



# Attendance Policy

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Date reviewed    | 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2020           |
| Frequency        | Annually                               |
| Next review date | October 2021                           |
| Reviewed by      | Health & Safety and Premises Committee |

Signed: .....

**Chair of Governors**

Dated: 8/10/2020

Signed: .....

Dated: 8/10/2020

## 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.'<sup>1</sup> 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'<sup>2</sup>.*

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 behaviour<sup>3</sup> 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%

## **Legal Frameworks and guidance:**

<sup>1</sup> 'Improving attendance at school', Charlie Taylor - DFE-00036-2012.

<sup>2</sup> 'Improving attendance at school', Charlie Taylor - DFE-00036-2012.

<sup>3</sup> 2004 Youth Crime Survey.

- 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 – Bedford Borough guidance 2020
- Keeping Children Safe In Education 2020
- Bedford Borough Council – Attendance Toolkit 2020
- Addendum -recoding absence in relation to coronavirus during the year 2020/21

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.

## **Understanding absence**

### **Authorised Absence**

Authorised absence is absence with permission from the principal or other authorised representative of the Academy. This includes absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided, eg ill health;

Even when pupils are engaged in Approved Educational Activity off-site, they must not be marked as present, as good Health and Safety practice requires that the Academy needs to know who is on the premises in the case of a fire drill or real emergency;

The Academy **may** authorise absence in the following circumstances;

- a. Personal illness (Excessive or extended absences **will require medical evidence**).
- b. Medical Appointment (Proof of appointment may be required)
- c. Family bereavement
- d. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to a child's health and safety.
- e. Religious observance
- f. A travelling child's absence
- g. Involvement in a public performance
- h. Approved sporting activity
- i. Entrance exams
- f. Visits to other schools i.e. to ensure a smooth transition to upper school
- g. In the year 2020/21 only, any pupil who is absent in line with guidance relating to coronavirus will be coded as X. Absences in these circumstances will not count as an absence for statistical purposes.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from the authorised representative of the Academy. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences. Unauthorised absence from school is considered truancy.

The Academy will not authorise absence in the following circumstances;

- a. No explanation is offered by the parent/carer
- b. Leave of absence which are taken without the Academy's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of the time agreed by the Academy.
- c. Occasions such as family birthdays
- d. Minding siblings
- e. Parent/carer or sibling illness
- f. Treatment of head lice
- g. Family holidays in term time
- h. When attendance is at 90% or below and sufficient evidence is not provided to justify further absence.

## **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

Persistent Absentees are pupils whose attendance falls below 90%<sup>4</sup>.

No absence below 90% will be authorised unless in extenuating circumstances. Goldington Academy will refer any individual child whose attendance is 90% or below to the Educational Welfare Officer. At this point legal proceedings could follow if pupils and parents do not engage with strategies put in place to address persistent absenteeism and raise attendance.

The Academy recognises that unique extenuating circumstances may mean that attendance below 90% is unavoidable e.g. in cases of long term illness where medical evidence has been provided. The Academy will endeavour to act in the best interest of the pupil/family in such instances and will seek advice from the Medical Needs Team<sup>5</sup> (part of Greys Education Centre) to ensure that pupils are able to access their education so far as is possible.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Parents**

To help fulfil parents/carers important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents /carers are requested and encouraged, to the extent feasible:

- To ensure their child attends school regularly (meeting the attendance target for their KS as appropriate) and punctually;
- To notify the Academy as soon as possible if their child cannot attend for any reason – this is for the child's safety as well as administrative reasons;
- Provide confirmation of the reason for an absence on the morning of the absence (or beforehand if the absence is planned);
- To work with the Academy and Education Welfare Officer to resolve/alleviate any attendance problems or protracted absence;
- To attend meetings as required in relation to their child's attendance;
- To help their child/children achieve the school's attendance targets for KS2 and KS3/4 as appropriate.

### **Pupils**

- Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and to arrive punctually at school and to lessons;
- If late, pupils must sign in at the main office (See Appendix A).
- 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;
- If requested, pupils must attend a return to school meeting with the appropriate staff member.
- Pupils should understand that only 'real' illnesses can be a reason for absence.

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<sup>4</sup> School census Guide

<sup>5</sup> Bedford Borough Council - Guidance regarding children who cannot attend school because of health needs.

## The Academy

- Ensure the correct code is entered onto the SIMS register to log a child's attendance/absence for both the AM and PM sessions and also for each lesson throughout the day using SIMS lesson monitor. (See Appendix A).
- Ensure that members of staff take accurate registers at the appropriate times (See Appendix B).
- Contact parents / carers if a call is not received by 10.00am on the first day of absence (See Appendix C).
- Monitor attendance and punctuality on a regular basis;
- Ensure that the attendance of vulnerable groups of pupils is monitored regularly and quick action is taken to address any concerns within these groups
- Submit the details of the level of absence within the Academy through the termly School Census;
- Report attendance data to parents/carers through reports and interim reports.
- Ensure all staff are aware of, and how to implement care, guidance and support policies in order to recognise where there may be issues affecting pupil attendance and to be pro-active in dealing with issues in the appropriate way;
- Implement strategies to support pupils and their families who have difficulties in attending school regularly and are at risk of becoming persistent absentees;
- Ensure form/class teachers are aware of their class's attendance percentage and are pro-active in promoting attendance;
- Ensure Progress and Year Leaders are aware of their Year Group's attendance percentage and are pro-active in addressing issues, especially where pupils are at risk of becoming persistent absentees;
- Reward good attendance;
- Ensure class and subject teachers contribute to the reduction of absences by delivering interesting and engaging lessons and insist on good attendance and punctuality for themselves, colleagues and pupils;
- Use assemblies to promote good attendance in school.
- Provide up to date and relevant information regarding attendance from the DFE to parents as necessary.
- ***Follow the procedures regarding attendance and absence, as outlined in this policy.***

## Rewarding attendance

| Attendance rewards   |  |
|--|--|
| 100% attendance in 1 <sup>st</sup> term                          | Certificate in HOY assembly                            |
| 100% attendance in 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> half term | Letter home from HOY                                   |
| 100% attendance all year   | Invitation to pizza party during 3 <sup>rd</sup> term. |

## **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**

1<sup>st</sup> 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:

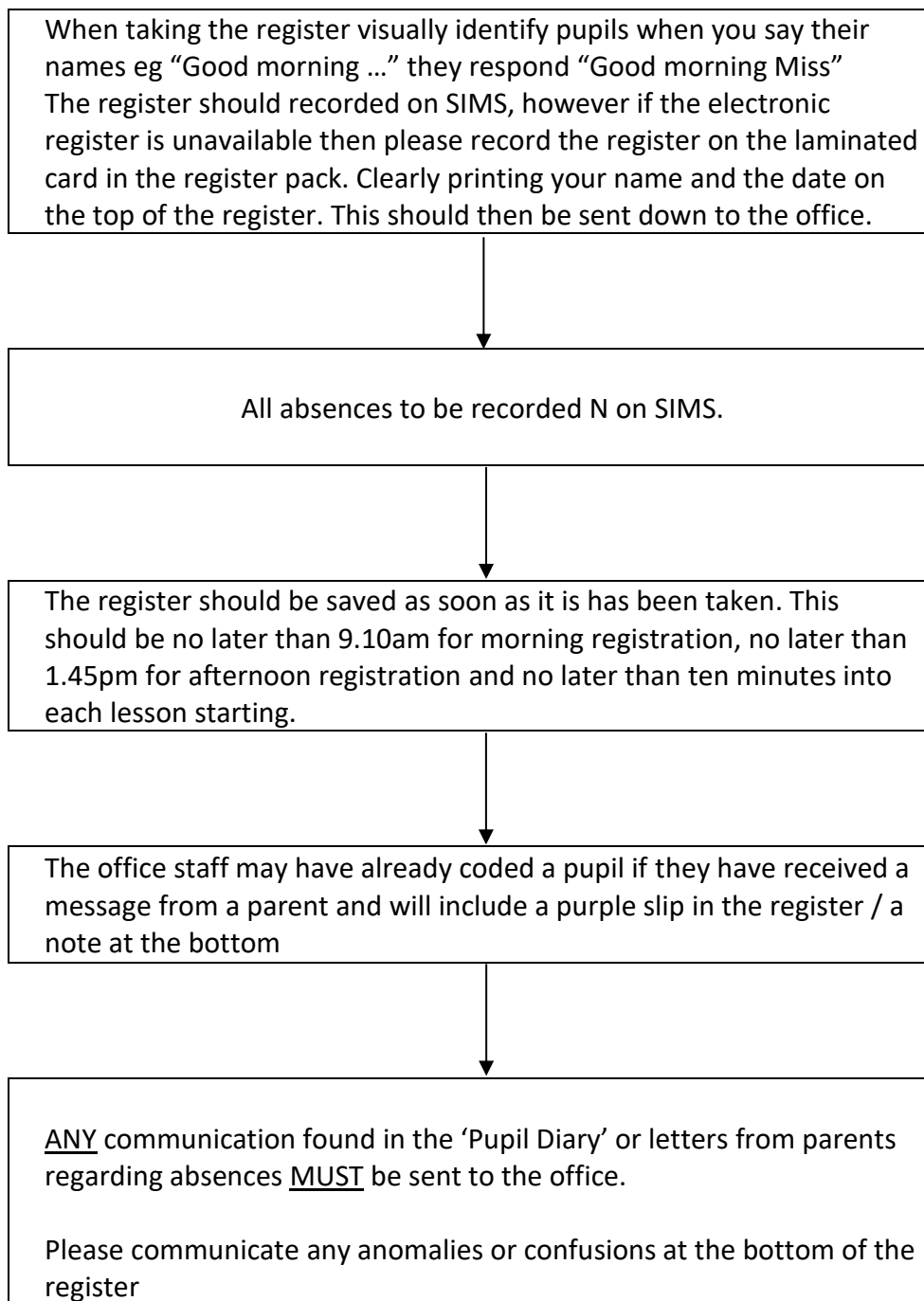
|   |  |
|---|--|
| / | Present (AM)   |
| \ | Present (PM)   |
| B | Educated off site (not dual reg)   |
| C | Other Authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) |
| D | Dual registered (i.e. present at another school or at a PRU)                         |
| E | Excluded (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) <sup>1</sup>/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.

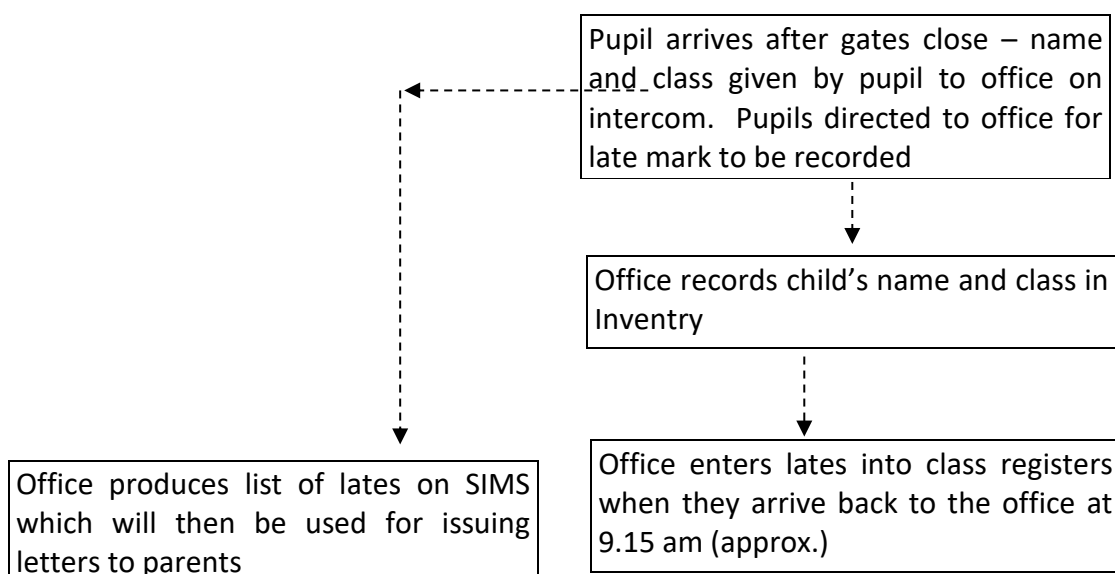
### The Important of Accuracy when taking Registers

- 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](http://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](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@bedford.gov.uk)

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



Engaging minds. Nurturing success. Inspiring futures.

Haylands Way, Bedford MK41 9BX  
**Telephone:** 01234 261516 **Fax:** 01234 272344  
**e-mail:** office@goldington.beds.sch.uk  
**Website:** www.goldingtonacademy.org.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**



**Artsmark  
Gold Award**  
Awarded by Arts  
Council England





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APPENDIX

G

Haylands Way, Bedford MK41 9BX

Telephone: 01234 261516 Fax: 01234 272344

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

Website: www.goldingtonacademy.org.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



Artsmark  
Gold Award  
Awarded by Arts  
Council England



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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)**

| <b>ACTION</b>                  | <b>Y/N</b> | <b>DATE REQUESTED</b> | <b>BY WHOM</b> |
|--------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Penalty Notice Warning Request |            |                       |                |
| Referral to EWS                |            |                       |                |
| Referral to Early Help         |            |                       |                |
| Referral to Social Services    |            |                       |                |



**BEDFORD  
BOROUGH**

**EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE:  
ATTENDANCE REFERRAL**

**From .....School**

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 Details .....     |
|   | .....Last 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.

| <b>EWS Use Only</b>                                   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Date referral first requested (if appropriate)</b> |  |
| <b>Date referral received</b>                         |  |