

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

A large version of the North Walsham High School logo, centered on a light pink background. The text is white. To the right of the text are two vertical bars, one yellow and one light blue.

**North
Walsham**
High School

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Outstanding Learning in Every Lesson, Every Day

1. Amendment History

Author	Version	Reason	Date
D Berry	2	Policy updated.	15/03/2018
F Ghafoor	3	Policy updated.	28/06/2019

2. Linked Documents

Title	File Name	Location
School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – November 2016	School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – November 2016.pdf	School website and The Key
School Attendance parental responsibility measures. Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police – January 2015	School Attendance parental responsibility measures. Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police – January 2015.pdf	School website and The Key
Education Act 1996 – Section 7 and Section 144	Education Act 1996.pdf	School website and The Key
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006	The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.pdf	School website and The Key
The Education Act 2002	The Education Act 2002.pdf	School website and The Key

3. Aims

North Walsham High School (NWHS) is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at NWHS, it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all students. NWHS actively promotes good attendance and discourages unjustified absence. NWHS recognises that promoting good attendance and punctuality prepares students for the disciplines of adult working life.

4. Guiding Principles

- NWHS emphasises that it is the responsibility of everyone in the School to improve attendance and punctuality.
- NWHS needs to ensure that all its students access a full-time education, which meets their needs and allows all to realise their potential.
- NWHS will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered.
- NWHS will work with students and their families to ensure every student attends regularly and punctually.

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- NWHS will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- NWHS has an effective system of communication with parents/carers together with appropriate agencies to provide mutual information and support.
- NWHS will continue to develop ICT-based attendance recording systems in order to provide accurate information and to use suitable tracking strategies to recognise any trends that can damage good attendance and learning.
- NWHS will support all aspects of the Education Act 1996 and the Children's Act 2004 by implementing this policy in a consistent manner.
- NWHS will have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and reasonable adjustments will be made for young people.

5. What you can expect from North Walsham High School

- We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- We will work closely with parents/carers where student's absence is cause for concern.
- We will support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality. We will support students returning to school after prolonged absence.

6. What North Walsham High School expects from its students:

- To attend regularly and on time
- To be punctual to all lessons
- To ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons and inform the School Attendance Office or School Reception where appropriate if they are not able to be registered.
- To ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers are taken to the School Attendance Office where these notes relate to student absence or requests for absence for any part of a school day.

7. What North Walsham High School expects from Parents/Carers:

- To ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To ensure their child attends every day the School is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- Not to keep their child away from the School for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation (see overleaf).
- Not to arrange holidays during term time.
- To immediately inform the School Attendance Officer or School Reception if their child is unable to attend (by 8.30am where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return.
- Confirm in writing on their child's return the reason for their absence.
- If no indication of a return date has been given, parents/carers should contact the School on each day of absence.

8. Registration

- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. At NWHS this is at 8.40am and 12:20pm.

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- Students are expected to arrive by 8.35am in order to be ready for the start of lessons at 8.40am.
- Students are registered at the start of every lesson of the day.
- Registers close at 9.00am in the morning and 1:10pm in the afternoon, after which students will be marked as unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation has been received.
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1).
- Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'School Attendance, guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' published November 2016 by the DfE.

9. Punctuality

- The School gates will close at 8.35am.
- Any student arriving after this time should sign in at Main Reception Desk giving their reason for being late. Where a late slip will be issued to the student.
- Students arriving late to registration but before 9am without a satisfactory explanation will receive a C3 detention of 30 minutes on the same day or the following day.
- Students arriving after 9am without a satisfactory explanation will be given a C4 detention of 1hr on the same day or the following day.
- Where a detention has been issued on the same day, parents and carers will be informed of the detention during the day by text or phone call. If contact cannot be made, then the student will receive a letter for parents/carers informing them of the detention, to be completed on the subsequent day.
- Students arriving at first lesson without a late slip must be directed back to the Main Reception to sign in.
- Repeated lateness will be reported to parents/carers and a meeting will be arranged to discuss support and actions to be made to prevent this occurring.

10. Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the School has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the School can do this.

Authorised absence can only granted in cases of exceptional circumstances.

- Parents/carers should contact the Student Support Leaders or School Reception (by telephone or email) on the morning of absence (preferably before 8.30am) giving a reason and an expected date of return. A note should follow this up on the child's return.
- All absence letters will be either authorised or unauthorised by Ms Ghafoor (Deputy Headteacher) and passed to the attendance officer whom will send out the relevant letter from Appendix 5

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- Absence may be authorised for such reasons as:
 - Illness
 - Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
 - Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement of a close family member
 - Days of religious observance (see Appendix 2)
 - Study leave
 - Exclusion
 - Involvement in a public performance
- Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:
 - Looking after brothers/sisters/unwell parents/carers
 - Birthdays
 - Days out, e.g. The Norfolk Show
 - Shopping trips
 - Family holidays where permission has not been granted (please note, family holidays during term time will not normally be approved).
 - Special occasions, where the School does not agree that the absence should be granted.
- Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. Should the School require evidence of a medical appointment; a medical evidence letter will be sent to parents/carers. Absence due to illness will only be authorised if the medical evidence has been received (i.e. appointment card, doctor's note or prescription). If medical appointments are attended at the start of the day, causing the student to arrive late to the School, medical evidence (as above) must be provided or a late detention will be issued.
- Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a student's absence, the School will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise/unauthorise accordingly.
- Absence, which hasn't been explained, will remain as unauthorised.
- Parents/carers should not take their children out of school for days out, to attend sporting events, etc.

11. How we respond to Absence/Lateness

- If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, the School will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence. Contact will be via phone call, text or email. If no contact is possible we may visit the students place or residence and if the student is not present or no contact can be made we may inform the authorities as a safeguarding concern.
- Where a message has been left by the school, a parent should contact the Student Support Leaders or School Reception to inform us of the reason for their child's absence. The School asks that parents/carers ensure we have the most up to contact details at all times.

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- If no response is received, the School will write to parents/carers requesting an explanation.
- All absence notes will be retained.
- Where a student's absence is cause for concern, the School will write to parents/carers and/or invite the parents/carers into school or visit parents/carers at home.
- Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated despite intervention, the Attendance to Achieve (A2A) process will be followed (Appendix 3). Fixed Penalty notices may be issued in line with the Local Authority's Code of Conduct. We will also pursue prosecution in line with the Local Authority's Code of Conduct if, after fixed penalty, no improvement in attendance is sustained.

12. Persistent Absence

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Any student whose attendance has reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via:

- An action plan to improve attendance will be created which may involve referrals to other agencies alongside meetings between relevant School staff and parents/carers.
- Where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by the School, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

13. Leave of absence during Term Time

Any absence interrupts the continuity of student's learning. Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence, please refer to the Department for Education for the latest guidance. Parents/carers must not take students out of school for holidays during term time.

Even where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that:

- Your request will not be authorised during exam periods (these could be throughout the year).
- Your request will not be authorised during the month of September.
- Your request will not be authorised for any student in Year 11.
- Your request will not be authorised if your child's attendance is below the school's attendance target for the 12 months prior to application.
- Your request will not be authorised if your child has unauthorised absences.
- Your request will not be authorised where a previous holiday has been taken.
- Your request will not be authorised where there are coursework deadlines or controlled assessments (these could be throughout the year).

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It is expected that a Request Form is submitted to the Student Support Leaders or School Reception at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the request form.

In Norfolk, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Norfolk Local Protocol (May 2014). A school can refer a case to the County Council to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for either:

1. 15% or more unauthorised absence for reasons **other than** a term-time holiday within a six week period.
2. Where in a 12 week period, there are unauthorised absences bringing attendance below 90% and some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term time.

The School has the right to serve a Fixed Penalty Notice on parents/carers who insist on taking their children out of school without authorisation. Fixed Penalties require **each parent to pay a fine of £60 per child** if paid within 21 days or **£120** if paid after 21 days but within 28 days (with effect from September 2013). Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any student taking leave of absence without prior notification to the School.

14. Re-integration following long-term absence

Where a student has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness, the School will:

- Welcome the student back to the School and value their return.
- Provide support for the student in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the School.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
- Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome
- Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate.
- Nominate a key member of staff to monitor and review the student's return.

15. Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- It is the belief that all students are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is engaging and personalised to meet their needs. The curriculum is monitored and revised on an annual basis so that it meets the ability needs of all students.
- Students are regularly informed of their attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve.
- Where appropriate, students whose attendance falls below the appropriate target for the School will be set a target for improvement and progress towards these targets will be regularly reviewed.
- Good and improved attendance and punctuality will be promoted and rewarded.
- Students, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Student Support Leaders at any time to discuss their child's attendance.

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- Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to re-integrate back into the School.
- Effective links are made with primary schools to facilitate the smooth transition to NWHs.
- Students' attendance will be reported six times a year in line with our Key Assessment Data.

16. Attendance Data and Targets

- The target for all students is to strive for 100% attendance. Only by achieving full attendance can students expect to achieve their full potential.
- Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the School's attendance practices and interventions.
- Individual student data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention.
- Attendance data is provided on a termly basis to the Local Governing Body.
- Attendance data and persistent absence data is communicated to the Local Authority and is published online.
- We will use a Cumulative Attendance Tracker to monitor attendance on a weekly basis.

17. Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority

- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure their child receives a suitable education.
- Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent who fails to ensure their child attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.
- The School works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Fixed Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.
- All sanctions are used to improve attendance and punctuality and reduce absence.

18. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the School have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

Subject teachers

- Welcome and value the attendance of all students to lessons.
- Will ensure all students are accurately registered.
- Will ensure that students know the register is being taken.

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- Will identify student absence to lessons and take appropriate action.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

Tutors

- Re-iterate the importance of attendance and the link with achievement.
- Will ensure they build positive relationships to identify concerns and facilitate early interventions.
- Will forward concerns to the Student Support Leaders.

Student Support Leaders (SSLs)

- Will work with the SLT Year Links and discuss absence and attendance weekly with students in their Year Group.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns in their Year Group and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will link pastoral issues with attendance and support SLT in tackling these issues.
- Will discuss absence and attendance weekly with students in their Year Group.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns in their Year Group and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will work with identified students in their Year Group, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets.
- Will ensure that all absence notes or verbal messages are collected and filed appropriately.
- Discuss attendance with parents/carers at every opportunity.
- Will work with other members of staff to share information and support students and their parents/carers to improve attendance.
- Will monitor registration on a daily basis.
- Will receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding student absence.
- Will contact parents/carers regarding student absence.
- Will identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will work with outside agencies, including the Local Authority, where appropriate to improve attendance of individual students.
- Will deal with all attendance data on a daily basis.
- Will hold Attendance Panel meetings to facilitate early intervention.

SLT Year Links

- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly, by use of the weekly Cumulative Attendance report.
- Will discuss absence and attendance concerns with SSLs and set targets for improvement.
- Will promote attendance through assemblies.
-

Attendance Lead

- Will take the lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the School, including improving attendance and reducing persistent absence.
- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly.

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- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will liaise with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified and provide support to improve their child's attendance.
- Will support students to improve their attendance.
- Will work with outside agencies, including the Local Authority, where appropriate to improve attendance of individual students.
- Will provide data to the Head Teacher, Senior Leaders and the Governing Body on a regular basis.
- In conjunction with the Student Support Team, will issue Fixed Penalty Notices and conduct all legal matters regarding attendance.
- Will issue the Cumulative Attendance reports to the Senior Leadership team on a weekly basis and provide a daily data update of all absence and lateness.
- Will identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will discuss attendance concerns with parents/carers and liaise with relevant members of staff.
- Will work with outside agencies, including the Local Authority, where appropriate to improve attendance of individual students.
- Will attend and lead all Fast Track meetings.

The Head Teacher and Senior Leaders

- Will ensure that the School attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Will ensure the whole School ethos promotes excellence in attendance and punctuality.
- Report to the Governors on attendance
- Monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision of educational experience.
- Utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning

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Appendix 1

DfE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS (adopted September 2006, and amended Feb 2013)

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING	FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES
/	Present (AM)	Present	
\	Present (PM)	Present	
B	Off-site Educational Activity	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence	
D	Dual Registered – at another educational establishment	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	
F	Extended family holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence	
G	Family holiday (NOT authorised by the school <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence	
H	Family holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence	
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence	
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence	
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence	
P	Approved supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence	
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	

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V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity	Counted as physically present
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (Enforced Closure)	Not counted in possible attendances	
Z	Pupil not yet on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances	
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in possible attendances	

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Appendix 2

Religious Observance

Authorised absence may be granted for religious observance, for example, Eid. The Department for Education definition is as follows:

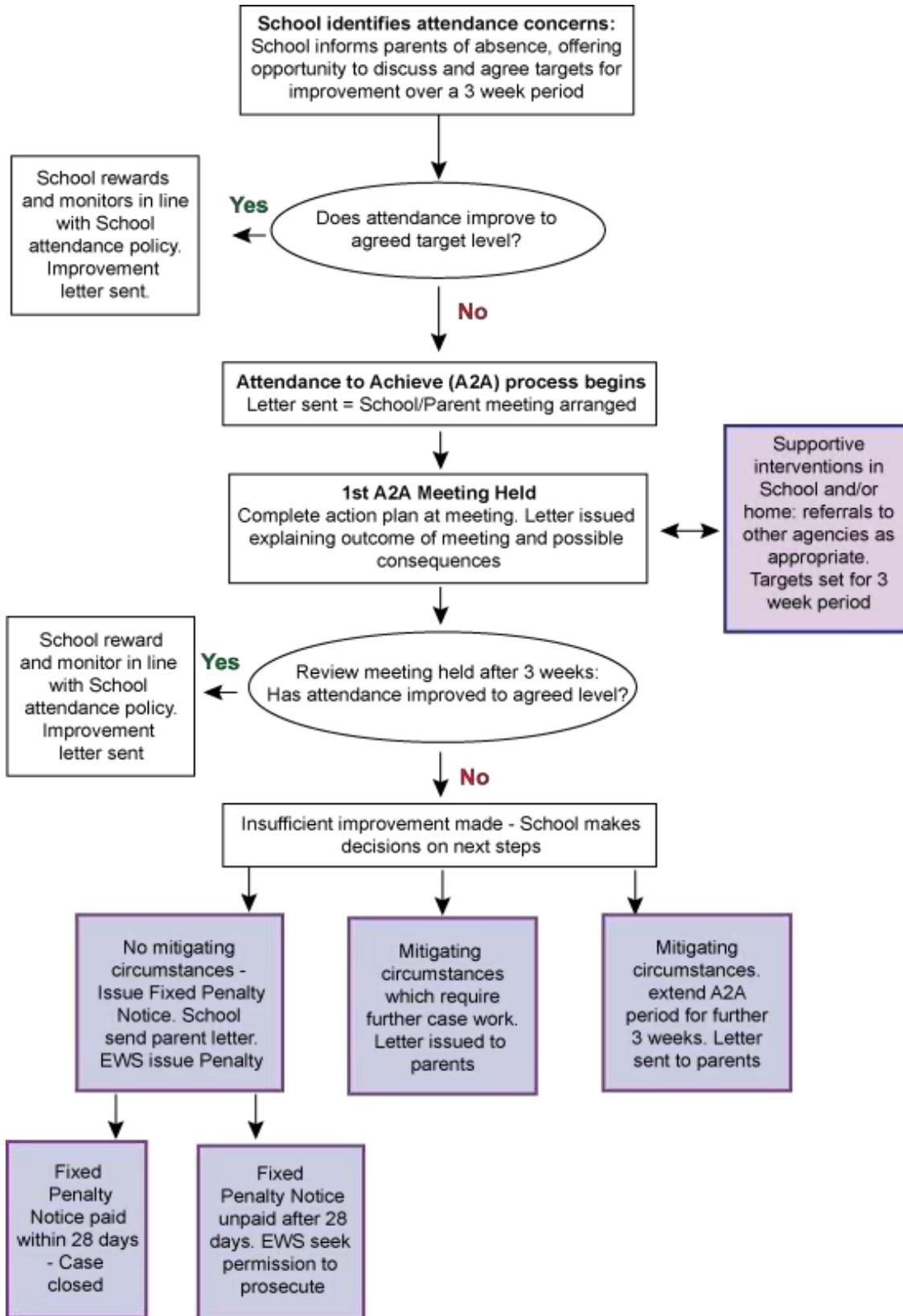
“Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals.”

If the religious body has not set the day apart, there is no requirement for the School to approve the absence or grant leave of absence.

Individual religions and their religious observance are too numerous to detail in this document. Parents should contact the School to request leave of absence for all religious observance.

Appendix 3

Attendance to Achieve (A2A) Flow Chart



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Appendix 4

Prosecution checklist completed by EWO

- Pupil's full name
- Pupil's date of birth
- Details of Ethnicity and Language used in the home
- Who has legal parental responsibility?
- Father's full name, address and telephone numbers, including mobile
- Father's date of birth
- Mother's full name, address and telephone numbers, including mobile Mother's date of birth
- Description of both parents (necessary for cases where arrest warrant is issued) Are there any other adults in the house?
- Have you tried to contact all appropriate adults in the case? Evidence of different types of communications, i.e. copy letters, telephone calls, home visits, minutes of meetings etc., including if the family have not co-operated.
- Evidence that targets for improved attendance having been set and not achieved and that parents have been made aware that legal action could be taken against them
- Have the parents made any comments regarding the potential prosecution?
- Complete the Pre-CAF checklist
- Has a CAF been completed? If not please evidence your reasons.
- Have other agencies been consulted regarding the prosecution? What are their views
- Have referrals been made to other agencies? Please evidence
- Are there any Special Educational Needs? If so, evidence needed that the case was prioritised for Educational Psychologist support.
- Are there any behavioural issues? If so evidence needed that school has tried to address any bullying issues raised, action plans, pupil support plans, alternative programmes etc. Are there any mental health issues with the child? If so was the case signposted to support agencies? please specify.
- Are there any proven mental health issues with the parent? If so please specify.
- Are there any other family issues, i.e. substance misuse, domestic violence, ASB etc. Evidence of contact with other agencies required, please specify which agencies are/or have been involved and which are currently involved.
- Are there any Health & Safety issues relating to risks to staff visiting the home, i.e. aggressive adults, animals etc.
- Copies of registration certificates, current and previous year
- List of all siblings, DOBs, schools and print-outs of attendance.

- Has the feelings of the child been ascertained regarding this possible prosecution and reasons for poor attendance?
- Have any issues been raised regarding school transport? If so how was this resolved.
- Is a significant amount of absence apparently due to illness? If so what investigations have been made to ascertain whether or not the illness is genuine.

All interventions must be recorded and evidenced.

Appendix 5

Letters to parents about their child's absence, attendance and punctuality

Use these 8 sample letters to help you communicate with parents about absence, attendance and punctuality

The letters cover the following scenarios:

- Letter 1 – Concerns about a pupil's high level of absence
- Letter 2 – Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence
- Letter 3 – Formal notice about unauthorised absence
- Letter 4 – Accepting a request for a holiday in term-time
- Letter 5 – Declining a request for a holiday in term-time
- Letter 6 – After an unauthorised holiday
- Letter 7 – Accepting a request for absence for religious observance
- Letter 8 – Concern about punctuality

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 1 – Concerns about a pupil's high level of absence

Use this letter in situations where a pupil's absence has been authorised, but absence levels are still high.

For example:

- A pupil is regularly ill, but doesn't have an identified medical need
- Combined circumstances (such as a family bereavement and pupil illness) means the pupil has missed a lot of lesson time

Absences from school

I'm writing to express my concern at [name's] recent high levels of absence from school.

[His/her] current attendance has fallen to [percentage]. Falling below 95% attendance will likely have an impact on [his/her] academic achievement.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We want to make sure that we can support [name's] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help [him/her] to address gaps in learning due to absence.

I therefore request that you contact the school office on [number] as soon as you can to discuss this.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 2 – Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence(s)

Use this letter as the first step to address unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absences from school

I'm writing to express my concern at [name's] recent unauthorised [absence/absences] from school.

[Name] has been absent from school for a total of [number] unauthorised sessions ([number] days) on the following dates:

> [date]

> [date]

> [date]

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

Amend the line below based on your local authority's code of conduct for penalty notices:

Unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has more than [number] unauthorised absences within [time period]. More information about penalty notices is available in the school's attendance policy. Copies of the policy are on the school website, or available from the school office.

I therefore request that you contact the school office on [number] as soon as you can to discuss this.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 3 – Formal notice about unauthorised absence

Use this letter if:

- You have previously tried to address a pupil's unauthorised absence
- The pupil's unauthorised absence has reached the threshold set by your local authority for the use of a penalty notice

Unauthorised absence

With reference to our letter dated [date], [name] has now had a total of [number] unauthorised absences within [time period]. These absences occurred on the following dates:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

In line with our attendance policy, and the local authority's code of practice, we'll now request a penalty notice be issued by the local authority.

On receipt of the notice, you must pay:

- £60, if paid within 21 days
- £120, if paid between 21 and 28 days from the date of the notice

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

We would also like to invite you in for a meeting with [appropriate member of staff], to discuss how we can support you to help improve [name's] attendance.

Please contact the school office on [number] urgently to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 4 – Accepting a request for a holiday in term-time

Unauthorised absence

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school between [date] and [date].

In this case, I'm prepared to agree to your request.

I haven't made this decision lightly. Our school is dedicated to the education of all our pupils and believes regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

Each request for a holiday absence is considered on its merits at the time. Please note that my decision in this instance does not set a precedent and does not mean I'll agree to a similar request, from you or other parents, in the future.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 5 – Declining a request for a holiday in term-time

Your request for a holiday absence

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school between [date] and [date].

In this case I regret I cannot consent to your request.

Our school, while acknowledging that each family's circumstances are different, is dedicated to the education of all our pupils and believes regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

I have not made this decision lightly. A request for an absence is considered on its merits at the time and many variables are taken into consideration.

Because each request is unique, my decision in this instance cannot be directly compared with decisions made by the school in the past, and nor does it set a precedent. It does not mean I'll not agree to a similar request, from you or other parents, in the future.

I'm sorry to have to disappoint you.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 6 – After an unauthorised holiday

Holiday absence

I'm writing about your action in taking [name(s)] out of school for a family holiday between [date] and [date].

We're treating this as an unauthorised holiday because [explain the evidence you have].

Our school works with parents to provide the best education for each child and believes that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

We expect you to consult the school before booking holidays that mean your child will be absent, or before making any plans that will involve your child's absence from lessons or other commitments.

If in line with your local authority's code of conduct for penalty notices, add:

We have the power to request that the local authority issue a penalty notice for unauthorised term-time holidays.

If issued with a penalty notice, you must pay:

- £60, if paid within 21 days of receiving the notice
- £120, if paid after 21 days, but before 28 days

If you don't pay the penalty within 28 days, the local authority could pursue legal action.

Continue with:

Absences like these could have a detrimental effect on [name(s)] education.

We would like to arrange a meeting so that we can discuss this further. Please contact the school office urgently on [phone number].

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 7 – Accepting a request for absence for religious observance

Your request for absence for religious observance

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school on [date] because of [religious occasion].

In this case, I'm prepared to agree to your request and it will be considered an authorised absence.

Each request for an absence is considered on its merits at the time. We recognise that a family's religious beliefs and traditions are intrinsic to their sense of identity. However, please note that my decision in this instance does not set a precedent, and does not necessarily mean I'll agree to a similar request, from you or other parents, in the future.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

[Insert school name, address
and/or logo here]

Letter 8 – Concern about punctuality

Poor punctuality

I'm writing to you because [name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe].

[He/she] arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

> [date]

> [date]

> [date]

[He/she] also arrived at school late (but before the register had closed) on the following dates:

> [date]

> [date]

> [date]

The school day begins promptly at [time] and registration closes at [time]. Afternoon registration takes place between [time slot].

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child doesn't miss work, and that disruption to the teacher and other pupils is minimised. Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time.

Amend the following sentence in line with your local authority's code of conduct for penalty notices:

Persistent lateness can result in a penalty notice. The school can request that the local authority issues a penalty notice related to lateness when:

> [conditions set out in your local authority's code of practice]

We're committed to working with families to make sure every pupil gets the support they need. We would therefore like to arrange a meeting to discuss how we can work with you to help improve [name's] punctuality.

Please contact the school office on [number] to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher