



**THE DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD**  
ACADEMIES TRUST

# **TRUST ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Policy Date: September 2023

## **1. AIMS**

In order for our pupils to maximise all learning opportunities provided and to reach their full potential, consistently good attendance is vital. As a Trust, we are committed to meeting our obligations with regard to school attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Identifying and acting promptly to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the right support in place to ensure they attend school.
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending school.

## **2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

This policy meets the requirements of the DfE document 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (May 2022) and refers to the DfE statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures (January 2015). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and responsibilities that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2023
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (February 2023)

## **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 Executive Headteacher/Head of School**

NB: The Executive Headteacher may delegate duties linked to attendance to the head of School, and quality assure this work regularly. Responsibilities include:

- Implementing the attendance policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and sharing this information with the local school board in the Headteacher's Termly Report.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed penalty notices where necessary
- Having an oversight of data analysis regarding attendance

### **3.2 Class teachers**

- Complete registers accurately and promptly
- Have regular discussions with pupils about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- Liaise with other school staff and respond to attendance issues promptly.
- Support the Trust/whole school ethos of promoting good attendance

### **3.3 Attendance Leads**

Schools may appoint an attendance lead with delegated responsibilities, including:

- Development and review of the attendance policy
- Producing and distributing attendance information for parents/carers
- Setting and monitoring targets for improving attendance within the school, and evaluating targets with the senior leadership team
- Supporting all school staff in their work related to attendance
- Collating attendance data as required for senior leadership team, DfE, LA and LSB
- Identifying individual pupils with known punctuality/attendance issues, and ensuring these pupils are monitored closely
- Referring pupils to the Trust Education Welfare Officer when attendance gives severe cause for concern, and liaising with the EWO to develop strategies to support these pupils/families.
- Liaising with other partner agencies and services towards improving and developing strategies to raise levels of attendance.

### **3.4 The Local School Board**

- Will receive information from the Headteacher and/or EWO on attendance in the Headteacher's termly report.
- Will support the school in setting attendance targets
- Will support the school in planning a response where attendance is a cause for concern
- Will support the school in its efforts to raise attendance
- May support the school by attending strategic meetings or attendance panels as appropriate.

### **3.5 Education Welfare Officer**

The Trust has its own appointed Education Welfare Officer who will:

- Work with the Deputy CEO, Head of Business and Operations, Headteachers, School Business Managers, Learning Mentors and Attendance Leads to develop processes, communication streams and efficient ways of working to support attendance.
- Provide advice for schools and engage with pupils, parents and families to improve pupil attendance rates
- Arrange and carry out home visits or on-site visits, to explore and offer support to improve pupil attendance
- To be on the school site to facilitate 'late gates' as required

- Use, model and evaluate practice and quality assure the processes and systems relating to pupil attendance
- Work with other staff and agencies who support pupils, such as local authorities and multi agencies, including support for Early Help assessments and TAF meetings
- Develop processes and procedures to improve the attendance systems through data analysis, pastoral information and other evaluation, preparing reports, assessments and other statistics data as required
- Take part in internal meetings to share information and provide guidance on Trust policy where necessary
- Have an up-to-date knowledge of legal proceedings and support schools in relation to statutory processes
- Where required participate in Child Protection procedures as appropriate, including making an education contribution at case conferences and multi-agency meetings

#### **4 STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS**

##### **4.1 What our schools expects of pupils:**

- To attend school every day, unless in exceptional circumstances.
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day
- To report to their class teacher for registration, or to the school office if late

##### **4.2 What our schools expects of parents/carers**

- To fulfil their statutory responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time
- To ensure they contact the school as per reporting procedures if their child is unable to attend
- To ensure their child arrives on time, and is well prepared for the day (equipment, homework completed, PE kit etc)
- To contact the school (class teacher/headteacher/admin staff) in confidence whenever a problem arises that may keep their child from attending school
- To inform the admin staff of any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, make appointments outside of the school day. Evidence of an appointment **must** be shown to the school office staff – without evidence, the absence for a full session will be logged as unauthorised. Parents collecting children early will also be asked to show evidence of the appointment.
- Holidays should be taken in the school holiday period only, and leave in term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

### **4.3 What parents can expect of their school**

- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing prior notification
- Prompt action when any problems are identified
- Close liaison with the Trust Education Welfare Officer, LA Attendance Officers and Early Help Team to assist and support parents and pupils
- Notification to parents/carers of their child's attendance record through annual reports sent home (drawn from Arbor)

## **5 ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

### **5.1 Registration procedures**

These will vary according to individual schools, and be detailed in their own specific policies.

### **5.2 Responding to lateness (punctuality)**

Pupils who are regularly late for school will miss out on valuable learning time. Late arrival in school can not only disrupt the individual child's learning, but also that of their peers. Our schools will take active steps to address persistent lateness.

- Pupils arriving late after doors/gates close must report to the school office, where a record of their late arrival will be made with the time of arrival and reason for the lateness.
- Pupils arriving up to 30 minutes after doors closing will be deemed to be late, and given a late mark (L). Individual school policies will determine the length of time allowed until the close of registers.
- Pupils arriving after this designated time and the close of registers will be marked as 'U'.
- Staff will monitor lateness, and note persistent offenders. Arbor registers will be annotated with the number of minutes late.
- Where a pattern of repeated lateness is seen, the school will send the relevant 'Late' letter 1 to remind parents of the importance of good timekeeping.
- Where the problem persists, the school can ask the DSAT EWO to speak to parents by telephone to discuss their child's lateness and try to identify causes/seek remedies to the problem.
- If there is no subsequent improvement, school will send 'Late' letter 2, and parents will be invited to a meeting with the headteacher and EWO.

### **5.3 The school's response to unexplained absence**

Although parents are expected to contact the school if their child is to be absent due to illness or other unexpected reasons, there will be instances where this does not happen. In such cases, all schools will follow a 'first day call' procedure as outlined below:

- If no message has been received, office staff will note the absence as 'N' at the close of registers. This can be updated depending upon outcome of first day protocols.
- Some parents will message the class teacher via Dojo or send a message verbally – this should be checked in the first instance, though third-party information must be checked with the parent as per the actions below. Parents must be advised that the correct procedure is to ring the school office to report absence.
- The school office may send a text message as soon as registers are closed to the primary contact to check on the absence.
- If no contact has been received by 9:30am, the office staff will start to ring the contacts on the pupil's file.
- Should there be no response from any of the contacts on file, office staff should consult the SLT/safeguarding leads to ascertain whether a home visit should be made. This can be by school staff or the DSAT EWO, depending on staff availability.
- The school may choose to contact their Local Authority Safeguarding Hub if in person contact cannot be made with the family and there are concerns around the safety of the child(ren). This decision would be made following careful discussion between DSLs and SLT.

### **5.4 Safeguarding**

Children may be at risk if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility.

Failing to attend school on a regular basis is considered to be a safeguarding matter.

As part of first day call procedures outlined, schools may well make home visits to ascertain the well-being of pupils. In any instance, where a pupil has not attended and the school has not been contacted with what it deems an acceptable reason, then a home visit will be considered. The school will speak to their safeguarding leads for additional advice where necessary, and where appropriate DSLs contact their Local Authority Safeguarding Hub for support.

### **5.5 The school's response to attendance issues/following attendance pathways**

- The school will identify and monitor pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern. The Trust will set a target for attendance, to be reviewed each academic year.
- The Trust target for the academic year 2023-24 is 96%.
- Pupils falling below this will be deemed to be of concern. The attendance lead in school should review the attendance certificates, and if necessary, make initial contact with the parent/carer to express their concerns and offer Early help support. At this stage schools

should send the first letter according to their relevant Local Authority Attendance Pathway, and monitor for 3-4 weeks.

- If attendance continues to fall below 90% (as defined by the DfE) a child will be deemed to be 'Persistently Absent' (PA). Absence at this level is likely to cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and the school will need parent/carer's fullest support and co-operation to address this. If not taken up already, Early Help support should be offered again. The school will continue on their Local Authority pathway as prescribed. Parents will be invited to meet with the head and Trust EWO.
- If attendance does not improve over the next 3-4 weeks, the next pathway letter will be sent and parents will be invited to a formal attendance review panel in school with the Headteacher/Attendance Lead and Trust EWO. The LA Attendance lead may also be invited to this meeting. A support plan will be created for the family, and further professional help accessed if not already in place. Regular review meetings will be held in school to monitor progress.
- Children whose attendance continues to fall to below 50% are deemed to be Severely Absent (SA) and will need a specific targeted plan. This should be created in liaison with support from the Local Authority attendance lead.
- Parents should be advised that failure to comply with the above interventions could eventually lead to the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices, or prosecution in court. The Local Authority will contact parents regarding the issuing of fines or any other legal action.

### **5.6 Leave of absence (including holidays in term time)**

The Trust will not authorise holidays in term time. Our schools will refer any cases of unauthorised holiday absence that meet Local Authority thresholds for the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice, currently £60 per parent/per child for any leave of absence of 5 days or more. This FPN will increase to £120 per parent/per child if not paid within 21 days.

If parents do wish to take their child out of school during term time, applications for leave of absence should be made to the school at least 20 days prior to the date of absence. Leave of absence request forms must be collected in person from the school office, and not given out by class teachers.

Where a leave of absence request is deemed to be due to exceptional circumstances, the headteacher will consult with the Trust EWO on a case-by-case basis to ascertain whether the FPN can be waived. However, the absence will still be classed as unauthorised.

Families requesting leave of absence for the purposes of Religious Observance should speak to their Head of School for guidance.

## **6. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION/ABSENT FROM EDUCATION**

Children/students who cannot be located, or their families contacted, will be considered missing from education. The relevant LA Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with specific Local Authority procedures.

Similarly, schools will pay particular attention to those pupils whose persistent absence is impacting severely upon their education, and classed as 'absent from education';

**KCSIE Sept 2023:** *Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school or college's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to Local Authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.*

These cases will be discussed with SLT/Safeguarding leads and Trust EWO to ensure that appropriate and robust action is taken to address concerns.

## **7. ATTENDANCE CODES**

**The following codes should be used when entering details on Arbor.**

- / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm Present in school during registration.
- Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed
- Code U: Late arrival after the register has closed
- Code B: off-site educational activity
- Code D: dual registered - at another educational establishment
- Code J: at an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- Code P: participating in a supervised sporting activity
- Code V: educational visit or trip
- Code W: work experience

### **Authorised absence from school**

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence

- Code C: leave of absence authorised by the school
- Code E: excluded but no alternative provision made
- Code H: holiday authorised by the school
- Code I: illness (not medical or dental appointments)
- Code M: medical or dental appointments
- Code R: religious observance
- Code S: study leave
- Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence



### **Unauthorised absence from school**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

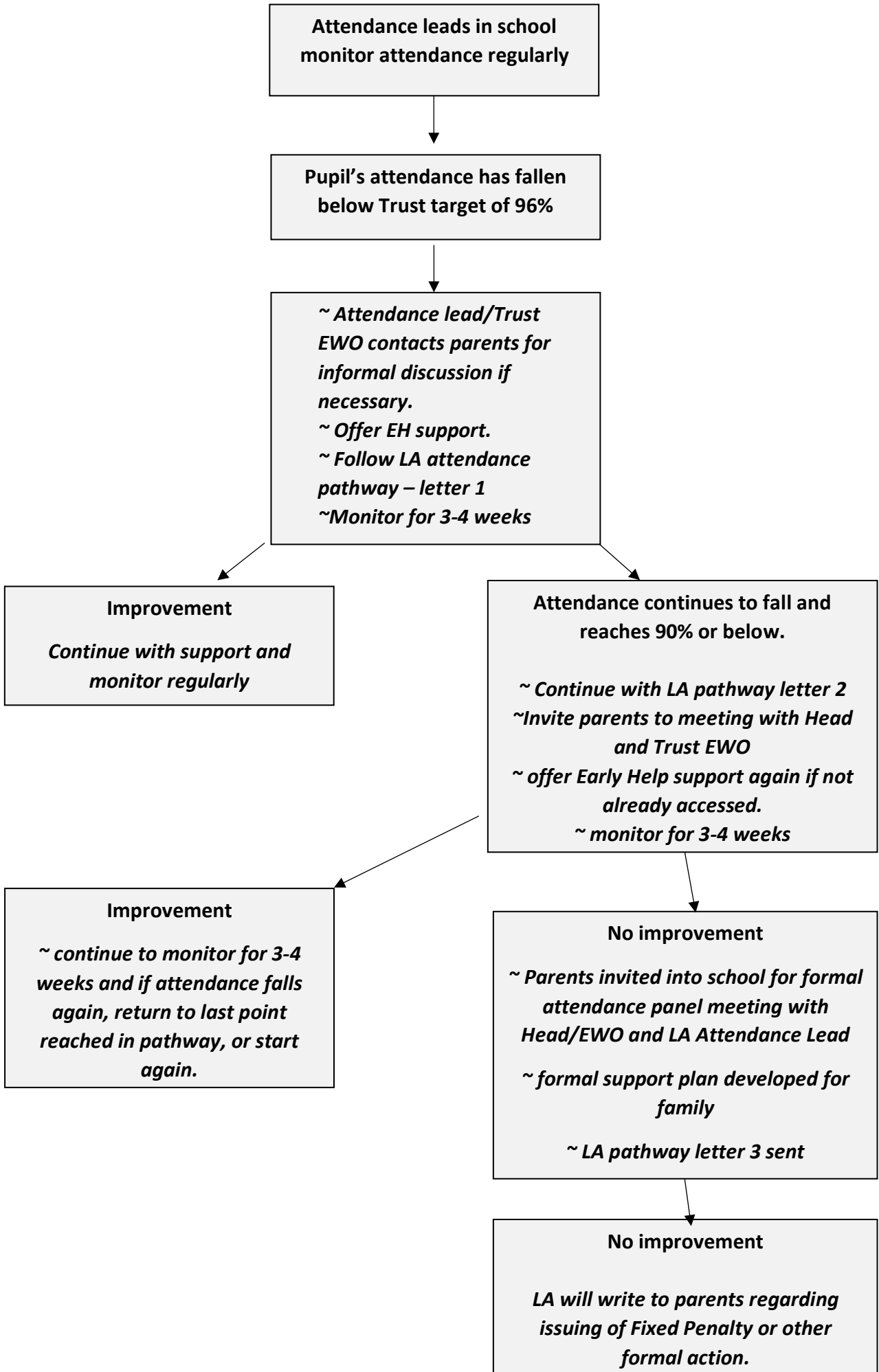
- Code G: holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher
- Code N: reason for absence not yet provided
- Code O: absent from school without authorisation
- Code U: arrived in school after registration closed

### **Administrative codes**

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

- Code X: not required to be in school
- Code Y: unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Code Z: pupil not on admission register
- Code #: planned whole or partial school closure

## ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART



## APPENDIXES



## **Poor Punctuality - Letter 1**

Date:

Dear

I am writing to you because [name] has been late to school [n] times in [number of weeks/dates].

Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss of learning time, and can have a serious impact on your child's education. Arriving after the start of lessons can also be embarrassing and unsettling for your child.

The school day begins promptly at [time] and registration closes at [time].

Any child who arrives in school after [time] will be marked as 'late' in the register.

Any child who arrives after [time] will be marked as 'U' ('late after close of registration') and is classed as an unauthorised absence. This will impact on your child's overall attendance data for the year.

All late arrivals are logged and recorded on our systems, and reviewed regularly.

Please ensure that your child is in school and ready to learn at the above times. If you are experiencing any difficulties in getting your child into school, please do speak to the school office who will arrange for the relevant person to contact you to see if we can offer some support.

If there is no improvement, we will arrange a meeting in school with myself and our Education Welfare Officer.

By working together, we can ensure that your child achieves to their full potential.

Yours sincerely,

Head of School



THE  
DIOCESE OF  
SHEFFIELD  
ACADEMIES  
TRUST

School logo

## Poor Punctuality – Letter 2

Date:

Dear

I recently wrote to you about your child's punctuality, and the number of late marks on our registers. Unfortunately, there has been little improvement since we made contact.

[name] has been late to school a further [n] times since our last letter [dates/no of weeks].

We would like to remind you that the school day begins promptly at [time] and registration closes at [time]. Any child who arrives in school after [time] will be marked as 'late' in the register.

Any child who arrives after [time] will be marked as 'U' ('late after close of registration') and is classed as an unauthorised absence. This will impact on your child's overall attendance data for the year.

We are committed to working with families to make sure every child gets the support they need. We would therefore like to arrange a meeting with myself and our Trust Education Welfare Officer, to discuss how we can work together to improve [name's] punctuality.

A member of our office staff will contact you by telephone to arrange a suitable meeting time.

Yours sincerely,

Head of School

Date

**IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS**

**NAME OF CHILD:**  
**DATE OF BIRTH:**  
**REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)**

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

I am writing to you to share my concern regarding the attendance of your child, (insert child's name.)

(Insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

Whilst occasionally, absence may have been due to illness, school are concerned that on occasion, there has been a lack of satisfactory evidence provided to explain the absence.

School and the Local Authority are keen that families who experience difficulties are supported in order to help make improvements with issues that are affecting family life and that can result in poor attendance. Support is available for families through the Early Help Assessment and Plan. This is a process that helps professionals understand the issues that may be affecting the child and family and plan appropriate support to help. We recognise that family life can at times be difficult and sometimes families' need a helping hand to assist.

It is, however, important to note that **enforcement action may be taken if an improvement in attendance is not made**. In light of this, we are keen to offer support and we hope that you take up this offer. If there is not a marked improvement in (insert child's name) attendance at school, the matter will be reported to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) with a view to seeking enforcement as per the provisions of the Education Act (1996.) If LASAP make the decision to issue a fixed penalty notice (fine) you will be informed by letter and will be given 21 days to pay. If LASAP make the decision that there will be an FPN (fine) and there are sufficient concerns that warrant further action, your child's case will be brought formally to LASAP, and you (and your child where appropriate) will be invited to attend.

It is important that you take this information seriously and act in the best interests of your child to ensure future good attendance.

If you need to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert head teachers name)

NB contact name above may be different but the letter must be signed by the head teacher

Date

## IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: FORMAL WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

**NAME OF CHILD:**

**DATE OF BIRTH:**

**REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)**

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

Despite writing to you on (insert date of letter 1) I am writing to you again to outline my concerns due to the ongoing unsatisfactory attendance of your child (insert child's name.)

I must emphasise the duty that is imposed by the Education Act (1996) upon parents/carers, to ensure that children of school age attend school every time it is open, unless the children are prevented from doing so as a result of their own illness. In the case of illness, medical evidence should always be submitted.

(Insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

The explanations given by you, for your child's absences, are not considered to be reasonable within the provision of the Education Act. I must, therefore, advise you that unless there is an **immediate and sustained improvement** in your child's attendance at school, I shall be compelled to take further steps in the matter by referring this to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP). It is my duty to bring to your attention the penalties which may be imposed via this route by the Magistrates Court in line with the Education Act (1996), namely:

*"Any person guilty of an offence against Section 444 of this Act" (these are the sections of the Act relating to compulsory school attendance) "shall be liable on summary conviction, in the case of a first or subsequent offence against that section, to a fine not exceeding £2,500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months."*

I must also point out that one of the actions from LASAP could be an Education Supervision Order imposed by the Family Court, which gives the Local Authority discretion to intervene with a family when attendance is very concerning. This means that you and your child will be required to follow directions that are outlined in the order imposed by Court and will be expected to work closely with a professional from the Local Authority.

School and the Local Authority are keen that families who experience difficulties are supported in order to help make improvements with issues that are affecting family life and that can result in poor attendance. Support is available for families through the Early Help Assessment and Plan. This is a process that helps professionals understand the issues that may be affecting the child and family and plan appropriate support to help. We recognise that family life can at times be difficult and sometimes families' need support to assist.

It is, however, important to note that **enforcement action will be taken if an immediate improvement in attendance is not made**. In light of this, we are keen that you take up the offer of support if you have not already done so. This warning is issued in the hope that there will be no necessity to take further steps to enforce the law. However, you are warned that if you do not immediately address your child's attendance and ensure that they attend school regularly, the actions above will be implemented.

If LASAP make the decision to issue a fixed penalty notice (fine) you will be informed by letter and will be given 21 days to pay. If LASAP make the decision that there will be an FPN (fine) and there are sufficient concerns that warrant further action, your child's case will be brought formally to LASAP and you (and your child where appropriate) will be invited to attend.

I should be pleased if you would give your immediate attention to this matter, and if you have any queries regarding this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert head teachers name)

NB contact name above may be different but the letter must be signed by the head teacher



Date

### IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: FINAL WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

**NAME OF CHILD:**

**DATE OF BIRTH:**

**REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)**

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

Despite writing to you twice previously (insert date of letter 1 and letter 2) I find it necessary to write to you a final letter to re-emphasise my concerns due to the ongoing, serious nature of your child's (insert child's name) poor attendance.

As previously stated, I must reaffirm the duty that is imposed by the Education Act (1996) upon parents/carers, to ensure that children of school age attend school every time it is open, unless the children are prevented from doing so as a result of their own illness. In the case of illness, medical evidence should always be submitted.

(Insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

Despite contacting you twice previously your child's attendance has remained concerning.

The explanations given by you, for your child's absences, are not considered to be reasonable within the provision of the Education Act. I must, therefore, advise you that I am now compelled to take further steps in this matter by referring this to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) It is my duty to bring to your attention the penalties which may be imposed via this route by the Magistrates Court in line with the Education Act (1996), namely:

*"Any person guilty of an offence against Section 444 of this Act" (these are the sections of the Act relating to compulsory school attendance) "shall be liable on summary conviction, in the case of a first or subsequent offence against that section, to a fine not exceeding £2,500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months."*

I must also point out that one of the actions from LASAP could be an Education Supervision Order imposed by the Family Court; which gives the Local Authority discretion to intervene with a family when attendance is very concerning. This means that you and your child will be required to follow directions that are outlined in the order imposed by Court and will be expected to work closely with a professional from the Local Authority.

It is extremely important to note that **enforcement action will now be taken.**

In the event of a fixed penalty notice (fine) being issued, the Local Authority will write to you with details of when and how to pay. This will be followed up with further contact to discuss how future attendance will be addressed swiftly.

If, in addition to the above, it is agreed that the case needs to be heard by LASAP the Local Authority will contact you with the date and time to attend LASAP.

I should be pleased if you would give your immediate attention to this matter, and if you have any queries regarding this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert head teachers name)

NB contact name above may be different but the letter must be signed by the head teacher

Our Ref:        /        /Uni 1.0

Your Ref:

Name:

Email:

Direct Dial:

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

**DOB:**

At \_\_\_\_\_ we are committed to providing high quality education and improving outcomes for all our pupils'. In order for a child to reach their full potential, we expect a high level of school attendance, so they are able to maximise their learning and achievement.

I enclose a copy of \_\_\_\_\_ attendance record which shows an attendance of \_\_\_\_\_ %.

As \_\_\_\_\_ attendance has fallen we are expressing our initial concerns. It is appreciated young people sometimes become unwell, but as parents it is important to be aware of the level of your child's school attendance, as it may have a detrimental effect on their educational attainment.

I will continue to monitor \_\_\_\_\_ attendance and, with your co-operation, I would anticipate an improvement. I may take the opportunity to speak with your child in school should I feel this is an appropriate action in raising attendance.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, or are experiencing any difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Position in School**

Enc.

C.C.

Your Ref:            /       /

Our Ref:            /       /Uni 1.2

Enquiries

To:

Tel Direct:

Email:

Date:

Dear            ,

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**DoB**

You may recall my letter dated            expressing concern with            current level of attendance. Since that letter there has not been the anticipated improvement and I would therefore like to invite you to a meeting in school on            at            . This will give us the opportunity to look at the issues causing irregular school attendance and if appropriate, put in a suitable support plan to help you with this.

I enclose a copy of the registration certificate for your information, which will form part of our discussion during the meeting.

I must also advise you that it is the decision of the **Headteacher** as to whether an absence is authorised or not, taking into account the reason provided. Due to            continued irregular school attendance, we now require medical confirmation to support any future absences, which will enable us to make an informed decision whether to authorise the absence.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss how we can work together to improve attendance.

If you are unable to attend the above appointment, please contact me as soon as possible so that an alternative date can be arranged.

Yours sincerely

**Position in School**

## DONCASTER LETTER 3

Dear

**Pupil's Name:**

**Attendance level:**

**Re: Education Penalty Notice Warning Letter**

As you are aware it is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly. However, your child's attendance, as shown above, falls below the minimum expected level of **96%**.

If your child fails to attend school regularly you may be guilty of a criminal offence and could be prosecuted under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1) or 444 (1a). Education Penalty Notices have been introduced under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored and I ask that you ensure there are no further absences from school without a justifiable reason. Please can you also make sure any medical appointments are made outside of school hours where possible.

If there is any unauthorised absence from school within the next 15 school days, you may receive an Education Penalty Notice from the Local Authority. If you are issued with an Education Penalty Notice, you will be required to pay a fine of £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the date of the notice. If issued, there is no right of appeal. Payment of the Education Penalty Notice will discharge your liability for the six week evidential period covered by the notice. However, if payment is not received, the Local Authority may decide to prosecute you for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child at school.

If you have any questions about this letter or require additional support, please contact (*insert name of contact at school*)

Yours sincerely

## SHEFFIELD SACL1 – Concern Letter 1

School letterhead

Dear

Re: Name, DOB, a registered pupil at ..... School

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you today because your child's attendance, which is currently ..... %, has declined in the last six-week period. Please find enclosed a Registration Certificate for you to look at.

Because of this ..... School will continue to monitor your child's attendance. If you or your child is experiencing any barriers to accessing their education, please contact or speak with .....to discuss how we can support you and your child to maintain a positive attendance record. There is a strong link between poor attendance and low academic attainment. And at .....School we are committed to supporting you and your child to enable them to achieve and reach their full potential.

It is important therefore, that you contact school on the first day of any absence or if there is any problem which may be causing your child to miss school.

..... School is committed to raising the profile of attendance in school, it is important that you support us by ensuring that your child attends school on time, every day.

Please give this your urgent attention

Yours sincerely

## **SHEFFIELD SACL2 – Concern Letter 2**

School letterhead

Dear

Re: Name, DOB, a registered pupil at ..... School

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you because of ongoing concerns over your child's attendance, which is currently ..... %, this is below the school target of ..... % for this year. Please find enclosed a Registration Certificate for you to look at.

Because of this ..... School will monitor your child's attendance. Please be aware that any further absence may not be authorised if the reason provided is not accepted by the head teacher. You are not being asked to provide a Doctor's note, or seek an appointment for minor ailments, however if you are able to, please provide evidence of pre-arranged medical appointments. If absences are persistent and/or frequent school may seek consent to request that the Local Authority follow their GP Protocol.

It is important therefore, that you contact school on the first day of any absence or if there is any problem which may be causing your child to miss school.

Please be reminded that if your child is of statutory school age, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

..... School is committed to raising the profile of attendance in school, it is important that you support us by ensuring that your child attends school on time, every day.

Please give this your urgent attention

Yours sincerely

## **SHEFFIELD SACL3 – Invite to Meeting in School**

Dear .....

**Re: Pupil name, DOB**

It has come to my attention that your son/daughter is not in regular attendance at school

You have been contacted by us to try to resolve this issue and to see whether any support may be required to do this. However, despite our offer to support you, your son/daughter's attendance remains irregular and does not meet statutory requirements.

It has therefore been decided to invite you **(and your son/daughter if appropriate)** to a School Attendance meeting.

**The meeting will be held on:**

..... **at** .....**am/pm**

where you will be given the opportunity to discuss any issues around #'s absences.

This meeting will consider ways of improving your #'s attendance, and therefore preventing further action being taken against you.

I need to inform you that, should you not attend the meeting, it will still go ahead in your absence, and we may have to pass our concerns onto the Local Authority.

Please be reminded that if your child is of statutory school age, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

Please give this your urgent attention.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

**\*\* This letter can be amended to fit arrangements for the meeting \*\***



## **SHEFFIELD SACL4 –PN Warning Letter**

Date

Dear

### **Penalty Notice Warning Letter - 15 Day warning**

We at ..... School is still concerned to see that your child, **(insert name of child), DOB**, is not attending regularly and has an attendance record of .....% over the previous .....weeks, despite our efforts to support you to improve the situation.

I need to remind you that you have a legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually. Frequent absences such as these can only have a serious effect on both your child's educational progress and their engagement with education.

.....at school has been in contact with you regarding this matter and made you aware of the situation. Support has been offered but the attendance of your child has not improved sufficiently, and reasons given for the absences have not proved satisfactory. As a result, I am issuing you with the following warning:

**If the attendance of your child does not improve over the next 15 school days (that your child is expected to attend) the case may be referred to the Local Authority. The Attendance and Inclusion Social Worker will consider if further legal intervention is appropriate.**

The 15-day monitoring period begins on ..... and will be reviewed by school after the full 15 day period. If your child's attendance remains at unsatisfactory levels after this time legal action may be taken.

If a Penalty Notice is deemed appropriate, this gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted for the offence given above. The amount of the fine will be £120 per parent/carer if paid within 28 days. If paid within 21 days, the penalty is reduced to £60. If the payment is then not made you may be prosecuted by Sheffield City Council for the original offence. This may result in a fine up to £1,000 plus costs.

If you wish to speak to me about this letter please ring on the telephone number above, I trust it will not be necessary for the Local Authority to take enforcement proceedings in this respect.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## **SHEFFIELD SACL5 – Continue to Monitor Letter**

School letterhead

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: (insert name of child)**

You were recently issued a Penalty Notice Warning Letter for your child, who had failed to attend school on a regular basis.

Your child successfully managed to attend school every day during the recent 15-day Penalty Notice Warning Period.

Considering this, it has been decided (with the Local Authority), to take no further action in this matter, and therefore we will not be issuing you with a Penalty Notice Fine on this occasion.

Your child's attendance at school will continue to be monitored by us.

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in the Local Authority issuing a Fixed Penalty fine and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

Should you fail in this duty the Local Authority may consider taking further legal action in the future.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher (insert name)