



## **Attendance Policy**

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## 1. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all schools in New Bridge Multi Academy Trust (MAT). It details what information must be obtained for the admissions register and how and where the data should be entered and stored.

## 2. 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 student 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 students have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 3. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 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



- The link Governor for attendance at New Bridge School is Ken Stapleton (Safeguarding).

#### **4.2 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 students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### **4.3 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 student s and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Danielle Cotton and can be contacted via 0161-883-2401

#### **4.4 The Attendance Lead**

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
- Close monitoring and oversight of pupils for pupils who access Personal Budget agreements
- Agreement of, recording, monitoring and review of pupils who may access part-time and transition timetables.
- Close monitoring and liaison of pupils who are absent from school long-term due to health/medical implications
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The Attendance Lead is Lesley Meadows and can be contacted via 0161-883-2401



#### 4.5 Form Tutor

Class Teachers/Form Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, (Appendix 1) and submitting this information to the school office. This may be delegated to a Teaching Assistant in the event of covering a lesson.

The registers must be completed by 09.10am and 13.40pm daily

#### 4.6 School office staff

School administration staff will:

- Take calls, emails and messages from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Pastoral Lead or Teachers/Form Tutors in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance on request of the parents

#### 4.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school (schools main switch board on 0161 883 2401, selecting option 1) to report their child's absence before 09.00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence unless previously agreed with a Pastoral Lead, and advise when they are expected to return. If a Pastoral Lead agrees less frequent contact they will update Arbor with the correct absence code for the full period of the absence.
- 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

During the course of a year, attendance percentages equate as follows: -

- 95% - 10 days absent
- 90% - 19 days absent
- 85% - 29 days absent
- 80% - 38 days absent
- 75% - 47 days absent

#### 4.8 Students

Students are expected to attend school every day on time unless exceptional circumstance which should be discussed with the Attendance Lead.

### 5. Registers

#### 5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all student s 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 student 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 student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student 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.

Students must arrive in school by 09.10am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken between 08.40am and 09.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 13.30pm and will be kept open until 13.45pm.

## **5.2 Unplanned absence**

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the schools main switch board on 0161 883 2401, selecting option 1.

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 student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate forms of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## **5.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should contact the school office or Form Tutor/Teacher with details of the appointment and provide evidence wherever possible. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the



student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The student's parent/carers 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.

## 5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked present, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- The school attendance officer will monitor all late arrivals and parents/carers will be contacted to discuss any on-going lateness concerns.

## 5.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Contact the student's parent/carers on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may conduct 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.
- Contact the parent/carers 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.

## 5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.

Parents will be notified in writing if the student's attendance falls below 90% on a half termly basis. (Appendix 2a)

The school will invite parents/carers for an attendance review meeting if the student's attendance is lower than 80%. (Appendix 2b)

## 6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher may only grant a leave of absence to a student 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 student is authorised to be absent for.

'Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually, taking into account, the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of the time the student can be away from school. As Headteachers should only grant leaves of absence in 'exceptional circumstances' it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.' *Working Together to Improve School Attendance Sept 2022 page 13*



Children of 'school-age' who are registered at a school must attend that school every day. Regular attendance is important, not just because the law requires it but because it is the best way of ensuring that your child makes the most of the educational opportunities in order to achieve well.

Parents should avoid taking their children out of school during term time in order to go on holiday. Requests for holiday absence must be made via an email to the Director of Pastoral Support using the schools portal Arbor app and requests made by phone/email will not be actioned.

Issues parents need to be aware of

- If a parent takes their child on holiday/extended leave without the school's permission, this will be counted as unauthorised absence.
- Parents of students whose absence is unauthorised are open to legal action and can be guilty of an offence and may be liable to either a Penalty Notice or Prosecution in the Magistrate's Court.
- For those students whose absence is agreed but remain absent for longer this extra time will also be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- If a student's absence is less than 80% the Headteacher will not authorise any absences.
- In some circumstances, the school may liaise with the responsible Local Authority to remove the child's name from the register if they do not return to school as expected or total absence amounts to 20 school days. The school will work closely with the responsible Local Authority in these cases.

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 3 weeks before the absence.

The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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 student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller student's 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 student is attending educational provision
- Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the Headteacher may grant term-time holiday
- Study leave
- Flexi-schooling requests if agreed with the local authority.





## 6.2 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 student 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.

## 7. Strategies for promoting attendance

As a school, we use a range of awards systems to promote good attendance. These may vary during the academic year and be related to the current school priorities.

At the end of every half term, Good Attendance Award - Students are awarded an Attendance certificate for 100% attendance.

At the end of the academic year - Students with 100% attendance for the full year will receive a reward. This reward may vary and will be agreed annually as part of the school's attendance plans.

## 8. Attendance monitoring

### 8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance daily
- Review internal systems and keep clear, accurate details of student's attendance
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Student's levels of 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.

### 8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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



### 8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Use the MIS system Arbor to allow Teachers and other school leaders up to date statistics to facilitate discussions with students 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

### 8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school.

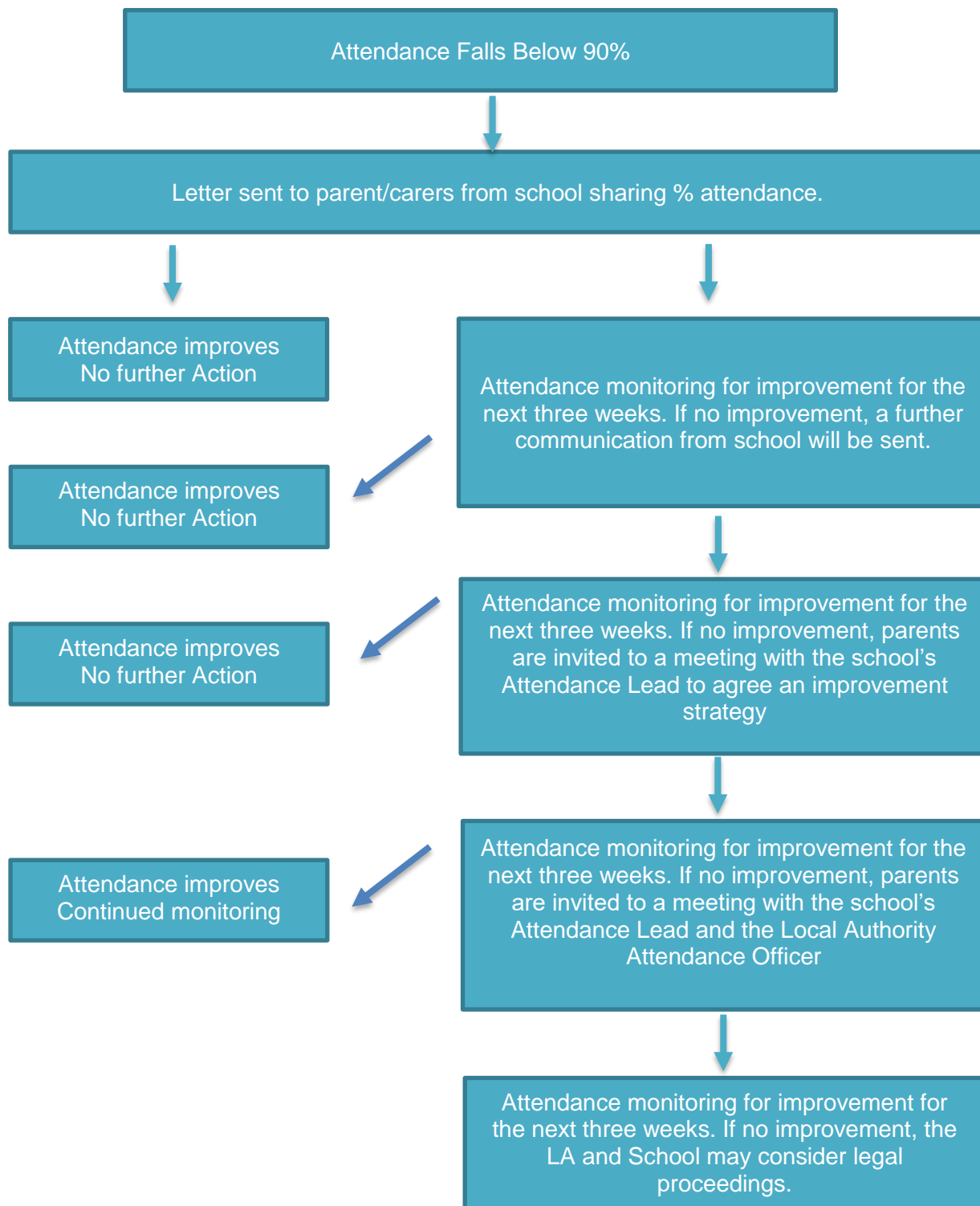
Severe persistent absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

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



## 9. Attendance Flow Chart



## 10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum bi-annually by Danielle Cotton (Director of Pastoral Support) and the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (Statutory Instrument 1995/2089)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 1997 (Statutory Instrument 1997/2624)
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2001. (Statutory Instrument 2001/1190(W.53))
- Exclusion from Schools & Pupil Referral Units WAG Guidance Circular 1/2004

## 12. Inspection of Registers Officers of the Local Authority may inspect admission and attendance registers

- The admission register and the attendance register of every school shall be available for inspection during school hours by:
  - any of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in England appointed under section 1(2) of the Education Act 2005(1)
  - any additional inspector assisting the Chief Inspector in accordance with paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 1 to that Act; and
  - in the case of a school maintained by a local education authority, any officer of the local education authority authorised for that purpose
  - Persons authorised to inspect the admission and attendance registers shall be permitted to make extracts from the registers
  - Schools will be requested from time to time to make returns based on entries in the admission or attendance registers

## 13. Retention of Registers

- Computerised registers must be printed and retained in a single volume for each year and those volumes retained in accordance with the regulations
- Every entry in an admission register or attendance register shall be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made
- The Records Management Society's guidance suggests that attendance registers should be shredded after a retention period of three years from the date of last entry. However, schools should consider circumstances where records may be required as evidence in defending insurance or legal claims such as those



alleging failure to provide education appropriate to needs

- This guidance is without prejudice to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1984
- If the guidance in this document is not followed the Local Authority may withhold pupil-led funding

#### **14. Monitoring**

This policy will be monitored through the MAT's accountability framework.



## Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>I</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late after register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded/Suspension	Pupil has been excluded/suspended but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances



<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



## Appendix 2 - Letters to Parents/Carers

### Appendix 2A

#### Less than 90% Attendance

Date:

Dear Parent/ Carer

Re: Student Name Attendance at School

We have a legal obligation to ensure that we are continually monitoring attendance for our children and young people. As a school we feel it's very important that we take the time to ensure all our parents are also up to date on their child's attendance at school.

I'm writing to let you know that [name's] recent levels of absence from school means that their attendance is currently [percentage]. This is below our schools expectation of 90% attendance and will likely have an impact on their achievements in school.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Our student's welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We want to make sure that we can support [name's] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help [him/her] to address gaps in learning due to absence. Please contact the school office on [number] as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss this.

Yours sincerely,  
[Name]

Attendance Lead





## Appendix 2B

### Less than 80% Attendance

Dear Parent/ Carer

Re: Student Name Attendance at School

We have a legal obligation to ensure that we are continually monitoring attendance for our children and young people. As a school we feel it's very important that we take the time to ensure all our parents are also up to date on their child's attendance at school.

I'm writing to let you know that [name's] recent levels of absence from school means that their attendance is currently [percentage]. This is below our schools expectation of 90% attendance and will likely have an impact on their achievements in school.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Our student's welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We want to make sure that we can support [name's] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help [him/her] to address gaps in learning due to absence. Please contact the school office on [number] as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss this.

In line with our attendance policy, and the local authority's code of practice, we may have to request a penalty notice be issued by the local authority should the attendance continue to decline. Before this action is implemented we would like to invite you in for a meeting so we can discuss how we can support you to help improve attendance at school.

Please contact the school office on [number] urgently so we can arrange this meeting.

Yours sincerely,  
[Name]



## Appendix 2C

Date

Dear Parent/ Guardian

### **RE: Attendance**

Your child's attendance is currently between 96% and 100%

Our attendance target for children of primary school age is 96%-100% and we are extremely pleased that your child is currently making this target. Therefore, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your child for your continued support, it is greatly appreciated.

If you would like to discuss your child's attendance at any point please email the school on [info@newbridgeschool.net](mailto:info@newbridgeschool.net)

Yours sincerely,



## Appendix 3 – Parent/ Carer Attendance Contract Template



### Attendance Contract

Child Details	
Name	
Date of Birth	
Primary Need/ Special Educational Needs Summary	

Meeting Details	
Date/Time of the meeting	
Venue	
School	
Intended outcome of the meeting	



Attendance Details and Action Plan	
Attendance	
Attendance Target	
Timescale for improvement	
Date of review	
<b>Action Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil will arrive at school by 8.30 a.m. every day.</li> <li>Parent/Carer will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon pupil's return.</li> <li>Parent/Carer will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur.</li> <li>Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly, school staff will be informed?</li> </ul>	



Attendance Contract Agreement		
I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.		
Pupil	Signed	Date
Parent/Carer	Signed	Date
School Representative	Signed	Date
<u>Other</u> Agency	Signed	Date

