



Brandling Primary School

**Attendance
&
Punctuality Policy
February 2025**

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1. Introduction

Our whole school attendance target is 96%.

Named personnel with designated responsibility for Attendance and Punctuality:

- Mrs Aimi Clennell – Head Teacher
- Mrs Amanda Langdon – Family Support Worker
- Revd Tom Worsley – Attendance Link Governor

Excellent attendance and punctuality is important if children are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

There is a clear link between attendance, punctuality and achievement.

The policy applies to all children registered at this school.

The policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the local authority.

2. Aims

- To promote good attendance. Our aim is that all pupils achieve a minimum of 96% attendance, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- To develop and implement procedures to reduce poor attendance and promote good attendance.
- To ensure that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of attendance procedures to promote attendance.
- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance and to work with families if difficulties arise.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality daily so difficulties are quickly highlighted.
- Support pupils and their families who experience difficulties leading to poor attendance.
- To work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Local Authority Attendance Service.
- Collate data to report attendance statistics to the DfE and others when required and analyse and themes for absence.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

3.1 The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of the policy.

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing rewards for excellent and/or improved attendance.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

3.3 Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes (where known), and submitting by 9.05am.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Discussing attendance at all consultation evenings.

3.4 Office staff are responsible for:

- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home early.
- Scanning and uploading medical information onto SIMS.
- Submitting attendance data to the DfE (and others) as required.
- Duties of Family Support Worker in their absence.
- Weekly class attendance percentages to be shared on weekly newsletter.

3.5 The Family Support Worker is responsible for:

- Daily attendance monitoring using A Star Attendance.
- First Day Response: Contacting home if no reason for absence is received (phone call, text message, email or home visit).
- Talk to pupils on a 1:1 basis regarding attendance related matters.
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Improving school attendance by carrying out home visits and attending meetings with the parent /carer.
- Meeting and working with parents to improve attendance. This may include offering parent contracts, attendance plans and CAF (Common Assessment Framework) / TAF (Team Around the Family).
- Refer to outside agencies for additional support for families including School Health, 0-19 Service and Early Help Team.
- Inform the Local Authority when a child is expected to be absent for more than 15 school days.
- Making referrals to the Legal Intervention Team.
- Overall monitoring of school attendance and punctuality.
- Analysing trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Provide regular attendance reports to staff and governors.

3.6 Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school every day on time.

- Contacting the school office by 8.50am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- Inform school if any absence is expected to last beyond 15 days.
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. We require sight of the medical appointment in order to authorise these absences.
- Ensuring that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time two weeks prior to the first date of proposed absence. Requests should only be submitted if absolutely necessary as these are not routinely authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

3.7 Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time.

3. Recording attendance

4.1 Registers

- Attendance registers are legal documents and will be marked twice a day.
- Each class teacher will take the register at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- The correct code will be used to record each absence (see Appendix 1), if the reason for absence is not known, the child will be marked as N.
- Lateness will be recorded using the appropriate code (L or U) and the minutes late will be recorded.
- The register for the morning session will be taken at 8.55am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1pm.
- All attendance records are documented using SIMs software, which is supported by the Local Authority.

4.2 Lateness

A pupil who arrives late:

- Must enter school via the school office.
- If the lateness is after 9.05am parent/carers must sign the child in on the InVentry system in the reception area.
- Before the register closes at 9.30am they will be marked as late (Attendance code L).
- After the register has closed they will be marked as an unauthorised absence for that session (Attendance code U).

5. Authorised and Unauthorised absence

5.1 Authorised absences

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised, this includes absences reported as illness. Examples of authorised absences include:

- Genuine illness – parents must report details of illness by contacting the school office on tel 0191 433 4079 and may be required to provide supporting medical information. This applies to physical and mental health related illness.
- Medical and dental appointments – appointment cards must be seen and it is an expectation that children are brought back to school straight after the appointment.
- Family Bereavement – period of absence will be agreed by school.
- Days for religious observance – advance notice required. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether they day is set apart.
- Exam (music, dance etc at the discretion of the Head Teacher).
- Visit to another school.
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion.

5.2 Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. We will take into consideration factors such as frequency, duration, attendance patterns and reasons provided by parents when deciding whether to authorise any absences.

- Children being kept off unnecessarily
- Late after register closes (9.30am and 1.30pm)
- Truancy
- Absences that have not been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children and birthdays
- Holidays
- Persistent absenteeism without supporting medical information – attendance lower than 90%

5.3 Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday in Term Time

Any application for a holiday in term time should be made by the parent that the child normally lives with. However, there is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and the Head Teacher will only authorise these absences in exceptional circumstances.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed will be classed as unauthorised and, may be referred to the Legal Intervention Team. Taking leave of absence without permission from the Head Teacher may result in an £80 Penalty Notice per parent per child if paid within 21 days and £160 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

6. Promoting attendance

6.1 School strategies

Although good attendance is an expectation the school seeks to improve whole school attendance by offering incentives, this may include:

- Attendance Certificates
- Prizes
- Medals
- In It to Win It Outings
- Class Punctuality
- Positive Postcards
- Letters

6.2 Administering Medication

See also First Aid Policy, Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions.

School staff can issue some prescribed medication during the school day with signed consent from a parent/carer as per our First Aid policy.

7. Addressing Attendance Concerns

At Brandling Primary School, attendance levels are categorised as follows:

- **Red Zone: Under 90% (Persistent Absentees)**

Students in the red zone are more likely to underachieve, find making friendships difficult and misbehave. Legal action may also be taken against Parents/Carers of Red Zone pupils.

- **Amber Zone: 90.1% - 95.9%**

Students in this zone are still at risk of underachieving due to the absence level. Students who miss school regularly are more likely to suffer from school related stress. If your child is in the Amber Zone we will contact you to attend a Governor Attendance Panel meeting which may include an attendance monitoring period and a Parent Contract to help avoid attendance falling into the Red Zone.

- **Green Zone: 96% - 100%**

We expect students to have Green attendance throughout their education. Those in the Green are more likely to do well in examinations, have better job opportunities and can develop strong friendships within school.

7.1 Reintegrating Long Term Absentees

Following a long period of absence, a child may feel vulnerable, so school staff may consider the following:

- a phased or gradual return
- allocation of a 'Key Worker'
- consideration about whether Special Needs support is appropriate

7.2 Working with Children and Families where attendance concerns exist

- Verbal discussions with parents as soon as attendance concerns arise
- Formal staged response to ongoing or persistent absenteeism

- Direct work with individual children to identify difficulties
- Referrals to other agencies

7.3 Formal Attendance Procedures

A Star Attendance is used daily to identify those pupils whose attendance is becoming a concern.

We have a 4 stage approach to addressing these concerns:

Stage 1: An initial attendance concern letter will be sent to each parent individually.

Stage 2: Ongoing attendance concern letter and reply slip

Stage 3: Serious attendance concern letter and meeting with Family Support Worker and/or Attendance Governor and Head Teacher. This will include an attendance contract between school and home.

Stage 4: Letter to parents informing them of the school's intention to refer the matter to the Legal Intervention Team.

All letters will be sent by **email**, as this is the usual method of communication used by the school. In the case where we do not use email as the usual means of communication, letters will be sent individually via First Class post. Letters will be sent to each parent individually.

Pupils who are not of compulsory school age will only receive a Stage 1 Initial Concern letter.

7.4 The Legal Intervention Team

The Legal Intervention Team at the Local Authority will look at each case and try to support the family to improve attendance. They may issue fixed penalty notices to parents where there is continued poor attendance.

The Legal Intervention Team working jointly with Legal Services may also consider:

- Applying for a parenting order
- Applying for an education supervision order
- School Attendance Order (If parent has not registered their child in a school)
- Community Order

8 Attendance Monitoring

8.1 Reporting Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence by phoning the school office. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with full and accurate details of the reason for their absence and expected date of return. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Head Teacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence by 9.20am, school office staff will attempt to contact parents/carers via telephone, text and or email. Where no contact has been received by 10.00am, the Family Support Worker (or other relevant senior staff member) may conduct a home visit (known as a 'Welfare

Check'). We may also contact any older or younger siblings' schools/pre-schools to identify a family pattern of absence.

9. Links to other Policies – Please visit the school website at brandlingprimaryschool.org.uk to view the following policies:-

- **Child Protection Policy**
- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Send Policy**

10. Legislation and guidance

Link to Working Together to Improve School Attendance – May 2022

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(\[www.gov.uk\]\(http://www.gov.uk\)\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

Link to School Attendance DfE Guidance – May 2022

[School attendance guidance May 2022 \(\[publishing.service.gov.uk\]\(http://publishing.service.gov.uk\)\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

Link to Children Missing DfE Guidance – August 2024

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education - statutory guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

Link to Referrals for Legal Intervention Gateshead Council – April 2021

[Referrals for Legal Intervention \(\[educationgateshead.org\]\(http://educationgateshead.org\)\)](http://educationgateshead.org)

Link to Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance – February 2023

[Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance \(\[publishing.service.gov.uk\]\(http://publishing.service.gov.uk\)\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

Appendix 1

Codes	Definition	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (PM)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
B	Education off site	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
C	Other authorised circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Codes	Definition	Meaning
D	Dual registration	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
H	Family holiday (agreed)	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
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
L	Late	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
M	Medical/dental appointments	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or should be replaced with code O if no reason has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised Absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school.
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during public examinations
T	Traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
U	Late (after registers closed)	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
V	Educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

Codes	Definition	Meaning
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to school holiday/bank holiday/inset day
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is a disruption to travel as a result of local/national emergency, pupil is in custody
X	Not required to be in school	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Pupil not on roll	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
-	All should attend/No mark recorded	No mark

Appendix 2

Attendance Monitoring

I am writing to inform you that Brandling Primary School is introducing a 4-stage monitoring process, which is intended to raise pupil attendance levels.

Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life and as you will already be aware and we expect regular and punctual attendance at this school. It is recognised that poor school attendance limits educational achievement and the future progress of young people.

The 4-stage monitoring process is being used to indicate the level of your child's school attendance:

Stage 1 – Pupils who have an attendance of 96% or below. A letter will be sent out reminding parent/carer of the importance of good attendance.

Stage 2 – Pupils continue to have attendance of 96% or below and have made no improvement. A letter will be sent home with a parent survey requesting more information to be provided regarding school the absence. It is also possible at this stage for parents to arrange to speak to school about any concerns they may have of their child's school attendance.

Stage 3 – Pupils continue to show little, or no improvement and attendance has not reached 96% or above. A letter will be sent home advising that the pupil is now on a 4-week

monitoring period. During this period 100% attendance is required unless medical evidence can be provided.

Stage 4 – Pupils who have not passed the 4-week monitoring period will now be considered for referral to the local authority.

Our goal is for all pupils to meet a target of between 96% - 100% attendance.

We are asking for the co-operation of parents. You can help us by:

- Encouraging your child to attend school punctually.
- Informing us of absences prior to 8.50am
- Informing us of any changes or circumstances at home which may affect your child. Any such information will, of course, be kept in the strictest confidence.
- Supporting your child and the school by attending parent's meetings and taking an interest in your child's schoolwork.
- Not requesting leave of absence in term time. Head Teachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

I hope you will support the school in this matter. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

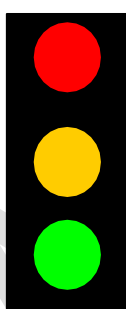
Mrs Aimi Clennell
Headteacher

Appendix 3

Initial Attendance Concerns

Dear <ParentalSalutation>,

As you are aware <SchoolName> uses the traffic light initiative to monitor the attendance of pupils. As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we formally monitor attendance to identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first letter to register our concern with parents/carers.



Red – Danger Zone - **Below 91%**

Amber – At Risk Zone – **92% - 95%**

Green Zone – Safety Zone – **96% and Above**

During this routine monitoring of attendance, we have noticed that <LegalForename>'s attendance is currently <PercentageAttendance>%. This is below the expected level of attendance.

At Brandling Primary School we value and reward good attendance as research shows that your child is more likely to achieve their academic attainment if they have a good attendance record. The information below illustrates the impact that poor attendance can have on your child's educational success.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year
Pupils in this group will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.
95%: 10 days absence a year
Pupils in this group are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 10-day holiday during term time every year can only ever achieve 95% attendance.
92%: 15 days absence a year
Pupils in this group are missing three weeks of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best. The school may consider referring pupils with this level of attendance to the Local Authority.

90%: 19 days absence a year

The Government classes pupils in this group as “Persistent Absentees” and it will be almost impossible for them to keep up with work. Parents of pupils in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

Please ensure that over the coming weeks your child's attendance improves to meet the minimum expected level of 96%.

We can support you and your child around any attendance issues you may have, therefore please do not hesitate to contact school by either emailing brandling@gateshead.gov.uk or ringing us on (0191) 433 4079 should you wish to discuss this further.

Thank you for your cooperation and support with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Clennell
Head Teacher

Appendix 4

Ongoing Attendance Concerns

Attendance Period: <AttendancePeriod>

Dear <ParentalSalutation>,

As you are aware <SchoolName> uses the traffic light initiative to monitor the attendance of pupils. Since we wrote to you, <LegalForename>'s attendance has failed to improve significantly and is now

<PercentageAttendance>%, this includes <NumberOfUnauthorisedAbsences> occasions of unauthorised absence.

This is below the minimum expectation and is having an impact on your child's education. To put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year.



Red – Danger Zone - **Below 91%**

Amber – At Risk Zone – **92% - 95%**

Green Zone – Safety Zone –**96% and Above**

Authorised absence means that school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be away from school or that the explanation offered afterwards by a parent/carer has been accepted. Decisions regarding the authorisation of absences are the responsibility of the Head Teacher. Unauthorised absences on your child's attendance record may mean that you are liable to incur a Fixed Penalty Notice or could face prosecution.

Due to the current level of absence please note that any future absences relating to illness and/or medical reasons will not be authorised without some additional assurances that the absences are unavoidable.

Some examples of evidence that could be used are: Prescriptions, Appointment Cards, Doctor's Notes etc. If this evidence is not supplied, your child's absence will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence.

Only in exceptional circumstances will low attending students not get monitored, these would be children with medical conditions requiring repeat treatment or who have had a stay in hospital.

To support you and your child a parent survey has been attached to this letter. Please use this form as an opportunity to provide any further information that may help to understand your child's absence.

Please complete and return to the School Office as soon as possible.

We would appreciate your support to make sure your child's attendance improves. We will continue to monitor the situation and will be in touch again if it does not improve and this may lead to a referral to the Attendance Team.

We can support you and your child around any attendance issues you may have therefore please do not hesitate to contact CONTACT on TELEPHONE should you wish to discuss this further.

Thank you for your cooperation and support with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Clennell
Head Teacher

Parent Feedback form: Ongoing Attendance Concerns

frl Name of Pupil: <LegalForename>		Class: <RegistrationGroup>	
<LegalSurname>			
Comments: (Please advise of any further details regarding the absence of your child from school. This information will help to review your child's current attendance.)			
Would you like a follow up telephone call from school? (please state the best time available)			
Name of parent/carer			
Date			
Contact details			

Appendix 5

Serious Attendance Concerns

Attendance Period: <Date>

Dear <ParentalSalutation>,

As a parent/carer you have a legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly. As your child <LegalForename> has an unsatisfactory level of attendance, which is <PercentageAttendance>% and there have been <NumberOfUnauthorisedAbsences> sessions of unauthorised absence to date, attendance will be monitored from <MonitoringStartDate> to <MonitoringEndDate>.

During this monitoring period attendance and punctuality will be recorded daily. All Pupils will be expected to have 100% attendance unless medical evidence is provided.

All children of compulsory school age who are registered pupils at a school must attend regularly and punctually. It is your responsibility as a parent to ensure this. Should your child fail to attend regularly and punctually the school may consider referral to the local authority.

The local authority has a duty to ensure that you fulfil your statutory responsibilities in relation to school attendance. You may be invited to answer questions under caution in accordance to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. The local Authority will then decide whether to take legal action against you which could mean applying for an Educational Supervision Order, issuing you with a penalty notice which is a fixed penalty fine or prosecuting you under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If you were found guilty, the maximum fine for the offence is £2,500 or up to 3 months' imprisonment.

If your child is experiencing any difficulties affecting attendance at school or you have any queries, please contact school to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Clennell
Head Teacher

Attendance Action Plan

Name of Child:	<LegalForename> <LegalSurname>
Address:	<ParentalSalutation> <FirstLineOfAddress> <SecondLineOfAddress> <PostCode>
Name of Parent/Carer:	<ParentalSalutation>
Name of school:	<SchoolName>

Current Attendance:	<PercentageAttendance>%
Date:	<Date>

Target Attendance:	100%
Monitoring period:	<MonitoringStartDate> to <MonitoringEndDate>

Appendix 6 School Response to Leave of Absence in Term Time requests

Request for Leave of Absence During Term Time – Authorised

Thank you for completing an online form to request leave of absence for your child during term time.

I have considered your request in line with our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and feel that it does meet the criteria for the following reasons:

- Your child's current attendance as at today is % which is at/above what is expected.
- There are exceptional circumstances surrounding your request.

For the above reason, the planned absence will be recorded on the school register as 'Authorised'.

Mrs A Clennell
Head Teacher

Request for Leave of Absence During Term - Unauthorised

Thank you for completing an online form to request leave of absence for your child during term time.

I have considered your request in line with our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and feel that it does not meet the criteria for the following reasons:

- The reason surrounding your request is not classed as an exceptional circumstance.
- Your child's attendance as at today is % which is below what is expected.

For the above reason, the planned absence will be recorded on the school register as 'Unauthorised'.

Mrs A Clennell
Head Teacher

Request for Leave of Absence During Term – Unauthorised/Request for Penalty Notice

Thank you for completing an online form to request leave of absence for your child during term time.

I have considered your request in line with our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and feel that it does not meet the criteria for the following reasons:

- The reason surrounding your request is not classed as an exceptional circumstance.
- Your child's attendance as of today is % which is below what is expected.
- We have serious concerns about the absence on your child's education.

For the above reason, the planned absence will be recorded on the school register as 'Unauthorised' and a request for a Penalty Notice has been submitted to the Local Authority.

Mrs A Clennell
Head Teacher

Appendix 7

RE: REFERRAL TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ATTENDANCE TEAM

As you are aware under the 1996 Education Act, all parents are required to ensure that a child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have. It is with extreme disappointment that I must contact you once again about <LegalForename>'s attendance. We have for some time tried to support you to improve <LegalForename>'s attendance in accordance with our school policy by way of letters, telephone contact, Meetings etc.

Unfortunately, <LegalForename>'s school attendance is still causing concern. At the date of writing <LegalForename>'s attendance is <PercentageAttendance>% and has attended school on <NumberOfAttendances> occasions out of a possible <NumberOfPossibleSession> when the school was open for instruction under the Education Pupil Registration Regulations 2006; <NumberOfUnauthorisedAbsences> of these absences were considered to be unauthorised. As we have explained to you in the past a parent can offer an explanation for their child's absence but the law clearly states that it is the Head Teacher's decision as to whether it is felt the explanation offered by a parent for an absence is justified. Our [Attendance Policy](#) outlines the procedures for dealing with a pupil's absence and is available to Parents via the school website.

As <LegalForename>'s attendance has not improved I have no other alternative but to refer this matter to the Local Authority's Legal Intervention Team. This Team has a statutory duty to investigate matters of on-going poor school attendance and to consider formal statutory action.

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a criminal offence is committed if a registered pupil does not attend school regularly. The Legal Intervention Team can issue a Penalty Notice to parents if a child has missed 10 or more sessions without permission from the school, Legal Intervention Team can also instigate criminal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

I would strongly recommend you cooperate and work with the Legal Intervention Team to prevent the need for legal action. If you wish to discuss the content of this letter further, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Clennell
Head Teacher



Legal Intervention Team Referral Form

Consideration for legal action: School Attendance

The Local Authority regards legal action (penalty notice/prosecution) as a last resort when all school interventions and strategies have failed to improve the attendance.

All fields are mandatory and should not be left blank. Where there are gaps in information, please indicate the reason. The referral must be fully completed by the school for the assessment to be completed.

Please note that information contained in the referral form will be shared and discussed with the parent and could ultimately be used as evidence in court.

Pupil Information

Name	
Date of birth	
Address including Postcode	
School	
Year group	
Gender	
Ethnicity	

Parent/carers Information

1. Parent/carers

Full name including title	
Date of birth	
Relationship	

Address including postcode	
Telephone number	
Email address	

2. Parent/carer

Full name including title	
Date of birth	
Relationship	
Address including postcode	
Telephone number	
Email address	

Siblings

Name	Date of Birth	School	Current Attendance

Attendance – Please provide attendance certificates.

Current attendance	
Previous year's attendance	

SEND / EHCP Status

	Y/N	Primary need	Brief description of support
SEN support			
EHCP			

Suspensions

Date of suspension	Period of suspension (days)	Reason for suspension

CSC Involvement

	Y/N	Social Worker or Lead Practitioner and contact information	Length of involvement
CAF/TAF			
Early Help			
SWISS			
TAS			
CIN			
CP			
Looked After			

Other Agencies Involved

Please provide details of any other services involved with the child including statutory, voluntary and other LA services

Agency	Named worker and contact information

Evidence of School Actions

Please explain in detail the attempts made by school to engage the parent(s)

Date	Contact type	Outcome

Please give details of the support school have considered and offered, including the dates and the outcome

Date	Support	Outcome

Additional concerns and relevant background

Please provide details of any additional concerns or relevant background information, not previously mentioned, that may impact the child's attendance (such as issues at home, health needs, drug or alcohol misuse, mental health issues, bereavement etc.)

Has the parent been informed that a referral has been made to the LA?

Does the parent require an interpreter (verbal contact), or translation (written contact), and if so which language?

Please ensure you have completed all sections of the form in as much detail as possible and attached supplementary documents:-

- Registration certificate, current and previous year
- All letters to parent re attendance
- Letter advising parent of referral to LIT

Referrer Details

I confirm that: • All school interventions to improve attendance (as described in the School Attendance Policy and LA Attendance Strategy) have been implemented. • The case has been reviewed and there are no further school strategies available. • Prosecution of parent(s) in Magistrates Court is considered by school to be an appropriate course of action.	
Name of referrer	
Designation	
Contact email and telephone number	
Date	

Please submit referral forms to LITAttendanceReferrals@Gateshead.Gov.UK

**** Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:-**

- *all natural parents, whether they are married or not*
- *any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person*
- *any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).*

Appendix 9

Request for Penalty Notice Unauthorised Leave of Absence



Request for Penalty Notice Unauthorised Leave of Absence

Legal Intervention Team Use Only

NFA

WL

PN

Pupil Details

Name		DOB		Gender	
Address		Post Code		Contact Num	
School		Year Group			
Ethnicity		Language used at home			

Parent(s) Names

Title	First name	Surname	Relationship	Address and contact number if different

Siblings name/s	DoB/Age/Year Group	School/s

Dates of Leave of Absence	From:	Until:
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Supporting documents attached	Yes
Attendance certificate	
Attendance certificate for siblings	
Copy of leave of absence request	

Copy of written response to leave of absence request	
Copies of notes/minutes of subsequent meetings/conversations regarding the request	
Copy of School Attendance Policy (to be submitted annually)	
Copy of letter informing the matter being referred to LA requesting PN	

Referrer Details

Name of Referrer		Date	
Contact Details			

Please note:

- All requests for a PN are made within 4 weeks of the child's return to school at the latest.
- If the referral form is incomplete a Penalty Notice cannot be issued.
- If the case of leave of absence taken in the last 4 weeks of the academic year (including the final week of term), all referrals must be submitted before the Friday of the second week of the school summer holiday.