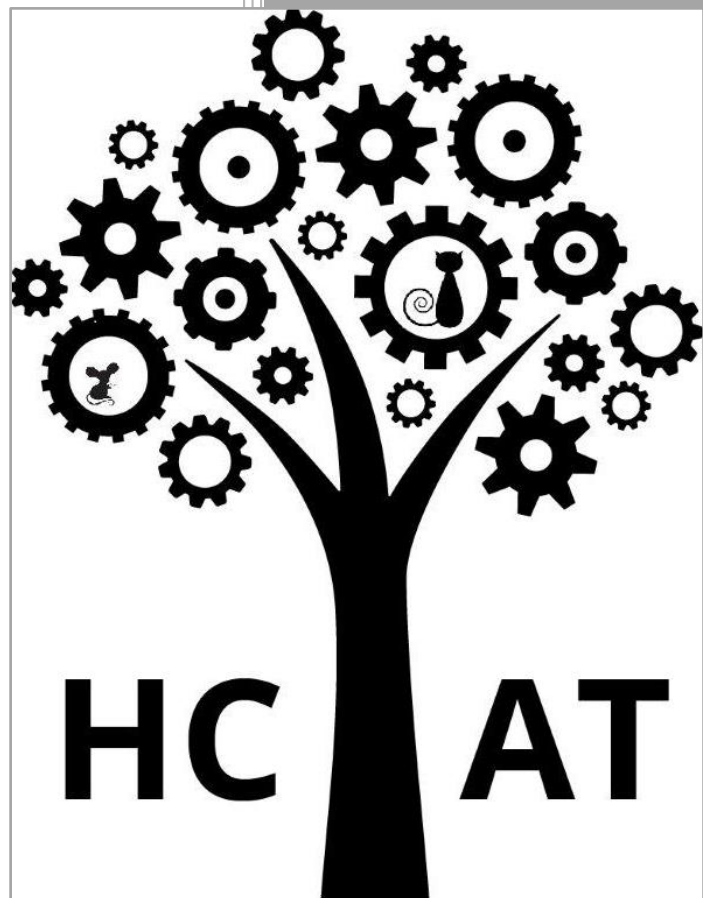




# HCAT

## Attendance & Punctuality Policy 2019



## HCAT ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY 2019

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## **Introduction and Aim of the Policy**

HCAAT are committed to promoting a culture of high expectation, achievement and excellence. Good attendance is crucial if students are to take advantage of the opportunities available to them and complete a successful journey through their time at our schools and as they move on into higher education or the world of work.

For our Students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and arrive, on time, every day that the School is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will affect their learning. Any student's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a student's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

We are committed to working with Parents and Carers to maximise the achievement and attendance for all students. There is a clear link between good attendance and punctuality with educational achievement.

In our schools, in order for an attendance record to be deemed acceptable, it should be 97% or above:

98 - 100% - Outstanding Attendance

97 – 99.9 % - Good Attendance

95 – 96.9% - Requires Improvement

92 – 94.9% - Cause for Concern

90 – 91.9% - At risk of Persistent Absenteeism

Below 90% - Persistent Absentee

Students with an attendance of 90% or below are classed as persistent absentees. Persistent absenteeism is when a student misses 10% or more of the possible sessions in an academic year.

Evidence suggests that students with an attendance of below 97% have a significantly lower chance of achieving 5 A\*-C grades in their GCSE results, regardless of their ability.

## **The legal framework**

Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.

If a child of compulsory school age, who is registered at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

## **Registration**

The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – once for the morning session and once in the afternoon.

The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes. Guidance on applying Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations can be found in 'Advice on School Attendance' published by the DfE –

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/818204/School\\_attendance\\_July\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf)

**Student Attendance Classification**

**Outstanding**

**97% - 100%**

**You attend more than 184 days out of 190 school days each year**

-----**Target 97%**-----

**Requires Improvement**

**95% - 96.9%**

**You attend between 181.5 and 184 days out of 190 school days each year**

**Cause for Concern**

**92% - 94.9%**

**You attend between 174 and 181 days out of 190 school days each year**

**Cause for Serious Concern/approaching Persistent Absenteeism**

**Below 92%**

**You attend less than 174 days out of 190 school days each year**

## **Expectations and Responsibilities**

### **We expect that all students will:**

- attend School regularly
- attend School punctually
- attend School appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their Teacher any problems that may affect their attendance.

### **We expect that all parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for their child will:**

- encourage regular and punctual School attendance
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at School punctually, prepared for the School day
- contact School before morning registration, on each day of the student's absence, by calling School and making the appropriate selection when prompted to do so and then stating the reason for absence. Alternatively, a letter can be sent for the attention of the Attendance team. The letter should explain the reason and date(s) of absence, giving the student's full name. Any unexplained absence is treated as unauthorised absence
- contact School if a student will be arriving late and provide a reason for lateness. Alternatively, a letter can be sent for the attention of the Attendance Team. The letter should explain the reason the student is late, giving the student's full name
- contact the School promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the student away from School.

### **We expect that Teachers have a responsibility to:**

- promote the 97% threshold for students in order for them to attend any rewards trips, visits which are not linked to the curriculum
- complete registers accurately and promptly at the start of the lesson. Persistent issues with incomplete or inaccurate registers will be addressed by the Head of School
- respond to reminders (via email or SIMs) to complete registers immediately
- amend the register for late comers and add the minutes late
- inform the Attendance Team of any information provided by students regarding their current or future attendance
- report any absence concerns to the Head of School or the Attendance team
- inform the Attendance Office prior to any trip/activity if any student is to be absent from "normal" lessons. The trip organiser to ensure that the Attendance Team has a full list of the students involved in the trip/activity.

### **We expect that Heads of School and Assistant Heads of School have a responsibility to:**

- promote the 97% threshold for students in order for them to attend any rewards trips, visits which are not linked to the curriculum

- have weekly meetings with the Attendance Officers to discuss students of concern and highlight students who they can intervene with
- phone parent/carer to enquire why the student is absent from School and advise them to send the student into School unless he/she is too unwell to be in lessons. In the absence of contact a home visit is made.
- monitor and analyse their year group attendance data on a regular basis
- liaise with the Attendance Office to introduce intervention strategies to improve the attendance of all groups of students.

**We expect that the Attendance team has a responsibility to:**

- promote the 97% threshold for students in order for them to attend any rewards trips, visits which are not linked to the curriculum
- send a text message if no information is received from the parent/carer. In the event of no response being received for the absence, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a home visit may take place
- phone parent/carer to enquire why the student is absent from School and advise them to send the student into School unless he/she is too unwell to be in lessons
- have weekly meetings with EWO and Head of School / Assistant Heads of school to discuss students of concern and highlight students who Teachers should intervene with
- analyse whole school and Year Group attendance data daily and weekly
- visit the student at home to enquire about his/her absence or bring them into School
- introduce intervention strategies to improve the attendance of all groups of students
- monitor absence regularly in conjunction with the Head of School.

**Failure to improve attendance may result in further action, such as a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.**

## **Definitions**

### **Authorised and Unauthorised Absences**

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

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

- Genuine illness
- Medical/dental appointments which fall unavoidably in school time
- Other emergencies and exceptional circumstances as determined at the discretion of the Head of School

Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of any medical/dental appointments and, wherever possible, arrange these appointments outside of the school day.

Unauthorised Leave of Absence is an absence which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' request has been agreed. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

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

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance should be addressed between the School / College, the parents/carers and the child. If the parent/carer thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem.

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they fall below 90% attendance for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly.

PA Students are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. All our PA students and their parents/carers are requested to attend an Attendance Support Plan meeting (ASP) and the plan may include allocation of additional support through the Learning Mentor or Education Welfare Officer. We may use tutor circle time,

individual incentive programmes, individual targets and participation in group activities around raising attendance. Persistent Absenteeism can also lead to legal proceedings and the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (fines).

### **The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**

Parents are expected to contact the School at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the School may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the Local Authority.

He / She will also try to resolve the situation by agreement, but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance are available from the School or Local Authority. Alternatively, parents/carers or students may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help and information. They are independent of the School and will give impartial advice. Their number is available from the School office or by contacting the Local Education Authority. If a child's attendance gives cause for concern and sickness is continually reported, support will be sought through the School Nursing team.

### **Children Missing Education**

All schools, including academies and free schools, must monitor students' attendance through their daily register. We are in agreement with the Local Authority to inform them of students who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. We must also notify the authority if a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in certain circumstances. Students who remain on school roll may not necessarily be missing education but we should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor. It is also important that students' irregular attendance is referred to the authority. Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their students, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their students.

Academies must also arrange full-time education for excluded students from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the school exclusions guidance.

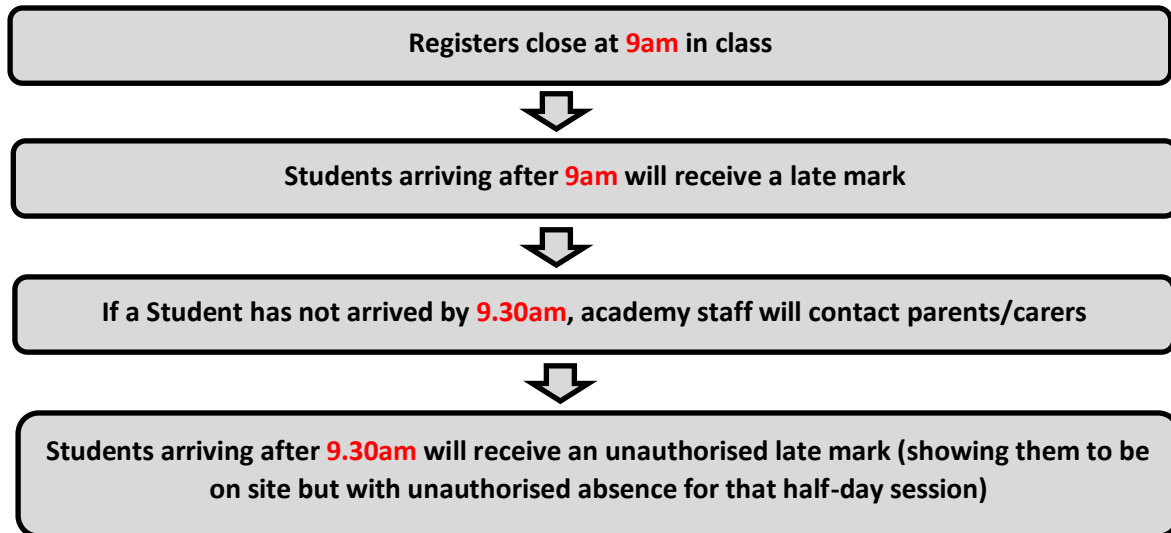
If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer their child to another school, the Head of School must be informed in writing. Children cannot be removed from roll until we have been notified by another School that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending and who cannot be traced cannot be removed from roll. They are reported to the Local Authority Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.



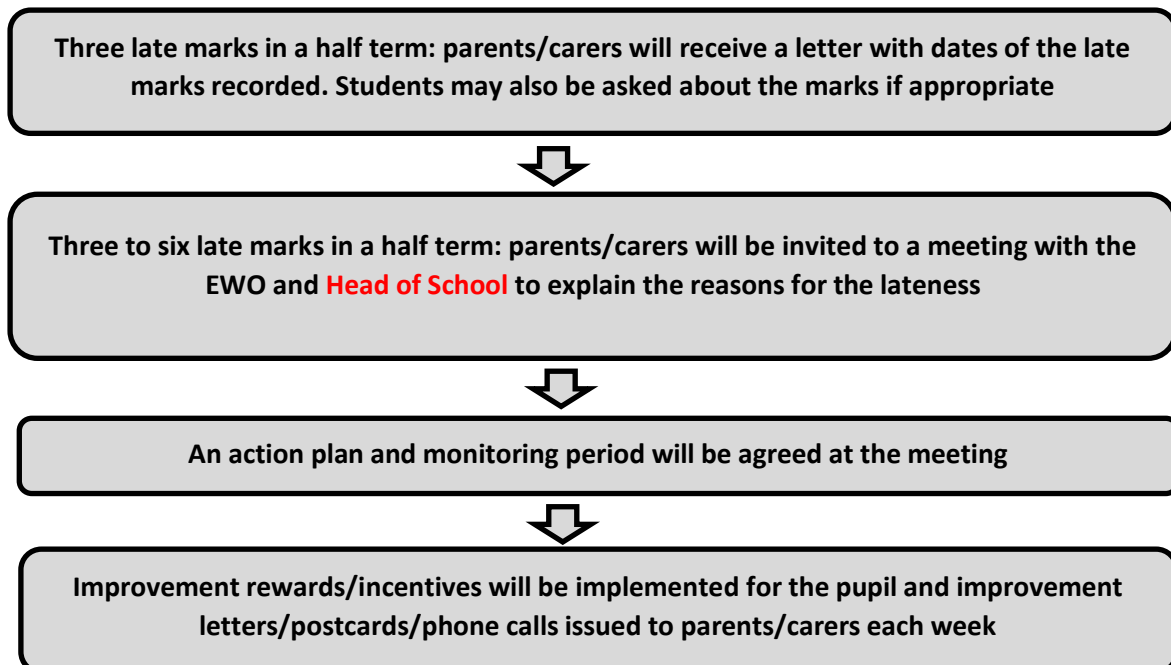
## Punctuality and Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and all students must arrive on time. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. The late arrival of students also disrupts lessons, which can be embarrassing for the student and can also encourage absence. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our students and by celebrating good class punctuality.

How we manage lateness:



Late marks will be monitored and the following action taken:



If lateness continues to occur, additional agency support will be required to ensure that the child's educational needs are met.

## Daily Absence Procedures

How we manage absence:

Parents/carers must notify the academy office as soon as possible on the first day of absence, and no later than 9.30am, and the reason for absence will be recorded



If no notification is received by 9.30am, the academy's **Attendance Officer** will contact parents/carers by phone and/or text to establish the reason for absence



If no reason has been established by 10am, this absence will be reported to the Head of School. If a child is already receiving multi-agency support, this will also be reported to the safeguarding lead and/or allocated social worker. Academy staff may undertake a home visit



If a student's attendance continues to give cause for concern and sickness is continually reported, support may be sought **from the School Nursing team**

## Holidays

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make clear that from September 2013, no holidays will be authorised by the School in term-time. Holidays in term-time will be recorded as unauthorised and will incur a fine, unless the below exceptional circumstances apply:

## Exceptional Circumstances

- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- Other exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Head of School.

To request a holiday in term-time, parents/carers must meet with the Head of School or another designated Senior Leader to obtain a holiday request form and explain the reasons for taking the holiday.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the School, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and will attract a Fixed Penalty Notice. A separate penalty notice will be issued to each parent for each child who has unauthorised absence.

## Unauthorised Absences

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

Unauthorised absences, including truancy, are recorded on a student's registration certificate.

## Fixed Penalty Notices

The Local Authority have revised their policy and this is effective from 2019/20 academic year.

The updated code of conduct provides clarity to schools and families as to when a penalty notice can be issued in Barnsley.

The main change to the code is the removal of the following criteria which head teachers were previously required to consider when assessing the merits of a leave of absence request during term time:

- Previous periods of leave of absence,
- leave of absences taken in the first term,
- exams and assessments,
- employers letter(s).

Under the new code, penalty notices could be issued if any of the following three conditions applies:

- A pupil has accumulated five or more consecutive days of unauthorised leave of absence (holiday in term time),
- if due to sporadic absences, then, other than in specific circumstances, the parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement. If there are further absences within the 15 day monitoring period then a Penalty Notice may be issued,
- an excluded pupil present in a public place without justification, during the hours of the school day where the pupil is on roll, during the first five days of each fixed period or permanent exclusion.

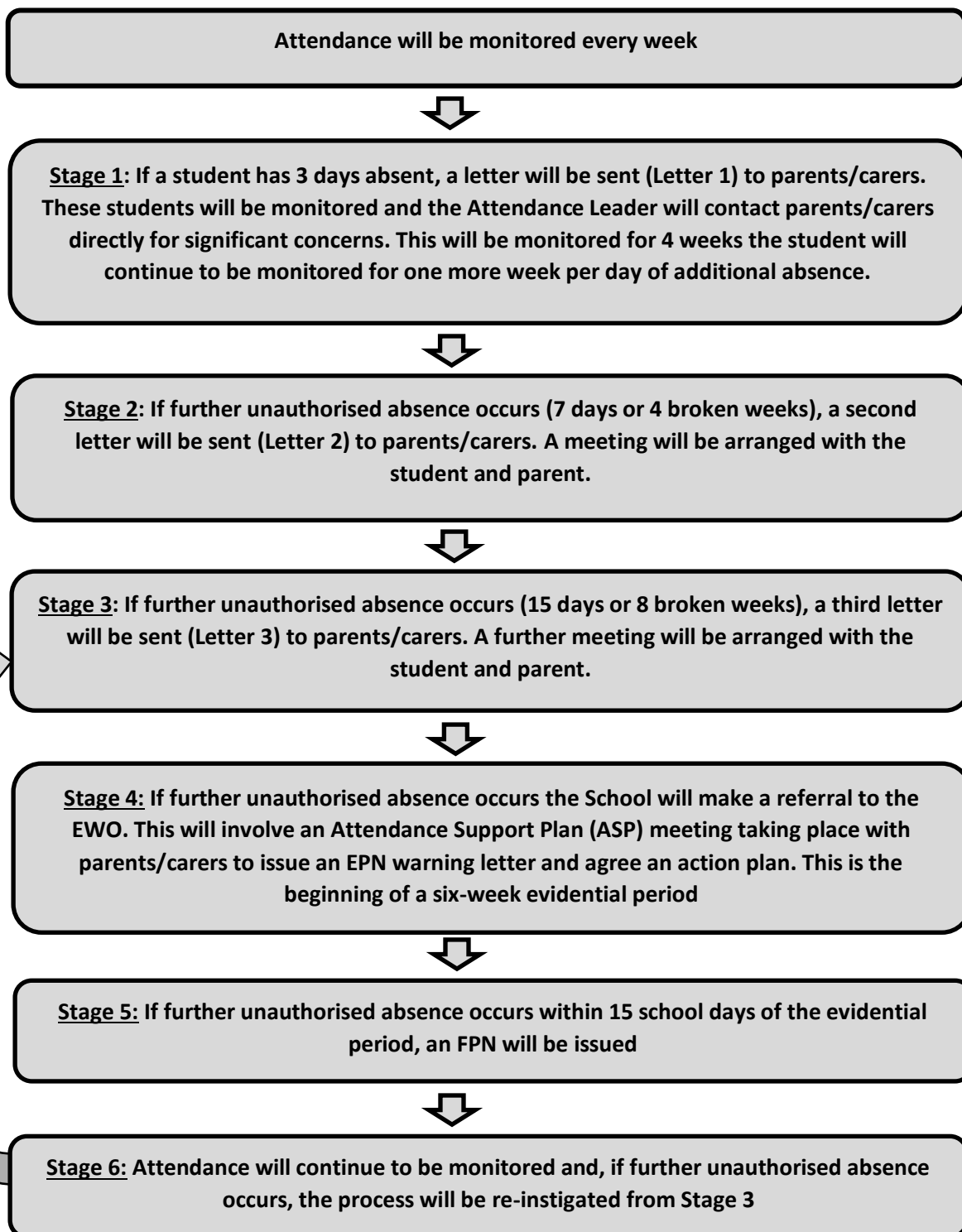
The amount payable on issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice is £60, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local

Authority may prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

### Unauthorised Absence Procedures

The School will monitor attendance on a weekly basis.

When a student's attendance or punctuality begins to be a concern, parents will be informed and subsequently become involved as outlined below:



**A second Fixed Penalty Notice could lead to automatic prosecution by the Local Authority under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.**

**Letter 1**

INSERT SCHOOL LOGO

«date\_of\_printing»

«addressee»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «year\_reg» Attendance Figure «percentage\_attendance»%

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

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

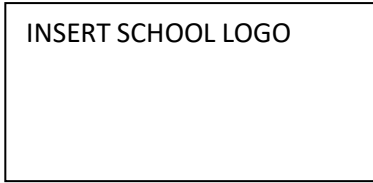
100%	Outstanding Attendance
97%-99.9%	Good Attendance
95%-96.9%	Requires Improvement
92%-94.9%	Inadequate
90.1%-91.9%	At Risk of becoming Persistent Absentee
90% or below	Persistent Absence

As you will see from the attached registration certificate your child has now missed three school days and will be placed on an attendance plan to support an improvement in their attendance. Any further absence will need to be supported with evidence. The Government classifies any student with an attendance under 90% as being persistently absent from school and whilst we do acknowledge there may be extenuating circumstances affecting attendance, we will now monitor the situation closely. If there is no improvement in «chosen\_forename»'s attendance your child will be involved in a meeting to discuss how we can collectively improve attendance. We also have close links with our colleagues in the Education Welfare Service with whom we follow up attendance concerns rigorously.

Please be assured that we want to support you and should you feel we can help in any way do not hesitate to contact the Head of School or the Attendance team.

Yours Sincerely

**Letter 2**



«date\_of\_printing»

«addressee»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «year\_reg» Attendance Figure «percentage\_attendance»%

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

We have previously informed you of concerns with «chosen\_forename»'s attendance. However, since then there have been further absences. We will now be meeting with «chosen\_forename» to discuss how we can support an improvement in their attendance. The meeting will be held on ..... at ..... Should you wish to attend with your child at this time please inform school.

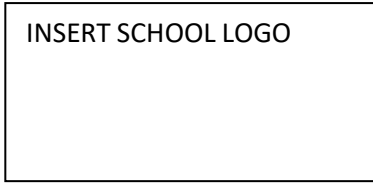
Research has proved that any student with attendance under 95% is at risk of achieving a grade lower in every subject by the time they leave school. We expect all students to attend school regularly and their attendance should be at least 97%. At *Insert School Name*, we classify attendance in the following way;

100%	Outstanding Attendance
97%-99.9%	Good Attendance
95%-96.9%	Requires Improvement
92%-94.9%	Inadequate
90.1%-91.9%	At Risk of becoming Persistent Absentee
90% or below	Persistent Absentee

Please be assured that we want to support «chosen\_forename», and would like to discuss ways in which we can work together to help improve attendance. We also have close links with our colleagues in the Education Welfare Service with whom we follow up attendance concerns rigorously.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 3**



«date\_of\_printing»

«addressee»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «year\_reg» Attendance Figure «percentage\_attendance»%

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

We have previously informed you of concerns with «chosen\_forename»'s attendance and have met with «chosen\_forename» to discuss ways in which we can support «him\_her» to help improve «his\_her» attendance. However, since the date of the meeting there have been further absences. We would now like to invite you into School / College to attend an Internal School Attendance Panel (ISAP) on ----- at ----- . The ISAP will be chaired by *Insert Chair* and the panel will consist of the *Assistant Head of School, the Education Welfare Officer, a member of the Board of Governors*. We will, however, still meet with «chosen\_forename» if you are unable to attend.

Research has proved that any student with attendance under 95% is at risk of achieving a grade lower in every subject by the time they leave school. We expect all students to attend school regularly and their attendance should be at least 97%. At *Insert School Name*, we classify attendance in the following way;

100%	Outstanding Attendance
97%-99.9%	Good Attendance
95%-96.9%	Requires Improvement
92%-94.9%	Inadequate
90.1-91.9%	At Risk of becoming Persistent Absentee
Below 90%	Persistent Absentee

Please be assured that we want to support you and «chosen\_forename», and would like to discuss ways in which we can work together to help improve «chosen\_forename»'s attendance. We also have close links with our colleagues in the Education Welfare Service with whom we follow up attendance concerns rigorously.

Yours sincerely