

065 Student Attendance

Responsibility: EE

Date: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Aim of this Policy:

The aim of this policy is to set out the key principles underlying the school's attendance strategy.

Principles:

- Regular attendance at school is the responsibility of parents and carers.
- The future academic success of each student is dependent upon good attendance at school. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.
- Students should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable (Please see Appendix 8 for our descriptors of attendance and what impact it can have on a child missing days at school).
- The school needs to work in partnership with parents to secure high standards of attendance and punctuality, enabling our students to make the most of their educational opportunities.
- Annual attendance targets will be set following careful analysis of attendance figures and with due regard to local and national attendance targets.
- The school will promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence, ensure every student has access to full-time education at the school and act early to address patterns of absence.

Core Roles and Responsibilities

Assistant Headteacher –

The Assistant Headteacher will oversee the effective implementation of this policy across the school including monitoring attendance and punctuality and developing effective strategies for improving attendance and punctuality.

Attendance and Pupil Support Officer (APSO) & Attendance Officer (Attendance Team)

Working in conjunction with the House, Pastoral and school Leadership Team, the school Attendance Team will help to ensure that all agreed attendance and punctuality procedures are understood, implemented and followed by staff in school. The school will work in partnership with external support agencies, providing relevant information in accordance with current data protection regulations to support families where there are serious concerns regarding attendance.

Heads of House

Heads of House will promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, the streak competition and the implementation of attendance interventions at milestones, supporting both pupils and their families. Heads of House, with the support of Deputy Heads of House, will monitor the attendance and punctuality of students at regular points throughout the academic year, implementing appropriate strategies to secure high standards of

attendance and punctuality. The Attendance Officer will ensure that all registers are completed by Form Tutors accurately and promptly during registration periods. The Heads of House and Deputy Heads of House are to work in close partnership with the school's Attendance Team to ensure all data recorded is accurate and up to date.

Form Tutors

Form tutors will promote good attendance and punctuality through the attendance streak competitions and form time curriculum, strengthening relationships with students and highlighting rewards for students with good attendance and punctuality. Form tutors will follow school attendance procedures regarding the taking of registers, reconciliation of absences and setting attendance targets for students in their care.

Pupils

Pupils will aim to achieve 100% attendance and punctuality, recognizing the impact of this on academic progress. Pupils will engage with attendance streak competitions to ensure excellent attendance and thus academic progress.

Students will comply with any consequences for poor punctuality in accordance with the school behaviour policy

Parents / Carers

A parent means –

- All natural parents, whether married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with or looks after

It is also important to note that even though a parent may not live in the same home as the student, that parent is still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day. Parents/carers will aim to minimise the disruption to their child's learning by avoiding any appointments medical or otherwise which require the child to attend during the school day. Parents will ensure that leave of absences are not taken during term time, recognising that the school cannot authorise absences unless for exceptional circumstances – this means leave of absences cannot normally be authorised.

Governors

The Governors will ensure that all members of the Governing body are aware of the attendance policy. They will monitor the effective implementation of this policy.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Procedures

Appendix 2 – School Absences

Appendix 3 – Leave of Absence Requests

Appendix 4 – Promoting Attendance to School

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Appendix 6 – Punctuality

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Appendix 1 – Attendance Procedures

Attendance Procedure

It is the expectation of the school that all students will achieve good levels of attendance as illustrated in Appendix 8.

There are a variety of reasons for students missing school. Some are unavoidable but we would ask that you support us in ensuring that your child's attendance meets both the school and the government's expectations. Any problems with regular attendance, especially any concerns about possible bullying or learning difficulties are best sorted out by the school, the parents and the student at an early stage. We will closely monitor your child's attendance and alert you if we feel there is an issue. The school undertakes a wide range of measures to support students where attendance at school is an issue. Where there may be an issue and we fail to see an improvement, it may be necessary to make a referral to an appropriate external agency to ensure the student receives the support required to bring about an improvement.

Daily Procedures: Registration

School starts at 8.45am when all students should be in their form base in preparation for the register being taken. It is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day. Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a student checklist in respect of health and safety issues – e.g. Fire Drill. Registers are therefore an important tool to help safeguard students.

Electronic registers are to be taken twice per day. If for any reason the register cannot be taken electronically then a paper register will be completed and sent immediately to the office. Registers are marked in the morning between 8.45 and 8.50am and in the afternoon during registration, which is 2.00 – 2:25pm. All students are registered on both occasions.

- All students must be marked as either present or absent with the appropriate code as per DfE guidelines. DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Aug 2024)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
- If a student arrives after the register has been taken, the register should be re-opened, edited with a late mark against the name of the student concerned, and saved. Any mistakes in the original register should be dealt with in a similar way.
- If a student does not report for morning registration, the school endeavours to contact the family concerned for an explanation. If the parent phones in to explain, or the office staff identify the reason for absence following telephone contact, then they will change the absence mark from an unexplained absence to an explained. If tutors receive the explanation for absence by letter, or note in the planner, then they should contact the Attendance Officer with the reason for absence and any evidence. The Attendance Officer will then amend the register accordingly. It is important that this is done promptly as the office staff will continue to chase explanations where they have not been received.
- If staff are engaged in activities which remove students from lessons, it is their responsibility to ensure a list of those involved is lodged with Attendance Officer in the attendance office, so registers can be updated.
- Where explanations remain outstanding, the Attendance Officer and APSO continues to follow up and if the absence remains unexplained the matter is referred to Heads of House.
- Each day the Attendance Officer will identify a list of students who appear to have missed a lesson and checks then take place to ascertain the reason for their absence from a lesson.
- The Attendance Officer circulates an analysis of attendance.
- Heads of House monitor attendance on a weekly basis.

The school calendar is on the website which clearly indicates the days when your child is expected to be in school. If your child tells you that school is to be closed on a day not indicated on the school calendar, please check by telephoning the school.

Appendix 2 – School Absences

Registration Codes

The school uses various codes to explain any absence in accordance with DfE attendance guidance (2024)

Absence from school

Explanations for future absence should be entered onto the register column to avoid embarrassing and unnecessary telephone calls. Schools cannot authorise absence from school unless it is for exceptional circumstances. If parents request time for their child to be absent from school for a planned event, they need to be able to demonstrate the reason for this. This may be:

- Education at another centre e.g. a local College
- Attendance at a sporting event/competition
- Work experience arranged through the school
- Covid-19 related absences
- Other exceptional circumstances

Family leave of absences will not count as exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances might involve attendance at a funeral, wedding or interview/appointment.

In making a decision about leave of absence, the school will also take into account the current attendance record of the child concerned, and any anxieties about their progress. The school reserves the right to prosecute parents if the family are not granted leave but take their child out of school anyway.

The school may authorise absence under certain specific circumstances. However, the parent must contact the Headteacher in advance to secure authorisation. This may include work related interviews and meetings with external agencies (ie- CAMHS). The Headteacher may also authorise events where students are involved in any supervised sporting events or trials, theatre performances and participation in acts of religious worship.

If your child cannot come to school because of illness you should advise the school on the first day of absence through the Studybugs app. If no message is received via Studybugs we will assume that your child is absent without your permission and will then make every effort to contact you. It is essential that the school is kept informed of changes of contact details such as phone numbers and addresses. In cases where we continue to be concerned the attendance team may make a 'home visit' or request the police to undertake a 'Safe and Well' visit. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their child brings in a letter confirming the reasons for the absence when the child returns to school.

Once contact (written) has been made with the parent the school will determine if the absence is to be authorised or unauthorised.

The school will only authorise a medical absence if the circumstances are unavoidable. The school may request medical evidence if a parent rings the school to confirm the student is unwell: medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a professional, doctor's note, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence.

Persistent Absenteeism

The school has a responsibility to reduce the number of students whose attendance is at or below 90% over the school year. Students with attendance below 90% may fall into the 'Persistent Absentee' category. This is particularly relevant if any of the child's absences are unauthorised.

In line with the DfE guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance', 'If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority'. In addition, 'Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order (section 443 of the Education Act 1996) or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school (section 444 of the Education Act 1996)'. May result in the matter being directly prosecuted in the Kirklees Magistrates Court. Repeated offences of leave of absence

To prevent any child's attendance reaching 90% or below (equivalent to 19 days), the school will implement staged interventions according to the days of absence a child has accrued. These interventions will aim to support a child and family to improve attendance moving forwards in the academic year. This pro active approach should prevent a child becoming a persistent absentee.

These are outlined below:

Number of Days Absent	Intervention Milestones
3 Days	• Tutor will contact home
5 Days	• Deputy Head of House will contact home
7 Days	• Head of House phone call and letter
10 Days	• Meeting with the Head of House and letter with agreed actions
13 Days+	• Attendance contract meeting (<i>HoH/other stakeholder deemed appropriate</i>)

An Attendance Contract is a voluntary agreement between the school and parent and will contain improvement targets with set timescales and an overview of the support provided by the school to support the child and the child's family. Parental failure to comply with the contract may be used as evidence if the Local Authority decides to prosecute parents.

If there continues to be no improvement in attendance and absences remain unauthorised, a Notice to Improve letter will be issued and the school will begin to undertake the necessary legal action against the parents. This will initially result in a Penalty Notice Fine. This will be issued to both parents even if one of the parents does not live with the student. Each parent will be issued with a fine and will have a fixed period in which to make payment. The fine may will rise if payment is delayed. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority. There is no right of appeal by parents against the penalty notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice Fine will result in further legal action being taken by the courts. There must be a minimum consecutive absence of 10 school sessions (this can be split over weekends or school holidays) before triggering a penalty notice request.

Under the 1989 Children Act the Local Authority has the power to issue an Education Supervision Order (ESO) and place a child under their supervision on the grounds that the child is not being 'properly educated' and is in danger of 'significant harm'. The Local Authority can issue an order if the child is persistently absent from school. The Local Authority appointed 'Supervisor' can give 'directions' to the parents on how the child should be educated and work with the parent to ensure the child attends

school regularly. The Local Authority may use an ESO as an interim measure before moving directly to prosecution.

Under the 2003 Anti-Social Behaviour Act, if a student continues to have attendance issues after a parent has been convicted, the courts can also issue a Parenting Order. This legally requires the parents to participate in a programme of parenting support and counselling. If unauthorised absence continues, a new case will be brought against the parent/s but previous parental failure to engage with the school and local authority can be cited.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the student, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

When a student is persistently absent from school due to ill health we inform parents that we will be unable to authorise further absences without medical evidence.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. These are an offence by the parent.

Such circumstances can include (not a definitive list) a student:

- not attending school to go shopping for school clothes
- not attending school as it is their birthday or the birthday of a family member
- not attending school as the family have gone to the airport to meet a visiting relative
- not attending school due to attending a hospital appointment for another family member
- not attending school due to the fact, the family returned late the previous evening from a family leave of absence
- not attending school as they are looking after younger siblings
- attends a medical appointment in the morning but then fails to return to school for afternoon lessons

The school will notify parents via Studybugs if a child has received an unauthorised absence.

Appendix 3 – Leave of Absence Requests

Leave of Absence in Term Time

All parents are made aware that leave of absences during term time are not allowed. Any requests made for leave of absences in term time are refused in accordance with the DfE guidelines / regulations. As a result, any absences incurred as a result of a term time leave of absence are normally recorded as unauthorised. Parents are also made aware that if their child is out of school for more than 20 school days the school has the right to remove their child from roll.

The school may authorise absence under certain specific circumstances. However, the parent must contact the Headteacher in advance to secure authorisation. This may include work related interviews and meetings with external agencies (ie- CAMHS). The Headteacher may also authorise events where students are involved in any supervised sporting events or trials, theatre performances and participation in acts of religious worship.

Any request for leave in term time needs to be made formally in writing on our leave of absence request form seeking permission from the Headteacher using the form below. Requests should normally be made at least 15 working days prior to the start of the requested absence. Leave will only be granted where there is a judgement of genuine and exceptional circumstances e.g. there has been a bereavement in the family.

The Headteacher will also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is authorised. From this perspective leave of absence in term time is no longer a parental right and will only be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion.

Under DfE guidelines schools may consider taking legal action against a parent/s who takes leave of absence without permission and can apply for a Penalty Notice Fine to be issued by the Court Section or other legal proceedings by the Local Authority. Holmfirth High reserves the right to request that the local authority issue a penalty notice to the parent for failing to return by any agreed authorised absence date. This may also result in legal action via the court.

On the third occasion of an unauthorised leave of absence being taken during school time, will result in direct prosecution, where if found guilty, you will have a criminal record.

Penalty notices may be issued to each parent of each child. This is £80 if paid within the first 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice may result in prosecution for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular school attendance. If found guilty, you may be fined up to £1000 and you will receive a criminal record.

It is important for parents / carers to note that the school will not authorise ANY leave of absence unless the school feels the circumstances are unavoidable.

Additionally, as previously outlined in the policy, the school reserves the right to either contact the parents / carers directly or make an immediate referral to social care or the police if the school feels there is a safeguarding concern and therefore a student is potentially at risk being taken out of school during term time.

The school will seek advice from the local authority if a pupil fails to return from a leave of absence during term time and the school and local authority have made reasonable enquiries but cannot locate the pupil. This applies to leaves of absence that are both authorised and unauthorised by the school. As a result the school may remove the pupil from roll under such circumstances.

[Kirklees Penalty Notice Information - https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/schools/penalty-notice.aspx](https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/schools/penalty-notice.aspx)

Leave of Absence Request Form (downloadable copy available on website)

REQUEST FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL		
Pupil Name:		Class:
Other school age children:	Name(s):	School(s):
Parent/Carers Full Name:	Parent/Carer 1:	Parent/Carer 2:
Parent/Carer Full Address:	Parent/Carer 1 Address:	Parent/Carer 2 Address:
Absent from school date:		Return to school date:
Total amount of days absent from school:		
Does the holiday overlap with the beginning or end of term? Yes: ☐ No: ☐		
Please state the reason for your travel:		
Signature of Parent/Carer: Date: Where a parent is unable to take holidays during the school holidays, evidence from the employer will be needed to verify this (with the exception of armed forces personnel). The Headteacher will consider the following points before authorising leave: 1. Whether the request fits the 'special circumstances' criteria outlined by Kirklees LA and the DFE 2. The child's attendance history (above or below 97%). 3. The time of year (Controlled Tests, Exams or September). 4. The length, destination and purpose of the holiday. Please include evidence of booking dates. 5. The family circumstances and the parents' reasons for wanting to take their annual family holiday during term time. Penalty Notice: Where the Headteacher decides that authorisation cannot be given but the absence occurs, consideration will be given to the issuing of a Penalty Notice per parent per child in line with Kirklees Code of Conduct or there is a possibility that your child may be taken off the school roll.		
Office use only:		
Current attendance %: Number of late marks: Number of days requested: Would granting this request mean attendance would fall below 95%	Yes: ☐ No: ☐	
Signature:	Authorised: ☐ Unauthorised: ☐	
Reasons:		

Medical Appointments

Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, parents should inform the school in advance.

We do appreciate that it is often difficult for parents / carers to obtain written confirmation of medical appointments. However we do expect parents to do their best to provide this, and where appointments are having an impact on attendance we will invite parents to meet to discuss this.

All medical appointments are to be sent to the Attendance Officer via email
r.foley@holmfirthhigh.co.uk

A child will not be able to leave the school site for appointments unless notice has been given to the school prior to the appointment.

Appendix 4 – Promoting Attendance to School

Promoting Attendance

Excellent attendance will be promoted in school through the Attendance Streaks initiative. Attendance data is analysed regularly in order to identify specific cohorts of students with poor attendance as outlined in appendix 2. Attendance will be a key focus in all aspects of school life and the importance of sustaining excellent attendance will be regularly communicated to parents on information evenings, parents' evenings and in school reports.

Monitoring Attendance

We promote the concept to our students that an attendance percentage of at least 97% and above is considered to be acceptable. In setting the whole school the attendance target of we are recognise that there are sometimes circumstances that dictate a student absence. The idea that 97% attendance means a student having no more than 6 days off during an academic year, which equates to 1 day a term, is heavily promoted throughout the school. The House and Pastoral team will review attendance data weekly and use said data to inform the school absence procedures.

Absence Procedure

The Pastoral/House Team will follow the below procedure for absences, even if these absences are authorised.

Number of Days Absent	Intervention Milestones
3 Days	• Tutor will contact home
5 Days	• Deputy Head of House will contact home
7 Days	• Head of House phone call and letter
10 Days	• Meeting with the Head of House and letter with agreed actions
13 Days+	• Attendance contract meeting (<i>HoH/other stakeholder deemed appropriate</i>)

Attendance and Punctuality Rewards

Attendance will be rewarded through attendance streak milestones which are captured each half term and equate to an individual prize and house points.

All attendance related statistics are broken down and presented to our students in a way they can understand. Attendance should be a standard item in the Head of House assemblies, serving to promote the importance of attendance and the link with attainment. Assemblies will also seek to celebrate attendance success.

Students are also rewarded for 100% attendance in a half term. See Behaviour Policy.

Appendix 5 – Attendance and Safeguarding Children

Absent children can represent a very real safeguarding issue.

The school Safeguarding Policy sets out our procedures for dealing with this and for reporting children missing in education.

As stated in our safeguarding policy, the law requires all schools to have an admission register.

Holmfirth High School will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register. It will be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met and in any event prior to the name of the pupil being deleted, so that the local authority can identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education and follow up on any child who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Contact the Children Missing from Education Team on: 01484 221919 and refer to

<https://www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Children-missing-education-policy-and-procedures.pdf>

The school also reserves the right to invite parents into school to discuss any attendance issues that raise potential safeguarding concerns. In addition, if the school suspects that a student may be at potential risk as a result of their absence from school the safeguarding team reserve the right to refer these concerns to the appropriate external agencies, i.e. – social care, police. The school will normally inform parents / carers if a referral is to be made. This may not always be appropriate in every circumstance depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern and therefore a referral may be made without informing the parent / carer.

If a child has not been in school for a period of two days and no explanation from home has been given the school may make a home visit. Home visits for persistent absence will also be conducted on a case by case needs basis.

The school reserves the right, however, to contact relevant agencies to seek advice (Children's Social Care, Police) if any child is absent from school for more than two days without confirmation from parents. Every attempt will be made to communicate with parents to ensure the child is safe and well, including home visits. The school will contact relevant agencies after the second day's absence without confirmation from parents / carers if the child is subject to a 'Child in Need' plan or considered vulnerable in other ways.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, for example:

- Pupils at risk of harm / neglect (school will follow standard Child Protection procedures for referrals to social care / police)
- Children of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families (school will inform the local authority when a GRT student leaves the school without identifying a new destination school.)
- Families of Armed Forces (school will contact MOD Children's Education Advisory Service for advice on making arrangements for continuity of education)
- Missing children / runaways (direct referral to Children's Services and Police)
- Children who cease to attend a school

If we deem a child to be potentially missing in education the school will report and refer to Kirklees Safeguarding Board (Duty & Advice) and Kirklees Child Missing in Education Service. The school will work with the agencies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child is met, this will include, where required, sharing of information in the interest of safeguarding the child (Refer to Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy). A dedicated member of the school's pastoral team (Pastoral Manager) is responsible for attendance and persistent absence and will be the member of staff who initially instigates a potential and/or child missing in education referral along with the school's DSL.

The school recognises that some children are more at risk of poor attendance at school such as those from and not inclusive of:-

- Special Educational Needs
- Low socio economic backgrounds – including defined as Pupil Premium
- Looked After Children
- Students at risk of CSE, FGM.
- Children currently involved in behaviour or safeguarding concerns both in/and or out of school.

As a school we operate a 'High Alert List', should the pastoral team and DSL deem necessary that a child is to be placed on the high alert list then they will be assigned to a member of staff who will monitor that child closely and provide a review at a specified date. The admin team and pastoral manager who deal with daily attendance will raise any suspicious or unauthorised absence from any of these students as a priority.

Moving school

Where the school has been informed that a child is moving school/area, the Head of House or Pastoral Manager will check that contact has been made by the receiving school, and if this has not happened within the first week after leaving, the Head of House or Pastoral Manager should contact the school (if known) to check the student has been admitted. If so, the student's records are sent and the student is taken off roll. If the new school is unknown or there is no contact within two weeks, the child should be referred to the Attendance and Student Support Service. The child must not be taken off roll until it is clear that they are attending their new school.

When a student returns from a period of extended absence appropriate daily attendance checks will be carried out and their attendance, behaviour, emotional and physical well-being will be monitored closely by the safeguarding team in school. Parents / carers will be invited into school with the student to meet with a member of the pastoral team as part of the reintegration programme and relevant support will be offered to the student / family as necessary.

Anxieties about school:

In all schools some young people experience increased anxieties and we have a wide range of pupil support services to help with this. However, unless there is a clearly diagnosed medical reason for non-attendance (physical or emotional), parents still have a responsibility to ensure students attend school and receive their education. We cannot authorise attendance for anxieties without a medical diagnosis.

School will of course offer specialist support and may be able to make further referrals for additional support, but students are still expected to attend school – advice from external professionals is generally that this is the best way to overcome anxieties. Please contact the school as soon as possible to speak to the relevant Head of House if you have any concerns and we will work with you to ensure attendance remains good or better.

Home Education

Under the DFE guidance working together to improve school attendance; 'Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education but this does not have to be at a school'. If a parent wishes to withdraw a child from the school the child will be known as 'Electively Home- Educated'. In addition 'On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record. Schools and local authorities should not seek to prevent parents from educating their children outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home.'

Children with Special Educational Needs statements (Education, Health and Care Plans) can be home educated. Where the statements sets out special educational provision that the child should receive at home, the local authority is under a duty to arrange that provision. The local authority must review the child's statement / EHC Plan annually.

Work from Home

The school does not offer a virtual school package to allow pupils to work from home. Staff are not expected to set work for pupils who are absent from school.

Appendix 6 - Punctuality

Punctuality

Morning registration is 8:45am – 8.50am and afternoon registration is 2.00pm – 2:25pm, Monday - Friday with tutors welcoming students at their muster points.

Students arriving after the register has closed but before the end of the tutor period will be signed in and given a late. Students who arrive after tutor period must sign in. This can be done at the school's reception.

When a late arrival at school is due to a medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

If a child is unacceptably late for a lesson it should first be recorded in the electronic register and then the subject teacher should, in the first instance, take remedial action. This might involve a verbal warning or the implementation of a sanction, such as extra work or being kept in at the end of the lesson. If the problem persists, it should be referred to the child's form tutor who will speak to the child, contact parents, check whether this is a problem in other subject areas and refer the matter to the Head of House as appropriate.

If you are aware your child will be arriving late, please send them with a note explaining the circumstances or contact the school by telephone, i.e. - unplanned appointment at the doctors.

Young people form habits very readily and the habit of regular and punctual attendance at school will stand them in good stead. When students are applying for jobs / further education or other placements their attendance and punctuality will form part of the reference. This will have a direct impact upon their success.

Appendix 7 – Practical Steps to Improve Attendance

Improving attendance – WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

1. Try to make all medical appointments (doctors, dentist and hospital) out of school time. Sometimes this is not always possible. In such cases, try to minimise the disruption to the day by getting an early morning appointment so that your child can attend school immediately afterwards OR a late afternoon appointment so that they can complete most of their timetable before leaving.
2. Encourage your child to take responsibility for being on time for school. Try to make sure they have an alarm clock that is reliable. Make sure that they have a realistic bedtime and will not be too tired to get up in the morning for school. Bags, books and other equipment should be prepared the night before. Regularly checking your child's planner can help you to do this.
3. Discourage your child from staying overnight with friends during the week. This sometimes leads to them both being late (or not attending at all) the next day.
4. Check with the school if you have any concerns about whether your child is present in school.
5. Leave of absence during term time is not a parental right. If there are special or exceptional circumstances please contact the Headteacher and decision will be made if the absence can be authorised or not.
6. Encourage your child to come to school even if they are feeling slightly unwell. Many aches and pains are forgotten when they are with friends and the school will contact you if it becomes necessary.
7. Talk positively about going to school – "What was good about school today?" "Did anything funny happen?"
8. Take any worries seriously but do not show that you are unduly concerned. Believe that they will be sorted out. Contact your child's Form Tutor or Head of House before the concerns escalate.

Improving attendance – WHAT SCHOOL DOES:

1. Promotes and incentivizes excellent attendance through attendance streaks
2. Mark the registers in accordance with statutory requirements.
3. Inform any parents / carers who have not contacted the school of the absence of their child on a particular day.
4. Maintains records and monitor attendance of students on a regular basis.
5. Authorise absences in accordance with the government guidelines. Please note that only the school can authorise absence.
6. Contact parents / carers when the attendance falls below acceptable levels and / or when particular patterns of absence are causing concerns.
7. Provide access to staff with whom attendance related issues can be discussed.
8. Works with external agencies to maintain good attendance and to support the student / family with any issues that may affect attendance and punctuality to school.
9. Provide reintegration support for students returning from absence.
10. Works with relevant external agencies if a students' attendance becomes a concern, i.e. – Social Care, CAMHS, Pupil Support Service, Police, YOT.

The school has a legal responsibility to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attends school regularly. Our staff are committed to working closely with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Your continued support in this matter is essential. Please work with us.

Appendix 8 – Attendance Descriptors

Descriptor	Attendance	Equals Absent Number of Days	Learning Hours Lost
Excellent	100%	0	0
	99%	2	10
Good	98%	4	20
	97%	6	30
Requires Improvement	96%	7.5	37.5
	95%	9.5	47.5
	94%	11	55
Cause for concern	93%	13	65
	92%	15	75
	91%	17	85
Serious cause for concern	90% and below	19	95

Appendix 9 – Poor School Attendance

When attendance starts to dip, it will be referred to the attendance officer. A school attendance improvement contract will be offered. Failure to adhere to the contract may result in legal action being considered, such as a supervision order. An Education Supervision Order (ESO) is heard in Family Court. If granted, the order is for 12 months with the option of renewing for an additional 24 months. The parent will be assigned a Supervising Officer who will oversee the order; and the pupil will be assigned a Befriender who will advise, assist and guide the pupil. An ESO does not criminalise the parent and must be the first consideration when deciding the appropriate legal action.

Prosecution may be appropriate for late year 10 or year 11 pupils where there are no younger siblings. Additionally, where there are no identified unmet needs, prosecution is more appropriate. Prosecution is heard in Magistrates' Court for the offence of knowingly failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance (s444(1)(a) Education Act 1996). If found guilty, this carries a penalty of up to £2,500 or up to 3 months imprisonment and you will receive a criminal record. Additionally, other community orders may be attached. The appropriate course of action will be decided by the Kirklees Legal Intervention Panel.

Appendix 10 – Suspended/Excluded Pupils

If a pupil has been suspended or excluded, that pupil may not be in a public place during the period of suspension/exclusion without just cause (such as attending a medical appointment). If that pupil is seen in a public place, a penalty notice is issued to each parent of each child. This is for £80 if it is paid within the first 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

Appendix 11 – Penalty Notices

A penalty notice is issued to each parent of each child. This is for £80 if it is paid within the first 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the local authority commencing legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular school attendance. If found guilty, you may be fined up to £1,000 and you will receive a criminal record.

Appendix 12 – Religious Observance

3 days are permitted within a 12-month period in respect of religious observance where a religion other than Christianity is practiced and the day falls on a usual school day.

