Authority may also issue Penalty Notices if your child has been excluded from school and seen in a public place during the period of exclusion.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

Requests for leave of absence must be submitted in advance using the school's published procedure. The Head of School will consider each request individually, taking account of the circumstances and any supporting evidence provided. Decisions will be made in accordance with current legislation and the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* guidance.

As a general principle, holidays and other leisure activities will not be authorised during term time and will only be considered where exceptional circumstances apply.



No leave of absence should be taken until written confirmation has been received from the school. Where leave is taken without authorisation, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the school may request that the Local Authority considers issuing a Penalty Notice in line with the DfE National Framework and the relevant Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to submit requests as early as possible to allow sufficient time for consideration before the proposed absence.

Further information regarding leave of absence, exceptional circumstances and Penalty Notice arrangements can be found in the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026) guidance and the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

8. Safeguarding and Attendance

Attendance is a safeguarding priority and forms an important part of the school's wider safeguarding arrangements. Attendance concerns will always be considered alongside other safeguarding information to help identify students who may be vulnerable or require additional support.

Particular attention will be given to students who are vulnerable, including children with social workers, children in need, students subject to child protection plans, looked after children, young carers and students with SEND. Where attendance concerns emerge, schools will work proactively with families and relevant agencies to understand barriers, assess risk and provide appropriate support.

Unexplained, persistent or severe absence will be followed up promptly. Where concerns about a student's safety or welfare arise, schools will take appropriate action, which may include welfare checks, home visits, referrals to external agencies or safeguarding interventions.

Children Missing Education

HCAT schools will fulfil all statutory duties relating to Children Missing Education (CME) and will work closely with the Local Authority to identify, monitor and support students who are at risk of becoming missing from education.

Where a student fails to attend regularly, cannot be located, is absent for prolonged periods without explanation, or meets Children Missing Education thresholds, the school will follow local authority procedures and statutory guidance. Attendance concerns will be referred promptly where required.

Schools will notify the Local Authority when a student is to be removed from roll in circumstances prescribed by legislation and will not remove a student from roll unless the relevant statutory requirements have been met.

Parents and carers must inform the school if they intend to move, relocate or transfer their child to another school. The school will work with families and the Local Authority to ensure continuity of education and safeguard students whose whereabouts are unknown.

Excluded Students

Arrangements for students who are excluded from school will be managed in accordance with current statutory exclusions guidance. Schools will ensure that all legal responsibilities relating to the provision of education during exclusion are fulfilled.

9. Support for Vulnerable Students

HCAT maintains high expectations for the attendance of all students while recognising that some children may face additional barriers to regular attendance. Our ambition remains the same for every student, with support tailored to individual needs and circumstances.



Particular consideration will be given to students with SEND, medical needs, mental health difficulties, children with social workers, looked after and previously looked after children, young carers and disadvantaged students.

Where attendance is affected by additional needs or vulnerabilities, schools will work collaboratively with students, families and relevant professionals to identify barriers and provide appropriate support.

This may include:

- Individual attendance support plans.
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Reasonable adjustments and tailored support.
- Strategies to remove barriers within school.
- Phased or supported reintegration arrangements where appropriate.
- Regular monitoring and review of attendance and support plans.
- Access to support from external agencies and multi-agency services.

All support arrangements will be proportionate, reviewed regularly and designed to help students access their education successfully while promoting sustained improvements in attendance.

11. Monitoring and Review

Attendance information will be reviewed regularly by school leaders, governors and trustees. Attendance data will be analysed by student groups, year groups and vulnerable cohorts to ensure any emerging concerns are identified quickly and addressed effectively.

Attendance data will be monitored:

- Daily by school attendance teams.
- Weekly by senior leaders.
- Termly by governors.
- Regularly by the Trust Board.

Leaders will evaluate the impact of attendance strategies and use findings to inform future improvement planning. Regular reviews will ensure that attendance remains a key priority across all HCAT schools and that support arrangements continue to meet the needs of students and families.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes.



Appendix 1 – Initial Warning Letter

«date»

«addressee»

Dear **xxxxx**

Student: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Year Group: «year_reg»

Current Attendance: «percentage_attendance»%

At **XXXX**, we fully recognise the impact of good attendance and punctuality on the success and development of young people both socially and academically.

Research has proved that any student with attendance under 95% is at risk of achieving a grade lower in every subject by the time they leave school. We expect all students to attend school regularly and their attendance should be at least 97%.

At **XXXX**, we classify attendance in the following way:

Attendance	School Days Missed (Approx.)	Attendance Category
100%	0 days	Excellent Attendance
97.0% - 99.9%	1-5 days	At or Above Expected Attendance
95.0% - 96.9%	6-9 days	Below Expected Attendance
92.0% - 94.9%	10-15 days	Cause for Concern
90.1% - 91.9%	16-18 days	At Risk of Persistent Absence
90% or below	19+ days	Persistent Absence
50% or below	95+ days	Severe Persistent Absence

Our current attendance target range for all children is 97%-100%. Unfortunately, **XXXX's** attendance is not currently meeting this target as it has dropped below 95% as **he/she/they** has now missed **XXXX** school sessions (2 sessions per school day) this academic year.

This becomes a cause for concern as they are at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. We are bringing this to your attention because any child below 90% attendance is considered by the Department for Education to be a “persistent absentee”. Therefore, we are sending out this letter to advise that if there is further absence from school, this could result in **XXXX** becoming within the lowest standard of attendance.

If there is no improvement in **XXXX's** attendance, you may receive a letter 1, which is the first formal stage of our Attendance & Punctuality Policy.

Please be assured that we want to support you and should you feel we can help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact the Head of School or our Parent Support Advisor.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

[Role]

[Insert School Name]



Appendix 2 – Letter 1

«date»

«addressee»

Dear **xxxxxx**

Student: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Year Group: «year_reg»

Current Attendance: «percentage_attendance»%

At **[Insert School Name]**, we recognise that excellent attendance is fundamental to a child's academic achievement, wellbeing, and personal development. Regular attendance enables students to fully engage with their learning, build positive relationships, and benefit from the wider opportunities that school provides.

National research consistently demonstrates a strong link between attendance and educational outcomes. Even small amounts of absence can have a significant impact on a student's progress over time. For this reason, we encourage all students to achieve attendance of at least 97% and work closely with families to support regular school attendance.

Our attendance categories are outlined below:

Attendance	School Days Missed (Approx.)	Attendance Category
100%	0 days	Excellent Attendance
97.0% - 99.9%	1-5 days	At or Above Expected Attendance
95.0% - 96.9%	6-9 days	Below Expected Attendance
92.0% - 94.9%	10-15 days	Cause for Concern
90.1% - 91.9%	16-18 days	At Risk of Persistent Absence
90% or below	19+ days	Persistent Absence
50% or below	95+ days	Severe Persistent Absence

According to our records, **(xxxxxx)** has now missed **three school days** this academic year. A copy of your child's attendance certificate is enclosed for your information.

We understand that there may be genuine reasons why children are absent from school. However, where further absence occurs, we may request appropriate medical or other supporting evidence to help us ensure that your child's attendance is appropriately recorded and supported.

The Department for Education defines a student as being **persistently absent** when their attendance falls below 90%. Although your child's attendance may not currently be at this threshold, we feel it is important to make you aware of the current attendance pattern so that we can work together to prevent any further decline.

Should attendance continue to be a concern, we may invite you and your child to attend a meeting with school staff to discuss any barriers to attendance and agree a plan of support. Our priority is always to work in partnership with families to improve attendance and ensure students receive the full benefit of their education.

Please be assured that we are committed to supporting both you and your child. If there are any circumstances affecting attendance, or if you feel there is anything the school can do to help, please contact the Attendance Team or the Head of School at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that **(xxxxxx)** attends school regularly and is able to make the most of every learning opportunity.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

[Role]

[Insert School Name]



Appendix 3 – Letter 2

«date»

«addressee»

Dear **xxxxx**

Student: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Year Group: «year_reg»

Current Attendance: «percentage_attendance»%

Following our previous correspondence regarding attendance, we are writing to express our continued concern about **xxxxx**'s level of attendance at **[Insert School Name]**.

As outlined in our earlier letter, regular attendance is essential for academic success, wellbeing, social development and future opportunities. We know that every day in school matters, and we are committed to working in partnership with families to support students in achieving the best possible outcomes.

Research shows that any attendance below 95% can have a significant impact on educational progress, and students with lower attendance are more likely to experience gaps in learning that become increasingly difficult to address over time. Our expectation is that all students attend school regularly and achieve attendance of at least 97%.

Our attendance categories are outlined below:

Attendance	School Days Missed (Approx.)	Attendance Category
100%	0 days	Excellent Attendance
97.0% - 99.9%	1-5 days	At or Above Expected Attendance
95.0% - 96.9%	6-9 days	Below Expected Attendance
92.0% - 94.9%	10-15 days	Cause for Concern
90.1% - 91.9%	16-18 days	At Risk of Persistent Absence
90% or below	19+ days	Persistent Absence
50% or below	95+ days	Severe Persistent Absence

Since our previous communication, **xxxxx**'s attendance has continued to decline, and further absences have been recorded. We are therefore keen to meet with you and your child to better understand any barriers affecting attendance and to discuss the support that may be available.

We would like to invite you to attend an Absence Prevention Plan meeting on:

Date: _____
Time: _____
Location: _____

The purpose of this meeting is to explore any concerns, identify appropriate support, and agree a plan to help improve attendance moving forward. We strongly encourage both you and your child to attend so that we can work together in a constructive and supportive way.

Our aim is to understand the challenges that may be impacting attendance and to ensure that appropriate support is put in place at the earliest opportunity. We recognise that there can be a range of factors affecting a child's attendance and are committed to working with families to overcome these wherever possible.

As part of our graduated approach to attendance support, we continue to work closely with colleagues in the Education Welfare Service and other relevant agencies where appropriate. We hope that by working together at this stage, we can secure the improvements needed to ensure that **xxxxx** benefits fully from their education.

If you are unable to attend the scheduled meeting, please contact the school as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be discussed.

Thank you for your support and cooperation. We look forward to meeting with you and working together to improve **xxxxx**'s attendance.

Yours sincerely

[Name][Role]

[Insert School Name]



Appendix 4 – Letter 3

«date»

«addressee»

Dear **xxxxx**

Student: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Year Group: «year_reg»

Current Attendance: «percentage_attendance»%

I am writing further to our previous communications and the Attendance Support Meeting that took place regarding **xxxxx**'s attendance at **[Insert School Name]**. As you will be aware, concerns regarding attendance have previously been discussed with both you and your child, and support has been offered to address any barriers affecting regular school attendance. Despite these interventions, further absences have continued to be recorded and attendance remains a significant concern.

Regular attendance is essential for academic achievement, wellbeing, and positive future outcomes. Absence from school not only impacts learning but can also affect confidence, friendships, participation in school life, and overall educational progress. Whilst we recognise that there can be genuine challenges affecting attendance, it is important that we work together to ensure that every possible step is taken to support improved attendance.

Research consistently demonstrates that students whose attendance falls below 95% are at greater risk of underachievement. Our expectation is that all students attend school regularly and achieve attendance of at least 97%. Our attendance categories are outlined below:

Attendance	School Days Missed (Approx.)	Attendance Category
100%	0 days	Excellent Attendance
97.0% - 99.9%	1-5 days	At or Above Expected Attendance
95.0% - 96.9%	6-9 days	Below Expected Attendance
92.0% - 94.9%	10-15 days	Cause for Concern
90.1% - 91.9%	16-18 days	At Risk of Persistent Absence
90% or below	19+ days	Persistent Absence
50% or below	95+ days	Severe Persistent Absence

As attendance has not improved sufficiently following our previous support and intervention, we would now like to invite you to attend an **Internal School Attendance Panel (ISAP)**.

Date: _____ **Time:** _____ **Venue:** _____

The panel will be chaired by **[Insert Chair's Name]** and will include:

- Assistant Head of School
- Education Welfare Officer
- Representative of the Governing Board
- Other relevant school staff where appropriate

The purpose of the panel is to review the attendance concerns in greater detail, consider the support that has already been offered, identify any ongoing barriers, and agree a clear action plan aimed at improving attendance. We strongly encourage you and your child to attend this meeting. Your views and contributions are important, and the panel provides an opportunity for us to work collaboratively to ensure that the right support is in place. However, should you be unable to attend, the panel will still proceed and the outcomes of the meeting will be shared with you.

Whilst our priority continues to be supporting your child and family, it is important to note that attendance concerns may be referred to the Local Authority where attendance does not improve despite support and intervention. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Service as part of its graduated response to attendance concerns.

We are committed to helping **xxxxx** attend school regularly and achieve their full potential. We hope that by working together through this next stage of support, we can secure a sustained improvement in attendance and ensure that **xxxxx** benefits fully from all aspects of school life.

If you have any questions before the meeting, or if there are circumstances that you feel the panel should be aware of, please contact the school.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support.

Yours sincerely [Name] [Role]



Appendix 5 – New Academic Year Letter

«date»

«addressee»

Dear xxxxx

Student: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Year Group: «year_reg»

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we start the new academic year, we have been reviewing attendance across school. I am writing because your child's attendance last year was lower than expected, and we want to work closely with you to ensure they have a positive and settled start this year.

Parents and carers have parental responsibility for ensuring that school-age children attend school regularly. Attendance is also a legal requirement, and as a school we must monitor this closely and work with families where attendance falls below expected levels.

We understand that some families face additional challenges, and we know that circumstances outside of school can sometimes make regular attendance difficult. Our aim is not to place blame, but to offer support and work together so your child can attend consistently and feel secure, confident, and ready to learn.

From the start of Autumn term, we will be monitoring your child's attendance weekly. We expect to see a clear and sustained improvement in their attendance percentage, in line with the expectations set out in our school policy and the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance. If attendance does not improve, or if it continues to fall below expected levels, you should expect the school to follow formal procedures. This may include involvement from the Local Authority, who have a statutory role in addressing persistent absence.

Good attendance is important for your child's progress, wellbeing, and routine. Even small improvements can make a significant difference, and we will always recognise positive steps and offer support early where needed.

If there is anything you feel we should be aware of, or if you would like support with routines, health needs, anxiety, or any other barriers, please get in touch. We are here to listen and to work with you in a way that feels manageable and supportive.

Thank you for your continued cooperation. We look forward to working together to make this year a successful one for your child.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

[Role]

[Insert School Name]



Appendix 6 – Traffic Light Emails

Dear xxxxx

Date xxx

Attendance Update for all Parents & Carers – Your Child is currently Red

Our current attendance target range for all children is 97%-100% and unfortunately xxxxx is not currently meeting this target as their attendance is xxxxx, which is below 90%. Therefore, we are bringing this to your attention, as any child with below 90% attendance is considered by the Department for Education to be a “persistent absentee”.

For persistent absentees, the school is expected to have plans in place to support both children and parents to improve their attendance.

If your child is further absent from school due to illness, as we have concerns about xxxxx's attendance in school and the impact on their education, we may request that medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence is provided.

You can view xxxxx's registration certificate on the Arbor App via the attendance drop down menu, click by date and download the certificate.

Please be assured that we want to support you and should you feel we can help in any way, do not hesitate to contact.

Yours sincerely,

xxx

Head of School

Dear xxxxx

Date xxx

Half Termly Attendance Update for all Parents & Carers – Your Child is currently Amber

Our current attendance target range for all children is 97%-100% and xxxxx's attendance is currently xxxxx and is within our Amber Area of 90% to 96%. Therefore, we are sending out this email to advise that if there is further absence from school, it could result in xxxxx becoming within the lowest standard of attendance.

We are bringing this to your attention because any child with below 90% attendance is considered by the Department for Education to be a “persistent absentee”. For persistent absentees, the school is expected to have plans in place to support both children and parents to improve their attendance. We are aware that illness or term time holidays can be the cause of this. This is a notification of attendance at this point in time and we have a statutory responsibility from the Department of Education to report this to you.

You can view xxxxx's registration certificate on the Arbor App via the attendance drop down menu, click by date and download the certificate.

Please be assured that we want to support you and should you feel we can help in any way and, do not hesitate to contact so we can avoid xxxxx falling into persistent absence.

Yours sincerely,

xxx

Head of School

HCAT Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Dear xxxxx

Date xxx

Half Termly Attendance Update for all Parents & Carers – Your Child is currently Green

Our current attendance target range for all children is 97%-100%. We are delighted to inform you that xxxxx's attendance is XXX and is currently meeting this target.

Therefore, we'd like to take this opportunity to commend you on xxxx's attendance which is currently within our highest standard - Green Standard.

You can view xxxx's registration certificate on the Arbor App via the attendance drop down menu, click by date and download the certificate.

Many thanks for your continued support, it is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

XXX

Head of School



Appendix 7 – Attendance Registers and Codes

<u>Attendance Registers</u>	
Attendance and Absence Codes	
Attending the school	
Codes	Description
Code / \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
Code L	Late arrival before the register is closed
Attending a place other than the school	
Codes	Description
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Code D	Dual registered at another school
Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code P	Participating in a sporting activity
Code V	Attending an educational visit or trip
Code W	Attending work experience
Absent - leave of absence	
Codes	Description
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Code C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
Code J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
Code M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Absent - other authorised reasons	
Codes	Description
Code T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code R	Religious observance
Code I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause	
Codes	Description
Code Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Code Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Code Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent - unauthorised absence	
Codes	Description
Code G	Holiday not granted by the school
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established
Code O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative codes	
Codes	Description
Code Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
Code #	Planned whole school closure