

SANDY UPPER SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY 2017-2018

Effective Date: October 2015

Last Reviewed: July 2017

Reviewed by: Miss K Hayward

Next Review Date: April 2018

Rationale

For a child to achieve their full educational potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students/students and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. Parents and students play a part in making our school successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good school attendance.

The School displays a positive and pro-active ethos that places high value on attendance and punctuality, as well as valuing its partnership with parents/carers to promote good attendance. This policy advocates close working relationships with all stakeholders to provide a cohesive approach to tackling attendance.

Aims

To share the responsibility for promoting school attendance amongst everyone at Sandy Upper School and to develop and implement an effective attendance policy that touches all aspects of the School's life, and relates directly to the School's values, ethos and curriculum.

- To encourage all students
- School strives;
 - i. To encourage all students to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners, who value learning with, and from, others; to have a positive attitude to life-long learning;
 - ii. To value application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and action, as well as co-operative endeavours;
 - iii. Statistics show a direct link between educational achievement and absence levels

Promoting good attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents/s and the child. The Home School Agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is;
- reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and school trips;

Roles and responsibilities

A member of the senior leadership team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. (S)he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with difficulties. If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents/guardians the reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep these to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence

becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the Head teacher.

Governors

- Ensure compliance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended
- Adopt an Attendance Policy and review it annually;
- Agree targets for attendance at School;
- Ensure that they receive reports from the Head teacher regarding school attendance as part of the school monitoring or school profiling exercise;
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance target, or when the Governors believe there is a cause for concern, to require a review of the systems and procedures in place to promote good attendance;
- To promote the strong link between attendance and educational attainment to parents and students where appropriate and ensure that the school attendance policy and procedures are communicated effectively;
- Authorise the Head teacher (or other designated person) to consider and make decisions regarding leave of absence requests;
- Work with the Head teacher in establishing criteria against which leave request will be considered. This is important to ensure the process is equitable and consistent;

Staff

- To ensure that all students are registered accurately;
- Promote and reward good attendance with students at all appropriate opportunities;
- Liaise with the attendance officer of matters of absence and punctuality;
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence;
- Support students with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school;

Parents/Guardians

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/guardian's legal responsibility (section 7 Education Act 1996) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

A 'parent' is defined in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 and is defined as follows;

- 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 the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of what their relationship is).

Parents will:

- to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually;
- to notify the school if their child cannot attend for any reason – this is for the child's safety, as well as administrative reasons;
- provide written confirmation of the reason for an absence on their child's return to school;
- to request authorisation for all 'leave of absence' including holidays and appointments in school time;
- to provide evidence of medical or other appointments in school hours;
- to work with the school and Attendance Officer to resolve/alleviate any attendance problems or protracted absence;
- to attend meetings as required in relation to their child's attendance;

Students

- Students are expected to attend school regularly and to arrive punctually at school by 8.35am and to the start of lessons;
- If late, students must sign in at Student Services;
- If students are required to leave the premises during the school day they must sign in and out at Student Services. (This is for their safety as well as administrative purposes);
- Students should inform their House Achievement Leader if there is a problem that may lead to their absence, e.g. bullying, long term medical issues, etc.;
- Students should use their best endeavour to pass on absence notes from parents/guardians to their Form Tutor and to pass correspondence to their parents/guardians;
- Students should understand that only 'real' illnesses can be a reason for absence.

Taking the register

Registers are treated as legal documents – indeed they may be used as evidence in court cases. For this reason they are retained for a minimum of three years.

- The legal register is held on our SIMS (Management Information System);
- The register will be taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session;
- For each student, the register must be marked either as present or absent.
 - / - is entered to show the student is present in the morning session.
 - \ - is entered to show the student is present in the afternoon session.
 - N – is entered to show the student is absent until the reason is known;
- Once the school has been officially notified of the reason for the absence, the appropriate registration code will be inserted by the Attendance Officer. (Appendix ii)
- The register must clearly differentiate between whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised by the school;
- It is the policy of the school that no absences are unaccounted for;

Punctuality and Lateness

The School actively discourages late arrival by staff setting a good example and by challenging it whenever it occurs.

- A child will be registered late in the morning if they arrive after 8.40am, the scheduled start of the day. The 'Late' will be recorded on our electronic management system and a behaviour point will be added to the student's record;
- Lateness can be an indication of more serious problems, as well as poor time management. Students who travel to school independent of an adult, may not be coming here directly. We have a duty to ensure every child's safety and therefore will telephone home after 3 recorded lates;
- Our level of contact will be increased if lateness continues until after 10 lates when the School Attendance Officer will be informed, this could result in a fine;
- Arrival after the close of register will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with the Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other students. On-going and repeated absent lates (U code) are unauthorised absences and **maybe be subject to legal action**. Parents or guardians of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If

support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 12 week period, the school may ask Central Bedfordshire council to issue parents with a fixed penalty notice.

Understanding Types of Absences

Authorised Absence

- Authorised absence is absence with permission from the Principal or other authorised representative of the school. This includes absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided, e.g. ill health;
- Even when students are engaged in Approved Educational Activity off-site, they must not be marked as present, as good Health and Safety practice requires that the school needs to know who is on the premises in the case of a fire drill or real emergency;
- The school **may** authorise absence in the following circumstances;
 - i. Personal illness (excessive or extended absences **will require medical evidence**)
 - ii. Medical Appointment (copy of appointment to be seen and copied)
 - iii. Family bereavement
 - iv. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to a child's health and safety
 - v. Religious observance (limitation apply)
 - vi. A travelling child's absence

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from the authorised representative of the School. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

- The school will not authorise absence in the following circumstances;
 - i. No explanation is offered by the parent/guardian
 - ii. The explanation offered is unsatisfactory (e.g. shopping, minding the house, etc.)
 - iii. Leave of absence which are taken without the school's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of the time agreed by the school.
 - iv. Special occasions, such as birthdays
 - v. Minding siblings
 - vi. Parent/guardian or sibling illness
 - vii. Family holidays in term time
- Unauthorised absence from school is considered truancy. This can take the form of absence from school for complete days, lateness and absenteeism from individual lessons. Each of these is as serious as the other, but the strategies for effecting change may need to be different;
- When parents are unaware of such absences there may be significant danger to the young person's safety as it likely that their whereabouts are unknown by a responsible adult;
- Unfortunately, there may be occasions when truancy is condoned by parents. If such collusion occurs it is the duty of the school to work with the student and family to change their attitudes towards school, thus encouraging full attendance

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

- Persistent Absentees are students whose attendance falls below 90%;
- While discretion may be deployed (e.g. in cases of long term illness), Sandy Upper School will refer any individual child whose attendance is 90% or below to the School Attendance Officer. At this point legal proceedings could follow; (Appendix i)
- No absence below (90%) will be authorised unless in extenuating circumstances, such as long term illness;
- All PA's are tracked and reported to the House Achievement Leaders

Temporary Schools Closures

Where a school has to close due to severe weather conditions, problems with amenities such as water or heating, fire, structural damage or in-service training, no attendance registers are needed. This will be coded appropriately.

Reporting Absence – First Day Response

A child not arriving at school where the parents have not informed the school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the reason for any absence is always required. If your child is absent you must:

- On the first day of absence parents/guardians are expected to contact the school, preferably by telephone before 9.00 am;
- The parent/guardian reporting the absence should give the reason for the absence and the expected date of return;
- If the date of the return is unknown, regular contact on a daily basis should be kept with the school; if the school receives no contact a member of the office team will:
 - i. Arrange to check if the student is in the lesson that they should be in. If he/she is present, the register will be marked accordingly. If he/she is absent they will:
 - ii. Telephone or text the parent/guardian;

If your child is absent we will:

- telephone or text you on the first day of absence, this continues every day whilst the child is absent – this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance;
- invite you in to discuss the situation with our attendance officer and/or pastoral leaders;
- refer the matter to the Central Bedfordshire Council's Access and Inclusion Service if absence is unauthorised and doesn't meet school expectations;

Third day absence

Please note: if your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/guardian, after three days of absence the school is required to consider implementing the child missing in education procedures as set down by Central Bedfordshire Council. We will make all reasonable enquires to establish contact with parents/guardians and the child, including making enquiries to know friends, wider family.

Ten days absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named Parent/guardian then the local authority is notified and the Child is Missing Education. Staff from the Access and Inclusion Service will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help us and your child by making sure we always have an up-to date contact number and home address.

Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 39 or more sessions of absence across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as a persistent absentee. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child, by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows that these gaps at whatever level affect attainment. We monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the Local Authority and the Department of Education.

All our persistent absentee students and their parents are subject to an Attendance Plan or home school contract.

Holidays within Term Time

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated in September 2013:

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. It is important to note that head teachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining **exceptional** are **rare, significant, or unavoidable**, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. Circumstances where absences may be regarded as **exceptional** will vary from school to school and family to family.

There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised. Parents/guardians wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available from Attendance Officer in advance and before making any travel arrangements. If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions of absence reaches the thresholds in Central Bedfordshire Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct (10 sessions of absence on 12 school weeks), parents/guardians may be issued with a penalty notice or other legal action in accordance with the code. Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

- The Principal will use discretion to grant authorised absence in a school year **if both the following apply**:
 - i. There are '**exceptional circumstances**' for the holiday
- Special reasons or exceptional circumstances that may be agreed to are:
 - i. A dying relative in a different country;
 - ii. A family funeral in another country/ part of the country;
 - iii. Holidays for fostering or adoption purposes;
 - iv. Religious observance;
 - v. Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during normal school holiday times. (Evidence must be provided to this effect)
- The school is therefore unable to authorise absence because of:
 - i. Availability of cheap holidays;
 - ii. Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods;
 - iii. Shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
 - iv. Overlap with the beginning or end of term;
 - v. Another sibling in another school where the holidays do not coincide;
 - vi. A special treat for the child;
 - vii. Absences which have not been explained
- Authorisation will not be considered during assessment times for Years 10 to 13. This may also include during the preparation period leading up to the examinations;
- When deciding on the authorisation the following will also be taken into account:
 - i. If the child's attendance is above the school's target of 98%;
 - ii. If there have been any other holiday requests during the same school year. (There must be only one request for the academic year);
- Should the application not be authorised and the holiday is taken, the **Education Welfare Service** in consultation with the school **may** issue a **Fixed Penalty Notice**.

Parents can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the Head teacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs.

For national guidance please refer to: www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance

Procedure in School

On receipt of a written absence request, the following will occur:

- i. The request will be considered according to the above criteria.
- ii. If appropriate, the parent/guardian may be requested to attend a meeting to discuss the circumstances.
- iii. If special circumstances are identified authorisation of the holiday may be granted by the school.
- iv. Parents will be notified of the outcome in writing, telephone call or email.

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/guardians. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return the school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

External Appointments within School Hours

The school recognises that there are occasions when students need to go out of school for an appointment (e.g. doctor, dentist, optician, etc.). If at all possible, all appointments should be made outside of school hours or during the lunch break.

- If an appointment is during the school day, a request for the absence to be authorised should be made at least **24 hours before** the appointment to allow for authorisation to be considered;
- The request can be made verbally or in writing through the Attendance Office or Form Tutor who will place the request in the register folder which is sent to the office during morning registration;
- If your child's attendance is below our (98%) threshold, evidence for the appointment will need to be provided with the request (e.g. appointment card/hospital letter);
- We acknowledge that there are occasions when requests cannot always be made in advance as appointments at doctors and dentists, etc., can sometimes be made on the actual day. Where this is the case, required evidence must still be provided when the child returns to the school or the absence will not be authorised.
- Without this requested evidence, the absence will not be authorised;
- We must have evidence of which students are on the school's premises and in our care, therefore when a student leaves the school to attend an appointment during the school day, he/she must sign out on the daily 'signing out' book held in the Student Support office;
- If the student returns during the school day they are also required to sign back in;
- We require all students leaving for an appointment to be collected by a parent/guardian in person. We will not allow a child to leave alone. (Being told that a parent/guardian is going to wait in the car park, etc., is not sufficient for our safeguarding procedures);

Education of Students with Medical Needs

In response to the guidance – Access to Education for Children & Young People with Medical Needs, DfES 0732/2001 – Sandy Upper School recognises its responsibilities 'for all students unable to attend school for medical reasons. Young persons should be able to access education without stigma or exclusion.' The school's aim is to ensure students have access to as much education as their medical condition allows.

- Students covered by this may:
 - Be recovering from an illness or injury, keeping the student away from school during recovery
 - Have a long term or recurring illness

- Have an illness or clinically defined mental health disorder which causes them to be absent for a period in excess of 15 days, where medical opinion states they are still unable to access mainstream school
- The **SEND Manger with the appropriate House Achievement Leader** will be responsible for:
 - Ensuring that Medical Needs Referral Forms (Request for Involvement and Request for Medical Information forms) are completed and passed to the relevant agencies as quickly as possible.
 - Ensuring that the student is transferred to School Action Plan of the Inclusion Register, and that, working with the relevant school staff, a Personal Education Plan is drawn up.
 - Ensure that Personal Achievement Plan is written.
 - Arrange for the relevant member of staff to meet with the Medical Needs Team to plan appropriate coursework.
 - The school will also be responsible for requesting special arrangements where necessary.

Parents/Guardians

- Parents/guardians are expected to be full collaborative partners in the process of ensuring all students maximise their attendance. Where difficulties arise parents/guardians must be able to access information, advice and support during a student's illness. Opportunities to allow the student to be involved in decision making and choices will also be arranged.

Monitoring and Protocols for dealing with Absences

- The Attendance Officer will monitor absences via electronic registers on a week to week basis;
- If a student's attendance falls below our school target of 98%, 'Trigger Point 1' will be activated as per our system protocol.
- If the attendance rate continues to deteriorate, the school will begin to follow the protocol for subsequent trigger points;
- All actions will be recorded electronically by the appropriate person depending on the level of trigger point;
- At the start of the school year, any student who had been referred to the Educational Welfare Officer in the previous academic year will be expected to attend an attendance meeting with their parents/guardians, House Achievement Leader and Education Welfare Officer. If attendance becomes an issue they will be contacted further by the Educational Welfare Officer.

Legal Measures for failing to ensure regular school attendance (including penalty notices)

School Attendance System Protocol

First day calling for all absences

In the event of a student's absence from school, the parents/ carers contact the school by 9.00am.

The Parent/guardian should give details of the cause and indicate how long the absence is likely to last. If the absence goes beyond this, a subsequent call should be made.

If there is no contact the attendance officer will check in lessons to see if the student is present. If not, the Attendance officer will either text home or ring.

The absence will be an immediate unauthorised absence, until the reason for the absence is given.

When the student returns to school, the reason for the absence should be confirmed in writing within five school days. Where this is not forthcoming a written reminder will be sent home. If the confirmation is still not received within a school week, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If the student is to be absent for more than 5 consecutive school days and the student is not hospitalised, medical proof (i.e. doctor's note) will be requested. If this is not provided (non-engagement with the school policy, then refer to trigger points.

If a child is hospitalised for an extended period of time, hospitals often provide supervised educational activities. Evidence may be available for this.

At the end of the Academic year, any student whose attendance was below 92% will be asked to attend an attendance meeting with their parents/guardians, Attendance Officer and the Educational Welfare Officer.

School Attendance System Protocol

TRIGGER POINT THREE – 90% and below

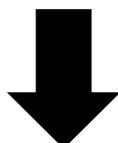
Third Point of Contact

Formal letter to be sent. Face to face meeting to be held.

Request medical proof for all future absences. Where this is not available, absences to be deemed as unauthorised.

School Attendance Officer to arrange a meeting with parents/guardians.

After all absences, students to complete a return to school form and have a discussion with House Achievement Leader.



TRIGGER POINT 1 – 97% and below

First Point of Contact

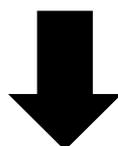
Form/Class teacher to be informed of the student's attendance rate by the Attendance Officer responsible for the weekly monitoring of attendance.

The Form Tutor will evaluate the cause of absences and determine how to inform parents/guardians.

After all absences, students will have a discussion with their Form Tutor.

An Attendance file to be opened and data inputted onto an electronic spreadsheet set up by the Attendance Officer. Actions recorded on this by the Form Tutor.

If after a 4 week period there is no improvement, an official **letter must be sent**.



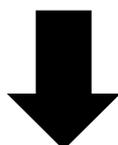
TRIGGER POINT 2 – 92% and below

Second Point of Contact

House Achievement Leader to be informed of the Student's attendance by the Attendance Officer

Form Tutors to evaluate the cause of absences and determine how to inform parents/guardians. This should be either through a discussion or formal letter.

Request medical proof for all future absences. Where this is not available,



Attendance and the Law:

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002

Places a duty on governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Section 7 of The Education Act 1996 requires parents to secure the education of their children of compulsory school age.

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

- a) to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and
 - b) to any special educational needs he/she may have,
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

Section 576 Education Act 1996

Requires parents to secure the education of their children of compulsory school age

Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness

The following legal measures may be used for students of compulsory school age who are registered at a school and are not attending regularly:

Penalty Notices: The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Magistrates Court Action under Sec 444 (1) and (1a) of the Education Act 1996

Penalty Notices

Central Bedfordshire Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices states that where a child has had 10 unauthorised absences in a 12 school week period, the school may request a penalty notice be issued. The code of conduct is a statutory document that ensures that the powers for this legal sanction are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority.

Penalty Notices can be issued when

- a student has taken holiday during term-time and the absence has not been authorised by the school, providing the school has taken into account DfE guidance to inform its decision-making
- where the school believes that the sanction will lead to an improvement in attendance, e.g. persistent late arrival at school; parents failure to attend/co-operate at a parenting contract meeting

Parents and carers will be alerted/warned by the attendance officer about the possibility of a penalty notice being requested for unauthorised absence. Details of the school's attendance policy are on the website for parents to read

If more than one parent has parental responsibility, both parents will receive a Penalty Notice. In situations where there is more than one student in a family with irregular school attendance, multiple penalty notices can be issued to the same parents during the year. However, this action must be subject to careful consideration and co-ordination.

Legal Action taken under Section 444 (1) and (1a) Education Act 1996

Where the school has tried to address a student's unauthorised absences but the measures taken have been unsuccessful, it can then refer on to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer. If there is either no improvement in the attendance nor satisfactory evidence provided for the absences following their intervention, then it is likely legal action at Magistrates Court will be initiated.

Sanctions available to the court are as follows;

- a fine of up to £2,500
- a conditional discharge – you will be given a set amount of time in which to improve your child's attendance. Should you fail the Council may bring a further prosecution against you and, if found guilty, you will be sentenced for both offences
- an absolute discharge – the case is proved but you will not be subject to a penalty, although you will receive a conviction
- a community order such as unpaid work, curfew or tagging
- imprisonment - for up to three months

Other recommended policy sections

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/guardians and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend then it is better not to cover up their absence or to give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may also make things worse. Contact your child's Achievement Leader immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems or family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling

A parent can seek leave of absence from a school for their child to take part in a performance. They must however contact the head teacher to discuss the nature and frequency of this, the impact that this may have on their child's education, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the head teacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport

Parents can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the Head teacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the head teacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching. The regulations related to children participating in public performances are separate to those around authorising leave of absence. Head teachers can authorise this absence. For further advice and guidance on Child Employment and Performance Licenses contact Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 4953

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families

The absence of a child from a Traveller family who has left the area can be authorised if the absence is for the parent's work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. A school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll whilst they are travelling. When the child is travelling the school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised by using the *T* code. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school although may offer support to the student whilst they are away. Please note that students must have attended 200 sessions in a rolling 12-month period to be able to use travelling for work purposes as a defence against prosecution. For further advice and guidance on attendance and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families, contact Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 4953.

To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration at two schools is allowed.

Study leave

We believe that students/students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period, therefore, and students/students will be expected to attend school in the usual way. Study leave may only be granted to Year 11 students/students during the time of the GCSE examination period. Should any students/students wish to attend school (or should their parents wish them to) on the days and at times when they are not sitting examinations, arrangements will be made for them to do so. The school will work within the legal requirements, i.e.:

- study leave should only be granted to Year 11 students and never to those in other year groups
- it should never exceed 15 school days in a year and is most appropriately granted during the examination period itself, i.e. not before the beginning of that period
- it should always be granted sparingly, taking account of an individual student/student's ability to manage and benefit from unsupervised study
- any student has the right to attend school during study leave and a parent has the right to insist he/she does so

Dear

School Attendance – Trigger Point 1

I am writing to you with reference to the attendance of your son/daughter. The attendance register (copy enclosed) shows that his/her attendance currently stands at XX%. I am concerned that this attendance level may seriously impact upon his/her ability to fully access the curriculum.

The school's minimum attendance target is **XXX** and we would appreciate your support in ensuring that your son/daughter's attendance improves to at least our minimum school target.

If there is anything we can do to support you to help improve **XXXX** school attendance or if you would like to discuss this matter please do contact me.

The Local Authority requests that schools ensure that parents are made aware of both the definition of who is a parent and also what the law says parents must do with regards to their child's education. Please see our attendance policy [***hyperlink to schools attendance policy***](#)

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

Appendix 1.2

Dear

School Attendance – Trigger Point 2

I am writing to you with reference to the attendance of your son/daughter. The attendance register (copy enclosed) shows that his/her attendance currently stands at XX% **with XX number of unauthorised absences**. I am concerned that this attendance level may seriously impact upon his/her ability to fully access the curriculum.

The school's minimum attendance target is..... and we would appreciate your support in ensuring that your son/daughter's attendance improves to at least our minimum school target.

Unfortunately we will be unable to authorise any further absences **as illness from the date of this letter onwards unless satisfactory** medical evidence is provided to support these absences. Medical evidence can take the form of copies of prescriptions, appointments cards or sight of medication. In certain cases a letter from a GP or Consultant would be required so that extra support to help a child access their education because of a medical need can be arranged.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/.../school_attendance.pdf

Should **XXXXX** level of attendance fail to improve or the school doesn't receive satisfactory evidence to support the absences, the school may need to consider requesting that you attend a joint meeting with the Attendance Officer and the Local Authority School attendance Officer or may request that a Penalty Notice is issued in line with Central Bedfordshire Council's Code of Conduct

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/schoolsportal/administration/inclusion/referrals.aspx>.

Please contact us if you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

Appendix 1.3

Dear

As you are aware we continue to work hard to improve our student's attendance levels thus improving the life chances of your child and enabling them to achieve their full potential. As part of the School's Attendance Policy we are arranging meetings for all those students who have had attendance levels of 90% or below (at the end of the previous academic year) and who would be at risk of becoming a persistent absentee.

The aim of this meeting is to discuss the reasons for the previous absences and offer advice and support to enable your child to achieve a minimum of 98% attendance for the new academic year.

The meeting will be held at:

On:

At:

It is very important that you attend this meeting however if you are unable to make the above time or date please inform the School as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

Notification Letter

Dear

Students Name

I am writing to inform you that due to YOUR CHILDs irregular school attendance I have requested that the Local Authority issues you with a Penalty Notice
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/schoolsportal/administration/inclusion/referrals.aspx>
OR have made a formal referral to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer who will be in contact with you in the near future.

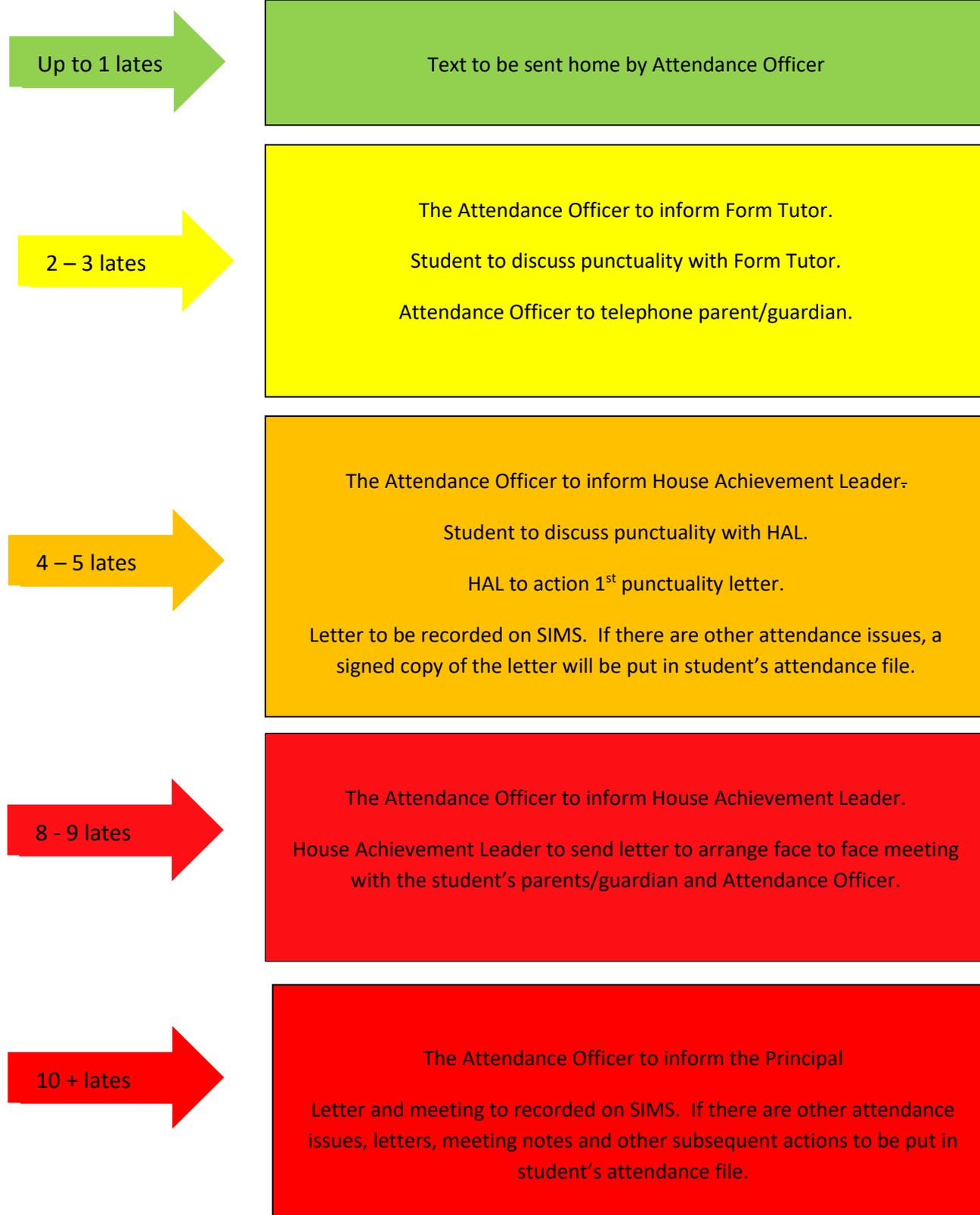
Should you have further information that would support YOUR CHILD'S level of absence then I would ask that this is shared with the School Attendance Officer.

Yours sincerely

Appendix iii

Punctuality (Lateness) Protocol

All lates will be recorded as 'L' beyond 8.40am. Arrival after 20 minutes, unless for an authorised medical appointment, is automatically coded as 'U'.



Appendix iii.1

Dear Parent/Guardian

As you may be aware the School is working very hard to improve both attendance and punctuality. X has been identified as having been late on X occasions since XXXXXX

It is understandable and acceptable that any child can be late on an odd occasion for any number of reasons, all of which should be verified by the Parent/guardian. However, I am sure you will agree that excessive lateness is unacceptable.

Lateness in school causes immense disruption and inconvenience, plus actively disadvantages the progress of students whose lessons are constantly interrupted by the arrival of latecomers. It is also often very embarrassing for the student to be constantly arriving late.

I must advise you to make certain that your child resumes a punctual attendance pattern as soon as possible. Registration is at Xam. If a child arrives at school after the registers have closed without an adequate reason, we will have to record this as an unauthorised absence. 10 unauthorised absences may render parents liable to a Penalty Notice.

Please make every effort to improve this situation. We will continue to monitor your child's attendance and hope to see an improvement in the coming weeks. If there is no improvement, it is likely the School Attendance Officer will wish to make contact with you.

If we can support you in any way to do this please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

Dear

Re: Persistent Lateness

I am writing to inform you that your child _____ is persistently late for school. Between *date* and *date* he/she was late on ____ occasions and missed ____ hours of education.

When students arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Your child may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled. Furthermore, when one student arrives late, it disrupts the entire class and the teacher – everyone’s education is compromised.

5 minutes late every day = 3 DAYS OF SCHOOL LOST A YEAR
10 minutes late every day = 6.5 DAYS OF SCHOOL LOST A YEAR
15 minutes late every day = 10 DAYS OF SCHOOL LOST A YEAR
20 minutes late every day = 13 DAYS OF SCHOOL LOST A YEAR
30 minutes late every day = 19 DAYS OF SCHOOL LOST A YEAR

Further lateness may result in you being served with a Penalty Notice. Parents have a duty to ensure their child’s regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. .

Meanwhile, if anything can be done to support _____ getting to school on time, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely