



# Queensway

## **Attendance Policy Support & Guidance**

Reviewed and Revised January 21



**HLC Attendance Policy**



Introduction

The HLC approach is where we work in close partnership with our families to support a culture of attendance and safety, however, parents are responsible by law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with Academy staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance.

## **Philosophy**

HLC is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. We believe that, if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. However, attendance to HLC is far more than just an academic consideration. We recognise the nature of our students and as a result, believe that our attendance systems are our first line in safeguarding our young people and therefore a priority.

As an Academy, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils to ensure that they are safe and prosper academically. Any problems that impede the safety, punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

We recognise that many of students will have displayed very low levels of attendance within their previous setting. We know that we have to change a culture and much of our reward system will focus on student specific gains, celebrating small successes that will lead to long term changes in culture. We recognize that these small gains are building blocks and a critical factor to a productive and successful education and life beyond our doors. Our Academy will actively promote and encourage small gains alongside a desperation to move towards 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils and work passionately to embed that ethos.

Our Academy will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach, involving families fully and outside agencies where appropriate, to ensure that pupils always have full attendance.

## Principles

Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at the HLC Academy are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

The Academy will:

- ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration regulations and associated education law,
- complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session,
- stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence,
- display attendance rates around the school and reward good and improved attendance of all pupils,
- promote positive staff attitudes and support to pupils returning after absence,
- consult with all members of the school community and the Attendance Support Team in developing and maintaining the whole-school attendance policy,
- ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers and the school governors,
- send regular newsletters to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues, additionally maintain and update information on the school website with any attendance related issues,
- work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed,
- have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members, consider remote learning opportunities where necessary,
- take responsibility for Children not Receiving Education (CNRE), so that school are in regular contact with the pupil and parent, ensuring the pupils safety, working together so that the pupil can resume full time education,
- monitor and regularly review those pupils subject to a modified timetable, ensuring it is a short term intervention and have a clear plan for reintegration back into full time attendance at school.

## Procedures

### Stage 1 – Registration

Registration will be carried out at the beginning morning and afternoon sessions and registers will be marked promptly within **the first five minutes of these sessions**. The time keeping and quality of the registers drive the mechanics for the next stage, as a result, failure to take accurate registers will lead to the leadership taking the appropriate action against the individual members of staff.

(See also DfE guidance ‘School Attendance - Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – August 2020 (plus the addendum to this guidance)’ and DfE guidance ‘School attendance parental responsibility measures’

- a) **No pupil should be marked present unless actually present in the room when the register is taken** or unless he or she has been given permission to be absent by the registering teacher.
- b) Spaces must not be left in the register.
- c) Registers should be closed at an agreed time each day. AST have circulated LA guidance in line with DfE guidelines. These suggest that registers are closed 30 minutes after the start of the morning session.
- d) Where a pupil arrives late but the register is still open, the pupil should be marked as late ‘L’ – code, but counted as present for that session.
- e) Where a pupil misses registration (arrives after registration has closed) absence must be marked as an unauthorised absence – ‘U’ code
- f) Where a pupil misses registration but provides an adequate explanation, s/he should be recorded as late if arriving before the register closes, but coded as an authorised absence for the session e.g. M for dental or medical appointment if arriving after the register closes.
- g) Pupils must not mark the register under any circumstances.
- h) Attendance data from registers should be monitored appropriately.
- i) The decision to authorise an absence should be made within a maximum of ten school days from the date of the absence. If no reason has been provided during this time the absence should be recorded as unauthorised.

### Computerised Registration:

The Academy uses BROMCOM management Information systems (MIS) to record attendance. Using an MIS system will not by itself improve attendance. It does, however, provide an accessible, accurate and easy to use record of data and information relating to the individual pupil or whole school attendance in the form of data reports, these may include:

- a daily report of all absentees
- a register over any given time which codes all absences allowing the reader to quickly identify patterns and trends in authorised and unauthorised absences,
- an individual registration certificate per pupil which can be produced at any time in the school year and includes information on total percentage attendance, absence and punctuality,
- an absence-mapping facility which can be used to check a pupil’s attendance against another pupil, or a group of pupils’ attendance if there is a suspicion of multiple truancy,
- a record of attendance for each class over any given period of time which will provide a percentage attendance figure for each session and data which could identify patterns of absence for individuals as well as the whole class.

- Individual reports for vulnerable pupils and vulnerable groups of pupils.
- A list of all pupils who are persistent absentees (90% or below)

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken,
- Ascertain the reason,
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

### **Quality Assurance**

**HLC will have a daily checking exercise to ensure register accuracy and further QA through monthly EWO analysis of coding.**

**Stage 2 – First Day Contact**

HLC has a robust understanding of their students and families. Using this knowledge is critical making sure they attend and are by default safe. HLC uses the information to create an agreed criteria has created a tiered response system to prioritise first day response by Academy staff.

The Academy follows the RAG protocol for first day response:

The **GREEN** and **AMBER** process is as follows:

- If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence we will follow ‘first day contact’ procedures and contact the parent by telephone
- The expectation for text messages to be sent to all absent student families is 9.30
- The expectation for all phone calls to be made and logged on Bromcom for analysis is 10.30
- Details of communication will be logged on BROMCOM and if appropriate CPOMs

The **RED** process is as follows:

- Phone call to be made by 9.30
- Details to be sent to the home visit driver by 9.45

The following criteria is to be used to define the RAG ratings of our students. **Professional judgement may be used to adjust a students RAG rating but must be supported by external professionals and a risk assessment must be in place.**

<b>Student focus group</b>	<b>Definition/Criteria</b>	<b>Additional School Attendance Action</b> <i>All families will be contacted by school on first day of absence</i>
<b>RED** ***</b> <b>T&amp;W – Complex/Acute</b>	EHCP, LAC, CSE, CCE, Social Workers, CP Plan, S47 Investigation, Mental Health linked to suicide risk	<p><b>In addition to first day contact</b></p> <p>HLC will make every effort to make face to face contact with student and family every 3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence.</p> <p>Face to face contact with student being a video call or home visit</p> <p>HLC will contact and update linked external agencies</p> <p>HLC will visit students on a more regular basis if they have additional concerns</p>
<b>AMBER**</b> <b>T&amp;W - Vulnerable</b>	Persistent absentees, working with external agency, family concern, EWO/AST involvement, Police investigation,	<p><b>In addition to first day contact</b></p> <p>HLC will make every effort to make face to face contact with the student and family every 5<sup>th</sup> day of absence.</p> <p>Face to face contact with student/family being a video call or home visit</p>

		<p>HLC will contact and update linked external agencies</p> <p>HLC will visit students on a more regular basis if they have additional concerns</p>
<p><b>GREEN</b> <b>T&amp;W - Universal</b></p>	Remit of School staff	<p>In addition to first day contact</p> <p>HLC will make every effort to make face to face contact with the student and family every 7<sup>th</sup> day of absence.</p> <p>Face to face contact with student/family being a video call or home visit</p> <p>HLC will visit students on a more regular basis if they have additional concerns</p>

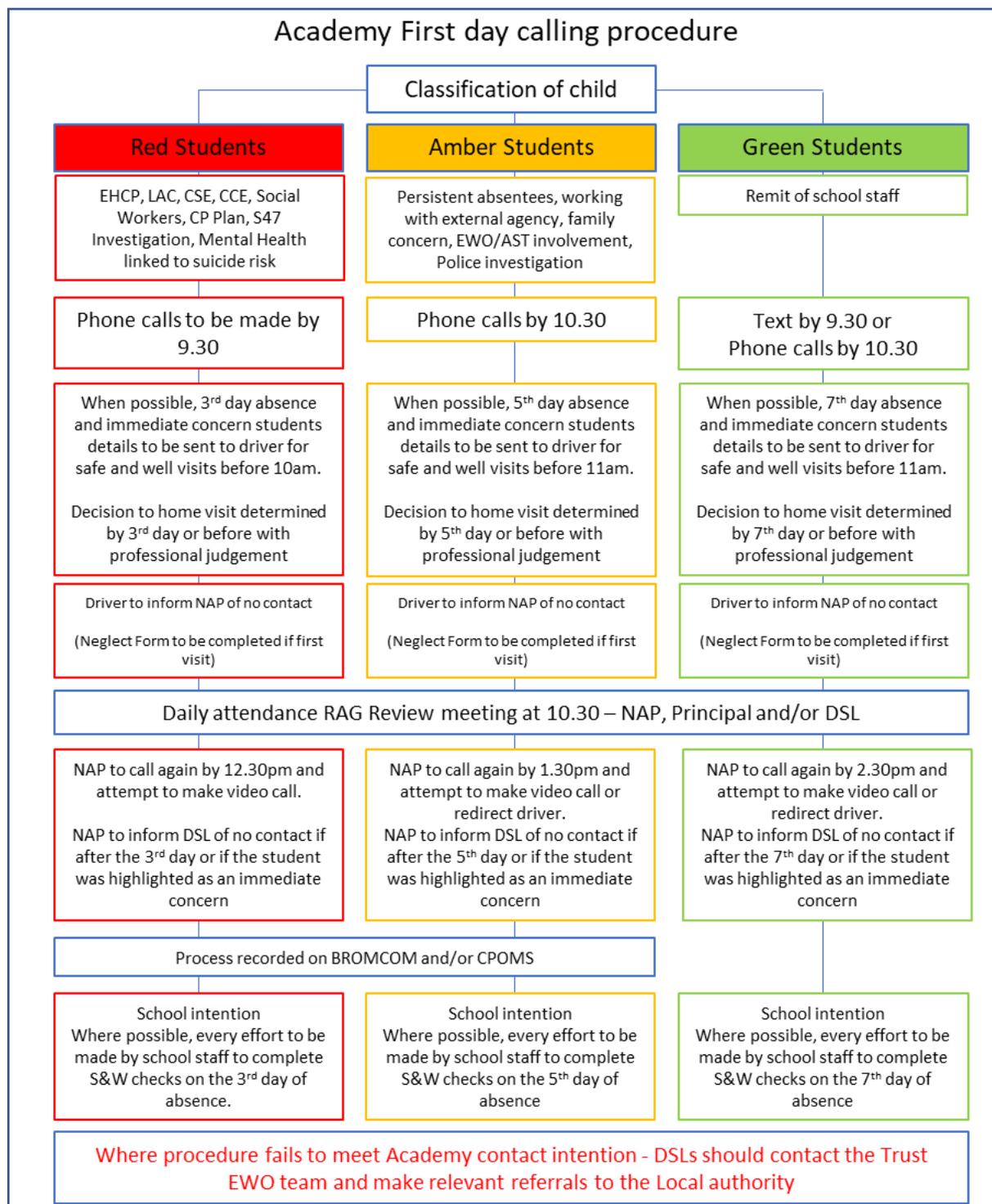
\*\* Use LA threshold guidance and ensure all associated professionals are aware.

\*\*\* All students identified as RAG RED will have a full risk assessment (APPENDIX 3)

Daily attendance RAG review meeting will be held at 10.30 by the most senior linked member of staff (Principal, Deputy, DSL, and Attendance Lead)

Power Bi Report to provide leaders with key information to determine possible escalation of monitoring systems.

## Academy First day calling procedure



- **Parents are requested to call for everyday of absence.**
- **Parental failure to contact school will result in phone calls being made on every day of absence.**

**Outcome of poor attendance (Specific student level)**

### Stage A

Some students will have accessed the SAL approach to attendance improvement in their previous educational setting with their parents being familiar with the process. However, we believe that we need to have high expectations and use national formal processes to support improved attendance.

As a result, Students under 95% will be reviewed and a decision made if School Attendance Letters (SAL) SAL 1 is appropriate (Areas to consider: point in academic year, illness etc...). It will be the decision of the NAP to send the SAL 1 to parents where attendance is a concern

Schools pastoral systems must work with the students in school to look at effective improvement targets

Success Criteria – Attendance to move to 95% within 3 week period of monitoring and support (From issue of SAL 1 letter to 3 week end date)

### Stage B

The decision to escalate to a SAL 2 letter should be decided 3 weeks following the issuing of the SAL 1.

The criteria for a SAL2 letter is the failure to move to 95% over the 3 week SAL 1 period or for students who drop below 90%. NAP can move to SAL 2 before the student drops below 90% if they see no improvement over the first 2 weeks

Poor attending students moving in from a previous school needs to show 'Sufficient' improvement since moving from their previous setting.

It is expected that the 'Nominated Attendance Person (NAP)' and EWO are fully aware of the individual student issue. The Academy will expect the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), to provide and enforce further actions

At this stage, the student automatically becomes AMBER on the RAG system.

### Stage C

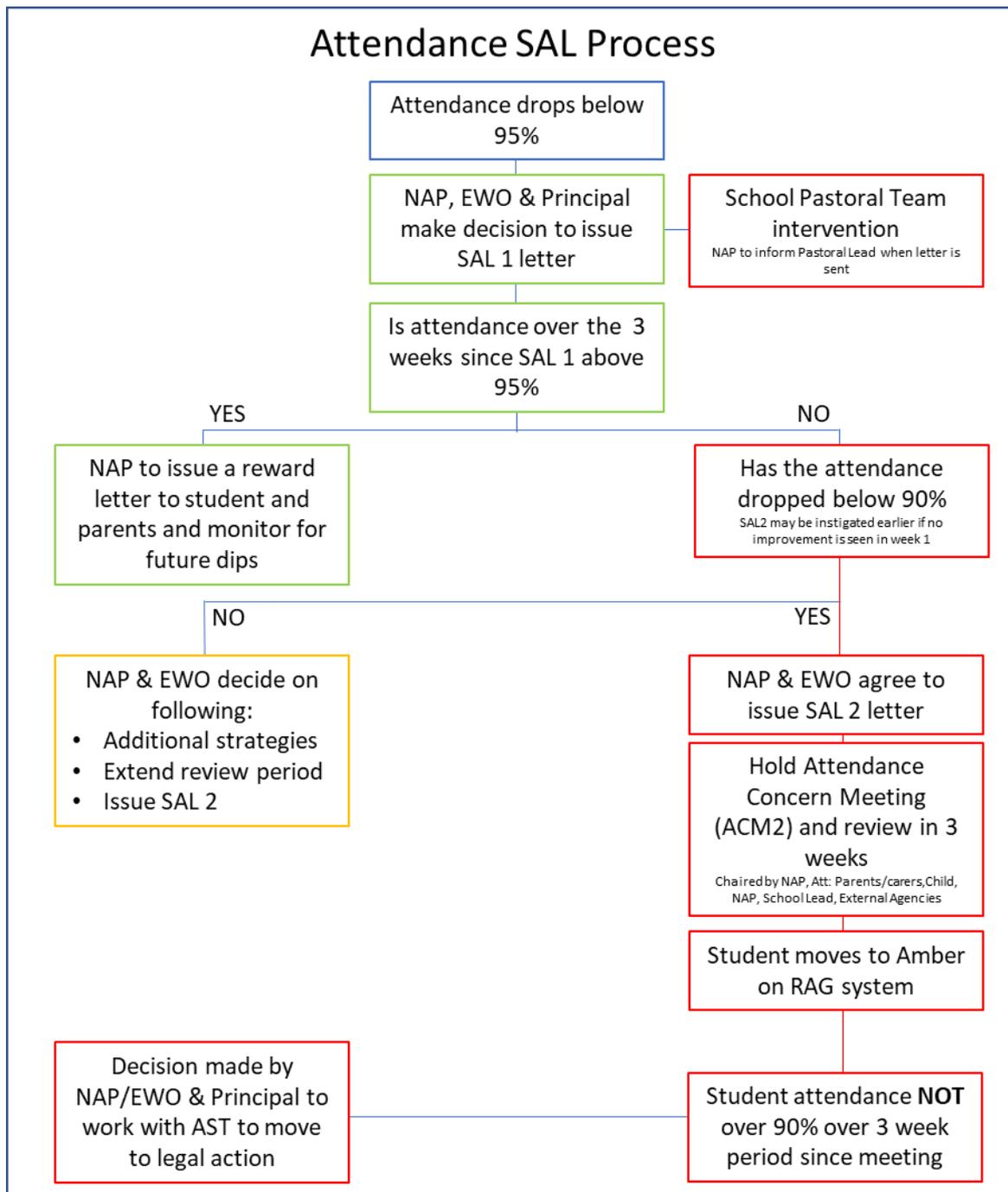
As soon as stage B is accessed an immediate invitation to the parents into school for an 'Attendance Concern Meeting' (ACM), is compulsory. This meeting should include a senior member of staff, parent, pupil and the NAP and/or EWO. The aim of this meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance

The Academy will support the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence then a 'Reintegration Plan' can be implemented. The plan should include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupils needs as possible. 3 week review prior to escalation to AST

The Academy will always aim to provide Early Help advice and support to the family, undertaking an Early Help Assessment if appropriate and make a referral to Strengthening Families if it is felt the family would benefit from additional support.

**In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the pupils the importance of their education.**

# Attendance SAL Process



## **2.1 Performance**

It is important to set realistic targets for both attendance and persistent absence; these targets will be set during the autumn term of each academic year, in consultation with the Governing Body. The Governing Body must approve the school target for attendance to be set for the following academic year and will be recorded in the governing body minutes. Ideally, the target should be sent to the Attendance Support Team by the end of the autumn term at the latest.

When evaluating success, the school will consider the impact of the work on school attendance by whether or not:

- Students are safe when not in school
- Attendance has improved
- Persistent absence has reduced
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absence has improved
- Re-integration plans, where implemented, have been successful
- There are specific key groups where a targeted approach is appropriate to raise attendance, e.g. children in receipt of pupil premium.
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Personal and Social Education (PHSE) lessons, or as a theme for any other lessons
- Active and positive engagement of external agencies to safeguard our children and support improvements in attendance.

## **2.2 Practice**

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data & comparing it against both the local and national average, and considering the performance of key groups in comparison to the national data for that particular group.
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Liaising closely with the school's NAP/EWO, if appropriate
- Recording (and retaining) carefully, all telephone messages/email or contact from parents
- A signed copy of any correspondence to parents is retained by the school
- A referral is made to AST (the Attendance Support Team) for intervention using the electronic ASTR form

## **2.3 The school culture**

The profile of attendance and its importance must be evident in the academy at all times. The culture of attendance has to be of the highest profile to ensure our children understand the intrinsic link between good attendance, safety and future life choices.

**As a result, the academy has the following expectations:**

Expectations of in school actions to improve attendance culture	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students know their current attendance and have a strategy to improve it</li> <li>• Monitors have a regular attendance presence</li> <li>• Culture of poor punctuality being challenged through a range of strategies</li> <li>• Posters in key areas to promote good attendance</li> <li>• Half termly parental contact as a part of newsletter to promote attendance</li> <li>• letters of congratulations, certificates for good attendance which may be taken home</li> <li>• recognition in assembly</li> <li>• the award of badges, merit, group/house points</li> <li>• the giving of prizes, class rewards such as mascots or a cup for the highest class or tutor group attendance.</li> <li>• recording attendance on reports sent home, with positive comments for effort</li> <li>• Facilitating Attendance Concern Meetings and Attendance Panels in schools to invite parents to attend for a discussion specifically about school attendance. This panel may include the community school nurse or a school governor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending letters to parents of new pupils after the first possible 100 attendances with special praise both for those with 100% attendance and for those with no avoidable absences, and recognising &amp; rewarding improved attendance where there is a history of poor attendance</li> <li>• sending children to senior members of staff for commendation for efforts made towards improvement as well as for full attendance,</li> <li>• using older pupils as learning mentors to assist pupils plan and prepare their course work</li> </ul>

### 3.0 Good Practice

The following sections of this policy outline Trust/Local Authority good practice that we expect our schools to use as required

#### 3.1 Keeping the Registers

The status of the register

The register is a legal document which can be maintained in paper or electronic format. Registers, attendance & absence codes must be recorded accurately, and any paper copies must be marked in ink. The register, or content recorded within it, may be requested in a Court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance. It may also contribute data to pupils' end-of-term reports, to records of achievement, and to leavers' references.

An accurate, timely and consistent registration system is crucial if poor attendance and punctuality within a school are to be addressed. It is vital that pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day.

Registration **should be completed within 5 minutes of each lesson**. All staff involved with the registration process should be aware that the law is very specific regarding the keeping

of registers. Marking and keeping the register is of the utmost importance. The form tutor/teacher should not relegate it to the bottom of the list of priorities.

Every entry on the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date in which the entry was made, N.B every amendment to the admissions register and attendance register must include: the original entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

### 3.2 Removal from Roll

(See also DfE guidance 'School Attendance - Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2020) and 'Children Missing Education – Statutory Guidance for local authorities (September 2016) and Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Schools must inform the LA within 5 days of any intended deletion from roll using the A/D 1 form. Pupils should only be removed from the school roll and class registers under the following circumstances:

- a) Where a parent informs the school that they are moving out of the area and give a new address and school where they intend to register the child. Following the date given for the re-location the school will contact the new school/LA to ascertain that the child is, in fact, living in the area and has been registered at a school. If confirmed, the Headteacher can remove the pupil from school roll and registers, retrospectively from the date given for the move. If the pupil cannot be located in the area the parents has given the school should complete a CME/CNRE referral form and submit the form to the [childrenmissingeducation@telford.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@telford.gov.uk) inbox.
- b) Where a parent informs the school that they will be pursuing a place in another school in the local area the parent should complete the online in-year transfer request section of their 'My Telford' account and the Admissions Team at Telford & Wrekin Council will process the application and inform both schools of the transfer. The Admissions Team will inform the parent that a place is available to them at the new school. Once admission is confirmed at the new school the original school can remove the child from roll and submit an A/D1 form (within 5 days).
- c) Where a parent informs the school that they wish their child's name be removed from the school roll as they intend to teach the child **otherwise than at school**, the school must inform the LA by completing the 'Pupil Passport' and submitting it to the [accessandinclusion@telford.gov.uk](mailto:accessandinclusion@telford.gov.uk) inbox. Once the child's name is removed from the school roll the LA Advisory Teacher for Elective Home Education will write to the parent and monitor the educational provision from that point.
- d) Where a pupil has been continuously absent for not less than 4 weeks and the school has made reasonable enquiries which have failed to locate the pupil. In such cases a school representative or, once a referral from the school has been received, an attendance & pupil tracking officer will make home visits and other enquiries to ascertain that the family are no longer living at their last known address. Removal of a pupil from the school roll should only be undertaken when authorised by the Headteacher after these enquiries have taken place. **The school must notify the LA in all cases of a pupil being removed from the school roll where a family has moved and cannot be traced in line with DfE guidance 'Children Missing Education' – September 2016'. This information should be submitted via an A/D1 form. The school should also complete a CME/CNRE referral form and forward it to [childrenmissingeducation@telford.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@telford.gov.uk) the Attendance & Pupil Tracking Officer will then ensure the pupil is tracked.** Schools may be contacted and asked to keep the pupil on

roll whilst further investigations are made. Schools can liaise directly with the Attendance & Pupil tracking officer.

- e) Where a pupil is registered in accordance with a school attendance order and the LA substitutes another school.
- f) Where a pupil has been granted leave of absence e.g. for the purpose of a holiday but has failed to attend school within the twenty school days immediately following the expiry of the leave (except by reason of sickness or other unavoidable cause). Reasonable enquires must be undertaken by the school in these circumstances to trace the pupil, prior to removal from the school roll. If the pupils' whereabouts is known the school cannot remove the child from the school roll. **The school must liaise with the LA in all cases of a pupil being removed from the school roll in circumstances relating to non-return from leave of absence e.g. for a holiday.**
- g) Where a pupil is certified by the School Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a state of health to attend before ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- h) Where the pupil has died.
- i) Where the pupil has been permanently excluded. The Pupil Discipline Committee must have met. 15 school days will then be allowed for a possible independent review panel before the pupil is removed from the school roll.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 currently do not provide for a school to delete a pupil from the admission register where the pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age and has failed to meet the academic requirements for entry to their sixth-form.

Amendments to the 2006 Regulations will allow this, bringing the regulations into line with the School Admissions Code 2014, which allows schools to set academic requirements for entry into sixth-form.

**It is illegal for a school to remove a pupil from a school roll simply because the pupil has a poor behaviour or poor attendance record.**

### **3.3 Expected First Day of Attendance**

The Academy will enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the Academy must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

We will notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register by using the A/D 1 form and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year – for example pupils who are registered at a secondary school at the start of Year 7 - unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided.

### **3.4 Professional Development Days**

When we are proposing to take PD days, the Headteacher will look to agree these days with the support of the full governing body and to liaise with neighbouring schools. Parents will be given sufficient notice of training days and dates should be published on the school website,

enabling parents to make appropriate childcare arrangements. The LA will be informed of all PD days as soon as they are set.

#### **4.0 Analysis of Attendance Data**

The Academy recognises that the use of effective data will support the drive to improve attendance at individual level alongside sub and year groups. At individual student level, the Academy will regularly monitor attendance to identify regular patterns of non-attendance that may reveal, for example, an association with certain subjects, teachers or teaching groups. Such analysis can also draw attention to the deterioration or improvement in the attendance of individual pupils. The analysis can help to target intervention more selectively and help to establish the cause of an absence.

The Academy will also be monitoring the attendance of key groups. In doing, we will identify specific groups of pupils whereby a targeted approach may be necessary. These groups will be linked to our own pupil characteristic profile, but is likely to include pupil-premium pupils and non pupil-premium pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language, and those who speak English as a First Language.

Continuous analysis of individual pupil's attendance and of the whole Academy will give scope to strategic planning. By identifying those levels which the Academy considers are indicators of persistent absenteeism or irregular attendance, it will be possible to identify the extent of the problem.

#### **Each Academy must be able to provide the following data quickly**

- General attendance – Overall, year group, tutor, house, individual
- Analysis of general attendance by subgroup – EHCP, PP, EAL, Gender, SEND, Band
- RAG system student attendance – Red/amber/green attendance
- Sub 95%, 91% to 89%, Sub 90%, Sub 85%, PA Specific (Student number & % with half termly improvement reports)
- Individual response to SAL letters (3 week specific data)
- Methods of highlighting trends/patterns
- coded absence, broken down into a class and/or year group format, would allow identification of excessive unauthorised absences.

#### **5.0 Types of Absence**

##### **5.1 Authorised Absences**

**Only the Academy** can authorise an absence. Parents and the LA do not have the power to authorise absences. The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for the registers.

The key points schools should consider when deciding to authorise absence are:

- it is a legal requirement that registered pupils of compulsory school age attend regularly and punctually,
- a satisfactory explanation for every absence is required; if one is not forthcoming the absence should be treated as unauthorised,
- schools are not obliged to accept a parental explanation for pupil absence where there is doubt as to the validity of that explanation,
- parents should be aware that only the Headteacher has the discretion to agree to any leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Each application for leave of absence should be considered in view of the specific

circumstances of the family. (N.B Applications for leave of absence during term time are discussed fully in Section 7.0),

- schools should always expect regular and punctual attendance, even when the school is aware of family difficulties,
- minding the house, looking after siblings, shopping or going on a trip will not normally be acceptable reasons for absence,
- where absence is authorised, schools should remain vigilant to emerging patterns of non-attendance,
- lateness should be actively discouraged and persistent lateness treated in the same way as irregular attendance,
- schools should develop a close working relationship with the Attendance Support Team (AST) in order to promote regular school attendance and ensure access to all legal interventions where necessary.

## 5.2 Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absence is absence without approval from an authorised representative of the school and includes all unexplained absences.

**If a child is absent with the approval of the school, for whatever reason, no offence is deemed to have been committed. Thus, the decision taken by the school to give, or withhold, authorisation for an absence, is a critical factor in determining the LA's decision to prosecute parents.**

Schools need to exercise caution in the authorisation of absence. If they are suspicious of the explanation given by parents, the absence should be further investigated and left unauthorised until the matter has been clarified to the satisfaction of the school. The decision taken by the school to authorise absence or not, is of critical importance in determining the level of involvement of the Attendance Support Team. If the school has authorised a pupil's absence they have, in effect, given *leave*, **therefore there is no case in law for the parents to answer.**

## 5.3 Parentally Condoned Absences

The Academy recognises that parentally condoned absence is, in many ways, more difficult to identify than any other form of pupil absence. This form of absence is equally as damaging to the pupil's educational experience as any other form of absence. The parents, in many cases, perceive that they are keeping their child away from school for legitimate reasons; they may feel that they are protecting their children. It is essential that, when Academy staff feel that a worrying pattern of non-attendance is emerging, they work closely with the educational, social and health support services to ensure that the most appropriate and effective intervention is available to the pupil and parents.

Parents of children from different cultures may feel that the Academy is not a safe, or proper, environment for their child. It is vital that we investigate and endeavour to recognise cultural issues, which may prevent a pupil from attending school. There is a range of specialist support services, which will assist and advise schools and parents on ways forward when these difficulties arise.

#### 5.4 Factors which may contribute to 'Condoned Absences'

- The parent may not value education, they may have had a negative experience of school themselves and condone their own child's poor attendance at school because of this belief.
- Separation anxiety: The parent and/or child may experience anxiety when separated from each other.
- The parent may be a victim of domestic abuse.
- The child may be illegally contributing to the family income by working either within the home or outside.
- The child may be a victim of child exploitation and involved in gang culture.
- The child may be the only significant carer within the family.
- The parent or child may be experiencing physical or mental health issues.
- There may be social issues which parents may feel are of more importance than educational issues.
- Financial restraints, the parent may be unwilling or unable to provide lunch or appropriate clothing (uniform, shoes and coats).

#### 5.5 Lateness

The Academy recognises the importance of punctuality and the impact of persistent lateness has on a student's education. A pupil's punctuality is a legal requirement and the parents/carers of a pupil who is persistently late after the register closes are guilty of an offence. The law treats persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents can be prosecuted if excessive late arrival is unresolved.

Persistent lateness can be as damaging to a pupil's school career as persistent absence. Pupils who arrive late disrupt not only their own education but that of others and being persistently late may also lead to truancy. Poor punctuality may be an indicator of more complex problems within the pupil's home which the pupil may need help to deal with; chronic lateness may result in a pupil losing his/her attendance mark for the session and the absence will be noted as unauthorised. We know that for some pupils, arriving punctually may be beyond their control. Often lateness is a symptom of another issue such as a disorganised parent and the child is confused and often left to cope alone at a very young age or a parent where the management of firm boundaries is challenging.

Within the Academy we will create a careful balance between being too punitive and too accepting of a pupil's lateness. Once the reasons for lateness have been established, the parents, pupil and school need to work in partnership to resolve the difficulties.

**The Academy operates a system, which sanctions a pupil who is late a specific number of times per term with an after-school detention; for many children this is a sufficient deterrent. For pupils who are late for school because of their domestic or family situation other forms of intervention may be more effective. For those pupils who have to use specific transport, arrangements could be made for detentions to take place during lunchtime.**

The Academy will work with the school community to develop incentive schemes to reward and encourage punctuality could be the focus of one such intervention.

Where a situation at home makes it difficult for the pupil to arrive on time, consideration should be given to an appropriate referral to an outside agency or voluntary service. The

Academy will consider an Early Help Assessment and provide early help and support to the family.

Where the pupil is late due to family circumstances, for example where a pupil is the main carer in the family, the Academy will use more supportive interventions.

### **6.1 The Role of the Headteacher/Deputy i/c of attendance**

HLC is a complex organisation that has a number of staff who have pastoral responsibilities. The overall responsibility for attendance sits with the Headteacher, however, the day to day systems and therefore accountability belong to the Deputy Headteacher.

To enhance good practice the following are recommended:-

- The Headteacher should attend the daily attendance/safeguarding briefing
- Hold key staff accountable for the implementation of systems
- Ensure the school culture is one that prioritises attendance and linked safeguarding processes.

- 

#### **The Deputy Headteacher attendance lead should:**

- Conduct regular spot checks and patrols during the day to detect and deter lesson truancy.
- Pay special attention to latecomers; this will demonstrate their conviction that being in school and in class on time is very important.
- Form tutors and those who manage attendance must be clear about their responsibilities with regards to following up attendance in accordance with the school policy.
- Ensure that all absent students are safeguarded in line with policy and school capacity

### **6.2 The Role of the KS3/KS4 SLT leads and SSMS**

At HLC, the NAP is responsible for following up absences, but consistency of practice is helped when the above staff and the tutor liaises effectively with identified attendance staff.

- Every group should be registered by subject teacher.
- Subject teachers should complete this registration at the beginning of each lesson.
- The daily absence list should be circulated to all lessons as some pupils may have not registered at the beginning of the school day but may be present in lessons.
- Subject teachers, when necessary, should inform the relevant officer of a “suspicious” absence from lessons.

Staff with attendance responsibilities will have regular discussions with Nominated Attendance Person to develop appropriate strategies to encourage and promote improved school attendance and agree the following:-

- the way in which the school will work with, and support, a pupil whose attendance is poor
- how the school and their NAP/EWO will approach and seek to work with the family of the poor attender, and
- ensuring that the school is offering appropriate early help and support to the family.

### **6.3 The Role of the Educational Welfare Officer**

The EWO is a key role in ensuring the safety of our students through driving attendance improvements. The welfare aspect of the role is of significant importance and the relationships born from high level pastoral support of students and their families is of the upmost importance to the academy.

The EWO role examines so many areas that cross into other aspects of the school pastoral systems but ultimately the role is to challenge attendance and provide support to all stakeholders that leads to the desired improvement. In addition, the quality assurance of academy systems allows our EWO to challenge Senior Leadership in their approach to student attendance and safeguarding.

At HLC, the role of our EWO considers all of the above statements and also includes the following:

- A solid understanding of the student/family for all of our learners RAG rated as Amber
- Full Engagement with all students highlighted as Red
- Oversee school actions and become involved in processes once a SAL 2 letter has been sent out to families
- Actively engage and work alongside external agencies to support all stakeholders
- To attend the attendance concern meetings (ACM) to support families and leadership of the school to discover most appropriate options that lead to attendance improvements

#### **6.4 The Role of the Nominated Attendance Person**

The NAP drives the daily mechanics of our attendance system whilst being the frontline to our families. The key priority is the management of BROMCOM to secure accurate attendance in school and provide quality information, quickly to staff for those not in attendance. The management of information will then become high level communication with leadership to action routine strategies. It is vitally important that the NAP is able to track individual attendance and escalate through to potential court proceeding by working closely with the EWO and AST. In addition, highlighting attendance patterns and trends through the analysis of data is fundamental to our proactive approach.

The key principles and priorities of our NAT are as follows:

- Ensuring daily registers are completed accurately
- Administration of daily first contact procedures
- Ensuring attendance data supports daily safeguarding meeting
- Producing of data as set out in this document to be able to examine daily, weekly, Biweekly, termly and annual attendance patterns
- Follow escalation systems that may lead to legal procedures from SAL approach through to AST processes.

#### **7.0 Leave of Absence during Term Time**

**See also the LA 'Leave of Absence during Term Time Policy' for more information.**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulation 2006 allows Headteachers the discretion to grant leave of absence during term time if there are “exceptional circumstances.”

Amendments to the 2006 Regulations removed any references to 'family holiday' and 'extended leave'. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Any leave of absence during term time can be disruptive both to the child's learning and to the school regardless of the reason for the leave. Schools will only consider authorising leave in term time where both:

- the application is made on schools 'Request for leave in term time' form, to the Headteacher in advance of the leave by a parent/carer the child normally lives with. The legislation does not allow for retrospective permission to be granted
- there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Headteacher for the leave and in such circumstances the Headteacher determines the length of any agreed leave in term time.

Applications should be made as far in advance of the leave as possible and parents/carers should seek permission for the leave from the school before they book any holidays. Headteachers will only agree absence in exceptional circumstances.

#### **How do schools consider term time holiday requests?**

The Trust does not support Holidays during term time. Legally, it is entirely the Principal decision and is not a parental right.

#### **Penalty notices for unauthorised absence**

Parents could be issued with a Penalty Notice if their child is absent from school without permission. In Telford & Wrekin, Holiday Penalty Notices (HPN) are issued by the Attendance Support Team to parents who take their children out of school for a minimum of ten consecutive sessions (5 school days) during term time without getting authorisation from the school. The penalty is £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days, per parent, per child. If parent/carers fail to pay the Penalty Notice within 28 days they will be prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. The Academy will ensure that parents are annually aware of our policy on leave during term time through publication on website and within newsletters.

"Blanket approval" or 'Zero Tolerance' policies are not acceptable. The following factors should be considered when assessing requests - no one factor should be regarded as conclusive. Academy staff will investigate each request individually and consider:

- the length and purpose of the leave of absence
- the duration of the leave of absence and its impact on continuity of learning
- the circumstances of the family and the wishes of parents
- the overall attendance pattern of the child

Where absences are sanctioned, they should be counted as an **authorised** absence.

Where parents fail to abide by the agreement reached with the academy and keep a child away from school in excess of the period agreed or, where parents fail to apply for permission, the extra time taken should be treated as an **unauthorised** absence.

If the Academy ever faced difficulties with leave of absence in term time, they may wish to:

- focus on the issue at parents' meetings
- issue a letter on the subject to parents
- contact the Attendance Support Team for advice and support

All requests for leave of absence should be in writing and the application should be made by a parent with day-to-day care of the child even if they are not actually going on holiday themselves. If the parent with whom the child lives does not give consent to the holiday, leave cannot be given lawfully by the Academy **except** by a Court order.

### **Extended Overseas Trips**

The Learning Community Trust does not support parents removing their children from education for extended leave or holidays.

When making judgements about extended absence for pupils, we will ensure that full account has been taken, not only of the regulations and DfE guidelines, but also of the families particular circumstances relating to each individual case. There is no automatic right to any parent to remove their child from school during term time.

We will ensure that all parents are aware of the school's policy on absence. In the case of black and ethnic minority parents or where English is an additional language (EAL), special care should be taken to ensure that the regulations are fully explained and understood.

### **The Academy should take account of the following:-**

- a visit involving family overseas has an entirely different significance from the normal associations with 'holiday' which is the category recognised by the DfE
- visits may be very important in terms of children's identity and self-esteem as they grow up
- parents may feel that the planned visit outweighs the importance of their child's uninterrupted attendance at school - maintaining family links may involve greater significance and greater pressure in some societies than it does in many western societies
- the reasons for parents making a visit may be similar to those for indigenous parents, e.g. family illness, bereavement, etc.

### **However, the Academy should explain to parents that:-**

- leave in term time is disruptive and detrimental to a child's learning and attainment
- advanced permission must be requested and agreed
- the absence should be planned carefully with the Academy
- wherever possible, extended visits should be made during school holiday
- leave of absence during examination time should be avoided
- children who miss school for six weeks or more fall behind in their school work by a full term
- some children never catch up and will under-perform in their examination
- their child's name may be removed from the register if he or she has not returned to school within twenty school days of the expected date of return

### **If absence is agreed, the Academy should consider:-**

- the potential educational value of the visit

- the amount of learning missed and how parents and how the Academy can help their child catch up on his/her return to school
- preparing a study pack
- asking pupils to make notes/observations in relation to a current or forthcoming class topic
- going through any work that has been completed by the pupil on return to Academy
- sharing experience with other pupils

## **8.0 The Role of the Attendance Support Team**

The Attendance Support Team (AST) form part of the **Telford & Wrekin Councils** support services to schools and liaise where appropriate with school staff to help secure pupils' good attendance.

Legal action to enforce attendance can only be taken by the LA.

The AST provide a service to schools and support legal intervention to improve school attendance. AST will normally liaise with the appropriate Senior Leader or the Nominated Attendance Person (NAP). However, attendance is the responsibility of the whole school. **Schools should, therefore, consider the most effective ways of giving all staff access to advice and training delivered by AST to ensure an understanding of the LA's responsibilities.**

Education Welfare Officer (EWO) support is available through a 'Traded - Service Level Agreement' that schools can benefit from and the service is provided by AST. Some schools employ their own EWO. In these circumstances the EWO's time-table is agreed with the school. It is advisable that schools should, therefore, have a clear policy on how and when a referral to the AST is made and both school and their EWO/NAP understand the procedures. In particular consideration should be given to:-

- the schools own procedures for dealing with absence should be agreed in discussion with their EWO before a referral is made to the AST,
- legal action can only be taken on unauthorised absences.
- Good communication and partnership working with schools/EWOs and AST

## **9.0 Children Transferring into and from Schools in Telford & Wrekin and Other Local Authorities**

The LA Admissions Team co-ordinate all school transfers and an 'in year' transfer application should be completed by the parent online. The parent will need to use the Telford & Wrekin website./admissions to complete an online application form. This can be found under 'Changing schools – how do I apply'.

The LA Admissions Team should be notified of all pupils transferring to schools outside Telford & Wrekin, using the A/D1 form. The LA will then liaise with the Authority in the area the child is transferring to. Schools should not remove a child from their roll until the deletion is agreed by the admissions team.

The Attendance & Pupil Tracking Officers will track children that have not been admitted into an alternative school after four school weeks. Schools will need to complete Child Missing Education form and submit it to [childrenmissingeducation@telford.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@telford.gov.uk)

**Guidance is available in 'Protocol for Identifying and Maintaining Contact with Children Missing Education'**

**These forms should not be completed for those pupils who are subject to whole cohort transfers during normal transition (Reception, between infant and junior school and primary to secondary school).**

**Schools should not delay making a referral if they have a concern for the wellbeing of the child.**

## **10.0 Good Practice – Measures to Encourage and Sustain Good Attendance**

### **10.1 Reintegration of Long-Term Absentees**

We recognise the issues that many of our students face within our setting and within their previous school experience. A number of pupils miss long periods of school through sickness, exclusion, school refusal, etc. and may feel especially vulnerable when they do eventually return. It is vital to make the transition back to full-time school as smooth as possible.

Ideally, the return of the long-term absentee needs to be carefully planned but this may not always be possible.

**To ease the return of the long-term absentee, we will consider the following:**

- nominate a key person to co-ordinate, monitor and review the child's return - a favourite teacher may be the ideal person,
- ensure that all staff are aware of, and alert to, the situation,
- consider the possible need for a phased or gradual return,
- consider the timetable and determine what is immediately possible and manageable for the child.
- involve parent/pupil with planning & what support is appropriate
- follow the modified timetable protocol with a structured time line and obtain parents agreement and signature.

### **10.2 Effective Primary-Secondary School Liaison**

This will involve:-

- clearly identified staff responsible for maintaining links with associate primary schools,
- a clearly defined and regularly reviewed strategy to facilitate secondary transfer,
- systems to monitor and review the transition and progress of all Year 7 pupils
- structured visits from primary schools in the summer terms and follow up meetings with primary staff,
- measures to ensure curricular continuity (purposeful liaison between Year 6 and Year 7 teachers),
- effective liaison with the member of staff attached to associate primary schools,
- a referral to AST following school procedures,
- special induction programmes for those Year 7 pupils who come from primary schools other than the school's usual primary schools (this may often be a small number of pupils - precisely those who may find secondary transfer a lonely and difficult time),
- getting the whole school involved in taking responsibility for assisting new pupils,
- involve the parents from the very beginning.

### **10.3 Children in Care/Looked After Children**

There has been growing concern nationally about the attendance and educational achievements of children and young people looked-after by Local Authorities. Children and young people may be looked-after by the local authority for a variety of reasons. Most children are looked-after under voluntary arrangements. A minority are subject to care orders.

Many of the children in care will have been affected by distressing and damaging experiences. They may be living away from home because of family breakdown, abuse or neglect, or social need. Nearly all will have to cope with some sense of loss of family, siblings, and friends, of identity or familiar surroundings. Some will carry guilt feelings and other hidden injuries and many will have very low self-esteem. All or any of these factors will affect the way these children act. Many children will also be behind in their education; it is important, therefore, that these disadvantages are not compounded and that early entry into local schools is facilitated.

Schools are of course responsible for a large number of pupils and some children in care may display a range of behavioural and discipline problems. However a good, consistent and caring education can help many children recover from the adversities that have beset them.

#### **11.0 The AST Guidance for Referrals and Legal Intervention for Schools**

(Free training on this guidance and the accompanying manual is available to all schools)

##### **Introduction to AST intervention**

The Attendance Support Team exists to help parents and the LA meet the obligations and duties placed upon them by successive Education Acts and Child Care legislation.

AST aims to enable all children to gain maximum benefit from their education, regardless of race, gender, ability, status, culture and religion by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

In the changing world of Education these procedures explain the role and function of the AST in relation to schools, families, children and other agencies. It also provides a framework whereby schools and the AST can negotiate the degree of support appropriate to individual requirements.

Telford & Wrekin Council is committed to maintaining consistently high levels of pupil attendance at school and recognise that improving attendance is a crucial factor in maintaining standards of pupil performance and achievement, and in ensuring equality of educational opportunity for all pupils.

##### **The Attendance Support Team and the School**

Irregular attendance raises complex issues. Poor attendance does not exist as an issue in isolation. It is symptomatic of another concern which needs to be identified and addressed. Pupils may be failing to attend school regularly for a variety of reasons. Some reasons may be outside the immediate control of the school, but good practice and appropriate responses within the school to identify needs can help to improve attendance.

It is therefore important that there are clearly defined criteria and procedures for referring pupils with attendance concerns to the AST. The importance of early identification, assessment and intervention cannot be over emphasised.

## **Referrals**

### **Who is responsible for making a referral to the AST?**

Regular time-tabled sessions to discuss school attendance with pastoral staff in secondary schools should be arranged and referrals made to AST only after the school has tried and failed to engage the parent to address attendance problems and initiated a series of letters as guided.

Schools should discuss requests for Penalty Notices directly with AST. As much information as possible should be included by the referrer e.g. family circumstances, involvement with other agencies, known health problems.

### **Some triggering factors could be:-**

- pupil is developing a lateness problem
- erratic attendance i.e. broken weeks over a period of time
- poor communication with parent
- no response to 1<sup>st</sup> day contact procedures or school texts/telephone calls requesting the reason for absence
- family trauma - pupil distressed, mood swings, sudden changes in character
- suspected illegal child employment
- material needs
- concern over the care and control, health or general well being of a child at home or in the community
- any welfare concerns about the pupil

### **What action should the school have taken before a referral is made?**

It is important that all absence is monitored and action taken by school staff before serious cases are referred to the AST. Therefore, before a referral is made the school will have applied all school resources without success e.g.:-

- on first day of absence, contact should be made to alert parent/s that pupil is not in school
- SAL 1, 2, or 3 letter should have been sent to parent(s) by school
- pupils will have been interviewed at school to obtain the child's perception of any difficulties, i.e. bullying, curriculum difficulties etc.
- a member of staff will have already tried to contact parent(s) to discuss attendance difficulties
- Ideally, Parents/Carers will have been invited to an Attendance Concern Meeting
- Home visits have been undertaken by the EWO or a member of school staff.

### **What happens next?**

The AST will consider all the circumstances of the referral and may seek further information from school staff (e.g. Social Care, Early Help Support) before issuing warning or penalty notices to the parents. An AST referral form should be completed by the school and sent to [attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk](mailto:attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk)

### **What if all attempts to contact the parents or guardians fail?**

Appropriate warning or penalty notices will be issued by the Attendance Support Team and this could eventually lead to legal action being taken against the parent.

In complex cases schools may need to consider a referral to support networks. School staff may need to complete appropriate referrals/assessments to access additional support and arrange meetings to discuss support further. In some cases this may involve working with parents to help them to see the school's view and vice-versa. Where ill health is a factor, the school will seek to confirm the medical problems identified by the child/parent, (particularly if there have been several referrals and the explanation has been ill health). If it is felt that the parent(s) have not sought appropriate medical help but are merely making excuses, parent(s) will be advised to obtain medical evidence for all future absences from their doctor.

Where learning needs or problems of school refusal/phobia have been raised, the school may need to consult with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and possibly consider a referral for advice from a Learning Support Advisory Teacher, or Educational Psychologist.

The school may have discussed with the family and child a referral to BeeU or Social Care, if appropriate.

Where there is already social work involvement the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school will have liaised with the social worker in order to determine separate areas of responsibility and to consider the possibility of a joint visit if appropriate.

The Nominated Attendance Person should liaise with school staff and school EWO and draw up a plan of action to address any issues raised by the child or family regarding difficulties that might mitigate against regular attendance at school. These may include; bullying, curriculum problems, teacher/pupil relationships, domestic problems, financial hardship, drug/alcohol abuse etc.

### **What happens when all avenues have been explored, and the child still does not attend school regularly?**

Provided absences are unauthorised, a Warning Notice (AST 1 or 1A) will be issued and attendance monitored for a minimum of 15 school days between each intervention. If there is no improvement in attendance a Final Warning Notice (AST 2 or 2A) may be served on the parents.

If there is no significant improvement in attendance noted within a minimum of 15 school days of the serving of this warning, AST will require the school to request an Interview Under Caution (IUC) also known as a PACE interview (under Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984). AST will liaise with school staff in the preparation of any interview and invite the parent to attend. This process will be to present evidence of unauthorised absence to the parent with a view to legal action being taken.

Following the IUC, the case will be sent to the LA Legal team and a decision made whether Court proceedings will be initiated under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

### **The LAs Policy for Prosecution is as follows:-**

The parent(s) of any pupil of compulsory school age who fails to achieve regular attendance will be considered for Court proceedings unless there are extenuating circumstances. All referrals will be considered and discussion between AST and school staff encouraged.

All parents must be given sufficient notification of their children's attendance via the serving of official warning notices.

After communication with the LA legal team, if it is decided to initiate legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court, the AST officers will work with the school staff to produce the necessary witness statement and appropriate supporting evidence.

### **Who is responsible for instigating Court procedures?**

The LA is responsible for all aspects of the procedure. In Telford & Wrekin this duty is delegated to the Attendance Support Team. A summons will be issued and served in accordance with the requirements of the respective Magistrates Clerks and a representative from the AST will attend court and present the prosecution case on behalf of the Local Authority. In certain circumstances legal services will ensure a Council Solicitor is made available to present cases on behalf of the Local Authority, e.g. not guilty pleas and contested cases.

A certificate signed by the Headteacher confirming the contents of the child's school attendance register during the period of prosecution referred to in the summons will be required as documentary evidence by the court.

### **N.B. Only unauthorised absences can be used in evidence**

### **If parents are acting responsibly, but cannot ensure regular attendance of their child/children because of the attitude of the child/children, what can be done?**

If it is inappropriate for parents in these situations to be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court, consideration will be given to applying for an Education Supervision Order (ESO).

### **What is an ESO?**

An ESO is an Order made by the Family Proceedings Court under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989. The initial Order is for one year but application can be made to extend the Order yearly up to a period of three years. The court must be satisfied that a child of compulsory school age is not being properly educated and that the making of the Order would be better for the child than making no Order at all. In addition the Court shall have regard in particular to:-

- the ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child concerned (considered in the light of the child's age and understanding)
- the child's physical, emotional and educational need
- the likely effect on the child of any changes in circumstance
- the child's age, sex, background and any characteristics that the Court considers relevant
- any harm the child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering
- the capability of each parent in meeting the child's needs together with any other person whom the Court considers appropriate
- the range of powers available to the Court under this Act in the proceedings in question

More information on ESOs is contained in the manual:

**'Attendance Support Team Guidance for Referrals & Legal interventions'**

Under the terms of the Order, the Supervising Officer must “**advise, assist and befriend**” the child and family, whilst the child and family must abide by the “**directions**” that the court lays down and any other reasonable directions of the Supervising Officer. Failure by the parent to follow these directions would mean returning to court when a fine of up to £2,500 could be imposed. In addition, the parent may be imprisoned for up to 3 months. Failure by the child to follow these directions would lead to the statutory involvement of Social Care.

There may be some situations in which an ESO is unlikely to be effective. Where, for example, parents would be hostile to such intervention, it may not be possible to undertake the structured programme of work that is necessary. At all times, the supervising officer will need to operate within a structure that defines clear aims and objectives. This will require a planned and realistic programme of intervention, including directions where necessary, which will specify how the aims and objectives are to be achieved. The active involvement of parents, children and schools will aid success.

***Education Supervision Orders, as the name implies, require a great deal of time spent with the pupil supervising them and encouraging them to change patterns of behaviour. They have a limited effectiveness, as many of the strategies that could be applied will have already been tried to no avail.***

**What other legal sanctions are available?**

#### **Unauthorised Absence Penalty Notices**

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent/carer is guilty of an offence under *Section 444 Education Act 1996*.

Schools can request a Penalty Notice Warning when a pupil has accumulated 20 unauthorised sessions within a school term by completing AST Referral Form and sending it to [attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk](mailto:attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk)

The AST will issue the warning which notifies parents of a monitoring period of 15 school days. During this period if the pupil has any unauthorised absence a Penalty Notice may be issued.

At the end of the monitoring period AST will request from school an updated attendance record and the reasons given for any absence in the period. Following this, AST will issue appropriate penalty notices.

Only one of this type of Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence can be issued per child per academic year.

The amounts stated on the Penalty Notices are £60 for those who pay within 21 days and £120 for those who pay within 22- 28 days, per parent, per child.

#### **Exclusion Penalty Notices**

For a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school and is excluded from that school either for a fixed period or permanently, his/her parent/carer is guilty of an offence under ***Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006*** if that child is present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of each and every fixed period or permanent exclusion.

The AST Referral form should be sent to request an Exclusion Penalty Notice or Warning.

### **Holiday Penalty Notice**

Schools can request a Holiday Penalty Notice when a pupil has had leave of absence during term time and accumulated 10 consecutive unauthorised sessions (5 days) during term time, not agreed by the school. Schools should complete the AST Referral Form and send it to [attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk](mailto:attendancesupportteam@telford.gov.uk).

If appropriate evidence is provided AST will issue a Penalty Notice. N.B. No warning will be issued if a Holiday Penalty Notice is requested by schools and agreed by AST.

### **Parenting Orders**

The 1998 Crime & Disorder Act allows courts to make a Parenting Order for cases of non school attendance brought under sections 443 & 444 of the Education Act 1996. The aim of the order is to increase parenting support and to encourage parent/s to develop better parenting skills.

A Parenting Order can consist of two elements:

- a requirement on the parents or guardian to attend counselling or guidance sessions; these can last up to three months and
- a requirement encouraging the parent or guardian to exercise a measure of control over the child (e.g. that the parent ensures that the child attends school regularly) These Orders can last up to twelve months.

An application can be made for a **School Attendance Order** (Education Act 1996).

This is only for use where parents have failed to register their child at a school or where the LA takes the view that the education being provided “otherwise” is not satisfactory. There is a set procedure for requiring parents to nominate a school to be named in the Order. Most situations are resolved without needing to issue the Order but, once served, it is an offence to ignore it. This power is not therefore, of significance where the child is registered but not attending.

## **12.0 Child Employment/Children in Entertainment**

All children who are employed part-time should have a work permit issued by the LA. **It is illegal to employ a child under school leaving age in any “trade or occupation carried out for profit” without such a permit.**

LA’s can prohibit the part-time employment of a particular child if it takes the view that the work is interfering with his/her education or considers the child is medically unfit. Any work-related injury, which is given as a reason for absence or any child believed to be working in school time or otherwise illegally, should always be reported to the LA for further investigation. Children **must not** be given leave of absence for shows, film work etc. without a performance licence.

**The Academy will notify the AST if they are aware of children who is working or appearing in entertainment so that the necessary checks can be made.**

With the introduction of bylaws in January 1999, some forms of employment are prohibited, namely:-

- a) in a cinema, theatre, discotheque, dance hall or nightclub except in connection with a performance given entirely by children
- b) to sell or deliver alcohol
- c) to deliver milk
- d) to deliver fuel oils
- e) to work in a commercial kitchen
- f) to collect or sort refuse
- g) in any work which is more than 3 metres above the ground or in the case of internal work, more than 3 metres above floor level
- h) in employment involving harmful exposure to physical, biological or chemical agents
- i) to collect money or sell or canvass door to door, except under the supervision of an adult
- j) work involving exposure to adult material
- k) in telephone sales
- l) in any slaughterhouse or that part of any butcher's shop or other premises connected with the killing of livestock, butchery or the preparation of carcasses or meat for sale
- m) as an attendant or assistant in a fairground or amusement arcade or in any other premises used for the purpose of public amusement, by means of automatic machines, games of chance or skill or similar devices
- n) in the personal care of residents of any residential care home or nursing home unless under the supervision of a responsible adult

**A child MUST be 13 years old to have a part-time job.**

**No child/young person is permitted to work before 7.00am or after 7.00pm.**

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Absence and Attendance Codes**

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

#### **Present at School**

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

#### **Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm**

Present in school during registration.

#### **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

#### **Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity**

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

**Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:**

#### **Code B: Off-site educational activity**

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

#### **Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment**

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

**Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

**Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

**Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

**Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

**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.

**Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:****Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

**Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

**Code H: Holiday authorised by the school**

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

**Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

**Code M: Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

**Code R: Religious observance**

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

**Code S: Study leave**

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

**Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

**Unauthorised Absence from School**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Legal action for non-school attendance can only be considered in relation to unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence codes are as follows:

**Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.**

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

**Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

**Code O: Absent from school without authorisation**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

**Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

## **Administrative Codes**

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

### **Code X: Not required to be in school**

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

### **Code X: temporary use in relation to COVID-19**

In addition to using the X code to record children who are not compulsory school age, the DfE have temporarily utilised the X code for schools to use during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was used during lockdown but the DfE have directed that schools continue to use the X code from September 2020 to record absence due to covid-19. Schools should follow the guidance published in 'Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus during the 2020-21 academic year.

### **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

### **Code Z: Pupil not on admission register**

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

### **Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure**

**This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.**

## APPENDIX 2 – Home Visit Potential Neglect Assessment

		<b>Academy Neglect Assessment Tool</b>			
Staff conducting visit:		Student:		Date:	
<p>The following assessment tool is designed to provide a structure for professional assessment when completing a home visit.</p> <p>Staff will complete the assessment and discuss outcomes with the appropriate DSL upon return to the Academy unless immediate contact with Family Connect/Police if the required action</p>					
<b>Category: Environmental Factors</b>			<b>Very Concerned</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Not Concerned</b>
Is the house in a good condition?					
Is there any damage to the house (Gate, Windows, front door)?					
Is the garden well kept?					
Is there any animal excrement?					
Are you concerned it is an Unsafe and/or unhygienic home environment?					
Is there a smell in the home that concerns you?					
Was the furniture in the home dirty?					
Was there an adequate level of furniture? (House & Childs bedroom)					
Are there any animals that pose a level of risk to child or cause hygiene concerns?					
Are there unidentified adults or young people in the home?					
Are the children adequately supervised?					
<b>Category: Emotional and Behaviour</b>			<b>Very Concerned</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Not Concerned</b>
Are the child's relationships with peers/support networks poor?					
Does the child appear to feel excluded by family?					
Is there evidence of emotional withdrawal?					
Is there evidence of attachment issues: Anxious, Avoidant, Socially unresponsive?					
Does the child appear to seek inappropriate physical comfort?					
Does the child show signs of under-stimulation?					
Are you concerned around a lack of online supervision, films, websites, porn?					
Did the child show episodes of running away during visit?					
<b>Category: Health/physical care</b>			<b>Very Concerned</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Not Concerned</b>
Has there been frequent attendance at A&E and/or hospital admission? – Red should lead to school nurse					
Does the child appear to be losing/gaining excess weight?					
Is there evidence of poor child hygiene – Dental, Odour, lice?					
Is there evidence of poor adult hygiene – Dental, Odour, lice?					
Is the Child and/or Adult Refusing help/services?					
Is there evidence of substance abuse (child/adult/household member)?					
Is the child appropriately dressed, clothes not clean, out of season?					
Are the adults appropriately dressed, clothes not clean, out of season?					

Category: Health/physical care	Very Concerned	Sometimes	Not Concerned
Do adults use inappropriate language/poor boundaries?			
Did the child use inappropriate language/poor boundaries?			
Did the adults fail to give the child appropriate boundaries?			
Do you feel that the adult has demonstrated 'Disguised compliance' (appears to be co-operating to avoid suspicions)?			
Did the child demonstrate aggressive /threatening behaviour towards professionals?			
Did adults demonstrate aggressive /threatening behaviour towards professionals?			
Is there any concern about children being left unattended or with inappropriate babysitters?			
<b>Summary of meeting</b>			
Action following meeting with DSL:			

## Appendix 3 Student Risk Assessment

<b>Name of student:</b>		<b>Date Written:</b>	
<b>Assessment compiled by:</b>		<b>Review Date:</b>	

### Task Analysis Summary

- 

### Summary of historical and current concerns

- 

### Current Agencies/Professionals involved

Agency/Professional	Name	Contact details

### School/Staff based actions:

Identified Risk to student and others	HOW LIKELY?	HOW SEVERE?	RAG	Preventative Actions taken by Academy	Staff Lead	If Actions Fail.....escalation pathway
	5=Certain 4=Probable 3=Possible 2=Not impossible 1=Never	5=Extreme 4=Significant 3=High 2=Mid 1=Low	20-25 = RED 10-19 = Amber 2-9 = Green			
1				•		
2				•		
3				•		
4				•		

### Home Visits/Modified Timetable/Alternative Provision Actions:

Identified Risk to student and others	HOW LIKELY?	HOW SEVERE?	RAG	Preventative Actions taken by Academy	Staff Lead	If Actions Fail.....escalation pathway
	5=Certain 4=Probable 3=Possible 2=Not impossible 1=Never	5=Extreme 4=Significant 3=High 2=Mid 1=Low	20-25 = RED 10-19 = Amber 2-9 = Green			
1				•		

2					•		
3					•		
4					•		
4					•		

Next steps			
•			
Summary checks			
Has this document been reviewed by EWO when appropriate?	Y N	Has this document been shared with external agencies?	Y N
Has this document been approved by DSL?	Y N	Is the Principal/Head aware of all aspects of this student?	Y N
<b>Signed (Writer):</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Signed DSL:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

# Attendance Concern Meeting

## ACM2

Date:		Minutes taken by:	
Is this meeting an ACM1 or an ACM 2?			
<b>Panel Members</b>			
SLT Lead	EWO	Governor (Chair)	Principal/SLT Lead
<b>Student/Family Details</b>			
Student Name:		Date of Birth:	
Home Address:			
School:		Year Group:	
Overall attendance:		Sessions Unauthorised:	
Attendance since SAL 1:		Attendance since SAL 2:	
<b>Details of Parents/Guardians/Carers</b>			
Names:			
Relationship:			
Address:			
Contact No:			
<b>Meeting intention</b>			
<p>This Parenting Contract is a formal written agreement with the Parent(s), Pupil(s), and the academy to support the following action plan to address the poor school attendance of the pupil.</p> <p>A meeting was convened with the parent/carer, pupil, and member of staff from the academy to address the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reasons for the pupil's non-attendance at school.</li> <li>• Actions that can or need to be taken by any or all of the people involved to secure the pupil's attendance at School.</li> <li>• To identify an agreed level of attendance for the pupil to attain during the review period.</li> <li>• The potential consequence of legal action being taken should the pupil's attendance at the academy not improve.</li> </ul> <p>Any agreement made in this Parenting Contract can only be amended providing everyone is aware and agree to the suggested amendments.</p> <p>Should the issue of attendance and/or punctuality continue to be a problem as a result of the Parenting Contract not being adhered to this document may be used as evidence in any legal action.</p>			
<b>Meeting Discussion notes:</b>			
Reasons for Absence:			
Views of the Academy:			
Views of Parent/Carer:			
Views of the Child:			
Views of others:			

### Parental Actions:

**The parent/carer agrees to:**

Suggested Actions	Tick if relevant
Make sure the pupil attends the academy every day	<input type="checkbox"/>

Contact the academy by phone to check attendance	
Look for the pupil and when possible return him/her to the academy should he/she have chosen to walk out of the academy	
Attend any future meetings that may be called by academy staff	
Notify the academy on the day of absence, giving a reason and indicating a return date/time	
Contact the academy as soon as you become aware of any concerns, issues or problems that you or the pupil have.	
Contact a senior member of staff if the pupil feels that the academy are not dealing with any issue, or if the pupil feels uncomfortable about discussing an issue with the pastoral team.	
Find out where the pupil goes when he/she is not in the academy and inform the academy so that action can be taken if this arises	
Notify the academy of any occasions when you are aware that the pupil will be late in to the academy giving reasons	
Keep the academy updated with full contact details, including where possible, a telephone number.	
Ensure the pupil is seen by a GP when ill and provide medical evidence of any absence due to illness (i.e. appointment cards, prescriptions, letters etc)	
Provide the academy with permission to contact other professionals involved with providing support for the pupil and the parent/carer(s) (i.e. Children's Social Care etc)	
<b>Additional Specific Agreed Actions</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>
<b>Review date/Lead</b>	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

<b><u>Student Actions:</u></b>	
<b>The student agrees to:</b>	
<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Tick if relevant</b>
Attend school as agreed and on time.	
Be responsible for obtaining a registration mark even if he/she is late arriving at the academy	
Attend any future meetings as felt necessary by their parent/carer(s), or the academy	
Be responsible for getting out of bed each morning to get to the academy on time and be aware that if he/she is late he/she will have to face the consequences.	
Make sure they follow the conditions of any attendance report	
Tell his/her parent/carer of any concerns especially if they are likely to affect attendance.	
Contact the pastoral team at the academy and let them know of any problems he/she has generally or relating to his/her work.	
<b>Additional Specific Agreed Actions</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>
<b>Review date/Lead</b>	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

<b>Academy Actions:</b>			
<b>The Academy agrees to:</b>			
<b>Suggested Actions</b>			<b>Tick if relevant</b>
Provide the pupil with a place on roll at the School.			
Provide appropriate education and support.			
Ensure that the pupil's attendance is monitored on a daily basis			
Be available to make contact to discuss problems.			
Place the pupil on an attendance report			
Liaise closely with the parent/carer and Attendance and Welfare Officer should there be any problems, concerns or issues regarding the pupil, including any unexplained absences.			
On receiving a call from the parent/carer, check that the pupil is in school.			
With the parent/carer's and pupil's agreement, the appropriate teaching staff will be made aware of the pupil's situation.			
Respond to, or deal with, any problems, concerns or issues raised by the pupil, parent/carer, school staff or Attendance Worker.			
If appropriate, consider alternative provision			
If appropriate, consider an amended timetable			
<b>Additional Specific Agreed Actions</b>			
	<b>Action</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>	<b>Review date/Lead</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

<b>Failure to meet the success criteria will result in the following action:</b>			

<b>The following stakeholders all agree to follow the above plan:</b>			
Student:		Date:	
Parent/Carer Sign:		Date:	
Parent/Carer Sign:		Date:	
Academy Staff:		Date:	
Next Meeting:		Signed Governor:	