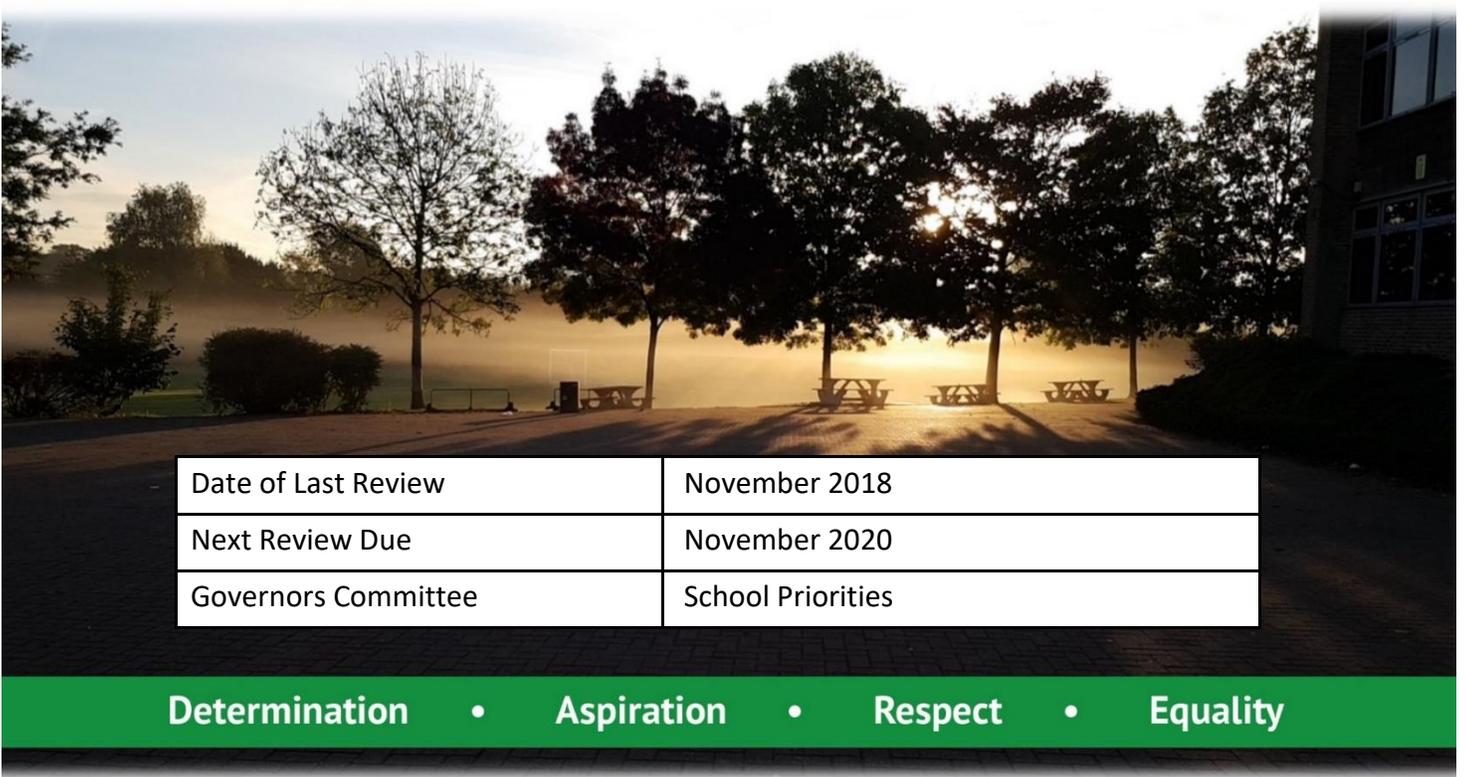




Highlands School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Date of Last Review	November 2018
Next Review Due	November 2020
Governors Committee	School Priorities

Determination • Aspiration • Respect • Equality

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Contents

SECTION 1 – RATIONALE	3
SUMMARY	3
SECTION 2 – OPERATING THE POLICY.....	4
2.1 Promoting Good Attendance	4
2.2 Roles and Responsibilities	4
2.3 Notifying the School and Parent of Absence	5
SECTION 3 – RECORDING ATTENDANCE AND RESPONDING TO ABSENCE.....	6
3.1 Recording attendance.....	6
3.2 Lateness/punctuality.....	6
3.3 Response to Absence	6
3.4 Support during absence and return from absence.....	7
SECTION 4 – REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE	8
4.1 Absence in Term Time	8
4.2 Absence through participation in performances, including theatre, film or television work and sport	8
4.3 Study leave	8
SECTION 5 – PENALTY NOTICES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AND OTHER LEGAL MEASURES	8
5.1 Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness	9
APPENDIX A – Punctuality.....	10
A.1 Prevention for Punctuality: Key people and steps	10
A.2 Policing of Punctuality: Key people, steps and sanctions.....	11
A.3 Monitoring of Punctuality: Key people and interventions	11
APPENDIX B - School Attendance Meeting (SAM) Forms	

SECTION 1 – RATIONALE

For a student to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all feel valued and welcome. Parents and students play a part in making our school so successful. Every student has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

It is very important, therefore, that parents make sure that their child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how, together, we will achieve this.

SUMMARY

- Attendance is a legal requirement and parents, students and members of staff work together to monitor, report and intervene on attendance.
- Absence is notified on the school telephone absence line 020 8370 1191, via INSIGHT or email
- The school will classify each period of absence as authorised or unauthorised.
- The school will investigate unexplained absence, working jointly with outside agencies as necessary.
- A student with attendance below 90% is considered a persistent absentee and will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- The school and local authority will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance.
- Request for absence in term time is only authorised in exceptional circumstances and must be made in advance and in writing to the Headteacher.
- Poor punctuality is considered an attendance problem and subject to the same interventions.

SECTION 2 – OPERATING THE POLICY

2.1 Promoting Good Attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home School Agreement contains details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- provide information on all matters related to attendance in our newsletters and website
- report to you on how your child is performing in school including attendance and punctuality.
- celebrate and reward good attendance or improving attendance
- set targets for attendance at school level and for individuals
- run appropriate intervention to secure good and improving attendance.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leader

A member of the senior leadership team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. (S)he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

Attendance Administration Officer

- Be responsible for the day-to-day recording of attendance within the school management system and generate reports to support tracking.
- Identify and follow up unauthorised absences and notify Head of Year of concerns at agreed trigger points
- Report to the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Looked After Children
- With the support of the pastoral team, coordinate meetings between the school, parents and support agencies.

Head of Year

- Develop strategies to address concerns about individual student's attendance.
- Ensure that all truancy is followed up and dealt with appropriately in line with the School Behaviour Policy
- Meet with parents to address attendance problems according to agreed trigger levels
- Where appropriate, makes referral to external agencies to provide support for the student and family
- Hold regular meetings with EWO on attendance concerns
- Agree a support and action plans with Form Tutor to address any attendance concerns

Form Tutor

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately
- Promote and reward good attendance with students at all appropriate opportunities
- Challenge and follows up, where necessary, unexplained absence during the school day ("N" codes)
- Liaise with the Head of Year on matters of attendance and punctuality, including any signs of suspected truancy and inform the Head of Year of any possible underlying problems
- Work with Head of Year to deliver agreed support and action plans to improve attendance and punctuality

Classroom staff

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately in lessons
- Report suspected truancy to the attendance officer
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a student's absence
- Support students with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school

Students

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Arrive in school on time and be at registrations and lessons punctually
- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours

Parents/Carers

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents/carers will:

- inform the school on the first day of absence
- discuss with the form tutor any planned absences well in advance
- support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable
- avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

2.3 Notifying the School and Parent of Absence

If your child is absent, you must contact us as soon as possible

- By phone 020 8370 1191
- By web using the INSIGHT link on home page
- By email postbox@highlands.enfield.sch.uk

If the absence is known in advance, for example a medical appointment, you should notify the school at least one day before the absence.

If the absence is to last longer than one day you should notify us on each day of the absence. If a doctor has recommended a fixed number of days absence then you can notify us of this in writing and you would not need to call each day during this period. Absence for a period of longer than 3 days for medical reason requires a note from the health care professional (typically a doctor).

If your child is absent and we have not heard from you we will send a text message or telephone you during the morning of the absence.

See section 3.3 below for details of our response to absence.

SECTION 3 – RECORDING ATTENDANCE AND RESPONDING TO ABSENCE

3.1 Recording attendance

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day and again for the afternoon session. All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised by the school.

Attendance and absence data are recorded electronically on the school's information management system. Every entry in the attendance register is preserved for a period of at least 3 years and the reason for absence is kept for at least 2 years.

3.2 Lateness/punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons is used to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late they can miss work time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be embarrassing leading to possible further absence.

All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.

If a student is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded M. Please be advised that, where possible, doctor and dentist appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other students. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action (see Section 6 for further detail).

Parents or carers of students who have patterns of lateness are contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents or carers are invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 20 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 3 month period, the school may issue parents with a Penalty Notice.

3.3 Response to Absence

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is always required.

First day absence

If your child is absent we will telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you – this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance

If absences persist, we will invite parents to discuss the situation and refer our concerns to the Education Welfare Officer as appropriate.

Third day absence

If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, after three days of absence the school will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family and neighbours.

A designated member of staff may make a home visit to establish the whereabouts of the child.

Ten days absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of being missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as persistent absentees (PA). Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education.

If your child has had absence and their attendance level is falling towards 90% we will:

- contact you to alert you to the low level of attendance
- hold a School Attendance Meeting (SAM1) to investigate the underlying causes

If your child has continued periods of absence and their attendance level has fallen below 90% we will:

- hold a second School Attendance Meeting (SAM2) to investigate the reasons why attendance has not improved
- construct an Attendance Action Plan (AAP) that may include the allocation of additional support through a mentor or the external agency
- notify the Educational Welfare Officer of our concern

3.4 Support during absence and return from absence

It is important that during unavoidable, authorised extended periods of absence, students are supported to continue their study. The school will coordinate with external support agencies to supply details of programmes of study and work.

On return from an unavoidable absence all students are made to feel welcome. This will include ensuring that the student is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date with any information that has been passed to the other students. The form tutor and Head of Year will coordinate actions to support the student and most catch-up will happen at home.

SECTION 4 - REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher can determine the length of any authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional circumstances are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to write to the Headteacher in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

4.1 Absence in Term Time

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time.

A maximum of 10 days may be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher as a one off. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time and attendance record to date.

Where a student's attendance rate is already below 95% or will fall to or below that level as a result of planned absence, permission is very unlikely to be given. Any period of absence taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised.

4.2 Absence through participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and sport

Parents can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work or activity, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer/organiser during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the Headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

4.3 Study leave

We believe that students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. For this reason, students will be expected to attend school in the usual way, although the regular timetable may be varied to support revision. Study leave will only be granted to students during the time of the external examination period.

Should any students wish to attend school (or should their parents wish them to) on the days and at times when they are not sitting examinations, arrangements will be made for them to do so.

Students in Year 12 & 13 may be given home study for specified periods when they are not required to attend school. These periods are set out in a 'licence' that is signed by the parent/carer and the school before the leave comes into operation. The school may alter and revoke the agreed periods of leave during the year and, if it does so, will communicate changes to parents.

SECTION 5 - PENALTY NOTICES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AND OTHER LEGAL MEASURES

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

5.1 Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness

The school and Enfield Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will be considered when there is unauthorised absence (including persistent lateness to school) and:

- 1 the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
- 2 the child has 20 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a three month period.

A copy is of Enfield Council's code is available from: <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/children-and-education/school-welfare-and-information/absence-and-attendance/>

Parents and carers will be warned of the likelihood of a Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absence via a letter, through the leave of absence request form or at the School Attendance Meeting (SAM2).

APPENDIX A - Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If students miss the start of the day they can miss, vital information and news for the day.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at 8.40 a.m. and we expect students to be in class at that time. Tutor group registers are marked at 8.45 a.m. and students will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At 8.55 a.m. the tutor group registers will be closed. Students arriving after 8.55 a.m. will receive a late mark, if they provide a reasonable explanation with the support of parent/carer. In accordance with the Regulations, if a student arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that parents could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If a child has a persistent late record then his or her parents will be asked to meet with the Form Tutor or Head of Year to resolve the problem.

The Punctuality Policy's 3 main parts identify and detail key people and key steps/sanctions involved in securing:

- Prevention
- Policing and Sanctions
- Monitoring and Intervention

A.1 Prevention for Punctuality: Key people and steps

1. Parents will be informed of the Punctuality Policy which makes the school's expectations explicit with regard to students' time keeping.
2. Parents will be kept regularly informed about their child's punctuality to both school and lessons:
 - a. A text message will inform them of their child having arrived late to school
 - b. Interim Reports will inform them of their child's punctuality to AM/PM registrations
3. Form Tutors will deliver at the start of every Academic Year, in each Year, an Induction Programme on the topic of "Readiness to Lessons", which will reiterate that:
 - a. Students are advised to carry a pocket or wrist watch, part of the development of their work and life skills.
 - b. Access to lockers is not permitted between lessons, as students are expected:
 - To be in full school uniform by 8.40 a.m.
 - To be equipped for each of their 1 to 2 lessons between breaks (including PE kit).
 - c. Access to toilets in form/lesson time will be restricted: Medical cards will continue to be used to allow students to leave lessons.
4. The Senior Leader on duty will ensure, with the Behaviour and Duty Teams, that
 - a. A 10 minutes notice bell or whistle is sounded outside and respected.
 - b. The 5 minutes notice bell is respected in the canteen and toilets.
 - c. In the first 5 minutes of any form or teaching period, main corridors are "swept and checked".
5. Heads of Faculty will support punctuality in their curriculum area directing their team, as appropriate, to help ensure all lessons are started promptly.
6. Teachers, Tutors, Cover and Support staff will take responsibility for ensuring that
 - a. Students are promptly allowed in and orderly settled into classrooms

- b. Class registers are completed within the first 15 minutes of the form or lesson period. A paper register is used in an emergency (e.g. technical problem, external cover) and sent to reception for information and temporary storage
- c. Students arriving more than 5 minutes into the lesson are registered late
- d. The school office is notified of any students previously registered and are missing from the lesson
- e. A signed, dated and timed planner or slip is carried by student if allowed out of the lesson/support activity/meeting.

A.2 Policing of Punctuality: Key people, steps and sanctions

I. Punctuality to school

- 1- The Behaviour Mentor will ensure that, when a student arrives after 8.45 a.m.
 - a. The student signs in at reception.
 - b. A text message is sent to the parents to inform them of a 20 min detention that day after school.
- 2- The Behaviour Mentor
 - a. Will refer to the Form Tutor and Head of Year, individual students who failed to attend their punctuality detentions.
 - b. Will keep a record of AM and PM punctuality detentions issued and attended.

II. Punctuality to lessons or form time

- 1- Teachers, Tutors and Cover staff will take responsibility for ensuring that
 - a. A Faculty detention is issued to students who arrive late to their lesson/ meeting
 - b. A Year detention is issued to students who arrive late to their form time
 - c. A Call-out is placed where students are missing after the first 10 minutes by faculty phone or by sending a reliable student from the class. Not by email
- 2- The Behaviour Mentor will monitor school's grounds and corridors during lessons, challenge any student not in lesson for a permission slip and escort them (back) to their lesson if appropriate, and inform the teacher that the student was found out of lesson without authorisation.
- 3- The Behaviour Mentor will consult HOY and issue an appropriate sanction to students found to be missing from lessons.

A.3 Monitoring of Punctuality: Key people and interventions

- 1- Tutors will take responsibility for checking their tutees' overall punctuality record every two weeks (Week A and Week B) and, where an overall patchy picture appears across the curriculum, they will:
 - a. Implement specific and appropriate intervention strategy: Tutor or Year Detention, Tutor Green Target Report, Home contact, up to a formal interview with parents (SAM1 and SAM2) – and if appropriate Education Welfare Officer.
 - b. Refer for further intervention to their Head of Year at the end of the Half-Term, any student who fails to respond to Tutor's intervention strategies as listed above
- 2- Tutors will refer to their Head of Year, who will inform the relevant Head of Faculty for appropriate investigation and intervention, any concerns regarding:
 - a. Patchy punctuality or attendance to specific lessons
 - b. Lesson registers which are missing, incomplete or inaccurate

- 3- Teachers will refer to their Head of Faculty, at the end of each half-term, on-going concerns regarding punctuality and inform parents with the appropriate Application Comment (Poor Punctuality to Lessons). They will take appropriate action in consultation with their Head of Faculty.
- 4- Heads of Faculty will help ensure that, if appropriate:
 - a. Subject registers are taken in accordance with the Punctuality Policy
 - b. Curriculum content and teaching strategies support motivation and engagement
 - c. Faculty detentions for lateness to lessons are monitored
- 5- Heads of Year will ensure that:
 - a. Interventions are in place and monitored where an SLT Detention has been set for Punctuality to school.
 - b. Interventions are in place and monitored where a concern for overall punctuality or punctuality to school has been highlighted by SLT Detention records, Tutor monitoring and/or Interim reports (e.g. Head of Year Yellow report, PSP, CP Officer, Multi-agencies meeting/EWO etc. as appropriate).
 - c. The Extended Leadership Team has access to a central record of students whose overall Attendance/Punctuality is being addressed and monitored.
- 6- Heads of Faculty and Heads of Year will report any recurring concerns with registers and punctuality, and lack of response to their intervention strategies to their direct Line Manager.

School Attendance Meeting - SAM 1

1. Obtain parent's full name 2. Ascertain reasons for absence 3. Set targets 4. Set review date

Student Name:		DOB:	Tutor Group:
Parent/Carer(s) Name: 1.		Parent/Carer(s) Name: 2.	
% Attendance		No. of unauthorised Sessions:	
Key issues / reasons given for absence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Bullying • Transport • Family Circumstances 			
Targets and Actions Agreed to Improve Attendance			
By School:			
By Student:			
By Parent(s)/Carer:			
Placed on Attendance reports	Yes / No	Review date (4 weeks)	
Signed and agreed by HOY:		Signed and agreed by AHT:	
Student:		Parent/Carer 1:	
Parent/Carer 2:		Date of meeting:	

School Attendance Meeting - SAM 2

- Ascertain reason for no improvement
- Advise parent/carer of legal implications
- Parents name and DOB to be completed
- Parent/carer to sign and be handed a copy of the attendance policy

Student Name:		DOB:	Tutor Group:	
Parent/Carer(s) Name: 1.		Parent/Carer(s) Name: 2.		
% Attendance		No. of unauthorised Sessions:		
Key issues / reasons given for absence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Bullying • Transport • Family Circumstances 				
Targets and Attendance Action Plan - Agreed to Improve Attendance				
By School:				
By Student:				
By Parent(s)/Carer:				
Handed a copy of Attendance Policy:	Yes / No	Advised of Legal Action:	Yes / No	Review date (4 weeks):
Signed and agreed by HOY:		Signed and agreed by AHT:		
Student:		Parent/Carer 1:		
Parent/Carer 2:		Date of meeting:		