

Attendance Policy

Village Infants School



Approved by:

Governing Board

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)
- It also refers to:
 - [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

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
- › Jo Archer is our link Governor for attendance at Village Infants

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
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary and authorising Louisa Spoor and Amy Whiffin to do so
- › Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- › Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- › Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader also known as the 'senior attendance champion' is responsible for:

- › Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- › Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- › Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- › Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- › Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- › Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- › Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Amy Whiffin and can be contacted via

3.4 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 (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Louisa Spoor and can be contacted via 0208 270 6589
lspoor@village.bardaglea.org.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes on Integris, submitting this by 9.00am and 1.40pm.

Class teachers have attendance slips in their pupil profiles to report any concerns to Amy or Louisa

Class teachers have a list of persistent absentees weekly, and these are to be flagged up to Louisa and/or Amy if absent.

3.6 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 designated senior leader responsible for attendance in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time (8.40am for Year 1 & Year 2 and 8.45am for Nursery and Reception)
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence or message via ParentMail (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
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Amy Whiffin or Louisa Spoor via the School Office or on 02082706589
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3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 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 first session of each school day and once during the second session. It 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

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must be in their classrooms by 8.40am for Key Stage 1 and 8.45am for Early Years ready to learn on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm.

4.2 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 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (see also section 7) or sending a ParentMail.

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 information e.g. prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of information. We will not ask for medical information 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.

4.3 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 via 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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 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
- If your child is late arriving at school three times during a half term the following actions will be taken:
 - You will be sent a warning letter informing you that the school is concerned regarding your child's punctuality
 - If your child's punctuality improves no further action will be taken.
 - If your child continues to arrive late for school you will be sent a further letter inviting you to attend a Parent Panel Meeting to discuss your child's punctuality and to complete a Punctuality Action Plan in which we will agree we can support your child in arriving at school on time.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call 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 do a home visit
- 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 involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via a half-termly attendance letter including current attendance data specific to their child.

If a child's attendance goes below 90% parents will be notified by a letter.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 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. Headteachers are not expected to class term time family holidays as exceptional.

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, where possible, at least before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence [appendix 2].

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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. Authorised absences will be only for the days religious observance is held and not for travel or any additional times.

- 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
- A relative is terminally ill

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences

- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

In order to raise the children's awareness of the importance of good attendance and encourage them to want to come to school every day we have introduced the following rewards to celebrate good attendance:

- **Leaflet**- Children joining the school to be provided with a leaflet encouraging good attendance. Leaflets will be available all year at the school office, and provided to targeted parents again where appropriate
- **Wrist Bands** – Children who achieve 100% attendance for each term will receive a coloured wrist band. Yellow for the autumn term, blue for the spring term and green for the summer term. Wearing a wrist band will mean the children will be a member of the 100% club and will be given additional rewards during the school year. If your child is a member of the 100% please encourage them to wear their wrist band to school every day.
- **Teddies** – George and Georgina are two teddies who are best friends, that love children coming to school. George is given to the class in Early Years with the highest attendance for that week and Georgina is given to the class in Key Stage One with the highest attendance for that week. We also have a bear that is given to the class of the week with the best punctuality.
- **Attendance Trophy** – Each week the class with best attendance across the whole school will get to have the trophy for the week.
- **Medals** – Children who receive 100% attendance during a school year will receive a medal for each year this is achieved. A bronze medal for the first year, a silver medal for the second year and a gold medal for the third year.
- **Display at the front of the school**- Parents will see which classes have won the trophy and the bears each week. The display will have information on for parents to promote good attendance.
- **No lates certificates**- Children are awarded a certificate if they have not received any lates- this is given out termly.
- **Website**- The classes with the bears for the week will be displayed on the website, this will show the bears as a race but also show how many times the bear has been won by the class
- **Display**- A display promoting attendance at the front of the school

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

The attendance team works closely with the family to support pupil attendance and education. The school will offer support, internally, or from external agencies to help the family. An individual plan will be put in place.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

The attendance team will work alongside the SENDCO and/or the Mental Health lead. These staff members will work closely with the family to support pupil attendance and education. The school will offer support, internally, or from external agencies to help the family. An individual plan will be put in place.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

The attendance team works closely with the family to support pupil attendance and education. The school will offer support, internally, or from external agencies to help the family. An individual plan will be put in place.

8 . Attendance monitoring

- › The school will rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to improve the child's attendance.
- › The Attendance Lead and Officer meet weekly to thoroughly analyse attendance, identify any actions and share latest attendance with Class Teachers
- › The school will share attendance concerns with parents via phone calls, warning letters, meetings and Attendance Actions Plans.
- › Class teacher receive a weekly list of current persistent absentees to monitor closely

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- › Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- › Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- › Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- › patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance information to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

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

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting

		<p>trial or sentencing, or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 – Leave of Absence Request Form

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Before requesting leave in term time you need to think about:

- The lessons your child will miss
- The difficulty your child will have in catching up
- The effect it will have on your child's friendship groups
- The effect it will have on how well your child performs in school

For your information:

- Amendments were made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which took effect from 1 September 2013. From this date schools are not permitted to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- All term time holiday/leave requests must be submitted to the Headteacher with the exceptional circumstances fully explained. In order to make the decision whether to authorise leave or not, parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence supporting their circumstances.
- Parents/carers need to be aware that Penalty Notices can be issued per parent, per child for unauthorised absence from school, for unauthorised leave taken in term time and/or for pupils stopped during a Truancy Patrol (£60 if paid within 21 days; £120 if paid within 28 days as at 1 September 2013) in line with the Education (Penalty Notice Regulations) England 2013. The Council's Safeguarding and Social Inclusion Service will issue Penalty Notices on behalf of the Police, the Local Authority and the School.

Pupil Details

First Name:	Class:
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Leave of Absence Request Details

Start date:	Return Date:
Total number of days absent from school:	What Country are you travelling to [if applicable]:
What are the exceptional circumstances for your withdrawal from learning request that you wish the school to consider?	

Parent Details

Name of Parent	Signature
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Appendix 3 – Attendance Slip in Pupil Profiles for Staff Members

Attendance Concern Slip- Please give to Amy or Louisa

Pupil Name and Class:

Attendance Concern:

Any action taken (e.g. spoken to parents):

Individual Attendance Plan

ADDRESSING PERSISTENT ABSENCE

Pupils Name					
Pupil class					
Attendance	Overall %	PA%	UA%	AA%	lates
History	SEN status	PP	FSM	EAL	LAC/PLAC
	Open to Social Care as CP /CiN/ Ever CIN	EHCP	Medical needs		
Support	Family Support	Early Help	CAMHS	Family Navigation	Young Carer
Action Taken	Vulnerable Pupil Hot Clinic	Education Placement Panel	Rapid Response Group	Penalty Notices	Court legal action

What is the attendance concern?

Interventions taken (meetings, referrals etc)

Date	Description	Action taken/by whom

Attendance Action Plan

Action	Who/What	Timescale	Impact/Evidence

Review date:	
Signed:	Child:
Date:	