

PRIMARY ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

Reviewed September 2024

*Together creating opportunity and aspiration
for every child*



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First Version Implemented	Revision Level	Current Version Adopted by Trust	Review Date	Responsible Person
June 2023	V2.0	September 2024	September 2025	CEO

Statement of intent

The Priestley Academy Trust believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents/carers.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents/carers.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents/carers and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

Staff, parents/carers and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Concerns and Complaints Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy

2. Contact details of the school staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis

All attendance must be reported to school before 9:00am on a day by day basis.

Parents/carers should report their child's absence as follows:

School	Before	Contact for reporting a child's absence on a day to day basis
Atlas Community Primary School	9:00am	Report absence via telephone: 01274 495190 Or via the StudyBugs app
Green Lane Primary School	9:00am	Report absence via telephone: 01274 774644 Or via the StudyBugs app
Lilycroft Primary School	9:30am	Report absence via telephone: 01274 543357 Or via the StudyBugs app
Margaret McMillan Primary School	9:00am	Report absence via telephone: 01274 495934
Miriam Lord Primary School	9:00am	Report absence via telephone: 01274 496611
Westbourne Primary School	8:30am	Report absence via telephone: 01274 483138 Or via the StudyBugs app

3. School Attendance Champions

The Senior Attendance Champion for each school is:

School	Senior Attendance Champion	Contact
Atlas Community Primary	Lisa Simpson, Headteacher	atlas@priestley.academy
Green Lane Primary	Rachel Allinson, Assistant Head	greenlane@priestley.academy
Lilycroft Primary	Leah Florence, Headteacher	lilycroft@priestley.academy
Margaret McMillan Primary	Sarah Johnson, Deputy Head	mmmps@priestley.academy
Miriam Lord Primary	Steven Young, Head of School	miriamlord@priestley.academy
Westbourne Primary	Laura Rogers, Deputy Head	westbourne@priestley.academy

The Attendance Officer for each school is:

School	Attendance Officer	Contact
Atlas Community Primary	Liam Brearley	atlas@priestley.academy
Green Lane Primary	Jackie Deaves	greenlane@priestley.academy
Lilycroft Primary	Fozia Bano	lilycroft@priestley.academy
Margaret McMillan Primary	Barbara Nemeth	mmmps@priestley.academy
Miriam Lord Primary	Shazana Kauser	miriamlord@priestley.academy
Westbourne Primary	Izabel Karol	westbourne@priestley.academy

4. Number of school days missing with each absence

Attendance percentage	Number of days missed over a school year
100%	0 days
99%	2 days
97%	5 days
95%	10 days
93%	14 days
90%	20 days
85%	30 days
80%	40 days

Minutes late every day	Number of days missed over a school year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

5. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring the school has a dedicated safeguarding and attendance link governor, discussing attendance with the school's Attendance Champion and challenging attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring Local Authority guidance is followed.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to monitor attendance.
- Ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

All staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date.
- Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns.
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns.
- Emphasising with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or who are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should:
 - treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence
 - handle confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being

- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually.
- Emphasize the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom.
- Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions.
- Apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence.
- Contact parents/carers regarding absence and punctuality.
- Review form or tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early, and help set targets.
- Periodically review practice and consistency both across and between departments.
- Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction.
- Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents/carers with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

The School Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy with the Head.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Championing and improving attendance.
- Ensuring the practice that is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Oversight of data analysis -
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes, raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
- Robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group, and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
 - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
 - young carers
 - children who are eligible for free school meals
 - children who speak English as a second language
 - children who have special educational needs and disabilities

- Keeping the Head and all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.
- Compiling attendance data for the Head, the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- Ensuring a positive working relationship with the School Attendance Service is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings.
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents.
- If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Undertaking home visits in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- Only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and doing so in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- In the case of pupils becoming at risk of being persistently absent or being persistently absent or severely absent, working with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engaging with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency, for which the school has granted leave

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other family members or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day
- Absence due to relocating within the local authority (pupils are expected to attend their current school until a new school is allocated)

Persistent Absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

6. Attendance expectations - Atlas

The Trust and school have high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents/carers and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school for the full day.

At **Atlas Community Primary School**, the school day starts at **8:45am** and pupils will be in their classrooms, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **8:40am**. Pupils will have a morning break, which lasts for 15 minutes, and a lunch break which lasts for 45 minutes. Pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the end of each break.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **8:45am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by that time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.
- The morning register will close at **8:50am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.

- The afternoon register will be marked by **1:00pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- The afternoon register will close at **1:05pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

7. Absence procedures

Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office via telephone 01274 495190 or via the StudyBugs app before **9:00am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence. Parents/carers are required to contact the school office via telephone or StudyBugs on each day of absence.

Where a pupil is absent and their parent/carer has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, a member of staff will contact the parent/carer by telephone call as soon as practically possible. If school are unable to contact parents/carers the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure school is made aware of any absence.

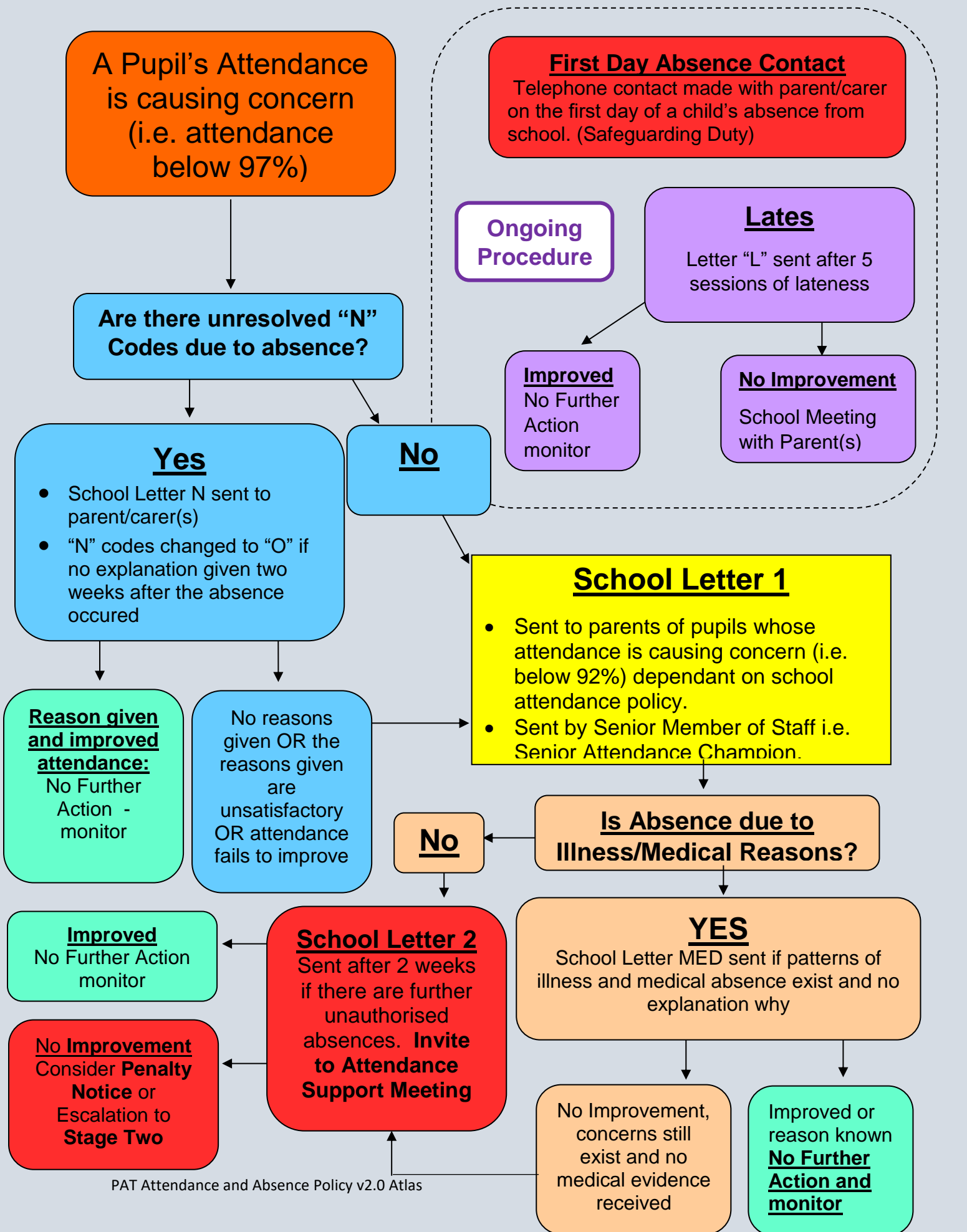
The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

The school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. The school will request supporting evidence for absence when a pupil's attendance is below 95%. If supporting evidence is not provided the absence will not be authorised.

The school will always request an appointment letter/confirmation to authorise medical appointments during the school day.

Stage ONE – Poor Attendance Staged Intervention Process



8. Attendance register

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. The register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

Colour Key	Description
	Present
	Authorised absence
	Approved educational activity – counted as present
	Unauthorised absence
	Not counted in attendances calculations

Register Code	Description
/	Present in the morning
\	Present in the afternoon
L	Late arrival before the register has closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by LA or school
C	Leave of absence due to other authorised circumstances by the school
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil to a part-time timetable
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made
I	Illness (not appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical or dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

B	Approved off-site education activity (NOT dual registration)
P	Participating in approved supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
V	Approved educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
K	Attending education provision arranged by LA or school
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registration closed
D	Dual registered (at another establishment – NOT counted in possible attendance)
X	Not required to be in school – for non-compulsory school age children
Z	Pupil not yet on roll – not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure – NOT counted in possible attendances
Q	Unable to attend school because of a lack of access arrangements or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

When a school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different year groups, e.g. induction days.

Where there is more than one afternoon session, and therefore the attendance register is taken more than once in the same afternoon, the school will use the codes from the last afternoon session as the basis for its statistical attendance data.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the absence register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of the amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

9. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents/carers will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents/carers and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. The school would not normally consider visiting family during term time to be an exceptional circumstance.

In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents/carers to attend a leave of absence request meeting. The school advises that this is done prior to making any travel arrangements.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school.

Request for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during the statutory assessment periods.
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice.

The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents/carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where not possible, parents/carers will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

An appointment letter or text will need to be seen by school as evidence of the appointment. If a pupil has three or more bouts of illness, the school may ask for medical evidence. Due to the level of illness and/or medical absence, we may ask that if any further absence occurs, evidence must be received by the school that shows that the pupil has been absent and is being supported by a doctor. Some examples of evidence that could be used are: Prescriptions, Appointment Cards, Doctor's Notes, etc. You do not need to ask for a letter from your GP. If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as "unauthorised".

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- Immediately before and during the statutory assessment periods.
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence.
- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed by the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day.

The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Parents/carers will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents/carers for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body (one day per religious observance). The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents/carers would be expected by the established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent/carer belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent/carer will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

10. SEND and health related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any Educational, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or individual healthcare plans (IHPs) that have been implemented. The school will ensure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal and external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts and early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or one-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

11. Leave during lunch times

Parents/carers may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents/carers will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into to school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.

Pupils will leave the school premises within **10 minutes** of the start of lunch and will return no later than **5 minutes** before the end of lunch.

Parents/carers will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register at the school office. A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff at the school office has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision.

If permission is withdrawn, parents/carers will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents/carers will be able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Permission will be updated on an annual basis – letters will be sent to parents/carers at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

12. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes for the start of school and straight after lunch, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the **school office** and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

13. Missing children

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.

- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - The library
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin to search the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not be found in 10 minutes, the parents/carers of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact the parents/carers using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents/carers have had no contact from the pupil and the emergency contact list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents/carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

14. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.

- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents/carers
 - Having a weekly review
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams
 - Using fixed penalty notices
 - Creating attendance clinics

The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality.

The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

15. Working with parents/carers to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents/carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents/carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents/carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly.

The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA and will encourage parents/carers to access support that they may need.

16. Persistent Absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHCP or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

17. Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the school's point of contact in the school attendance support team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contact or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

18. Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole
- Individual year groups
- Individual pupils
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The board of trustees will ensure staff from different schools within the trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

19. Training for staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

20. Deletions of names from the admissions register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance.
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances.

- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers.
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance.
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it.

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

21. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1 – Stage 1 School Letter 1

<Address>
<Address>
<Address>
<Address>

<Date>

Dear <Name of Parent>

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first Letter to register our concern with parents. We are therefore writing to you due to <Name of pupil>'s current level of attendance:

Attendance	<current attendance> %
Authorised Absence	<current AA> %
Unauthorised Absence	<current UA> %

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year
Excellent attendance! These children will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Children will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.
95%: 10 days absence a year
These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Children who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.
90% and below: 19 days + absence a year
The Government classes children in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible for them to keep up with work. Parents of children in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by Bradford Council.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact <named school person> on <telephone number>

Yours sincerely

<School contact>

Appendix 2 – Stage 1 School Letter 2

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Date >

Dear <name of parent/carer>

Since we wrote to you on <date of 1st letter>, <name of pupil>'s attendance has failed to improve significantly and is now <attendance percentage>%. This is below what we expect and to put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year – your child will spend more time at home than at school this academic year!

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent poor habits of attendance forming with <name of pupil>. Poor attendance habits now will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends school regularly as they get older.

We wish to help <name of pupil> to improve their attendance. I would like you to attend a meeting in school with me on <date> at <time> to discuss what we can all do to help <name of pupil> attend more regularly.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange another time and date to meet.

We would appreciate your support to make sure <name of child>'s attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and may refer your child's absence to Bradford Council for consideration of a fixed penalty notice fine or legal action if unauthorised absence continues to occur.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

<School Contact>

Appendix 3 – Stage 2 Enforcement Letter 1 - Warning Letter

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

Name of Child: <name of pupil>

DOB: <date of birth>

Attendance Percentage: <attendance percentage>%.

Regular attendance at school is a major focus for the Department for Education (DFE) and Bradford Council. In an effort to improve pupil's school attendance, schools and the council work together to challenge parents who fail to ensure their children attend school regularly without any known justifiable cause.

<name of pupil>'s attendance this academic year is currently <attendance percentage>%. This is considerably below what our school, the government and Bradford Council considers to be a level of attendance recommended for children to achieve their educational potential. Please note that parents are advised to provide an explanation for their child's absence. Absences through illness will no longer be authorised without medical evidence, for example a letter from your doctor, a copy of your child's prescription or an appointment card.

I will be monitoring your child's attendance for the next 3 weeks. Should there be any further unauthorised absences I will invite you to an Attendance Panel Meeting. It is the Headteacher's decision as to whether to accept any parental explanation for absence. Please be aware that pupils arriving to school after the official close of registers will be marked as 'unauthorised absent' unless there are legitimate reasons for your child's late arrival.

Every day in school counts towards <name of pupil>'s future, and I thank you in advance for supporting <name of school> in ensuring excellent school attendance.

If you are experiencing any difficulties, or do not understand aspects of this letter, please contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

<School contact>

Appendix 3 – Stage 2 Enforcement Letter 2 - Attendance Panel Meeting Invite/

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

Name of Child: <name of pupil>

DOB: <date of birth>

Attendance Percentage: <attendance percentage>%.

You will recall that I wrote to you on <date of Enforcement Letter 1> regarding <name of pupil>'s poor attendance at school. I enclose a copy of <name of pupil>'s registration certificate, showing that since (date), <name of pupil> has had <number of unauthorised sessions> sessions of unauthorised absence. You will notice that further unauthorised absence has occurred.

Unfortunately, <name of pupils>'s attendance has failed to improve sufficiently. <name of pupil>'s current attendance is <attendance percentage>%. I am therefore inviting you to attend an Attendance Panel Meeting. The meeting is scheduled to take place at <name of school> on <date> at <time>. You will be asked to agree to an attendance contract to support <name of pupil>'s attendance at school. If you are unable to attend the meeting or require an interpreter, please contact me as soon as possible.

Absences through illness will no longer be authorised for your child without medical evidence, for example a letter from your doctor, a copy of your child's prescription or an appointment card. It is your responsibility to ensure that you inform the school of any absences through illness and to provide the appropriate medical evidence.

I must remind you that it is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their children receive an education. This is stated in Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent is guilty of an offence".

Should you be prosecuted for failure to ensure <name of pupil>'s regular attendance at school, you may be sentenced to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a 3-month custodial sentence.

If you are experiencing any difficulties, or do not understand aspects of this letter please contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

<school contact>

Appendix 3 – Stage 2 Enforcement Letter 2A - Parent did not attend Attendance Panel Meeting

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

Name of Child: <name of pupil>

DOB: <date of birth>

Attendance Percentage: <attendance percentage>%.

I am sorry you were unable to attend the Attendance Panel Meeting today. However, the importance of this meeting cannot be stressed enough as <name of pupil>'s school attendance continues to be irregular with many unauthorised absences. I enclose a copy of <his/her> registration certificate, which shows that <name of pupil> has attended <attendances made> out of a possible <sessions available> sessions at school; <unauthorised sessions> of which are classed as unauthorised absence.

The decision has therefore been taken to continue to monitor your child's attendance until <date of review>. At that point your child's attendance will be reviewed, and if they are still causing a concern, a decision will be made as to what further action will be taken.

The school may continue to unauthorise future absences unless medical evidence is provided. Medical evidence may include appointment cards, copies of prescriptions, letters from specialists etc.

I continue to be available to you to offer support regarding <name of pupil>'s school attendance, therefore please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss the situation further.

Finally, I must remind you that the Education Act 1996 states that it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their child regularly attends the school at which they are on roll. A failure to do this could result in legal action being taken by Bradford Council.

Yours sincerely

<school contact>

Appendix 3 – Stage 2 Enforcement Letter 3 – Final Warning Letter

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

Name of Child: <name of pupil>

DOB: <date of birth>

Attendance Percentage: <attendance percentage>%.

Despite previous attempts to improve <name of pupil>'s poor attendance at <name of school> I remain concerned at the level of unauthorised absence. I enclose a copy of <name of pupil>'s registration certificate, showing that since (date), <name of pupil> has had <unauthorised sessions> sessions of unauthorised absence. **You will be aware from previous contact from me that you are legally responsible for the regular attendance of your child at school.**

Following a thorough assessment of this case, the decision has been made to refer your child's poor attendance to Bradford Council. Bradford Council will now conduct a criminal investigation and considering whether to instigate legal proceedings against you for an offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent is guilty of an offence."

The Local Authority will be in contact with you shortly, and in the meantime, I would urge you to ensure your child attends school regularly. If you are experiencing any difficulties or you do not understand aspects of this letter, please contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

<school contact>