



Attendance Policy

Date reviewed	September 2022
Frequency	Annually
Next review date	October 2023
Reviewed by	Health & Safety, Premises and Safeguarding Committee


Signed:.....
Chair of Governors

Dated: 13.10.2022


Signed:.....

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Rationale

It is the right of every young person to receive a full-time education and the responsibility of parents, pupils and school staff to work collaboratively to ensure that each child has the best opportunity of achieving their full potential. Research has highlighted the clear link between poor attendance and low academic achievement, stating that ‘failure to attend school regularly can have a major impact on young people’s education, their future and their life chances.’¹ Absence from school disrupts the learning of young people, severely limiting their ability to reach their full academic potential, as well as impacting upon their ability to form lasting and meaningful relationships with peers and staff.

Poor attendance results in young people missing out on a coherent education and exposure to the full curriculum in each subject area, this limits the extent to which teachers can ensure that each pupil makes the academic progress required on a daily basis and over periods of time. *‘Of pupils who miss more than 50 per cent of school only three per cent manage to achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including Maths and English. 73 per cent of pupils who have over 95 per cent attendance achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C’*².

As well as limiting learning, poor attendance also means that young people may miss out on the numerous extracurricular opportunities that are available to them through the Academy. These experiences provide fantastic opportunities for young people to develop life skills, social skills and mature into well rounded individuals. Research also indicates that young people who are absent from school without permission are most vulnerable to being drawn into crime and anti-social behaviour³ and are especially at risk of abuse and sexual exploitation.

Goldington Academy takes a pro-active approach to ensuring consistently high attendance for each of its pupils and seeks a committed involvement from all stakeholders in promoting the continued improvement of attendance for all students.

The Academy’s attendance targets for the current Academic Year are:

- KS3 – 96%
- KS4 – 96%

¹ ‘Improving attendance at school’, Charlie Taylor - DFE-00036-2012.

² ‘Improving attendance at school’, Charlie Taylor - DFE-00036-2012.

³ 2004 Youth Crime Survey.

Legal Frameworks and guidance:

- Education Act 1996, section 444
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs
- ‘Improving attendance at school’, Charlie Taylor - DFE-00036-2012
- Youth Crime Survey 2004
- School census Guide 2020, DfE-00142-2020
- Child Missing Education Procedures
- Keeping Children Safe In Education 2022
- Bedford Borough Council – Attendance Toolkit

It is a legal obligation of all parents/carers to ensure their child attends regularly, by law all children of compulsory school age must get a proper full time education. 2

The 1996 Education Act states;

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

(a) To his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) To any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise”.

Policy aims:

1. To promote a shared sense of responsibility for promoting attendance by all stakeholders in the Academy.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority amongst all stakeholders in the Academy.
3. To develop a framework with defined roles and responsibilities amongst staff, students and wider academy stakeholders in ensuring the continued improvement of attendance.
4. To develop and maintain a consistent approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data using SIMS management system at agreed intervals.
5. To ensure the academy carries out its legal obligations with regard to recording and publishing attendance figures to parents and the DFE.
6. To ensure clear procedures for safeguarding students during periods of absence.
7. To promote effective partnerships between the Academy, parents and the Educational Welfare Services.

8. To recognise and support the individual needs of pupils during and following periods of absence.

Roles and responsibilities

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

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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader 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
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The attendance officer

The school 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/Assistant Head (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Contact parents / carers if a call is not received by 10.00am on the first day of absence (See Appendix C). If appropriate, other agencies may also be informed of unexplained absence e.g. social workers, police etc.

Form tutors/class teachers

- Form tutors and class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. This must be as soon as possible at the beginning of form period and at the beginning of lessons on SIMS Lesson Monitor.
- Ensure form tutors must be aware of their class's attendance percentage and be proactive in promoting attendance

School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Officer or Head of Year in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Attend every timetabled session on time
- If late, pupils must sign in at the main office.

- If pupils are required to leave the premises during the school day they must get a signed slip from their Head of Year and present this to the office on their departure (This is for their safety as well as administrative purposes);
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence eg bullying, racism etc;

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the form tutor period each day.

Registers will then be taken for every lesson. The PM registration mark will be recorded at the beginning of period four each day. The registers will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken between 8.50am and 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.20amThe register for the second session will be taken at 1.40pm.

Unplanned absence

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office.

- We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should let the school know in advance by contacting the school office.
- However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Pupils regularly arriving late may face a sanction if the school has not been informed by a parent/carer of a genuine reason for lateness.
- Ongoing lateness may result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Notify the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may other agencies as appropriate e.g. social services, police etc.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider making a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through termly reports and through the SIMS parent app.

Parents/carers are welcome to contact the school for up to date information relating to attendance at any time.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Study leave
- Being educated off site

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Attendance monitoring

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

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

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors and heads of year and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- The school will write to parents/carers to alert them if their child's attendance becomes a cause for concern.
- The school may also invite parents in for a meeting to identify causes for low attendance and to develop an action plan to improve attendance.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Attendance procedures for absenteeism

Heads of Year will carry out weekly attendance monitoring using the SIMS attendance reporting system and will use their findings to inform their decisions around challenging absenteeism and referring individual cases to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Stage 1

Pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees identified through use of SIMS attendance report.

Stage 2

HOY to phone parents and raise concerns, phone call logged on SIMS communication log. Tracking sheet set up and saved in the HOY folder on the main system. Tracking sheet to be regularly updated throughout the process (See Appendix E). Support offered either in house or through Early Help assessment.

Stage 3

1st official letter from HOY (See Appendix F) if no improvement in attendance from stage 2.

Stage 4

HOY invites parents into meeting if no improvement from stage 3. An attendance action plan is put in place (See Appendix H).

If the plan is not met then the case will be referred to EWO (See Appendix G + I).

Stage 5

EWO/SLT/HOY meeting with parent.

Possible fixed penalty notice.

Live case to EWS.

Suspected missing Child

Having followed all of the procedures outlined in the policy and staff have been unable to establish a reason for absence and the pupil has not attended for 10 school days a Missing Child – School Referral Form (See Appendix D) will be completed and forwarded to the EWO for action.

Links to other policies

Behaviour policy

Pastoral care and guidance policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Appendices

ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

The register of attendance is a statutory document and staff must exercise care in ensuring its accurate completion. It is also an important tool for checking on the whereabouts of a pupil, and facilitates checks when the school is evacuated, e.g. for Fire Drills. It may be inspected by third parties, such as Ofsted or the Education Welfare Officer and is collected by the Department for Education termly through the school census. The data recorded is reviewed internally and used to identify pupils for whom poor school attendance and truancy is a concern.

For each day of the week the AM register should be completed and closed at 9.10 am for morning registration. For afternoon registration the register should be completed and closed by 1.45 pm and then saved on SIMS. Registers for each lesson should be taken and saved within the first ten minutes of the lesson starting.

NO BLANKS SHOULD BE LEFT IN THE REGISTER WHEN IT IS SAVED, i.e. EACH PUPIL SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED EITHER PRESENT OR ABSENT WHEN THE REGISTER IS CLOSED

SYMBOLS

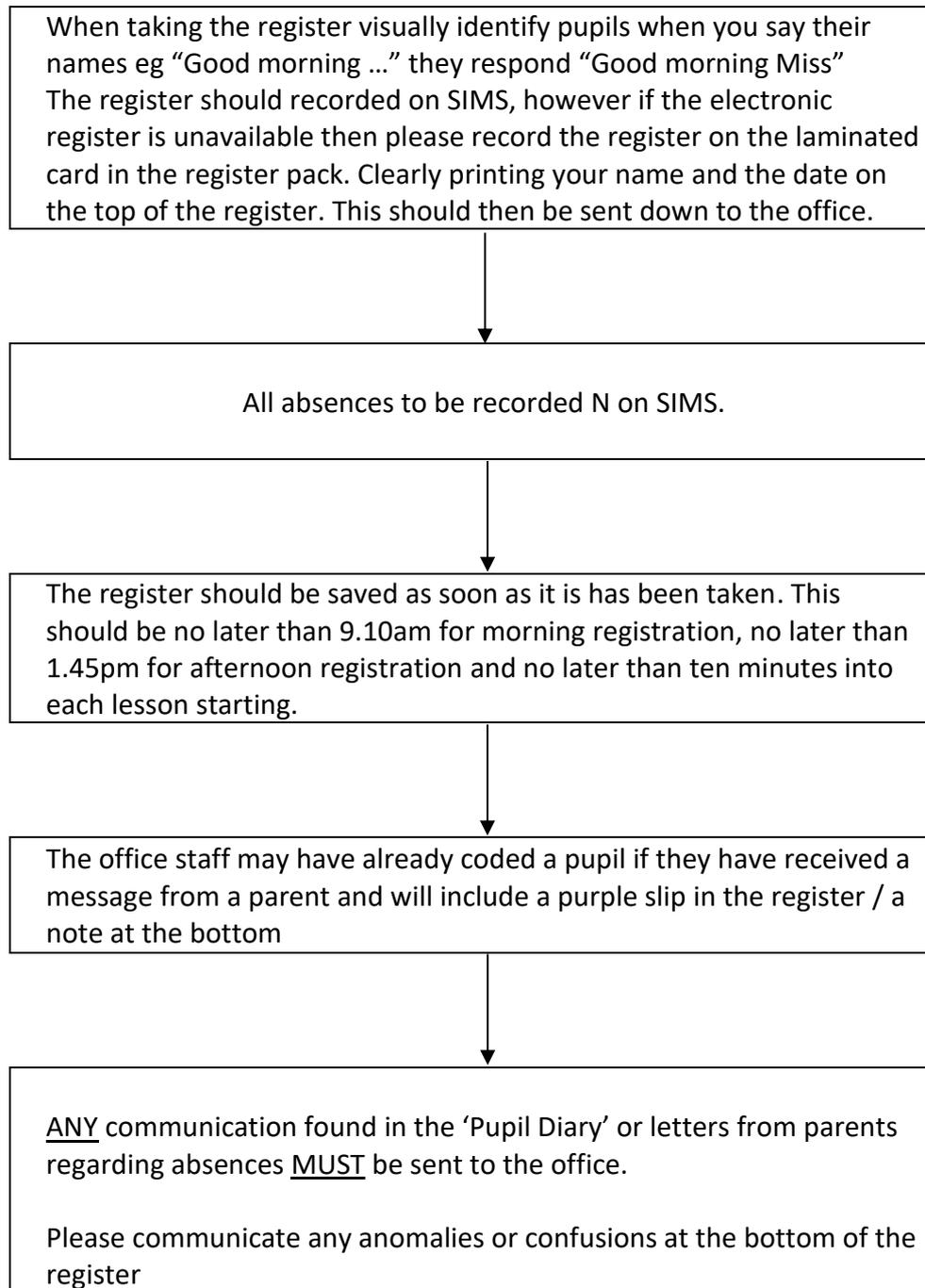
Attendance registers are to be marked in accordance with the symbols below. Pupils who are out of school on an official school visit should be marked ABSENT in the normal way but with the letter 'V' in the upper box. On that basis, the following supplementary symbols are to be used:

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (not dual reg)
C	Other Authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
D	Dual registered (i.e. present at another school or at a PRU)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
G	Family holiday (not agreed/unauthorised)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason for the absence provided yet
O	Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late and arrived after the register closed

V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience (not work based training)
X	Coronavirus related absence
Y	Partial and forced closure
Z	Pupil not on roll yet
#	School closed to all pupils

Late (after registration closes) ¹/The electronic gates close at 9.00 am. All pupils who arrive after this time are required to book in at the school office. Any child arriving late will receive a late mark. Following 3 late marks a letter of concern will be sent to their parents.

UPDATED REGISTRATION FLOWCHART



Staff MUST be accurate when taking the register because:

- In an EMERGENCY we must know who is present and who is not
 - Parents are sent a text message if there is no reason provided for an absence
- Staff must follow up N codes and indicate at the bottom of the register when they have received a letter or note in pupil diaries, explaining the reason for the absence. Please pass such communications to the School Office.

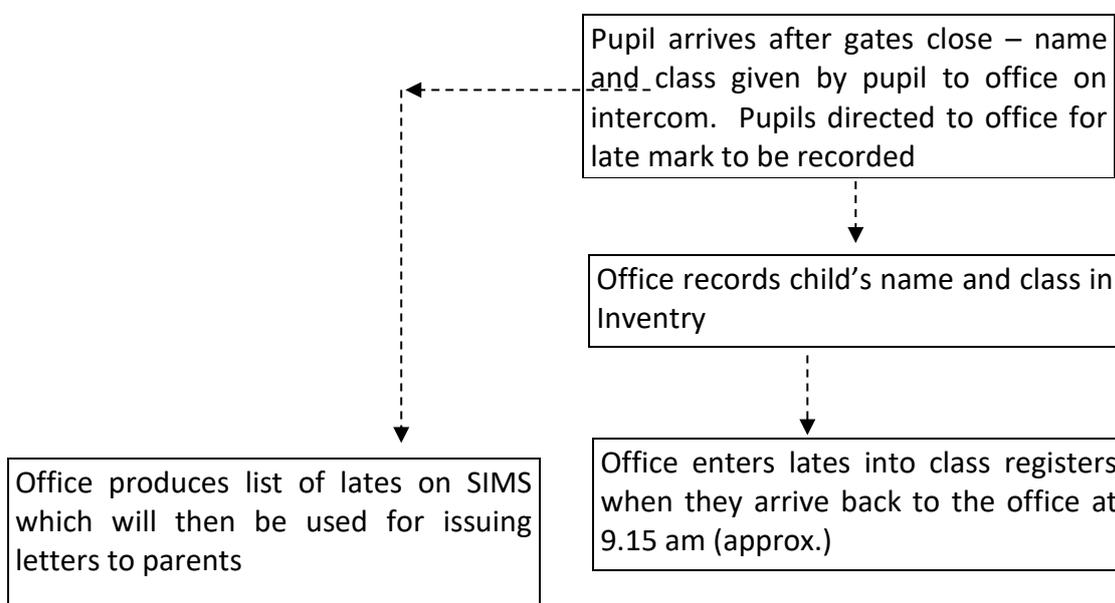
The Important of Accuracy when taking Registers

- It is vital that registers are completed accurately so that we are absolutely clear who is present and who is not in case there is an emergency.
- The school uses 'Keep Kids Safe' to aid communication with parents. Part of the system will enable the school to contact parents (at a click of a button) should there be NO reason provided for a child's absence.

It is therefore crucial that the registers are accurate so that we are not communicating an absence to parents when their child is in school.

- 'Keep Kids Safe' has been proven as an effective system to combat truancy and enables the school to check a pupil's attendance immediately by communicating with parents quickly and efficiently.

Late Register Procedures carried out by the Office



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
Children missing education



This form must now be completed online using the most up to date information found in Bedford Borough Council's latest Attendance toolkit.

www.bedford.gov.uk/possiblemissingchild

The Children Missing Education Officer can be contact on;

Tel: 01234 228178 (direct line)

E mail: childrenmissingeducation@bedford.gov.uk

Pupil Name:		Form:	Year:	Maths Level:	English Level	Science Level:
Autumn Term 1 percentage attendance	Autumn Term 2 percentage attendance	Spring Term 1 percentage attendance	Spring Term 2 percentage attendance	Summer Term 1 percentage attendance	Summer Term 2 percentage attendance	
Patterns	Patterns	Patterns	Patterns	Patterns	Patterns	
Concern/Information Term		Autumn	Spring Term		Summer Term	
Strategies/Advice						
Outcome						



Engaging minds. Nurturing success. Inspiring futures.

Haylands Way, Bedford MK41 9BX

Telephone: 01234 261516

e-mail: office@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Website: www.goldington.beds.sch.uk

Principal: Mr. Francis Galbraith BSc (Hons), NPQH, MBA

Dear *

I am writing to you concerning * school attendance. The school has a policy, agreed with the Education Welfare Service, of informing parents if their child's attendance rate falls below 90%. Whilst we recognise that children should not be in school when they are ill, we must stress the importance of regular attendance and the effect absence has on academic and social progress.

* attendance rate so far this academic year is *%. The school will be monitoring this over the next few weeks. If there is no significant sign of improvement in that time, an attendance meeting will be arranged in school.

Please contact the school if you feel we can help and support your child in increasing their level of school attendance.

Yours sincerely

HOY name

Head of Year



Engaging minds. Nurturing success. Inspiring futures.

Haylands Way, Bedford MK41 9BX

Telephone: 01234 261516

e-mail: office@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Website: www.goldington.beds.sch.uk

Principal: Mr. Francis Galbraith BSc (Hons), NPQH, MBA

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Student's name

Following further monitoring of **child's name** attendance, I am still concerned about that the amount of time **he/she** is missing from school. I would like to arrange a meeting with you to discuss the reasons for the absences and devise a plan to increase **Student's name** level of attendance. Would you please attend this meeting at school on **Date and time**. If this is not convenient please let me know and I will arrange an alternative date or time.

If you are unable to attend a meeting in School or if attendance does not improve as a result of this meeting, Goldington Academy will be obligated to consider making a formal referral to the Education Welfare Service.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Action Plan/Parent Contract

School:..... **Initial / Review**

Pupil:..... **DOB:**..... **Ethnicity:**.....

Form Group:..... **Form Tutor:**..... **Head of Year:**..... **LAC: Y/N**

Purpose of plan: improve pupil's school attendance & address any issues affecting attendance

Attendance Level (%)..... Authorised (%)..... Unauthorised (%).....

Difficulty	YES	NO	Difficulty	YES	NO
1. Academic			5. School Relationships		
2. Medical			6. Bullying		
3. Home issues			7. Behaviour/Attitude		
4. Transport			8. Other		

(If any issues are identified in the shaded area above an Early Help Assessment should be considered)
Identified Difficulty & Action Plan (to include Attendance Target for next 3 school weeks)

No.	Difficulty	Action	By Whom
This plan can be continued overleaf: Target		Attendance	%

- A. We, the undersigned, agree to the Action Plan above and will co-operate fully with these aims. We will review the plan in three weeks on
- B. We confirm this is the Action Plan made in the absence of the child's parents/carers.
- C. **The school will not authorise any further absences without evidence. Failure to reach these targets will result in a Penalty Notice being issued or a referral to the Education Welfare Service.**

Signed: Mother/Carer:..... **Print Name:**.....

Father/Carer:..... Print Name:

Pupil:..... Print Name:

School Representative Name & Position:.....

Signature of School Rep:..... Date

Action Plan Continued:

No.	Difficulty	Action	By Whom

Other Actions (to be completed if parents do not attend or at 3 week review of this plan)

ACTION	Y/N	DATE REQUESTED	BY WHOM
Penalty Notice Warning Request			
Referral to EWS			
Referral to Early Help			
Referral to Social Services			



**EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE:
ATTENDANCE REFERRAL**

FromSchool

The Education Welfare Service accepts referral enquiries on the understanding that the referral to us has been discussed with parent/guardian/carer (and students where appropriate). If *no contact* has been made with the responsible adult, please enter reason below. The school should have taken some action to remedy the situation prior to any request. *Please note this action below:*

Student Name.....M / F

Address.....Post Code.....

DOB.....Year Group..... Class..... Ethnic Origin.....

Language used at home..... G.P.

Other Agencies Involved (complete details overleaf)

LAC ? Yes / No

SEN Stage:

<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> School Action Details
<input type="checkbox"/> School Action Plus Details	<input type="checkbox"/> Statement DetailsLast Review Date.....

Names of Parents/Carers/Guardians (living at home)

Surname	First/Given Name	Title	Relationship	Telephone Number

Details of other significant adult(s) recorded on school records (not living at home address)

Surname	First/Given Name	Title	Relationship	Telephone Number

Address

School Intervention

Please tick action you have taken in an attempt to resolve the situation

✉ Letter home (attach copies)

☎ Telephone call (detail below)

☺ Meeting with parents (detail below)

? Other intervention (detail below)
(Please Specify)

Brief Summary of Intervention (use separate sheet if necessary)

.....
.....
.....

Please state any known concerns to staff safety -

.....
.....

➤ **Learning (*remember to attach Attendance Certificate*)**

Progress, achievement, aspirations – Are they progressing/developing age appropriately and having positive impact on others?

➤ **Links to other Agencies**

Are there any other agencies involved who are supporting the parent/carer and/or child?

➤ **Health**

Physical, emotional and social development – is this young person physically and mentally healthy?

➤ **Parents & Carers**

Family history, functioning and well being – do they keep this young person safe from harm, do they provide emotional warmth and stability?

School Referrer..... **Date**

(& Status) **Contact Number**

Communication following referral Once a referral has been accepted, the Education Welfare Officer will keep you closely informed of action taken. We would also ask that you keep the Education Welfare Officer informed of any meetings/actions taken by the school with the referred pupil as this may impact on our Case Management.

EWS Use Only	
Date referral first requested (if appropriate)	
Date referral received	