



**Good Shepherd Trust**  
life in all its fullness

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# Attendance Policy and Procedures

Date of Adoption	April 2018
Reviewed	April 2021
Reviewed	December 2022
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>April 2025</b>

## Values

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In keeping with our Trust vision, every member of the Trust family of schools will be valued and encouraged to fulfil their potential. In our Trust we believe:

- Everyone has something to offer
- Trust, honesty, empathy and social responsibility are the Christian values that frame our work
- We are here for the whole person, spiritually, morally, educationally and socially
- In working with transparency and openness

## Definitions

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**‘Child’, ‘children’ and ‘Pupil(s)’:** refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of this Code of Conduct apply to professional behaviours towards all pupils, including those over the age of 18 years. ‘Child’ should therefore be read to mean any pupil in the setting.

**Employees, adults and staff:** refer to **all** those who work across the Trust in any setting, with or without direct contact with pupils and in either a paid or unpaid capacity and includes staff/ volunteers who may be under 18. This will also include, for example, volunteers and those who are not directly employed by the Trust e.g., Local Authority staff, sports coaches, independent supply staff and agency staff.

The term **‘parent’** is used, this includes any person with parental authority of the child concerned e.g., carers, legal guardians etc.

**Overall absence** is the aggregated total of all authorised and unauthorised absences.

**Authorised absence** is absence with permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absence for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided e.g., illness.

**Unauthorised absence** is absence without permission from the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences and arrivals after registration has closed.

**Persistent Absence** is when a pupil’s overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions. A ‘session’ is one morning or afternoon in school.

This is based on the individual’s absence level, not by comparison to a national threshold.

The calculation for this is:

[A pupil’s individual overall absence] divided by [a pupil’s individual possible sessions] multiplied by 100. If this is greater than or equal to 10, the pupil is classified as persistently absent.

Or visually:

$$\frac{\text{A pupil's individual overall absence}}{\text{A pupil's individual possible sessions}} \times 100 \geq 10.0$$

## Roles and terminology within the Good Shepherd Trust

Throughout this document the following terminology is used to describe the roles within the Trust.

Role/Term	Alternatives, description and meaning
<b>Members</b>	Members appoint the Directors. Membership is described in the Trust's Articles of Association
<b>Directors</b>	Also 'the Trust board' or 'the board' The Trust Directors are accountable in law for all decisions about member schools and are accountable to the Secretary of State for Education for the performance of each school within the Trust.
<b>LGB</b>	Also 'Local Governing Bodies' or 'LGB Members' The local governing body is a standing committee of the Trust which has delegated powers to oversee the running of its individual school. The LGB may choose to delegate some of these powers to smaller committees or the Headteacher as it deems fit to fulfil its responsibilities. Where the document refers to the LGB this might be through some committees or further delegation but with the understanding that the ultimate responsibility remains with the LGB.
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer A significant number of responsibilities under the scheme of delegation lie with the CEO. It is recognised that the CEO may choose to delegate some of their duties to the Chief Finance Officer and School Improvement Consultants and other staff in their team.
<b>Central Team</b>	Refers collectively to the: Business Manager, Finance Support Officers, School Improvement Consultants, Admin Support Officers, and Development Officer Any other staff appropriate to the responsibility or task who work from the Trust's central administration office in Penrith rather than being based in a school.
<b>SLT</b>	Senior Leadership Team The Headteacher/Executive Headteacher, Head of School, Deputy Headteacher or other Senior staff member as appropriate to the individual school's senior leadership structure  ' <b>Headteacher</b> ' in policies will usually refer to the Headteacher or Executive Headteacher as appropriate for the leadership structure of the school

## Legislation and Guidance

This policy adheres to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority. It meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance: Attendance Policy v2 – December 2022

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) (HRA) which sets out the fundamental right and freedoms that everyone is entitled to, and the [UN Convention on the rights of the child](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(As amended\)](#)
- [Statutory guidance on School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures](#)
- [Statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Non-statutory guidance Behaviour in schools: advice for Head teachers and school staff](#)
- [Non-statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Non statutory guidance Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

This Policy and procedures should be read alongside other school policies and procedures as follows:

- Child Protection policy and associated policies and procedures
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy and procedures
- Equality policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy/Information Report
- Admissions policy
- Complaints procedure
- Code of Conduct for Staff and other Adults

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

# Policy

## Aims

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This policy and its procedures have been developed to ensure all staff, volunteers, pupils, parents, and carers understand the attendance expectations shared across the Good Shepherd Trust.

Good Shepherd Trust schools will meet their obligations regarding school attendance by:

- Ensuring that all children attend school regularly and punctually, to maximise their educational achievement and social development. Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Discharging the duty of all adults within the Trust to safeguard pupils
- Ensuring that all those responsible for children's education, including parents, carers, staff and local governing body members understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to attendance
- Minimising absence from school, thereby reducing levels of persistent absence
- Improving the life chances of the children attending each setting within the Trust and preparing them to be fully contributing citizens when they reach adulthood. Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training.

The DfE guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (2022) states that attendance at school is “essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances”. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Trust schools fully recognise their responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

This policy applies to all children registered at a Good Shepherd Trust school. This policy is made available to all parents/carers through each individual school website. A paper copy is available upon request.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Trust Directors, Headteachers and members of the local governing body will work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

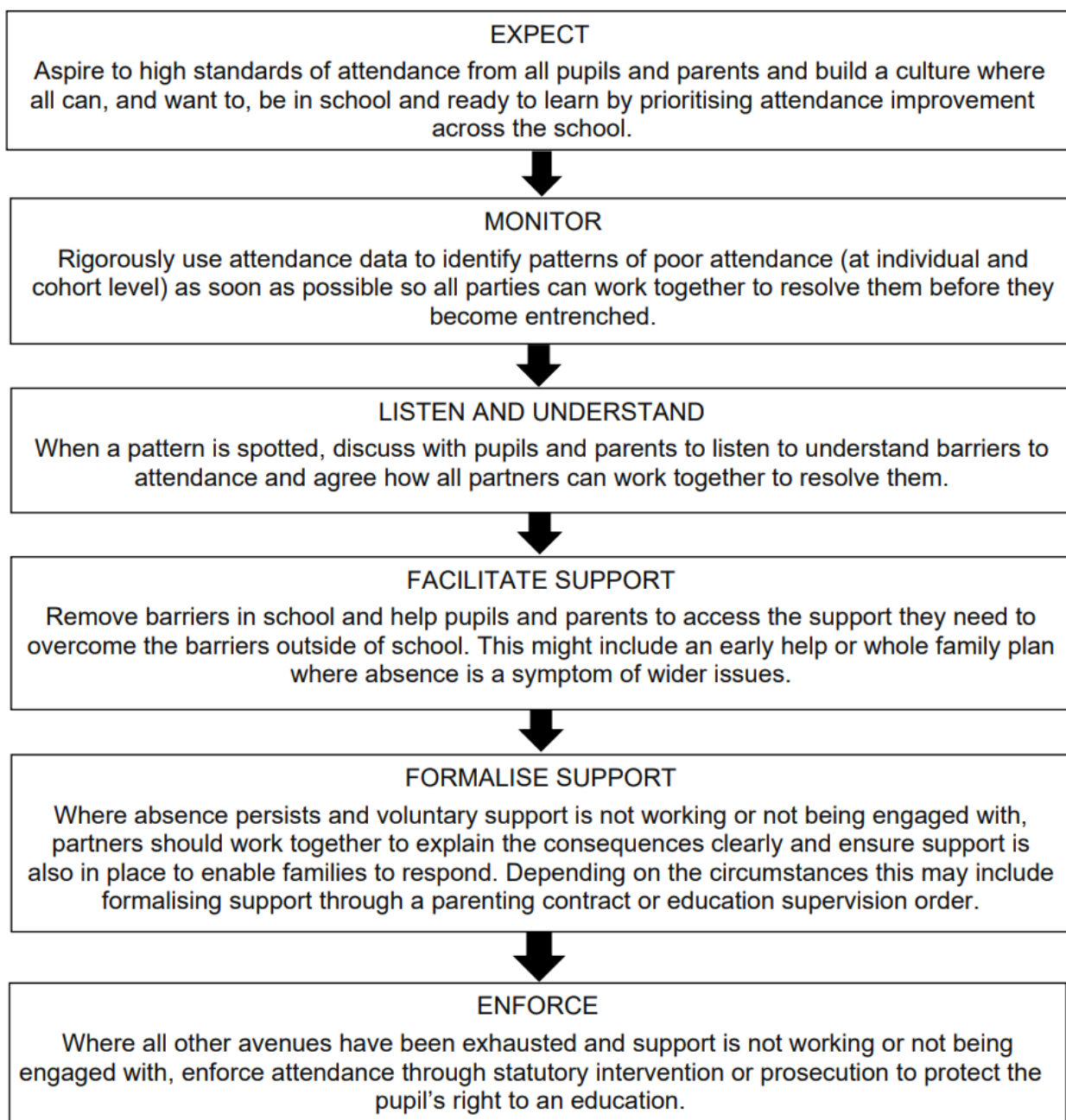
Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.

*A CHILD WHOSE ATTENDANCE DROPS TO **90%** EACH YEAR WILL HAVE MISSED TWO WHOLE TERMS OF LEARNING OVER THEIR TIME AT PRIMARY SCHOOL*

## Roles and Responsibilities

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Working with, not against families to identify and overcome the root causes of absence and barriers to attendance at home, in school and more broadly requires a collaborative approach at all levels. Our Directors, Executives, School leaders, staff, local partners and families must work together to:



An effective culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities.

### Trust Board of Directors

Directors of the Good Shepherd Trust will:

- Recognise the importance of attendance and promote it across our schools through both the Trust and schools' ethos and support policies
- Ensure that the Trust's duty to promote equality is fulfilled and that procedures implemented do not discriminate

- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

The full Board of Directors delegate the following responsibilities to their School Improvement sub-committee. The committee will:

- Evaluate the overall effectiveness of this policy and its procedures on attendance across the Trust by regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends
- Nominate a director who will have responsible for monitoring attendance

## Trust CEO

The Trust Chief Executive Officer will:

- Ensure accurate and timely attendance data for the whole Trust is presented to the School Improvement Committee once per term
- Help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure staff across the Trust receive adequate training on attendance and its support
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the Trust

## Local Governing Body

Each Local Governing Body will:

- Ensure effective policy implementation by holding their setting's SLT to account
- Set annual attendance targets for their setting and monitor attendance figures against these targets on at least a termly basis.
- Deal with representation by parents or carers if their application for an authorised absence is refused
- Appoint a member/s to act as the LGB member with responsibility for attendance who will attend Attendance panel meetings with the Headteacher where appropriate
- Handle complaints regarding this policy and procedures in line with the Trust's Complaints procedure

## Headteacher / Executive Headteacher

The Headteacher / Executive Headteacher will:

- Ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately record individual pupil, group, and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns
- Provide the Local Governing Body with information and data at least once per term
- Manage the effective day-to-day implementation of this policy and procedures
- Manage and implement effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance
- Ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities for promoting and implementing the Attendance Policy: modelling good attendance behaviour, ensuring pupils follow the Policy and that it is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Ensure that the policy is accessible to parents and carers at their setting through publication on the school website or via request from the school office
- Where the leadership and management structure of the setting allows the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher will appoint a senior leader with responsibility for attendance, and:
  - Ensure that the appointee has the knowledge, training and support they require to fulfil this role

## Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance

Where the leadership and management structure of the setting allows, the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher will appoint a senior leader with responsibility for attendance. Where such an appointment is not possible these responsibilities will remain with the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher.

The Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance will:

- Monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality and ensuring useful data is reported to the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher every half term
- Contact and work with parents or carers regarding concerns about their child's attendance.
- Arrange meetings with parents or carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties
- Support admin staff in offering initial challenge and support when pupils are late or absent and working with key partners if attendance and/or punctuality becomes an issue.
- Ensure school administrators are made aware of any pupils, families or behaviours that require daily monitoring
- Coordinate daily punctuality checks with late pupils
- Process all legal documentation regarding attendance monitoring including penalty notices to the LA

## Staff taking registration

Teachers and other staff who take the register in the morning or afternoon will:

- Provide an accurate record of the attendance of each pupil in their class using the correct code. Details of codes to be used are provided at Table 1 below
- Record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate record
- Respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by administrative staff
- Arrange for appropriate work and resources to be sent home to pupils who have missed lessons and who are expected to be absent for an extended period
- Raise any attendance or punctuality concerns (in line with the escalation of intervention described in Appendices 10 and 11) to their setting's SLT

## Administrative Staff

School based administrative staff will:

- Record pupils arriving late or leaving early daily
- Prepare, manage and coordinate use of Scholarpack (the Trust's preferred Management Information System)
- Monitor and track attendance patterns for all pupils and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary, using attendance register coding, this may include statutory reporting to the DfE in consultation with the setting's SLT
- Contact any parent who has not explained why their child is absent on the first day of their absence
- As far as possible ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each pupil by the end of each week, administrative staff should raise any failure to establish a satisfactory reason for absence with their setting's SLT as soon as possible

- Consult with their setting's SLT to determine whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised

Administration staff at the Central Office will:

- Publish the most up to date version of the Attendance Policy and procedures on each school's website

## Local Authority

The Local Authority retains a legal duty to support all schools with attendance.

Cumbria County Council	Northumberland County Council
Access and Inclusion Officer (Attendance)	Education Welfare Service
<a href="https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/accessandinclusion/default.asp">https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/accessandinclusion/default.asp</a>	<a href="mailto:EducationWelfareService@northumberland.gov.uk">EducationWelfareService@northumberland.gov.uk</a>

The LA will:

- Enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- Support a whole school response to attendance through regular meetings, monitoring of individual pupil's attendance, and support with specific attendance, access, or inclusion issues as they arise.

## Attendance Expectations

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### What parents, carers and pupils can expect from their school

This school will:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing
- Have a clear Attendance Policy which all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers to include relevant detail of any absences or lateness and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence
- Regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or groups of pupils that need support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them
- Consider the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support
- Build strong relationships with foster carers, Social Workers and the Local Authority Virtual Headteacher in relation to looked-after children
- Challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like
- Ensure that where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, the best placed person in their setting works with, and supports the family. Wherever possible the person will remain consistent

- Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance e.g., bullying or harassment. For more information on this refer to the Behaviour Policy
- Work with parents of pupils with medical conditions or special education needs and disabilities to ensure that the barriers to attendance these pupils face are minimised, providing additional support where necessary, to help them access their full-time education
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the same area, the same local authority, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe
- Make timely referrals to the appropriate Local Authority Officer (see p. 7) when any pupil's attendance causes concern and where parents or carers have not responded to initiatives to improve. Such actions will be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families
- Report attendance statistics to the DfE where required.

### What school expects from parents and carers

With the help and support of their setting parents will:

- Make sure their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability, and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have (under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996) by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise (including the parent choosing to educate their child at home)
- Ensure their child attends school every day once enrolled unless there is a genuine reason for absence
- Ensure their child is not late for school.
- Contact the school by telephone, in person, by text, email or written note **before 9am on the first day of absence** and regularly if absence is ongoing
- Provide the school with accurate and up to date contact details (including a minimum of 2 emergency contacts) and update these as soon as possible if these change
- Try to make health, doctor, dentist, hospital etc. appointments outside of school hours where possible, or at the very beginning or end of the school day. This will minimise the amount of learning missed.
- Ensure that where appointments are made during the school day their child is absent from school only for as long as it takes to attend their appointment
- Inform a member of school staff about anything that may affect their child's school attendance
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent matters

### What school expects from pupils

With the help and support of their setting pupils will:

- Attend school every day and strive for 100% school attendance. Every day counts!
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- Where age and stage appropriate, promptly tell their teacher, an administrator, or another suitable member of staff, about any problems that may affect their school attendance.

# Procedures

## Attendance Register

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By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. Across the Good Shepherd Trust schools use Scholarpack to record attendance.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.

The attendance register will record whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Late

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See **Appendix 1** for the DfE Attendance Codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Parents must be aware of the start time for the morning and afternoon sessions of the school their children attend. This information will be published on the school website and regular reminders should be issued as required, at the discretion of the settings' SLT.

## Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils must arrive at their school by the start of registration on each school day. The register for the first session will be kept open for half an hour, after which time pupils will be marked as absent. The register for the second session will be taken at the start of the afternoon session.

- Pupils arriving before the end of the Registration period will be coded L (Late before register closed) which is a present mark. The number of minutes late will be recorded in the register (does Scholarpack have this facility? If not where recorded?)
- Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be coded U (Late after register closed) which counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning session.

Pupils who arrive after the close of register automatically lose a half-day's attendance.

# Absence Management

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Children registered at a school must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance.

This section details the procedures in place for managing both unplanned and planned absences.

## Unplanned Absence

Unplanned absences must be notified by telephoning the school office.

Notification to the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if the child is unable to attend due to ill health – should be made by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible.

### Absence due to illness

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless there is a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, staff may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Medical evidence will not be requested unnecessarily.

Where the SLT of the setting are not satisfied about the authenticity of an illness the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

### Unexplained Absence

If there is no known reason for absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, until a satisfactory reason is provided.

If the reason given is not satisfactory and/or evidence of the reason cannot be provided, the absence will be coded as O (Unauthorised absent).

It is reasonable for members of staff to ask questions regarding a child's attendance and punctuality and when appropriate, request evidence to support the reason for absence.

### Following up Unexplained Absence

If a pupil is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days this must be reported as a legal duty.

If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing from education (CME). The local Attendance Advisory Service staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

Parents should ensure that their contact number and emergency contact details are kept up to date. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### First Day Calling procedure

Please see Appendix 2 for the First Day Calling procedure

If a pupil fails to attend without prior parental notification:

- A text/telephone call will be made to try to ascertain the reason for absence and the whereabouts of the child as soon as possible

- If there is no response a message should be left asking parents to contact the school
- If a response is still not promptly received, any other contact numbers will be called.
- In the interest of safeguarding the pupil, staff may visit the pupil's home address or request that other agencies (the police/children's services) follow up the unexplained absence.

Whilst the above sets out the standard procedure for safeguarding pupils, where there are specific concerns about the safety of a child, the school may expedite these procedures, e.g., calling before the close of register; calling all available contacts from the information management system; visiting the pupil's home address.

Attempts to make contact and ascertain the reason for any unexplained absence will continue to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

## Planned Absence

### Medical or Dental Appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Absences for medical and dental appointments must be notified in advance by letter or by telephoning the school office.

However, parents are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

### Granting Approval for Term-Time Absence

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time and parents or carers must apply to school for a leave of absence.

The Department for Education allows a Headteacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in 'exceptional circumstances.' They do not clearly define this for schools, but Headteachers will consider each application individually taking account of the specific facts and circumstances, and relevant background context behind the request.

Parents and carers must complete a 'Leave of Absence' form (Appendix 3) outlining in writing the exceptional circumstances for the request. A paper copy of the form can be obtained on request. The form must be returned to school for a decision at least 2 weeks before the first day of leave requested (except for a bereavement or other serious family emergency). The Headteacher may request a meeting to discuss the application.

Exceptional circumstances are defined as an event or problem which a parent or carer cannot control or did not expect.

**Holidays taken during term time will NOT be authorised unless an exceptional circumstance *also* applies.**

Valid reasons for applying exceptional circumstances and allowing an authorised absence *may* include, but are not limited to:

- Being too unwell or infectious to be in school, medical or dental appointments, or an absence from school recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from physical or mental ill-health or injury
- The school site, or part of it is closed due to an unavoidable cause when it should be open

- Transport provided by the school, or a local authority is not available, and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance (2 miles measured by the nearest available safe route for a child aged 7 and under and 3 miles for children aged 8 and over)
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel or daily activities which has prevented the pupil from attending school
- Service personnel close to the family are returning from a tour of duty abroad, and where it is evidenced that the individual will not be able to take leave that coincides with school holidays
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers  
Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Bereavement or unexpected and serious personal or family problems
- To attend the wedding of a person close to the family – up to 1 day

Evidence would be required in each case to support any application for leave and that the circumstances are exceptional.

If a request meets the exceptional circumstances criteria but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
- Year Six transition days
- Year Six SAT's week
- Year Two – SAT's week (week to be decided by school)
- Any designated teacher assessment period (decided by school and notified in advance)

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school the Headteacher does not have to authorise the whole period requested. If a pupil does not return to school on the day after their authorised leave of absence ends, their attendance will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Examples of types of absence that are **NOT** considered reasonable, and which will not be authorised under any circumstances are:

- Going shopping with parents
- Birthdays
- Minding other younger children in the family
- Staying at home because other members in the family are unwell
- Day trips and holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances that have been approved by the headteacher
- Arriving at school too late to get a present mark (After the close of registration)
- Truancy

## Monitoring and Reporting Attendance

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Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with our local governing body.

To monitor and manage attendance, each school in The Good Shepherd Trust will:

- Implement the First Day Calling procedure outlined in this document
- Follow up telephone calls and other methods of communication like SMS, email, app notifications etc.
- Produce and monitor regular attendance reports and individual attendance reports and analyse these for patterns and trends
- Identify and monitor disadvantaged pupils' attendance for comparison with their non-pupil premium counterparts
- Regularly promote good school attendance through the school social media, website and/or newsletter

### Reporting to Parents

Pupils' attendance will be reported each term, using a printout from Scholarpack so that parents have a clear picture of their child's attendance. An overall attendance figure for the academic year will be recorded as part of the annual report to parents.

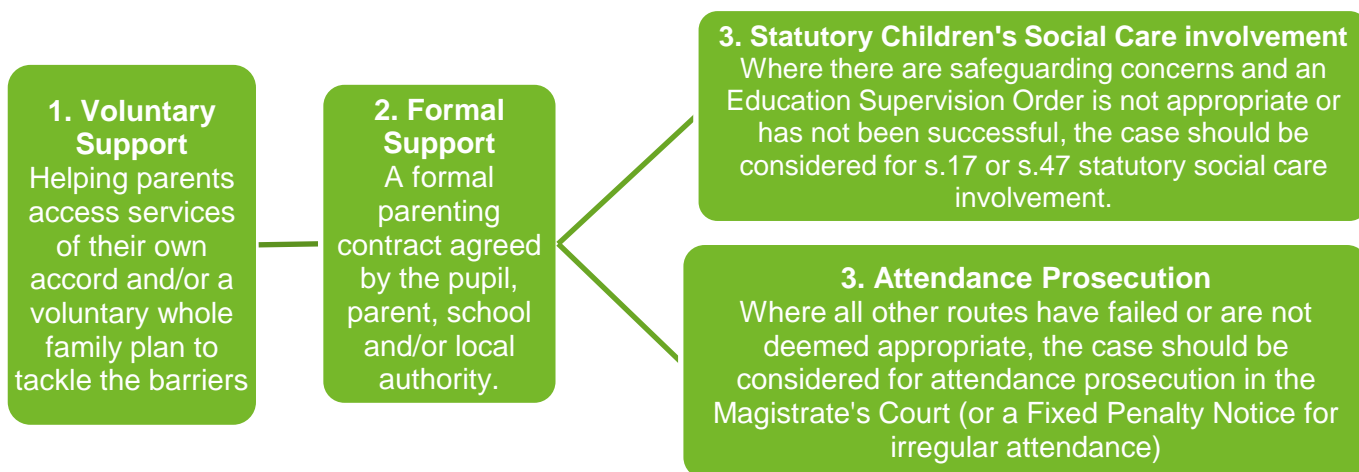
Further reporting and communications to parents will include:

- Regular information about the school's overall absence figures, the benefits of good attendance and punctuality and the consequences of poor attendance and punctuality.
- Working with parents to help them improve their children's attendance and punctuality where necessary

## Absence Management: Intervention and Sanctions

Absence is often merely a symptom of wider issues a family is facing. Staff across the Trust are committed to working with local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide the right support.

Where such support is unsuccessful the law protects a pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legally enforceable interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts. This includes the option to prosecute parents where all other options have been exhausted. Legal interventions can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions will always be made on an individual basis in 3 broad stages as follows.



### Consistent and Persistent Lateness

Pupils who are consistently late disrupt not only their own education but also that of other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness after the close of registration is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action.

On occasions, pupils may be late for a genuine reason. Concerns are raised when late arrivals become often and/or regular (persistent), especially if the reasons given seem repetitive and avoidable.

Lateness will be regularly monitored and, where necessary the Escalation of Intervention: Lateness process (see Appendix 4) will be implemented as follows:

- At the first late arrival after identification as a concern, staff will remind the parents or carers who are with their child of the importance of punctuality and support strategies available for tackling it. If a parent or carer is not present with the late pupil, the reminder should be given to them as soon as possible on the day of lateness e.g., template slip, email, SMS, or app notification
- If lateness continues, the Senior Lead on attendance will contact parents or carers informally for a discussion about avoiding persistent lateness
- If lateness continues, the Headteacher will write a formal letter to parents or carers about improving punctuality
- If lateness persists, then parents or carers will be invited to a formal meeting with the Headteacher and a member of the LGB to establish the reasons and agree an action plan or Parenting Contract (Appendix 5) to address the issue
- If lateness persists the Escalation of Intervention: Absence process (Appendix 6) will be implemented, which may include a referral to the LA Access and Inclusion Officer for the most persistent cases.

## Graduated Response to Absence

The Graduated Response is as follows:

- **Step 1:** If a pupil's attendance falls below the school's identified annual target for attendance, parents will be contacted by letter to alert them to the problem and to offer advice
- **Step 2:** Where there is no improvement, a second letter will be sent inviting parents to a meeting with the headteacher to agree strategies for improving the pupils' attendance.
- **Step 3:** If a pupil's individual attendance is equal to or below 90%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee, a further letter will be sent, and plans will be put in place with parents so that attendance can rapidly improve.

*Please see Appendix 7a, b, c for sample attendance letters (Steps 1, 2, & 3).*

*Please see Appendix 8 for an overview of how attendance can affect children.*

If after contacting parents a pupil's absences continue to rise, consideration will be given to involving the access and inclusion staff from the Local Authority.

## Escalation of Intervention

The Escalation of Intervention Procedure is set out in Appendix 6.

- When termly attendance monitoring identifies attendance below 96% a letter will be sent home
- When termly attendance monitoring identifies persistent absenteeism (below 90%), a letter will be sent home advising parents that their child's attendance will be closely monitored during the following half term and that if there is no improvement, they will be invited to an Attendance Panel Meeting (Appendix 9a) with the Headteacher and a member of the LGB to discuss any support needed
- Where no improvement is identified an Attendance Panel Meeting (Appendix 9b) will be conducted and an appropriate action plan or Parenting Contract (Appendix 5) will be jointly agreed and may involve external partner agencies
- A review will be conducted after one half term, if there has been no improvement in attendance, consultation with the appropriate LA Access and Inclusion Officer will be made to determine the next course of action. This may be an Early Help Assessment, a referral to another agency, or an agreement to formally refer the matter to the Access & Inclusion Officer for official involvement and the consideration of legal action.

A detailed chronology of all interventions and action taken to improve attendance will be recorded (Attendance Action Plan, Appendix 5)

## Legal Sanctions

Parents can be fined for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the relevant local authority.

The decision to issue a penalty notice, or not, ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the relevant Local Authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may consider:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

## Strategies for Promoting Attendance

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Trust schools may use a range of strategies to promote good attendance, which could include some or all the following examples:

### Individuals

- pupils can earn certificates for 100% or improved attendance or punctuality
- pupils receive a raffle ticket for each week when they have full attendance. At the end of each half-term, winning tickets are chosen, and prizes are awarded. The more tickets a pupil has, the greater chance they have of winning

### Classes

The class with the best attendance or the fewest late arrivals (depending on the school's priority) each week, month or half term should receive a reward:

- The reward can be something which is free such as being first in for lunch for a week
- The best attending class could have extra free time or be first out for break by 5 minutes. Each school will be able to identify a reward which would be particularly valued by pupils or may choose to ask pupils what they would like to receive as a reward.
- The school could purchase a mascot such as a large cuddly toy which is named by pupils or a trophy, and the class with the best attendance is able to keep this in their classroom until another class has better attendance

### Assemblies/Worship

There will be regular assemblies/worship illustrating the lifelong benefits of good attendance and punctuality habits.

### Home School Attendance Agreement

A home/school attendance agreement is available (Appendix 10) which clearly outlines the responsibilities of the parents and the school in ensuring good attendance.

## Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

Code	Definition	Scenario
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2: First Day Calling Procedure



### First-Day Calling Procedure

**Editable by School**

**(Safeguarding response to children missing education)**



AM	PM	Steps to be taken for unreported absence
		Registers saved.
		Late children checked against registers if recorded separately.
		Absence calls listened to/attendance emails checked.
		First day text sent to first name on contact list within half an hour of school start time asking for response.
		If no response to text start calling first name on contact list within 45 minutes of school start time.
		Ring down contact list until reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted.
		Alert HT/HoS/EHT/DSL that this child is absent and no contact has been made within an hour of school start time.
		If no reply send second text and email to first and second contacts on list.
		Home visit made if possible/appropriate by school or other agency involved.
		Contact Police and LA Children Missing from Education Officer if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child. This should be done using the 101 number.

***\*Times to be completed by individual school***

## Appendix 2: First Day Calling Procedure

### Example timings

AM	PM	Steps to be taken for unreported absence
9.00am	1.00pm	Registers saved.
By 9.30am	By 1.30pm	Late children checked against registers if recorded separately.
By 9.30am	By 1.30pm	Absence calls listened to/attendance emails checked.
By 9.30am	By 1.30pm	First day text sent to first name on contact list within half an hour of school start time asking for response.
9.45am	1.45pm	If no response to text call first name on contact list within 45 minutes of school start time
9.45am	1.45pm	Ring down contact list until reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted.
By 10.00am	By 2.00pm	Alert HT/HoS/EHT/DSL that this child is absent, and no contact has been made within an hour of school start time.
9.50am	1.50pm	If no reply, send second text and email to first and second contacts on list.
10.00am	2.00pm	Home visit made if possible/appropriate by school or other agency involved.
By 10.30am	2.30pm	Contact Police and LA Children Missing from Education Officer if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child. This should be done using the 101 number.

***\*Times are for guidance for schools in completing individual procedures.***

# Appendix 3: Leave of Absence Request Form



## LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST



Leave of Absence requests should be completed by the Parent or Carer and submitted to Main Reception no fewer than **two weeks** in advance of the proposed absence.

Please note that The Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 have been amended in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 which will be in force from September 2013.

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers determine the number of days a student can be away from school if the leave is granted. All requests for leave of absence are therefore dealt with in accordance with the provision laid down in the regulations.

A total of thirteen weeks' holiday is already available to all parents. Absence at any time would inevitably lead to your son/daughter missing valuable teaching time or even examinations. Please also be aware that if this absence is unauthorised and your son/daughter's attendance becomes a concern the holiday absence will be taken into consideration.

It is the parent's responsibility to prepare for the absence in advance by speaking with staff about the work that will need to be covered. However, tests cannot be rearranged to accommodate such absences. This could have a detrimental effect on subsequent educational outcomes.

**You may be guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for these offences is a fine of £2,500, 3 months' imprisonment or both. Alternatively, the Local Authority/School may choose to impose a Section 444A Penalty Notice in the order of a fine instead of prosecuting for the offences given above. The amount of the penalty notice is £60.00 if paid within 21 days. If paid after 21 days but within 28 days, the penalty notice is doubled to £120.00. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution except in limited circumstances.**

✂-----

### REPLY: LEAVE OF ABSENCE APPLICATION

Return written copies to the school Office on completion.

I request permission for:

Name of Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

To be absent from school from: \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ Number of School days: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for request: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Carer) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name: \_\_\_\_\_

---

### For school use:

Received by Office: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_ G = \_\_\_\_\_ H = \_\_\_\_\_

SLT (HT/EHT) agreed exceptional circumstances: Yes / No

Comment from SLT \_\_\_\_\_

Date letter sent home: \_\_\_\_\_

Duplicate correspondence: Yes / No

Mark given: J G H V C P (Please circle)

Date recorded: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 3a: Leave of Absence Response Letter Template

*To be replicated on school letterhead*

[NAME OF PARENT/CARER]  
[ADDRESS LINE 1]  
[TOWN]  
[COUNTY]  
[POSTCODE]

[Date]

Dear XXXXX

### Leave of absence XXXX Dates 20XX

Thank you for completing a leave of absence request to notify me of your intention to take xxx out of school during term time on xxxx for a period of xx days.

As you may be aware, Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers determine the number of days a student can be away from school if the leave is granted and there is no discretionary period to cover family holidays. All requests for leave of absence are therefore dealt with in accordance with the provision laid down in the regulations set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Time lost by children and young people due to family holidays taken in term time can be disruptive to their education and so, wherever possible, absence from school should be avoided as it can have a serious effect on your child's educational progress and can create difficulties for them on their return to school.

In accordance with [Cumbria County Council's School Absence Enforcement Policy/Northumberland County Council's A Guide to Non School Attendance, Statutory Responsibility and Referral to Education Welfare](#), parents may be issued with a Section 444A penalty notice if a leave of absence is taken without permission. The amount of the penalty notice is £60.00 if paid within 21 days. If paid after 21 days but within 28 days, the penalty notice is doubled to £120.00. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution except in limited circumstances. Alternatively, where attendance is a continued concern the Local Authority could pursue a prosecution under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for these offences is a fine of £2,500, 3 months' imprisonment or both. Alternatively, the Local Authority/School may choose to impose a Section 444A Penalty Notice in the order of a fine instead of prosecuting for the offences given above. You can also find more information at

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

In xxx's case, as I have no evidence that the circumstances are exceptional, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. I do note that this is **(any extenuating circumstances such as parents' work or right at the end of term)**. I note that xxx's attendance is **above/below** the school target of 95% and **(explain any other concerns such as Y6 or EHCP)**. Please remember, if you are considering any future planned absence from school for your child, this can only be authorised if there are exceptional circumstances and that these factors would make it more likely that further action would need to be taken.

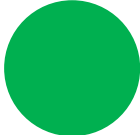

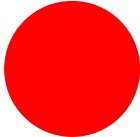
I hope that by working together we can minimise any negative impact on your child because of this absence and that further absence from school can be avoided where at all possible.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Policy v2 – December 2022

## Appendix 4: Escalation of Intervention - Lateness

Lateness is monitored on a weekly basis and sometimes more often, and the following action triggers are in place.

% Attendance	Level of Intervention	Responsibility
<p><b>No lateness</b></p> 	<p><b>No lateness concerns.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the end of term monitoring.</li> <li>Celebrate punctuality.</li> </ul>	<p>The School Lead on these actions</p>
<p><b>1 or 2 late arrivals in a week</b></p> 	<p><b>Lateness concerns.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lateness is to be challenged by the member of staff admitting the late child into school by speaking to the parent where possible and asking them why their child is late.</li> <li>Offer advice or support to parents if necessary.</li> <li>Record it in the school's late system.</li> <li>Send a lateness warning letter to parents outlining concerns and consequences if punctuality does not improve.</li> </ul>	<p>The School Lead on these actions</p>
<p><b>3 or 4 late arrivals in a week</b></p> 	<p><b>Significant lateness concerns.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly monitor the need to issue lateness letters.</li> <li>Issue written warnings (lateness letters) about concerns at the Head teacher's discretion</li> </ul> <p>At the end of monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is improvement in punctuality, continue monitoring.</li> <li>If there is no improvement in punctuality convene a Lateness Panel Meeting (with the Head teacher and a Governor present) to enable the school and parents to agree and write down a parent/pupil/school contract and action plan to improve a child's punctuality.</li> <li>If lateness continues, escalate the lateness to consideration as unauthorised absence and move over to the attendance escalation procedure.</li> </ul>	<p>School Lead</p> <p>School Lead/LA Officer</p>

## Appendix 5: Attendance Action Plan Template



### Attendance Action Plan



<i>Child</i>		<i>DOB</i>		<i>Current Attendance</i>	
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<i>Factors Leading to Poor Attendance</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>					

<i>Action Plan Details</i>				
<i>What will success look like?</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Who will do this?</i>	<i>By when?</i>	<i>Progress and Comment</i>

<i>Date of Plan</i>		<i>Date of Review</i>	
<i>Signed</i> <i>(Parent/Guardian)</i>		<i>Signed</i> <i>(School)</i>	
<i>Name</i> <i>(Parent/Guardian)</i>		<i>Name &amp; Position</i> <i>(School)</i>	

# Appendix 5: Parent Contract Template



## Parent Contract



<b>Child</b>		<b>DOB</b>	
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<b>Action agreed</b>	
[INSERT ACTIONS THAT THE PARENT/CARER WILL TAKE]	
<b>Support offered by XXX School</b>	
[INSERT SUPPORT STRATEGIES OFFERED BY THE SCHOOL]	
<b>Attendance target:</b>	
<b>Timescale for improvement:</b>	
<b>Date for review meeting:</b>	

### Parent/carer:

I agree to comply with the requirements set out above, for the duration of the contract.

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

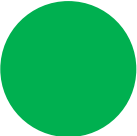
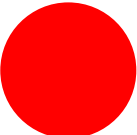
### School:

The school agrees to provide support to fulfil the requirements set out above, for the duration of the contract.

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## Appendix 6: Escalation of Intervention - Absence

Attendance is monitored termly and in some cases half termly. Issues with attendance can arise at any time so action on concerns can take place at any time in the school year but may fall in line with monitoring.

% Attendance		Level of Intervention	Responsibility
	<b>100%</b> ↓ <b>Lower Green</b> <b>96 – 99.9%</b>	<b>No attendance concerns.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the end of term monitoring.</li> <li>Attendance Letters to be sent home termly.</li> </ul>	School Led
	<b>Upper</b> <b>94 - 95.9%</b> ↓ <b>Lower</b> <b>90 – 93.9%</b>	<b>Attendance concerns.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First day response to be actioned.</li> <li>Speak to the individual in school.</li> <li>Rewards to be given as per the current school strategy.</li> <li>Analyse the end of term monitoring.</li> <li>Attendance Letters to be sent home termly about the impact of poor attendance (Upper or Lower Amber as appropriate).</li> <li>Parents invited to school voluntarily to learn about Early Help or other support which might improve attendance.</li> </ul>	School Led
	<b>90 % and below</b> ↓	<b>Significant attendance concerns.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the end of term monitoring.</li> <li>RAG Attendance Letters to be sent home with a warning that further monitoring will take place over the next half term.</li> </ul> <p>At the end of the half term monitoring period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is improvement, communicate and celebrate appropriately and continue monitoring.</li> <li>If there is no improvement, convene an Attendance Panel Meeting (<i>Appendix 8</i>) (with the Head teacher and a Governor present) to enable the school and parents to agree and write down a parent/pupil/school contract (<i>Appendix 9</i>) and action plan to improve a child's attendance e.g., TAF, Early Help / Plan of Support. Plan to monitor for a further half term and agree a review date with parents.</li> </ul> <p>At the end of the further half term monitoring period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite parents to review the action plan (this meeting will be held, and decisions made in a parents' absence if they fail to attend).</li> <li>If there is improvement, communicate and celebrate appropriately and continue monitoring.</li> <li>If there is no improvement, then escalate by referring the pupil to <b>[insert LA Access and Inclusion Officer]</b> with evidence– this may lead to prosecution</li> </ul>	School Led
			School Led/LA Officer
			School Led/LA Officer

## Appendix 7b: Graduated Response – Step 2 Letter

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**To be replicated on school letterhead**

[NAME OF PARENT/CARER]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[TOWN]

[COUNTY]

[POSTCODE]

[Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian of [NAME OF CHILD],

**Re: [Name of Child],      DOB: [XX.XX.XXXX],      Current Attendance: [XX]%**

Attendance in school is vital. Not only does good attendance give your child the best chance of learning and making friends but it also forms good habits for the future at college, university or in the workplace.

Unfortunately, [Name]'s attendance currently stands at [XX]%, which is significantly below our whole school target of [XX]%. If attendance continues to remain at this level or drops lower, we will become concerned about the potential impact on [Name]'s progress and wellbeing.

If your child is feeling slightly unwell, please encourage them to come in; coughs, colds, headaches and minor pain can be managed in school. If your child has had medicine prescribed by a doctor, we can administer this if you complete the relevant forms at reception. If your child becomes too unwell to remain in school, rest assured we will contact you and arrange for him/her to be collected.

If [Name] is experiencing any problems in school that are affecting attendance, please contact me immediately to discuss this.

Yours sincerely

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Headteacher

## Appendix 7b: Graduated Response – Step 2 Letter

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***To be replicated on school letterhead***

[NAME OF PARENT/CARER]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[TOWN]

[COUNTY]

[POSTCODE]

[Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian of [NAME OF CHILD],

**Re: [Name of Child],      DOB: [XX.XX.XXXX],      Current Attendance: [XX]%**

Attendance in school is important. Not only does it give children the best chance of learning and making friends but it also forms good habits for the future at college, university or work.

Unfortunately, [Name]'s attendance has now fallen to [XX]% which is substantially below the school target level of XX%.

I would remind you that it is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child receives a full-time education and that you must contact the school at the earliest opportunity if they are absent from school. A reason for absence from a parent/carer is always required for safeguarding purposes.

We will be monitoring [Name]'s attendance regularly and hope to see a significant improvement during this term. If there is no improvement we will have to refer you to the local authority who may consider issuing a fixed penalty notice. For information on legal action to enforce school attendance please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

Yours sincerely

XXXXXXXXXX

Headteacher

## Appendix 7c: Graduated Response – Step 3 Letter

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***To be replicated on school letterhead***

[NAME OF PARENT/CARER]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[TOWN]

[COUNTY]

[POSTCODE]

[Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian of [NAME OF CHILD],

**Re: [Name of Child],      DOB: [XX.XX.XXXX],      Current Attendance: [XX]%  
Non-Attendance at School**

Further to our recent correspondence regarding [Name]'s attendance, we have not seen any improvement since the last letter and their attendance is currently at [XX]%. As you are aware, the school attendance target is [XX]%. [Name]'s attendance is now a cause for real concern. Children with attendance below 90% are classed as persistent absentees and schools have a duty to make every effort to improve this. Attendance below 90% means that your child is missing at least the equivalent of one full day per fortnight. This will have a detrimental effect to his/her learning and social development.

I would like you to attend a meeting to discuss ways forward to improve [Name]'s attendance and I have made an appointment for [Date] at [Time]. If this appointment is not convenient, please contact the school office to arrange a more suitable date and time.






Failure to attend the meeting or to contact us will be considered as you failing to work with us to improve your child's attendance. This could involve us asking for the Local Authority to become involved and to make visits at your home to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXX

Headteacher

## Appendix 8: How Attendance Can Affect Children

	<p><b>Above 97%</b></p>	<p><b>Less than 6 days absence a year</b> Excellent attendance! Pupils with this attendance have the best chance of achieving their full potential and getting the most out of school.</p>
	<p><b>95%</b></p>	<p><b>Less than 10 days absence in a year</b> Pupils with this attendance are likely to achieve their target grades and are able to access most of what school has to offer.</p>
	<p><b>90%</b></p>	<p><b>20 days absence in a year</b> Pupils with this attendance are missing a month of school per year and will fall behind in Maths, Literacy and other subjects; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.  Attendance which drops below 90% is classed as Persistent Absenteeism and may be the trigger for legal action.</p>
	<p><b>85%</b></p>	<p><b>30 days absence in a year</b> These pupils are missing 6 weeks of school a year. It will be very difficult for them to keep up and achieve their best. The school will meet with you and involve the Local Authority to make sure that attendance does not dip further.</p>
	<p><b>80%</b></p>	<p><b>Pupils with this attendance are missing a day for every week of school</b> It will be impossible to keep up with school work. Parents of pupils with this level of attendance will have been referred to the Education Welfare Officer at the Local Authority. A Penalty Notice is likely to be issued.</p>

## Appendix 9a: Attendance Panel – Invitation Letter

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**To be replicated on school letterhead**

[NAME OF PARENT/CARER]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[TOWN]

[COUNTY]

[POSTCODE]

[Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian of [NAME OF CHILD],

**Re: [Name of Child],      DOB: [XX.XX.XXXX],      Current Attendance: [XX]%**

I am concerned that [Name]'s attendance during the previous academic year was [XX]%. I would like to invite you to a formal meeting with the attendance panel on [Date], at [Time], at [Location]. I will be joined at the meeting by two members of the Local Governing Body.

If this appointment is not convenient, please the school on [Contact Number] to arrange another appointment.

It is the view of the Local Authority and The Good Shepherd Trust, that parents should be left with no doubt that continued lateness and poor attendance cannot be tolerated. This impacts on your child's education and they are significantly disadvantaged due to the number of absences incurred.

Furthermore, parents and carers may be liable to legal proceedings being instigated against them if the lateness and attendance fails to improve.

Yours Sincerely,

Headteacher

## Appendix 9b: Attendance Panel – Agenda

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### Attendance Panel Agenda



Child		DOB	
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1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Purpose  
*The Chair sets out the purpose of the meeting.*
3. Chronology  
*The school outlines the chronology of events, including attendance statistics alongside any action taken by the school.*
4. Response by parents/carers.  
*Parents and carers are invited to respond.*
5. Legal requirements.  
*The legal requirements for school attendance are read.*
6. Evidence from external agencies.  
*The Early Help Leader shares support given from other agencies.*
7. Action Plan  
*The Chair outlines an action plan to rapidly improve attendance, including what support schools, parents and agencies will provide, also identifies attendance target within a specified timescale.*
8. Response by all participants and vote of acceptance.
9. Action Plan/Parenting Contract is signed by parents, school and any other agency involved.
10. Review meeting scheduled for 4 weeks' time.  
*(date and venue to be notified in writing by school).*

Minutes with Action Plan/Parenting Contract circulated to all attending **within 5 working days**



## Home/School Agreement - Attendance



Good Shepherd Trust schools will meet their obligations regarding school attendance by:

- Ensuring that all children attend school regularly and punctually, to maximise their educational achievement and social development. Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Discharging the duty of all adults within the Trust to safeguard pupils
- Ensuring that all those responsible for children's education, including parents, carers, staff and local governing body members understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to attendance
- Minimising absence from school, thereby reducing levels of persistent absence
- Improving the life chances of the children attending each setting within the Trust and preparing them to be fully contributing citizens when they reach adulthood. Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training.

Each school will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

The Parent will:	The school will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that children arrive to school on time, every day, properly equipped and ready to learn</li> <li>• inform the school by <b>9am</b> on the first day of any absence</li> <li>• ensure that all holidays are taken during school holiday times</li> <li>• contact the school if a child does not want to attend school for any reason so that this can be addressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a safe learning environment where children feel welcome and valued</li> <li>• contact parents promptly if a pupil does not arrive in school and there has been no prior arrangement for this</li> <li>• ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place, to best meet the individual needs of all students</li> <li>• keep families informed of their child's attendance, and respond promptly and professionally to contact from families</li> </ul>

**Name of Child:**

**Year Group:**

**Signed (Parent):**

**Print name (Parent):**

**Signed (Headteacher):**

**Date:**