



# NONSUCH HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Contents

1. Aims and guiding principles .....	2
2. Legislation and Guidance .....	3
3. Roles and responsibilities.....	3
4. Process of recording attendance .....	6
5. Process for recording student absence.....	7
6. Authorised and Unauthorised absence. ....	7
7. Process for leave of absence requests.....	8
8. Statutory Intervention (legal sanctions) .....	9
9. Monitoring attendance and punctuality .....	10
10. Supporting attendance and punctuality .....	11
11. Parental engagement in support .....	12
12. Students with medical needs or special educational needs .....	12
13. Students missing education for reasons other than medical .....	13
14. Children Missing Education .....	14
Appendix A Penalty Notices and Term Time Absence.....	15
Appendix B Attendance Strategy.....	29
Appendix C Punctuality Graduated approach .....	34
Appendix D Attendance letters / emails of concern .....	35
Appendix E Congratulations on 100% attendance letter.....	41
Appendix F Punctuality Report Card .....	42
Appendix G Attendance Codes .....	44

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July 2024

Next Review:

Summer 2026

Policy Notes may be subject to review and revision at any time by the Nonsuch Local Governing Body notwithstanding that the next review date has not been reached.

Review dates are for guidance only and whilst the intention is always to arrange reviews within the stated time frame all Policy Notes will remain in force until this has taken place and been formally approved by the Nonsuch Local Governing Body.

Parents / carers will be referred to as parents throughout this document.

## 1. Aims and guiding principles

- 1.1. Nonsuch High School for Girls provides a respectful, supportive and inclusive community that aims for 'excellence in girls' education.' We empower young people to want to achieve, to be part of Nonsuch school life and take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Students actively seek to gain high levels of attendance and punctuality and we work together with all stakeholders in order to ensure this.
- 1.2. Excellent attendance and punctuality at school are vital for students in order to achieve their full educational potential. Students with excellent attendance records benefit in the following ways:
  - continuity of learning which supports progress;
  - enhanced performance in examinations;
  - continuity of relationships and friendships;
  - good references for further education or employment;
  - good habits formed for later life;
  - emotional wellbeing and health benefits.
- 1.3. It is expected that all students aim for at least 96% attendance each year
  - 96% - 100 % is defined as **expected**
  - 95% - 96% is defined as **satisfactory**
  - Below 95% is defined as **cause for concern**
  - Below 90% is defined as a **serious cause for concern**
  - Below 50% is defined as **severe cause for concern**
- 1.4. The school understands that there may be exceptional circumstances when a leave of absence may be required for reasons beyond the parents' or student's control. However, these are very rare and should not cause a student's attendance to drop below 95%.
- 1.5. A student's progress is severely hampered if they do not regularly attend school.
- 1.6. Where absence escalates and students miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), this is classed as 'persistent absence' (PA) by the Department for Education (DfE). If this continues from Years 7 to 11, a total of six months' education will be lost.
- 1.7. An attendance record of 80% is equal to 1 day missed per week. If this continues from Year 7 to Year 11, a total of one year's education will be lost.
- 1.8. Students who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school) are classed as 'severely absent' (SA).
- 1.9. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure that their child attends school on time every day that the school is open.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

2.1. This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance 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:

- [Part 6 of The Education Act 1996](#)
- [Part 3 of The Education Act 2002](#)
- [Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The school attendance absence/legal action to enforce school attendance](#)

2.2. It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

2.3. This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Behaviour for Learning Policy
- The Supporting Students with Special Medical Health Needs policy

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1. The governing board

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 headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2. The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Deciding if they wish to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice fine for unauthorised absences from school and referring to the Local Authority to issue the fixed Penalty Notice on his or her behalf.

### 3.3. The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) ([pastoral@nonsuchschool.org](mailto:pastoral@nonsuchschool.org)) is the designated senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

### 3.4. The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer can be contacted via the School Gateway App or via ([attendance@nonsuchschool.org](mailto:attendance@nonsuchschool.org)). The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (or other senior leader authorised by the headteacher) when it is appropriate to require the issue of fixed-penalty notices

### 3.5. School and its Staff:

The school and its staff are responsible for:

- Setting expectations for students to attend school regularly and to arrive on time in a fit condition to learn
- Ensuring attendance is recorded on a daily basis using the correct code (Appendix G)
- Having a clear attendance policy with robust systems that follows up absence
- Investigating all unexplained and unjustified absenteeism.
- Working closely with parents and provide appropriate support in order to improve attendance and /or punctuality.
- Following our attendance strategy in Appendix B - the steps we take to ensure excellent attendance.

- Encouraging excellent attendance and punctuality in the following ways:
  - ensuring school targets are set for attendance and individual targets are set where necessary;
  - ensuring attendance information is provided to parents via the School Gateway App to allow them to regularly monitor their child's attendance;
  - regularly promote excellent attendance in assemblies, the school newsletter, Parents' Information Evenings and at Parents' Evenings;
  - providing weekly and half-termly analysis of attendance figures and trends for individuals, Year Groups and the whole school with action plans identified as a result;
  - organising termly support meetings with the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer
  - producing termly reports to Governors;
  - enabling a computerised registration system which allows every lesson to be monitored;
  - employing an Attendance Officer dedicated to the administration of attendance including the follow-up of absence and lateness;
  - making contact with parents on the first day of absence;
  - forming a working partnership with the Borough's Schools Attendance Service;
  - providing support for students and parents where attendance and/ or punctuality difficulties are emerging;

### 3.6. Students

Students are responsible for:

- Attending school regularly and on time
- Attending all lessons punctually and not leaving the school without permission
- Following the procedures outlined in our policy for any requests for absence or appointments during the school day

### 3.7. Parents and Carers (referred to here as "parents")

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance at school and informing school of the reason for any absence by 9 a.m. on the first morning of any absence.

Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance/ punctuality record.

Parents play a very important role in ensuring the good attendance records of their child.

The expectations of parents are to:

- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, any medical or dental or other appointments for their child are made outside of school hours or made for the very end of the school day
- encourage full attendance;

- stress the importance of full attendance to their child;
- not allow their child to have time off for minor complaints or illnesses: if they are well enough to be up and about, they are generally well enough to attend school;
- monitor their child's attendance report carefully;
- ensure their child is punctual to school;
- inform the school of any absence along with the reason for absence by 9 a.m. on the first morning of any absence;
- take any family holidays in school holidays, not during term time;
- ensure that if their child seems unwilling to attend, they contact the school as soon as possible and not to let their child stay at home as this could set a precedent for the future

#### **4. Process of recording attendance**

- 4.1. Registration is completed in each lesson using SIMS Lesson Monitor.
- 4.2. Guidelines for marking the register in SIMS Lesson Monitor are in the Staff Handbook and all new staff are trained in the process.
- 4.3. The legally required morning and afternoon register is taken in registration period at 8:30 a.m. and in Period 4 at 1:10 p.m.
- 4.4. Sixth Form students with afternoon Exit Privileges will register in Period 4 at 1:10 p.m. before swiping out using their proximity cards.
- 4.5. For morning registration, the register will be opened and taken at 8.30 a.m. The register for morning registration will close at 8:50 a.m.
- 4.6. If a student arrives in registration after 8:30 a.m. but before 8:50 a.m. the student must see their Form Tutor to sign in. They will be marked as late (L) in the register.
- 4.7. If they arrive after the registration period closes at 8:50 a.m. they will be marked as unauthorised absence (U) (or given a relevant code) for the morning session of the day even if they are present for Period 1. They will also be required to sign in at Reception and the parent will be required to provide an explanation for the lateness or absence.
- 4.8. For afternoon registration, the register will be taken in Period 4. It will be opened at 1:10 p.m. and close at 1:30 p.m.
- 4.9. If a student arrives in class after 1:10 p.m. but before the register closes at 1:30 p.m. they will be marked as late (L) in the register.
- 4.10. If they arrive after the register closes at 1:30 p.m. they will be marked as unauthorised absence (U) (or given a relevant code) for the afternoon session of the day even if they are present for Period 4 and 5.
- 4.11. Those students (except sixth formers with Exit Privileges) who leave the premises before the end of the day, must sign out at the Main School Reception.
- 4.12. Parents have access to their child's attendance record through the School Gateway App. Reports to parents will include data on attendance.

4.13. The Attendance Officer records all absences in accordance with the Department for Education (DfE) national codes. See Appendix G and Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

## 5. Process for recording student absence

### 5.1. Unplanned Student absence:

- 5.1.1. In the event of reporting unexpected absence, e.g. illness, parents must contact the Attendance Officer **by 9:00 a.m.** on the morning **of each day of absence and every subsequent day** by the **School Gateway App**
- 5.1.2. If there is no communication from parents, then this absence will be automatically recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- 5.1.3. The School's Attendance Officer (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form Administrator (Years 12-13) will contact parents of students with an unexplained absence by school comms on the first day of the absence.
- 5.1.4. If no response is received by the end of the school day, the Head of Year will call or email home. If the school receives no response we will use our safeguarding procedures to ensure the student is safe.
- 5.1.5. If absence continues, after 5 days the Head of Year will contact parents once again to support a return to school.

### 5.2. Requests for leave of absence

- 5.2.1. To request an expected leave of absence, for example medical appointments, music or other external exam, interview, or other extra-ordinary leave, requests in writing should be made at least two full school days in advance of the event via the **School Gateway App**.
- 5.2.2. Appointments (e.g. dental or medical appointments) during the school day should be avoided. Where unavoidable, students in Years 7-11 are required to be collected from school and will not usually be allowed to travel alone. To ensure the safeguarding of all our students we are unable to let a student leave school without parent consent in Years 7-11.

## 6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1. The decision over whether an absence is authorised rests with the school and the Headteacher.

6.2. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) under 3 days
- Medical or dental appointment (where Parents are unable to make appointments out of school hours, the student should only be out of school for a minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.)
- 1-day Religious observance (on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents))
- Close family bereavement up to 5 days

- 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
  - Leave of absence authorised by the Headteacher under exceptional circumstances (including, for example, to take external exams)
  - Fixed term exclusion or suspension
- 6.3. In order to authorise absence in certain circumstances the school may request further information from parents. If this information is not supplied the absence will remain unauthorised and if it exceeds 5 days, or 10 registration sessions, in a 10-week period the school will usually refer to the local authority attendance service for consideration of the issue of a fixed penalty notice (see section 8).
- 6.4. The school may ask for further evidence in the following circumstances:
- Illness of 4 consecutive days or more (we may request medical evidence in the form of a doctor's appointment, prescription or medical letter)
  - Sporadic illness of 4 days or more across one half term (we may request medical evidence in the form of a doctor's appointment, prescription or medical letter)
  - Any number of days illness that directly precedes or follows a school holiday (we may request medical evidence in the form of a doctor's appointment, prescription or medical letter)
  - Delayed return to school while traveling abroad (we will request evidence of the original return flight which would have ensured the student was back in school at start of term)

## 7. Process for leave of absence requests

- 7.1. The only person who can authorise a leave of absence other than for illness or medical reasons is the Headteacher.
- 7.2. **Only in exceptional circumstances will an expected leave of absence be granted by the Headteacher. Each request will be considered individually. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of time the student can be away from school.**
- 7.3. We strongly encourage parents to contact school in advance of the requested dates if they are considering a leave of absence that is not for illness or medical reasons. As a school we have a legal safeguarding duty to know where students are if they do not attend school (we will request evidence of their whereabouts).
- 7.4. If there are very exceptional circumstances where parents must request a longer leave of absence (more than 1 day), they must do so by writing to the Headteacher and where possible include relevant evidence e.g. medical certificate, letter from employers or death certificate. It is expected that, where possible, such requests will be made at least two weeks in advance.



- 7.5. The Headteacher will then write to parents to inform them of the decision with regard to requests for leave of absence in term time. If the request is granted, the expected date of the student's return will be included in the letter and any action which will be taken if the student fails to return on the date expected.
- 7.6. It is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday, weddings, anniversaries, special religious events (unless a day of religious observance under section 6.2), trips abroad or extended period of leave. This list is not exclusive.
- 7.7. If a student is absent and permission by the Headteacher has not been given, it will be recorded as unauthorised and the following action will be taken:
- You will receive a letter from the Headteacher
  - You maybe be asked to attend a meeting or attendance clinic in school
  - The matter will be referred to the local authority Attendance service (Cognus) for consideration for a fixed penalty notice (See Appendix A)
- 7.8. For any absence (whether expected or unexpected) the school reserves the right to request evidence. This could include but is not exclusive to medical evidence, an appointment card or letter, details of external exam entry, or details of original and new travel destination and arrangements.
- 7.9. If permission is granted for an absence during term time, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain work before going and/or to copy up notes etc. on return. We will not supply access to notes or lessons during the absence.
- 7.10. If the absence is caused by prolonged illness, we will refer to our Supporting Students with Special Medical Health Needs policy. The Form Tutor and/or Head of Year will liaise with parents to provide work. In severe cases the Educational Welfare Service will provide further support.
- 7.11. If the student is in our 6th Form and their attendance is continuously below 90% without reasonable circumstances the parents will be required to pay for examination entry costs. The parents will be invited to a meeting and this will be confirmed in writing.

## **8. Statutory intervention (legal sanctions)**

- 8.1. A penalty notice will be issued for single event absences of at least five school days or more (10 registration sessions), where these absences are unauthorised because they are not exceptional circumstances. For example, travel abroad.
- 8.2. Local authorities have the power to serve each parent with a Penalty Notice when instructed by the school, where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks – this is deemed as meeting the National threshold. (A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session; these sessions can be consecutive or not. The period of 10 weeks can also span different terms or school years)
- 8.3. The penalty for each parent is £80 for each child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days.
- 8.4. Penalty Notices apply to pupils of statutory school age, on roll at the school which finishes on the last Friday in June of Year 11. Further information regarding a Penalty Notice can be

found on the [London Borough of Sutton Website](#) (Inclusion - PN - CODE OF CONDUCT Oct 2023)

- 8.5. A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. In a rolling three-year period only two penalty notices can be issued. If a second penalty notice is issued, the fine will be charged at a flat rate of £160 and must be paid within 28 days.
- 8.6. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within three years of the date of issue of the first. In the case where the National threshold is met for a third time, alternative action such as prosecution will be considered.
- 8.7. For circumstances where attendance is not a single event and the school has exhausted all avenues of support and it is not working or being engaged with, the Headteacher will refer to the Local Authority for consideration of intervention or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education.

## 9. Monitoring attendance and punctuality

- 9.1. School attendance and punctuality data is monitored:
  - Daily and weekly by the form tutor and co tutor
  - Half termly by Heads of Year and Assistant Head (Pastoral) or Assistant Headteacher (Director of 6th Form)
  - Termly and Yearly by the Headteacher, Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Governors
  - Termly support meetings with the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer
- 9.2. The Assistant Head with responsibility for the Year Teams 7-11 will discuss attendance and punctuality matters with the Heads of Year. The Director of Sixth Form discusses attendance and punctuality with the Heads of Years 12-13.
- 9.3. Parents are able to monitor attendance data through the **School Gateway App**
- 9.4. The school will benchmark attendance data against local, regional and national levels to identify areas for improvement
- 9.5. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) will use the data to monitor the impact of school wide attendance strategies
- 9.6. Attendance is reported to the Local and Trust Governing Bodies. The School sets annual targets for overall attendance figures in the Autumn Term each year. Attendance data are submitted to the DfE on a termly basis.
- 9.7. Good punctuality to both lessons and to school is expected of all students. We know that employers place great importance on punctuality and attendance and it is important for our students to understand the value of being on time.
- 9.8. We recognise that parents play a vital role and have a legal responsibility to ensure good punctuality and we aim to identify, investigate and work in partnership with parents, students and other agencies to resolve any punctuality problems.

## 10. Supporting Attendance and Punctuality

10.1. Good attendance is recognised by the awarding of certificates, through letters home (Appendix E) and the golden ticket reward (please refer to the Behaviour for Learning Policy).

10.2. Supporting Attendance:

- When attendance data highlights issues with individual students' attendance immediate intervention is provided, targeted, monitored and evaluated by the form tutor and / or Head of Year.
- The school will work closely in partnership with parents to build strong relationships to address any in or out of school barriers to attendance and or punctuality.
- As attendance falls below 95% Tutors will contact home to build strong relationships to address any in or out of school barriers to attendance and or punctuality. A stage one letter (see Appendix D) will be sent home
- The Heads of Year (7-11) and Tutors (6th Form) will contact parents when attendance falls below 90% and a stage two letter (see Appendix D) will be sent home. Heads of Year may ask parents to provide a medical certificate in cases where the student has persistent absence which is below 90%.
- The school will work with parents to develop support for the student.
- If attendance continues to decline towards 70% then a Letter (see Appendix D) will be sent home and parents will be invited to an attendance clinic at school and /or the Girls Learning Trust. A meeting with the Educational Welfare Officer may also be arranged. The school will work closely in partnership with parents and external agencies to build strong relationships to address any in or out of school barriers to attendance and or punctuality.
- If this support has not been effective or has not been engaged with the school will work with the local authority to put formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or education supervision order and /or a fixed penalty notice will be given.
- If a student's attendance continues to be a cause for concern and all avenues of support have been exhausted, are not working or not being engaged with, the Headteacher will look to enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the students right to an education. (see section 7)
- If attendance in the 6th form drops below 90% the school can request that a student or their parent pays for their external exam entries.
- Where analysis of half termly, termly or yearly data identifies patterns or trends with cohorts of students, specific strategies will be used to improve attendance. The school attendance strategy can be found in Appendix B

10.3. Supporting Punctuality:

- The school recognises that there are occasions where students may arrive late to school for reasons beyond their control because of external issues. However, these are rare events.
- The second time a student arrives late without a valid reason parents will receive a school comms informing them that their child has been late to school
- If a student arrives late without good cause 3 or more times in a term a whole school 30-minute detention will be issued.

- Students and Parents will be informed of the detention via ClassCharts
- If a student's punctuality continues to be a cause for concern and all avenues for support have been exhausted, are not working or not been engaged with, the school will work with the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer and if necessary, consider a fixed penalty notice.
- Appendix C has further information on our graduated approach to supporting and monitoring punctuality. Please also refer to our Behaviour for Learning Policy.

## 11. Parental engagement in support

11.1. Parents are urged to contact the Form Tutor or Head of Year if they have concerns that their child may be reluctant, or has started to refuse, to come to school. Early help and intervention is essential.

11.2. Attendance and punctuality information is sent to parents regularly to assist them in monitoring their child's attendance.

11.3. Parents play a very important role in ensuring the good attendance records of their child. Below is a list of suggested strategies:

- encourage full attendance; talk to your child to try to ascertain if there are any problems or worries at school, on the journey to school or at home
- do not allow your child to have time off for minor complaints or illnesses: - if they are well enough to be up and about, they are generally well enough to attend school;
- monitor your child's attendance report carefully;
- book any medical or dental appointments out of school hours or make them for the very end of the day;
- do not take your child out of school for trips abroad in term time
- ensure your child is punctual for school;
- work with the school to remove any barriers to attendance.
- seek advice from the [Borough Schools' Attendance Service \(BSAS\)](#)

11.4. The following websites might be useful for parents:

- Family Lives (formerly Parent line) – [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Advisory Centre for Education - [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

## 12. Students with Medical or Special Educational Needs

12.1. Some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have a special educational need or disability.

12.2. The right to an education is the same for all students and therefore the attendance ambition for these students should be the same as for other students.

12.3. However, when working to improve attendance with these students the school should be mindful of the different barriers faced and put additional support in place where necessary to help them to access their full-time education.

12.4. This can include:

- Making reasonable adjustments and considering specific approaches with parents
- Putting in place a health care plan or Educational health care plan
- Considering working with external partners
- Making referrals where appropriate
- Considering removal of barriers such as uniform or lunchtime arrangements
- Considering time limited phased return to school
- Ensuring data is monitored regularly and targeted meetings occur

12.5. We will ensure that students unable to attend school because of health needs can access suitable and flexible education appropriate to their needs. The nature of the provision is responsive to the demands of what may be a changing health status.

12.6. Each case will be based on a personalised approach but will always involve liaison between the school, student and parents. The lead person in each case will be the Head of Year but students with medical needs will also be monitored by the allocated SLT member and the SENDCo.

12.7. Our Supporting Students with Special Medical Health Needs policy states how we will support students with medical health needs.

12.8. Guidance in the DfE document '[Supporting students at school with medical conditions](#)' - [Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015](#), is followed for all students with medical needs.

12.9. The 'First Aid & Medical Room Procedures', available in the First Aid Room, details the school's medical procedures.

### **13. Students missing education for reasons other than medical**

13.1. Missing education can be an indicator of other circumstances including students being at risk of harm or neglect so the school must investigate all unexplained absences.

13.2. Attendance is monitored through the daily registers. Monitoring of attendance occurs on a daily basis and is carried out by the Attendance Officer (Years 7-11) or Sixth Form Administrator (Sixth Form).

13.3. Further monitoring takes place on a weekly, monthly and half termly basis by the Heads of Year and Senior Leader in Charge of Attendance

13.4. All unexplained absences are investigated. Following school action, which may include an attendance meeting with parents, poor attendance may be referred to the local authority Attendance Service (Cognus).

13.5. We will notify the London Borough of Sutton if a student is to be taken off the school roll or if a parent decides to home school their child.

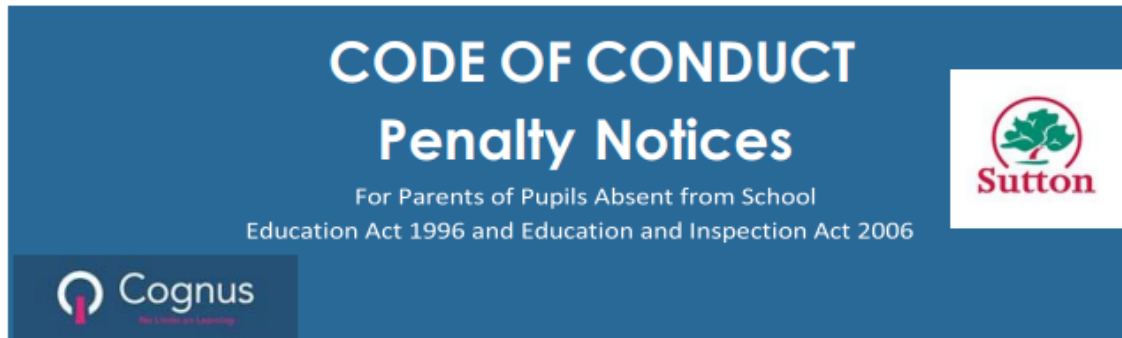
13.6. We will arrange full-time education for excluded students from the sixth school day of a fixed period suspension

- 13.7. If no explanation of unauthorised absence for an extended period occurs we will consult with the relevant borough safeguard hub.

#### **14. Children Missing Education**

- 14.1. 'Children missing education' are children of compulsory school age who are not registered students at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.
- 14.2. Under DfE guidance 'Children missing education: Statutory guidance for local authorities' September 2016, schools are obliged to investigate any student who fails to attend school. The London Borough of Sutton procedures will be followed where investigations fail to establish good reason for absence of more than 10 days.

**Appendix A**



## Contents

1. Introduction
2. Legislation
3. Authorisation to issue penalty notices
4. Circumstances in which a penalty notice may be issued.
5. Issuing of penalty notices
6. Number of penalty notices to be issued for truancy or unauthorised absence.
7. Cross-border working
8. Payment of penalty notices
9. Withdrawal of penalty notices

Example of the text required in a warning letter.

Version October 2023

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. In law an offence occurs if a parent fails to secure a child's attendance at school at which they are a registered pupil and that absence is not authorised by the school. Parents are supported at a school and Local Authority level to overcome barriers to regular attendance.

The purpose of this Local Code of Conduct is to ensure that statutory powers are applied consistently and fairly across the Local Authority area and that suitable arrangements are in place for the administration of the issuing of Penalty Notices.

The Government requires Local Authorities to issue a Code of Conduct to all schools.

This Code of Conduct has been written in light of 'Guidance on Education-Related Parenting Contracts, Parenting Orders and Penalty Notices' - Revised Edition-2015; and Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 Amendment 2016), and The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

The London Borough of Sutton Code has been agreed following consultation with:

- ◆ Sutton Local Authority – Attendance Support Team
- ◆ Representatives from Governing Bodies and Headteachers of Sutton Schools
- ◆ The Sutton division of the Metropolitan Police Service

This is in accordance with The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 Section 23 Subsection (1).

An authorised person issuing a Penalty Notice to a parent<sup>1</sup> of a child of statutory school age on roll at a Sutton school, must do so within the terms of this Code.

<sup>1</sup> All those defined as a parent under Section 576 Education Act 1996 are parents for the purpose of these provisions. This means that all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person; and 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. 'Parent' means each and every parent coming within the definition (whether acting jointly or separately) and should not be taken to mean that provisions only apply to 'parent' in the singular



The regulations specify that the following must be included in the code of conduct.

- ◆ The means for avoiding the issue of duplicate notices.
- ◆ Measures to ensure that a notice is not issued when proceedings for an offence under section 444 of the Act (or an offence under subsection (1A) of that section arising out of the same circumstances) or section 103(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 are contemplated or have been commenced by the local authority.
- ◆ The occasions when it will be appropriate to issue a fixed penalty notice.
- ◆ The maximum number of fixed penalty notices that may be issued to one parent or carer in any 12 month period
- ◆ Arrangements for co-ordination between the local authority, neighbouring local authorities and where appropriate, the police and authorised officers.

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A penalty notice may be issued to each parent of each child liable for the offence or offences.

It is important to avoid issuing duplicate penalty notices and to ensure that a penalty notice is not issued when a prosecution is being planned or has been commenced for the offence relating to the specific period of unauthorised absence. Therefore, before issuing a penalty notice all authorised persons must liaise with the schools named education welfare officer and any other local authority which is involved with the child. This would include a local authority who has responsibility for a looked after child and a local authority in whose area the pupil lives.

## 2. LEGISLATION

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 inserts into the Education Act 1996 Section 444A and Section 444B enabling authorised personnel to issue Penalty Notices as an alternative to prosecution under Section 444, and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty.

### **What is a Penalty Notice?**

Penalty Notices are fines that can be issued by a Local Authority to parents for their child's unauthorised absence from school.

### **When is a Penalty Notice appropriate?**

- Parents of a registered pupil whose child fails to attend school regularly, and the absence is unauthorised by the school, are committing an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. A Penalty Notice for irregular attendance can be issued where the parent is capable of, but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance.
- Where a parent fails, without a reasonable excuse, to ensure that their excluded child is not present in a public place during school hours in the first five days of any exclusion, then she or he is committing an offence under Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The education-related provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 apply to all parents who fall within the definition set out in Section 576 of the Education 1996. This defines 'parent' as:

- (i) all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- (ii) any person who, although they are not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person;
- (iii) 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.

### **Specific Conditions**

**Children Looked After:** The London Borough of Sutton does not include Children Looked After in the Penalty Notice process. Where there are concerns over attendance with a child within the London Borough of Sutton or other Local Authority care, a review should be held to determine that appropriate provision is in place and whether changes need to be made to better engage the young person with their education.

**Special Educational Needs (SEN):** For pupils with an Education Health & Care Plan, the absence should be considered in partnership so there is a clear pathway that can form the basis of an early review which should be held if it is believed that absence can be addressed through education, health and/or care provision, before considering a Penalty Notice or other legal action. NB this is in the case of persistent or severe absence and not for unauthorised holidays. This is to determine that appropriate provision is in place and whether changes need to be made to better engage the young person with their education.

Schools and Governing boards must demonstrate that they have ensured best endeavours (as per the SEND Code of Practice<sup>2</sup> in supporting children with SEND (including hidden disabilities) to address any concerns raised by the child and / or their family if the absence is reported to potentially relate to a disability, and take reasonable steps to accommodate them e.g. sensitivity of school uniform, being able to wear ear defenders, being able to leave the room if overwhelmed, before a PN is referred. The local authority will support schools with this by providing expert advice, guidance and potential financial support (for resources including potentially additional temporary TA support, environmental adaptations, training etc.) as per the above code of practice.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>



### 3. AUTHORISATION TO ISSUE PENALTY NOTICES

Primary responsibility for issuing Penalty Notices rests with the Local Authority through the Attendance Support Team.

In Sutton it has been agreed that the Police will not issue Penalty Notices to parents of truants, and neither will schools. If Headteachers feel it appropriate that a Penalty Notice is served, they therefore must refer to the Attendance Support Team, with clear supporting evidence.

This will avoid a Penalty Notice being issued when the Attendance Service may already be instigating legal proceedings for unauthorised absence from school.

It has been agreed that the Attendance Support Team, on behalf of Sutton Local Authority, will therefore issue Penalty Notices. The Service will administer the scheme from any funds obtained as a result of issuing Penalty Notices.

The Local Authority is required to set out the maximum number of Penalty Notices which may be issued to each parent in any 12-month period. For these purposes the Local Authority has set the maximum at two Penalty Notices for each parent for each individual child (with no restriction on the number of Warnings issued), although more than two Penalty Notices can be considered in a 12-month period if the absence is for different reasons (e.g. unauthorised holidays during term time as well as unauthorised absence).

Should the issue of a Penalty Notice fail to improve attendance, consideration will be given to a prosecution.

It is not a defence for the parent to say that she/he was unaware of the absences or the pupil being out unsupervised during an exclusion from school. Parents are expected to know where their children are on a daily basis and there is no duty, in law, on the school or the Local Authority to advise them of their child's absence.

#### 4. CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH A PENALTY NOTICE MAY BE ISSUED

Penalty Notices apply to pupils of statutory school age, which starts at term after the child turns five and finishes on the last Friday in June of Year 11.

London Borough of Sutton uses Penalty Notices to safeguard the education of children, and to influence the improvement of identified cases of poor attendance patterns at school.

Within Sutton it has been agreed to use Penalty Notices in the following circumstances:

- ◆ Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence from School
- ◆ Excluded pupils identified in a public place during specified days of exclusion
- ◆ Unauthorised term time leave (Holidays taken during term time)
- ◆ Persistent late arrival at school

**Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence from School** (not unauthorised term time leave which is covered in section below)

The Attendance Support Team will consider the issue of Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence to parents. This will be where:

- ◆ there has been a Referral to Attendance Support Team from the school as part of the school's processes to address poor attendance patterns;
- ◆ evidence of other strategies considered that may help the child concerned return to regular school attendance supplied by the pupil's school and / or the Local Authority. These might include:
  - writing to the child's parents to remind them of their legal responsibilities
  - holding a meeting with parents in school
  - Informing parents of ensuring contact regarding any absence
  - setting targets for improvement
  - setting a review date
  - referral to the school or Cognus Education Welfare Officer
  - consideration of involvement of other services where identified
- ◆ overall absence, within the previous six months, has fallen to 90% or below (10% or more absence)
- ◆ at least 50% of that absence remaining unauthorised
- ◆ or where there have been at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within the previous six weeks.

The Local Authority will not agree to sanction the issuing of a Penalty Notice unless he/she considers that with regard to the offence to which it relates there is sufficient evidence to secure a conviction under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Evidence could be letters sent to parent, minutes of meetings and record of telephone conversations.

**Required Documentation for Each Child If a Penalty Notice is in relation to Unauthorised Absence:**

- ◆ A fully completed online Penalty Notice Request Referral form which will include:
  - A Registration Certificate – to include previous 12 months.
  - A copy of the school's Warning letter (an example of the text required in a warning letter is at the bottom of this code of conduct) following previous unauthorised absence to the parents, warning that a referral will be made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice if there is further unauthorised absence.\*
  - Notes on any aggravating features that lead the Headteacher to request a Penalty Notice to be issued. This will support the decision to issue a Penalty Notice as well as provide evidence for prosecution if necessary.

**Excluded pupils identified in a public place during specified days of exclusion:**

When a pupil is excluded from school, either for a fixed period exclusion or a permanent exclusion, the parent is responsible for ensuring that their child is not found in a public place during normal school hours on the specified days of the exclusion. Truancy Patrols take place in Sutton, carried out by Attendance Officers in partnership with the Police.

If an excluded pupil is stopped in a public place by the Truancy Patrol during the specified days of their exclusion, the School Attendance Officer on patrol can refer for a Penalty Notice to be issued under Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Pupils on roll at a school outside Sutton will be referred to the attendance service in the Local Authority where they are on roll.



### Unauthorised term time leave (Holidays taken during term time)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, amended in September 2013, removes references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the previous statutory threshold of ten school days.

It is for each school, with their Governing Body, to decide whether they wish to refer to the Attendance Support Team for a Penalty Notice to be considered for unauthorised leave of absence in term time.

Any parent who takes a child out of school for term time leave for 10 consecutive sessions (five days) or more, not authorised by the headteacher (under the exceptional circumstances rule), may be at risk of a penalty notice. Therefore, penalty notices will be issued for single event absences of at least five consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable. The absences must be recorded with a 'G' code in the attendance register. If a Headteacher does not authorise a request for leave of absence, s/he will send a letter to the parent confirming this decision, which includes a warning that a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Headteachers must confirm the decision to not authorise the leave of absence in the following way:

- A letter to parents and carers (by email or post) who have sought the request.

In the absence of a meeting with the parents or request having been made directly, the headteacher, where seeking to pursue a penalty notice, must ensure that the parents are advised in writing of their decision.

If leave of absence is then taken without authorisation, school may choose to complete a Penalty Notice Request Referral. Penalty Notice Request referrals must be agreed by the Headteacher.

Referral forms should be completed for receipt within 15 school days of the holiday being completed. All requests will be considered for Penalty Notice issue.

Penalty Notices for any unauthorised leave of absence in term-time can be requested by the Headteacher. The Headteacher should act in accordance with the school's Policy and must take into account all considerations recommended in the DfE Guidance<sup>3</sup>. The Attendance Support Team Court Officer / Penalty Notice Officer may decline to issue a Notice where such considerations have not been made.

NB The local authority will consider the following case disposals : Penalty Notice; Warning; Formal Caution; Court Proceedings; NFA.

[1]<sup>3</sup> 'Working Together to Improve school attendance, May 2022, DfE

**Required Documentation for each child if a Penalty Notice is in relation to Unauthorised Term Time Leave:**

- A fully completed Penalty Notice Referral online form which will include:
  - A Registration Certificate – to include previous 12 months.
  - A copy of or links to all information provided to parents/carers on school policy on unauthorised term time leave. This can be provided as evidence of parents being fully informed of the consequences of unauthorised term time leave.
  - Notes on any aggravating features that lead the Headteacher to request a Penalty Notice to be issued for example, evidence of previous unauthorised term time leave. This will support the decision to issue a Penalty Notice as well as provide evidence for prosecution if necessary.

**Persistent late arrival at school**

After the register has closed. Equivalent to a minimum of 10 sessions accrued in a six week period. Following the warning letter for previous persistent lateness being sent, a penalty notice may be issued. The late mark (U) for an unauthorised absence should be recorded. Schools must ensure parents and carers are aware of what time the close of register is that would deem a 'U' code absence for after this period.

Penalty notices will not be issued in respect of children who are looked after.

\* Please note that if the warning letter (following a previous unauthorised absence) is included in the Penalty Notice referral documentation, there will be no need for the Local Authority to issue a further warning letter as we will have the chain of evidence required. The Local Authority will only send a warning letter if it is felt absolutely necessary to do so. An example of the text required in a warning letter is at the bottom of this code of conduct.



## ISSUING OF PENALTY NOTICES

The issue of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence must be preceded by a formal letter to the parent from the school. This letter will:

- Raise concerns regarding the level of unauthorised absence, and giving advice regarding contact with the school / School Attendance Officer.
- Remind the parent of their responsibility for ensuring their child maintains full and regular attendance at school, in accordance with Section 444 of The Education Act 1996, and that failure to do so could result in legal action being taken.
- Advise the parent of the powers of the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices.
- State the specific absences which will give rise to the formal warning.
- Notify the parent that continued unauthorised absence may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or other legal action.

In relation to unauthorised holidays in term time without permissions, it is for Headteachers to determine if the request meets the school's exceptional circumstances criteria. Legislation requires that each request is judged on a case by case basis. If it does not meet those criteria and there is evidence that parents/carer has been provided with all documentation on school policy and warned, a request for a FPN for unauthorised holiday in term time can be made.

Before a Penalty Notice is issued it must be evident that the matter is capable of proof in the Magistrates' Court so that in the event of non-payment of the charge, the parent / carer can be prosecuted.

Should a fixed penalty notice be issued, and if the penalty is not paid within 28 days, the local authority must consider prosecution for this unauthorised absence. It is therefore essential that the decision to issue a fixed penalty notice is supported by sufficient evidence to ensure a realistic prospect of conviction as a prosecution will be sought under section 444 of the Act if non-payment occurs.

In order to proceed with prosecution, the local authority require a response from school following our informing them that the PN has not been paid, accompanied by a certificate of attendance signed by the Head teacher and a witness statement if necessary, that school support or do not support the further action of prosecution. This response must be received within three weeks of the local authority informing school of non-payment, in order to keep to the timeframes of the court process.

A letter will be sent to parent(s) by the Courts Officer at the 28 days point, warning that if the fine is not paid in full the Local Authority may proceed to court. This provides evidence that the Local Authority have warned families, in addition to the warning letter sent by schools.

## 6. NUMBER OF PENALTY NOTICES TO BE ISSUED FOR TRUANCY OR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Sutton will issue no more than two penalty notices per pupil with high levels of unauthorised absences in a 12-month period.

If the law continues to be broken around school attendance, the Attendance Support Team legal intervention process will be considered.

*As with prosecutions under Section 444 Education Act 1996 a Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent liable for the offence.*

## 7. CROSS-BORDER WORKING

Where a school's head teacher is considering issuing a fixed penalty notice for one of its pupils who is the resident of another local authority, the attached EWO will contact the EWO in the other local authority advising them of this.

The attached EWO should agree with the other local authority in which court any subsequent prosecution will take place if the penalty is not paid and consideration is made under section 444 (1) or section 444 (1A) of the Act where it is deemed to be appropriate.

This agreement must be reached between the two local authorities prior to the issuing of any fixed penalty notice.

## 8. PAYMENT OF PENALTY NOTICES

Payment of a fixed penalty notice discharges the parent's or carer's liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the period covered by the fixed penalty notice.

The penalty for each parent is £60 for each child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. (Service by post is deemed to have been effected, on the second working day after posting the Notice by first class post, unless the contrary is proved.)

All penalties are paid to the Local Authority to cover the administration costs of issuing and enforcing penalties and the prosecution of recipients who do not pay their penalty.

The arrangements for the paying of penalties will be detailed on the Penalty Notices.

If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period the Attendance Support Team will consider prosecution for the offence to which the Notice applies. The prosecution is not for non-payment of the Notice but is a prosecution for irregular school attendance – Education Act 1996 Section 444. If a prosecution is not commenced or contemplated then the Penalty Notice must be withdrawn in accordance with The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice. A parent should therefore, if possible, be given warning of the possibility of a notice being issued in order to allow him/her to make representations should he/she wish to do so. If a head teacher refuses to authorise any absence or requests for holidays during term time and parents are not happy with the decision, they should make representations to the Governing Body of the school. They should not delay and wait to discuss with Local Authority Officer once a Penalty Notice has been issued.

A Penalty Notice need not be served before any prosecution can take place.

## 9. WITHDRAWAL OF PENALTY NOTICES

A Penalty Notice can be withdrawn by the Attendance Support Team in the following circumstances:

- where it ought not to have been issued, i.e. where it has been issued outside the terms of the local Code of Conduct or where no offence has been committed;
- where it has been issued to the wrong person;
- where it contains factual errors;
- where new evidence or information has come to light after the initial application, that warrants the withdrawal of the Penalty Notice;
- where the time limit for payment of the Penalty Notice has expired and prosecution for an offence contrary to s444 of the Education Act 1996 has not been commenced nor is contemplated See paragraph 9.4 above. NB a penalty notice discharges the parent/carer of criminal liability. If it is unpaid, it needs to be withdrawn in order to proceed with prosecution for the offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996 of failure to ensure their child maintains full and regular attendance at school.

## Appendix B Attendance Strategy

Attendance percentage	Responsibility	Responses	Example of Actions or Interventions	Acknowledgement / Success
100% - 96% (Expected)	Tutors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tutors celebrate good attendance during tutorials including golden tickets</li> <li>2. Tutor acknowledgement given where students have 100% weeks of attendance</li> <li>3. Tutor tracks and monitors attendance weekly and addresses issues with students who begin to move towards the 96%. Barriers will be spoken about (both inside and outside school) and intervention agreed.</li> <li>4. Routines and expectations are regularly reinforced through assemblies (HoY) and through form time</li> <li>5. All staff are role models for expectations arriving at lessons and tutor time on time</li> </ol>	<p>Tutor monitors weekly attendance</p> <p>Tutor or cotutor has 1:1 meeting with tutees to discuss what might be the barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Peer mentoring</p> <p>Academic intervention</p> <p>Set Targets with student and then monitor</p> <p>Pastoral support: ELSA, Mental Health Champion, CWP</p>	<p>100% attendance is celebrated at end of term assembly by awarding of certificate</p> <p>Congratulations in form for 100% attendance weeks</p> <p>Rewards for best attendance given out in year assemblies</p> <p>Golden ticket</p>

Attendance percentage	Responsibility	Responses	Example Actions or interventions	Acknowledgement / Success
96 % – 95 % (Satisfactory)	Tutors and Head of Years	<p>Tutor makes the Head of Year aware of students who are beginning to fall towards 95%</p> <p>Regular monitoring and analysis of whole year group data by Head of Year</p> <p>Tutor to have mentoring conversation with student regarding reason for fall in attendance</p> <p>Head of year and Tutor to meet or call parents to discuss interventions already in place and the increase in support that can be offered. If barriers are outside of school sign post to early help. Agree actions and interventions</p>	<p>Peer mentoring</p> <p>Academic intervention / Report cards</p> <p>Set Targets with student and then monitor</p> <p>Pastoral support: ELSA, Mental Health Champion, CWP</p>	<p>Improvement in attendance is celebrated by form tutor in form time.</p>

Attendance percentage	Responsibility	Responses	Example Actions or interventions	Acknowledgement / Success
Below 95% (cause for concern)	Head of Year and Deputy Head / Assistant head 6 <sup>th</sup> form	<p>Head of Year and Assistant Head (Pastoral) Assistant Head 6<sup>th</sup> Form is aware of students below 95% through half termly monitoring of attendance data and conversations with Tutors</p> <p>Stage one attendance letter is sent home to make parents aware.</p> <p>More formal conversations take place between Head of year and Student Consequences of persistent and serve attendance explained and interventions discussed</p> <p>Tutors welcome and build confidence with student when they are in school</p> <p>Head of year develops intervention strategies with AHT 6<sup>th</sup> Form and DH pastoral to improve attendance</p> <p>Begin to work with external organisations to support student such as CAHMS and EWO if appropriate</p> <p>Medical evidence sorts if appropriate.</p>	<p>Investigation to understand underlying causes of absence.</p> <p>Consideration of SEND / ECHP</p> <p>1:1 intervention with HoY and letter sent home</p> <p>Support given by external agencies EWO / Ed Psy / CAMHS</p> <p>Set goals and action plans in conjunction with parents, assessed after 10 days for impact and make changes if necessary</p> <p>1-2-1 tutoring to support academic work</p> <p>Timeout / exit cards used</p> <p>School support services used to provide help for underlying issues; councillor, CWP, ELSA</p> <p>Differentiated timetable considered for medical or SMEH</p>	<p>Improvement in attendance is celebrated by Head of Year letter home (appendix F) and by speaking to student</p> <p>Improvement in attendance recognised by form tutor and Head of Year</p>

Attendance percentage	Responsibility	Responses	Example strategies that could be used	Acknowledgement / Success
<p>Below 90% (Major cause for concern) Persistent absence</p>	<p>Head of Year and Deputy Head / Assistant head 6<sup>th</sup> form</p>	<p><b>Ongoing / Persistent low-level attendance</b></p> <p><b>Stage 1:</b> Stage two attendance letter sent when student drops below 90%</p> <p><b>Stage 2:</b> If there is a further decline in attendance a Formal meeting will take place between the Head of Year/ DH pastoral or AHT 6<sup>th</sup> form the student and their parents to discuss support already in place and to set clear attendance targets with an expectation these will be met. Medical evidence is sought going forward for any absences if required</p> <p>Intervention strategies / work with external organisations continued</p> <p><b>Stage 3</b> If targets not met within timeframe another meeting involving the Education Welfare Service will take place and further strategies discussed. Clearly explain the consequences of persistent absence and potential need for legal intervention and explain help that is available</p> <p><b>Stage 4:</b> If attendance continues to fall below 80% Headteacher, Deputy Head Pastoral/ AHT 6thform and EWO meet with the student and their parents. Consideration of penalty notice and legal intervention</p> <p><b>Stage 5:</b> If student’s attendance drops to 70% then they will be invited to attend the Trust Attendance Clinic</p>	<p>Conversation with EWO to understand underlying causes and support given by school where necessary</p> <p>Attendance contract signed by parents and student</p> <p>Support services utilised where necessary</p> <p>Adapted timetable / disapplication from curriculum</p> <p>Voluntary early help sign posted to parents</p>	<p>Improvement in attendance is celebrated by letter home and by speaking to student</p>



Attendance percentage	Responsibility	Responses	Example strategies that could be used	Acknowledgement / Success
50 % and Below	Head of Year and Deputy Head / Assistant head 6 <sup>th</sup> form	<p>Put formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or and education supervision order</p> <p>Issue a fixed penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change parent's behaviour.</p> <p>Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement</p>	<p>Social care involvement</p> <p>Fixed penalty notice</p> <p>Prosecution of parents where all else fails</p>	

<b>Other concerns</b>	<p><b>Long absence due to trip abroad:</b> letter home (appendix E) and meeting parents with Head and Deputy on return. Dates of tripped logged and will be referred to in the future. Fixed Penalty Notice given</p> <p><b>SMEH / SEND long term absence:</b> Work closely with SENDCo, parents and outside agencies to develop individualised strategies</p>	<p>Attendance Strategy clearly communicated to parents with expectation that holidays, appointments, etc. are taken outside of term time</p> <p>Meetings with parents returning from trips abroad in term time.</p> <p>Meeting with parents and SENDco to discuss potential strategies.</p> <p>Adapted timetables</p> <p>Attendance clinics set up to provide support to parents dealing with complex issues</p> <p>Fixed Penalty notice</p>	Reduction in the number of Students asking for absence for family trips abroad
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**Action to Implement Strategy**

Daily	Weekly	Half Term / Termly / Yearly
<p>Attendance officer and Sixth form Administrator monitors missing registers, absences and punctuality</p> <p>Attendance officer enters students who sign in late</p> <p>Any student who hasn't been reported absent will be contacted by the attendance officer. This will be followed up by the Head of Year if no response is given</p> <p>Tutor takes register daily both in morning and afternoon</p> <p>Signing of attendance / punctuality reports</p>	<p>Tutor monitors attendance data via data base on SIMS</p> <p>Meeting with students of concern to set or assess targets</p> <p>Record on SIMS any actions they may have taken with regards to attendance</p> <p>Pastoral administrator to log punctuality and trips abroad</p>	<p>Head of Year to analyse Data and produce a report for Deputy Head or Assistant head</p> <p>Discuss attendance with Head of Year and decide intervention strategies where needed.</p> <p>Send letters home for 100% attendance</p> <p>Rewards for best attendance given out in year assemblies</p> <p>Benchmark attendance data against local, regional, national levels to identify areas for development</p> <p>Monitor the impact of school wide attendance efforts including any strategies implemented</p> <p>Provide data and reports to support the work of the governing body</p>

## **Appendix C - Punctuality Graduated Approach**

Below is the process the school employs to monitor students and their punctuality and how we sanction students who are late

- A student must be in school by 8.30 a.m.
- If a student arrives in school after 8.50 a.m. they must sign in at main school reception

### Stage 1

- If a student is late on one occasion form tutors will speak to the pupil.
- The second time a student arrives late without a valid reason parents, students, tutor and head of year will receive an email informing them that they have been late twice to school this term. The email will be sent by the pastoral administrator
- The pastoral administrator will log the date of the email.

### Stage 2:

- If a student is late 3 times in a term, they will receive a 30-minute after school detention.
- If a student continues to be late for a 4th or 5th time, an hour detention will be given after school on both occasions
- Students in Years 7–11 will be informed of the detention by email to parents
- Students in Years 12 and 13 are emailed informing them of the detention and the parents are copied into the email

### Stage 3:

- If a student is late 6 or more times a term, then the Head of Year will speak with the student and if appropriate home.
- Support strategies will be put into place and punctuality targets will be set.
- No Detention will be given.
- Strategies could include a punctuality report where students report every morning and afternoon to head of year
- Punctuality report could be graduated
- Strategies will be logged by the pastoral administrator

### Stage 4:

- If a student is late 9 times in a term and continues to be late, a formal meeting will take place between the student, Head of Year and Deputy Head Pastoral or Assistant Head 6<sup>th</sup> Form
- A pastoral support plan will be put in place with targets set. This could include students reporting to Deputy Head / Assistant Headteacher every morning and afternoon.
- The plan will be logged on the spreadsheet by the **pastoral administrator**
- If no improvement the **EWO** may be contacted for support

### Stage 5

- If there is no improvement in the number of lates the EWO will be involved

**Appendix D: Attendance letters / emails of concern**

**i. Stage 1 Letter regarding concern over attendance (see attendance strategy)**

Dear Parents/Carers

**RE: Stage One Attendance Letter**

I am writing to inform you of my concerns about [student name]'s attendance. Having analysed the attendance figures from, I have found that your child has an attendance rate of [%]. This is clearly below our target of at least 96% for each student. It is our legal duty to inform parents of students whose attendance is below our expectations even when we have been made aware of the reasons for these absences. Attendance below 95% is a cause for concern and if it were to drop to 90% this would be categorised as persistent absenteeism.

The following information outlines how important good attendance to school is:

<b>Above 96% - this equals less than 6 days of absence a year, 30 lessons or less missed</b>
Excellent attendance. These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Students will also form positive habits for attendance which will help in the future.
<b>95% - this equals 9.5 days of absence a year, 48 lessons missed</b>
These students are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Students who take a 2 week leave of absence every year can only achieve a maximum of 95% attendance, and will miss 40 lessons.
<b>90% - this equals 19 days of absence a year, 95 lessons missed</b>
Young people in this group are missing a month of school per year. The Government classes young people in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of young people in this group could be passed to the Education Welfare Officer with the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

We will be working with [student's name] providing intervention and strategies to support attendance. However, should there be no improvement in attendance we will invite you into school for a meeting and may have to involve the Attendance Service at Cognus who are authorised by the local authority to work with families needing support in getting their children to school or who may impose a penalty notice. Only by working together can we ensure that [student's name] attendance improves and they therefore achieve success at school.

We trust that we can rely on your support in this matter

Head of Year

Deputy Headteacher

ii. **Stage 2 Letter regarding concern over attendance (see attendance strategy)**

Dear Parents/Carers

**RE: Stage Two Attendance Letter**

**[Student Name]**

Following on from my previous letter, I am writing to inform you of my concerns about **[student name]**'s attendance. Having analysed the attendance figures from we have found that your child has an attendance rate of **[%]**. This is clearly below our target of at least 96% for each student and is not the improvement we had hoped to see.

It is our legal duty to inform parents of students whose attendance is below our expectations even when we have been made aware of the reasons for these absences. Attendance below 90% is categorised as persistent absenteeism and is a concern, therefore, parents/carers are requested to attend a meeting at school on **[insert date and time]** with the Educational Welfare Officer, Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher to discuss this further.

If absence intensifies the school will seek to work with external organisations and the Local Authority to help to remove barriers to school attendance. If this support has not been effective or has not been engaged with the school will work with the local authority Attendance Service (Cognus) to put formal support in place in the form of a Stage Three Letter, parenting contract or education supervision order and/or the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Only by working together can we ensure that **[student's name]** attendance improves and they therefore achieve success at school.

We trust I can rely on your support in this matter

Head of Year

Deputy Headteacher

**iii. Letter regarding unauthorised absence**

Dear Parents/Carers

(Name of Child) – (Form)

Date of Absence (No. of School Days)

Thank you for your notification dated (date) concerning the above-mentioned school day/s.

I have considered your request but in line with our school Attendance policy I am unable to grant leave of absence on this occasion.

Please refer to our Attendance policy for your information. It can be found on our website here:

<https://www.nonsuchschool.org/page/?title=Our+Policies&pid=16>

I trust you understand the position the school must take to safeguard the education of our students and that you will uphold our Attendance policy.

If your child is absent on (date), it will be recorded as unauthorised.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

**iv. Letter regarding unauthorised absence for Holiday abroad or extended period of leave**

Dear Parents/Carers

(Name of Child) – (Form)

Date of Absence (No. of School Days)

Further to your request for leave of absence for the above dates, I am writing to inform you that I am happy to authorise (number) days absence but cannot authorise the remaining (number) days.

Or

Further to your request for leave of absence for the above dates, I am writing to inform I cannot authorise this absence.

As a school we also place great emphasis on high levels of attendance as it good attendance links closely to high levels of academic achievement. We are also only too aware of the negative mental health issues that can occur when young people return after a lengthy period away from school. Anxiety can stem from missing out on friendship opportunities and the classroom discussion that aids understanding of content. Following receipt of this letter, you may wish to refer to our correspondence with you, sent 7 September 2023, about the updates to our policies and our website where they can be found for clarification.

Please refer to our Attendance policy for your information, particularly section 7 and 8

*7.2 Only in exceptional circumstances will an expected leave of absence be granted by the Headteacher. Each request will be considered individually. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of time the student can be away from school.*

*7.6. It is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday, weddings, anniversaries, special religious events (unless a day of religious observance under section 6.2), trips abroad or extended period of leave. This list is not exclusive.*

*7.8. For any absence (whether expected or unexpected) the school reserves the right to request evidence. This could include but is not exclusive to medical evidence, an appointment card or letter, details of external exam entry, or details of original and new travel destination and arrangements.*

*8.1 A penalty notice will be issued for single event absences of at least five school days or more (10 registration sessions), where these absences are unauthorised because they are not exceptional circumstances. For example, travel abroad.*

*8.2 Local authorities have the power to serve each parent with a Penalty Notice when instructed by the school, where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks – this is deemed as meeting the National threshold. (A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session; these sessions can be consecutive or not. The period of 10 weeks can also span different terms or school years)*

Our Attendance Policy can be found on our website

<https://www.nonsuchschool.org/page/?title=Our+Policies&pid=16>

This absence will be recorded as unauthorized for (number) days which will be accrued by your child (NAME) between (dates).

We will be referring this to the School Attendance Service requesting a Penalty Notice. It is the policy of Sutton Local Authority to support schools in maintaining full attendance at school of pupils that are registered within the borough

*or*

If (pupil name) has (number) more unauthorized absences this year we will refer this to the Schools attendance service for requesting a Penalty Notice. It is the policy of Sutton Local Authority to support schools in maintaining full attendance at school of pupils that are registered within the borough

A penalty notice will cause parents to incur a £80 fine for each child which will increase to £160, if not paid within the specific timescale. Should the notice remain unpaid the matter maybe brought before the Magistrates Court and, if convicted, you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000 and the local authorities costs for bringing the proceedings.

I trust you understand the position the school must take to safeguard the education of our students and that you will uphold our Attendance policy.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Alexis Williamson-Jones  
Headteacher

**v. Letter giving authorisation**

Dear Parents/Carers

(Name of Child) – (Form)

Date of Absence (No. of School Days)

Thank you for your notification dated (Date) concerning the above-mentioned school day/s.

Under our policy / given the extenuating circumstances, I am authorising (one day's) / (..... days') absence.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

**vi. Email regarding concern over punctuality**

Dear Parents/Carers and Student

Our attendance records show that (Student Name) has been recorded as being late twice this term. The School Policy for attendance, which can be found on our School Website, explains that if a student is late 3 or more times a term without a valid reason they will be put into a 30-minute detention. We wanted to bring this to your attention and inform you of the situation.

With kind regards

Pastoral Administrator



**Appendix E: 100% attendance letter**

Dear Parents/Carers

**RE: Congratulations on 100% attendance in school**

We are writing to congratulate your child on achieving 100% attendance to school this term. This is an excellent achievement and we would ask you to pass on our congratulations to your child and encourage them to continue to maintain these very high standards of attendance.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

Deputy Headteacher

## Appendix F: Punctuality Report

Codes Explained	
Purple	Students who consistently meet our "Exceeding NHSG expectations" (Blue)
Blue	Students who, in addition to meeting our expected requirements, are also proactive in any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>regularly undertaking extension tasks</li><li>reading beyond the topic</li><li>seeking out their teacher for additional help</li></ul>
Green	Students meet our high expectations in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>engagement</li><li>completing all classwork and homework to a high standard</li><li>participation in group work/projects/investigations</li><li>behaviour</li><li>punctuality</li><li>bringing equipment to lessons</li><li>meeting deadlines</li></ul>
Yellow	Students who fail to meet one or two of our expected criteria (late to lesson = yellow)
Orange	Students who consistently fail to meet two or more of our expected criteria.

# Punctuality Report



Name:

Form:

Tutor:

Head of Year:

Week beginning:

Remember: it is **your** responsibility to give this report to your teachers and collect it again at the end of the lesson!

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Signed by HoY AM:</b>	Arrival time:	Arrival time:	Arrival time:	Arrival time:	Arrival time:
<b>Period 1</b>	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):
<b>Period 2</b>	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):
<b>Period 3</b>	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):
<b>Period 4</b>	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):
<b>Tutor Time</b>	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):
<b>Period 5</b>	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):	Arrival time: Comment (if necessary):
<b>Signed by HoY PM:</b>					

**Appendix G: Attendance Codes 2024**

Table 1

<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Code</i>
The session is a morning session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.	/
The session is an afternoon session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.	\
The pupil is absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended.	L

(3) If the pupil is absent from the school so that they can attend a place other than the school in any of the circumstances listed in the first column of Table 2 their attendance is to be recorded by entering in the attendance register the code listed in the corresponding entry in the second column.

Table 2

<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Code</i>
The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the 1996 Act(1) or section 42(2) or 61(1) of the 2014 Act.	K
The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the proprietor and supervised by a member of school staff.	V
The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity within paragraph (11) that is a sporting activity.	P
The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity within paragraph (11) that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the proprietor as part of the pupil's education.	W
The pupil is attending a place for any other approved educational activity within paragraph (11).	B

(4) If the pupil is absent and none of the circumstances listed in the first column of Table 2 applies their absence is to be recorded by entering in the attendance register the code listed in the second column of Table 3 that corresponds to the circumstances as listed in the first column.

Table 3

Absence	Code
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	C1
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.	M
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.	J1
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination.	S
The pupil is not of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend.	X
The pupil is of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because, in accordance with an agreement between a parent who they normally live with and the proprietor that the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis, their timetable does not require them to attend.	C2
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending another school at which they are a registered pupil.	D
The pupil is absent with leave for any other purpose.	C
The pupil is a mobile child, their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with that parent.	T
The day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a parent of the pupil belongs.	R
The pupil is unable to attend because of sickness.	I
The pupil is unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements for them within paragraph (12) or (13).	Q
The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and the transport to and from school that is normally provided for the pupil by the proprietor or a local authority is not available.	Y1
The pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency.	Y2
Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those who the proprietor thinks cannot practicably be accommodated in those parts of the premises that remain in use.	Y3
The pupil is unable to attend because they are in criminal justice detention within paragraph (14).	Y5
The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be—	Y6
(a) contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care or any body or authority exercising equivalent functions in relation to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland; or	
(b) prohibited by any enactment relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease or any instrument made under such an enactment.	
The pupil is excluded from the school for any other reason.	E
The pupil is unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Y7
The pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday.	G
The circumstances of the pupil's absence have not yet been established.	N
None of the other rows of this table applies, or this code is required to be used by paragraphs (7) and (9)(b).	O