





TOWNSEND
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

September 2023

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1. Introduction

At Townsend, our vision 'Achievement For All, Respect For All' is underpinned by the concept of 'Love your neighbour' from the story of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37. We value everyone, and show love and respect for ourselves and others, setting high standards and supporting each other so that we can all flourish. The concept of 'love your neighbour' is taught in three strands:

1. Love your neighbour – treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself
2. Love yourself – self-care is important, look after yourself physically, mentally and spiritually
3. Love the journey – whether academic or personal, Townsend supports everyone's journeys to enable you to flourish individually and collectively

Townsend C of E School is committed to achieving excellent levels of attendance for individual children and for the school as a whole. Underpinning this commitment is the belief that if children attend school regularly and punctually they will be best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, they will achieve better outcomes, be safe and supported and be able to make and sustain relationships. Attendance is a whole school approach and all staff are committed to ensuring pupils attend school. Every child should be aiming for above 95% attendance and anything below 90% is deemed by the Government as Persistent Absence and anything below 50% is deemed as severely absent.

The Hertfordshire County Council Attendance Policy guided, assisted and empowered our school to meet its responsibilities and to provide an agreed framework within which consistent practices and procedures are applied.

2. Statement of Intent

Townsend School wants to work closely together in partnership with parents/carers in order to achieve excellent levels of school attendance and punctuality for all pupils. We will do this by ensuring as a school we:

- Develop and maintain a positive and effective whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Embed a culture where attendance is everyone's business and where a 'support first' approach is used.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents, children and young people, taking into consideration the vulnerability of some children and young people and the ways in which this might contribute to absence.
- Will handle confidential information with sensitivity and work collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance.
- Are conscious of potential safeguarding issues related to attendance
- Recognise the individual child or young person when planning for reintegration following periods of absence.
- Promote effective partnerships with the Hertfordshire ISL Attendance Team (Hertfordshire LEA attendance service) and with other services and agencies (see appendix 6).
- Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement and make sure it is resourced appropriately to create, build and maintain systems and performance.
- Apply this policy fairly and consistently and recognise the individual needs of children and young people and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools will consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- Understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity, recognising that children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues.

3. School Responsibilities

- The Headteacher will be responsible for the implementation and management of this policy underpinned by clear expectations, procedures and responsibilities. These are communicated to and understood by staff, pupils and their families, ensuring compliance with DfE guidance for schools and local authorities.
- There is a Designated Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance and punctuality of pupils, who will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the attendance management, accurate completion of admission and attendance registers, tracking and intervention systems, providing regular reviews to their senior team and school governors.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff know and understand their responsibilities for attendance and adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness. Staff will actively work to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and the pupil body as a whole, receiving the training and professional development they need. Every member of staff has a shared responsibility for promoting, supporting and intervening with issues around attendance. Form tutors who have twice-daily contact with students and have a significant role to play in ensuring good attendance of individual pupils.
- Directors of Learning for Year Groups oversee and monitor the attendance of pupils in their year groups and will work with students and families to ensure attendance is as high as possible.
- The school Attendance Improvement Officer supports the work of form tutors and Directors of Learning. They are responsible for daily absence reports, contacting parents/carers when students are absent and liaising with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for attendance.

The school is responsible for supporting the attendance of all students and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance. We will aim to identify the barriers to low or non-attendance and work together with families and pupils to overcome those barriers where possible. We will do this using a range of strategies and with reference to the following documents:

- Working together to support school attendance (DFE)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)
- Mental Health Issues affecting a pupil's attendance guidance (DFE)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1136965/Summary_of_responsibilities_where_a_mental_health_issue_is_affecting_attendance.pdf)
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance guidance (HFL)
(<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/media-library/documents/resource-area-documents/summary-guidance-for-schools-on-emotionally-based-school-avoidance-pdf-438kb.pdf>)

We may also seek the advice, guidance and support of external agencies such as the Hertfordshire ISL Attendance Team, Services for Young people and Integrated Services for Learning.

Attendance registers are legal documents that may be required as evidence in court cases. They are also used in an emergency to ensure all pupils are safe. Registers will be taken at the beginning of each morning (8.55am) and once during the afternoon session (2pm). If any pupil (Years 7-11) leaves the site during the school day they must:

- Have a note from a parent/carer explaining the reason
- Must sign out at reception
- Be collected by a parent/carer on school premises. Students (years 7-11) are not allowed to leave the site on their own without a parent/carer collecting them from reception.

If a student at any point of the day feels unwell and does not feel they can stay in school they must go to the school office to collect a green slip, which must then be signed by their Director of Learning to give permission to go home. The pupil should then return the slip to the school office, who will telephone a parent/carer to collect the student. Students should not phone their parents to collect them without permission.

Registers will record whether each pupil is present; attending an approved educational activity; absent; or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. In the case of a pupil of compulsory school age who is absent the register will also indicate whether the absence has been authorised by the school. When a student is absent from school and no reason has been given by the parent/carer by 9am, parents/carers will be informed by the school that their child is absent. Gaps should not be left so that entries can be made later. In marking registers, schools will use the national set of symbols as advised by the Department for Education (see Appendix 2). When the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the beginning of a session, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and any subsequent correction to the register made as soon as practicable after the reason for the absence has been established.

Registers will open and close at regular, set times and attendance information is publicised to parents/carers with all grade sheets that are issued, with school reports and on request by parents/carers.

In order to reduce the possibility of post registration truancy we also take class registers at the start of each lesson. The school also carries out spot checks.

To support the school's aims to maximise attendance, Townsend has in place (see appendix 3 & 4 to support this work)

- Clear systems and strategies to address the attendance of any child that causes concern as i) being under 90% ii) shows a sudden decline iii) displays a particular pattern of absence
- Clear systems and strategies to address persistent absence (under 90%) through a variety of interventions that start with prompt actions from the form tutor with communication home
- Clear procedures to support parents/carers in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non- attendance
- Clear systems and strategies in place to respond to first day absences of vulnerable students or other identified students who require prompt contact with home. Directors of Learning for Year groups provide a list of students in priority order for the attendance improvement officer to contact home on the first morning of absence. This list is regularly reviewed and updated

The school is sensitive to the needs of individual parents/carers and this is reflected in the way in which attendance concerns are addressed. As a school, we understand and recognise that some parents/carers have difficulty understanding written communications and therefore where appropriate will make sure alternative communication methods are in place. The school also recognises the reluctance of some parents/carers to come into school and will where possible ensure the appropriate external agencies are accessed to support full parental engagement with school attendance.

The school also monitors any differences in the attendance of the different learner groups including the most vulnerable, pupils on free school meals, SEND students and students known to a social worker. Form Tutors work closely with Directors of Learning for Year groups to intervene and support pupils and families to ensure no child is disadvantaged with regards access to education.

4. Sixth Form attendance

Year 12 and Year 13 students are expected to attend school all day, from 8:45am until 3.25pm. Home study will only be agreed for Y13 students following a meeting between parents, students and the Head of Sixth Form at a time deemed appropriate for the cohort. The minimum expected attendance figure is 95% and excellent punctuality is expected. The following interventions are used to improve and monitor sixth form attendance.

95%-100% attendance	Recognition in assemblies and Celebration assemblies.
90%-95% attendance	Form tutor conversation – consistent = phone call home
Below 90%	Parents meeting with the Head of Sixth Form/Form tutor

Where a student may have poor attendance, this will be discussed with the student and the parent/carer. Steps are taken to improve attendance, such as attendance and punctuality report. If attendance does not improve and falls below 80%, we may look to withdraw you from your programme of study or you may be asked to pay for the exam entry. This would be a last resort and we would hope by working with students and parents/ carers that we can improve attendance.

Year 12/13 students leaving the site at break or lunchtime or for consortium lessons must sign out and sign back in. Consortium schools share attendance data of their students on a weekly basis. Pupils are transported to consortium schools by minibus and a register is taken by the consortium minibus driver and given to the head of sixth form.

5. Punctuality

Townsend will take steps to actively encourage excellent levels of punctuality. Lateness to school and to lessons, is monitored and followed up by subject teachers and form tutors. It is included on the school's behaviour framework and will be sanctioned according to this. (See appendix 7).

A clear range of strategies are in place for school leaders to ensure appropriate action is taken and that parents/carers are informed where the issue is persistent. Punctuality Reports can be used and where there is a persistent late arrival to school or a persistent late arrival to lessons. Teachers will ensure that the individuals make up missing time at break times or after school. School start times and lesson times are published in school policies, brochures and on the school website and pupils need to ensure they are on time. School will not keep a register open for the whole session.

If a child arrives after 8.45am they will need to sign in at reception and the school attendance officer will update the school's register. If they arrive late on more than one occasion each week (Monday to Friday), they will be issued with a 30-minute centralised lunchtime detention. A detention will be issued for every day they arrive late after the first late of the week.

If a parent / carer produces a note / email which the school deem to be a valid reason for their child's lateness, no sanction will be issued but the child will still be marked as late. (See appendix 7)

6. Responsibilities – Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. Parents/Carers whose children are registered at a school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances.

Parents/Carers should:

- Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn
- Notify the school if their child/children are absent by 8.45am. This must be done on the first day of absence providing an explanation and daily thereafter to keep the school updated on the child's health.
- Provide medical evidence if required for their child's absence.
- Instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- Ensure that they are aware of this Attendance policy and all the details
- Impress upon their children the need to observe the Townsend C of E 's code of conduct and Behaviour Policy
- Take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents'/carers' evenings and other relevant meetings
- Work in partnership with this school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- Avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours
- Not book holidays during term time

7. COVID 19

The NHS recommends if your child/children have tested positive for COVID-19 they need to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for three days after the day they took the test.

8. Admission & Attendance Registers

The rules governing the maintenance of registers, including removal from roll, are contained in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016.

All parents/carers should inform the form tutor or Director of Learning for that year of any address or contact number changes whenever they occur by telephone contact through the school office or by letter. This will assist both the school and Local Authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Where a parent/carer notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address the attendance improvement officer will record in the admission register:

- a) the full name of the parent /carer with whom the pupil will live;
- b) the new address; and
- c) the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent/carer of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record in the admission register:

- a) the name of the new school; and
- b) the date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

The school are required to notify the Local Authority **within five days** via school admissions - <http://www.intra.thegrid.org.uk/admissions/seam.shtml> when a pupil's name is added to the admissions register at a non-standard transition point. Schools will need to provide the Local Authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school.

The school are required to notify the Local Authority of any pupil of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, or who has been absent for a continuous period of more than 10 school days, without a legitimate reason. This duty also extends to academies and independent schools.

For further guidance see - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/csf/admissions.shtml>

9. Removal from Roll

There are strict grounds as to when schools may remove pupils from their admissions register. These are outlined in **Regulation 8** of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Regulation 12(6) states that when a school has decided to delete a pupil's name from their admission roll they must notify their Local Authority as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This responsibility applies to all Maintained Schools, Academies, Free Schools, Studio Schools, University Technical Colleges, Education Support Centres and Independent Schools. Full guidance on Removal from Roll is available at - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

If the pupil has left the school without explanation and there are concerns about the pupil's welfare the school will contact the local Attendance Team immediately. If the school is concerned about any aspect of a transfer or if a pupil has "disappeared" the matter will be drawn without delay to the attention of the Local Attendance Team. **If there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation or radicalisation the school will contact the local Attendance Team immediately.**

10. Elective Home Education

Parents have the right to educate their child at home. As a school, we would discourage this for any child. However, if a parent wishes to electively home educate their child, we request a letter to be sent to the Headteacher informing us of this decision. Parents will be responsible for ensuring the conditions of home education are met once the pupil is removed from roll.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ca21e0b40f0b625e97ffe06/Elective_home_education_guidance_for_LAv2.0.pdf

11. Children Missing from Education

As a school, we will work with parents and the local authority to ensure that children are receiving a suitable education. We will do this through the admissions and removal from roll procedures outlined in this policy. As a school we will notify the local authority if a child is absent, without reason for ten consecutive days. It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of a change of address and in the case of a new school, the name and address of the new school being attended by the pupil. We will make reasonable enquires to establish the whereabouts of a child and will work with the local authority to ensure children are in education.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7f5e4a40f0b6230268f135/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

12. Authorising Absence

It is only the school a child attends that can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent /carer has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered - or when no explanation is forthcoming at all - the absence will be treated as unauthorised and the parent/carers informed.

The reasons for non-attendance at school that will be deemed authorised absences are given below. Where any of our families require support or help with understanding the different reasons for authorised absences, support will be provided. If an interpreter is required the school will seek to provide this. The school will keep absence notes for at least a term but when a pupil's absence is a cause for concern the notes may be kept longer for this may be used in court as evidence there has been a formal referral to the Local Authority because attendance is causing an ongoing concern.

Absence should be authorised if:

- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause. Where illness causes ongoing absence the school will require supporting medical evidence
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs
- The school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home; and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA for any of the following:
 - the child's transport to and from school; boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school; enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents/carers who are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending alternative provision
- There is a close family bereavement
- A Year 11 pupil is granted study leave. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise
- Leave of absence has been applied for in advance and has been granted because of exceptional circumstances relating to the application. (Parents/carers should be reminded that they cannot expect, as of right, that the school will grant leave of absence)
- Leave of absence should be granted to allow a pupil to take part in a performance within the meaning of s37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (c) for which a child performance licence has been issued

Before granting a licence the Local Authority must be satisfied that the child's education will not suffer. A school letter is requested as part of the licence application as confirmation of this. If a school believes a child's education will suffer as a result of taking part in a performance they should provide reasons to the Local Authority in writing. The information must be specific to the child (saying for example that it is against school policy is not sufficient). If the school does not provide such information the Local Authority will issue the licence. The absence should be recorded as code C.

Further guidance is available at - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

Absence should be unauthorised if no explanation is forthcoming from the parents/carers or if the school is dissatisfied with the explanation.

13. Administrative Codes

There are a number of administrative codes which are not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. They must only be used in the circumstances described:

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (Code Y)

This code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes but is not counted as a possible attendance. It may be used when:

- a) the school site, or part of it is closed due to unavoidable cause; or
- b) the transport provided by the school or the local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- c) a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

Not required to be in school (Code X)

Is used to record sessions that non –compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Pupil not on admission register (Code Z)

Enables schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Planned whole or partial school closure (Code #)

Should be used for closures that are planned or known in advance e.g. holidays, curriculum planning/training days (up to five per year) or the use of the school as a polling station.

Different Term Dates for Different Pupils (Code #)

Can also be used to record staggered starts or induction days. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

14. Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

Pupils who are engaged in off-site educational activities will be recorded as attending (or absent from) an approved educational activity using the appropriate code. The key features of approved educational activity are that they must be:

- educational and
- approved by the school and
- supervised by the school or someone authorised by the school

A pupil will be recorded as approved educational activity if he/she is attending:

- an approved work experience placement (Code W)
- a field trip or educational visit (Code V)
- an approved sporting activity approved by and supervised by someone authorised by the school (Code P)
- the pupil is attending an interview with a prospective employer, or another educational establishment (Code J)
- an off-site educational activity (Code B)

Note: The B code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school.

14.1. Dual Registered – at another educational establishment (Code D)

Note: This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. This code should be used where pupils are attending an Education Support Centre, hospital or special school on a temporary basis or for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children where they are known to be registered at another school for the session in question. Each school will only record the attendance/absence for those sessions where the pupil is expected to attend.

14.2. Consortia Schools

Pupils attending consortia schools as part of their course need only be placed on the registers of their main school. They should be treated as “guest pupils” at the other consortia school/s.

14.3. Flexi-schooling

The Headteacher may agree to flexi-schooling arrangements where the parents/carers take on the responsibility for their child’s education for part of the school week. This will be only with a written agreement from a parent/carer in place and under exceptional circumstances. Where agreement has been reached, pupils should be marked authorised absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education. (Code C).

14.4. Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable for short periods of time to meet an individual pupil's needs. A part time timetable will be time limited and will only be made with parental agreement and a reintegration plan in place. The school should mark the sessions were the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

15. Requests for Family Holidays During Term time

Amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration (England) Regulations which came into effect on 1st September 2013 remove all references to family holidays and extended leave for holidays in term time. **The amendments make clear that headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** It is for the Headteacher to determine what constitutes exceptional circumstances and for them to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

The Local Authority has provided a standard letter that will be issued to parents/carers to support the governing body and Headteacher in communicating their decision making regarding individual requests for leave of absence for holidays in term time.

Parents who wish to request time off for their child/ren in term time from school should complete the form 'Request for Authorised Absence for exceptional Circumstances' which can be found on the school website. This form should be returned to the Headteacher to be considered. Holidays in term time will not be authorised and parents should be aware that if this unauthorised absence is taken you may be at risk of being issued with a Fixed penalty Notice. If a student has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the previous and/or current term, including holidays where parents/carers understand that permission would not have been given, the Headteacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. This can be for each parent/ carer for each child. A fine of £60 is issued if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016 is available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>. Further details information and advice on all aspects of school attendance in Hertfordshire is available at <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

Appendix 1

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Policy for Local Authority Attendance Officer working with children whose absence has been authorised

- if the Local Authority Attendance Officer becomes concerned (through checking the attendance register) that a pupil has accumulated significant amounts of authorised absence this will be discussed with the relevant member of school staff
- if it is agreed that there is a concern about the pupil's attendance the school should share this concern with the parents/carers
- if concerns about the pupil's attendance remain, the Local Authority Attendance Officer will consider asking the school to make a referral to the attendance team
- if a pupil is identified as being a persistent absentee (PA). Persistent absence is when a pupil enrolment's overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions.

(Note: if a pupil's absence has been authorised by the school, the LA cannot cite that absence as evidence of non attendance under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Appendix 2

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Present at off site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another educational establishment	Not expected to attend this session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils (Planned)	Not counted in possible attendances

Detailed advice on the use of these registration codes can be found at www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance

Appendix 3

Supporting Attendance

Absence and ongoing late arrival are both safeguarding concerns. Therefore, both should be treated as priorities and actions implemented promptly.

All staff are responsible for monitoring attendance both pastorally as a form tutor and academically as a classroom teacher. Directors of Learning for year groups and departments should be aware of attendance concerns in both year groups and departments.

The Attendance Improvement Officer will produce weekly attendance reports for form tutors. Form tutors should monitor attendance using these reports and students who have been absent each week should be spoken to by form tutor. Form tutors should refer to the Attendance Plan to ensure each stage is appropriately actioned to improve attendance at all stages

Monitoring procedure

Absence	Procedure	Actions
Day 1	<p>AIO to make contact with home to ascertain a reason for absence if the parent/carer does not call/ email into the school office.</p> <p>All emergency contacts should be tried.</p> <p>Vulnerable and <90% attendance should be contacted as first priority by phone call.</p>	<p>AIO or form tutor to ensure that there is a note on Arbor with the reason for absence. If no response from parent/s this should also be noted on the register.</p> <p>Clear N codes when reasons are ascertained (see codes table for changing codes)</p> <p>Form tutors should look daily at absentees and inform DOL of any concerns.</p>
Day 2	<p>AIO to make contact with home to ascertain a reason for absence if the parent/carer does not call/ email into the school office.</p> <p>All emergency contacts should be tried.</p> <p>Vulnerable and <90% attendance should be contacted as first priority by phone call.</p>	<p>Follow up with vulnerable students (historical attendance concerns, PP, safeguarding concerns) where no reason for absence has been recorded or N code has not been cleared from day 1.</p> <p>Form tutor to ensure DOL is aware of any vulnerable students who have been absent for 2 days where no reason is recorded.</p>
Days 3-7	<p>Form tutor must call home for a continuous 3-day absence even when contact has been made by AIO on days 1 & 2.</p> <p>Record notes from conversation on Arbor. Leaving an answer phone message requesting a call back is fine but please follow up if the parent/carer does not return your call and continue to call until you get a response - from any emergency contact. Use all available numbers if persistent failure to get through to main contact and child has not returned to school.</p>	<p>If the child is still absent on day 3, but a reason has been recorded, please phone as a courtesy call to see how the child is and ensure they are aware the school is monitoring attendance.</p> <p>Speak to the parent about a possible return day and record this on Arbor so that it can be followed up (can set a follow up reminder)..</p> <p>If the child returns to school please talk to the child about any barriers to attendance and reason for their absence for the last 2 days (or more if they return at a later date). Consider the contextual information about the student (historical attendance concerns, PP, safeguarding concerns) and put a plan in place,</p>

	DOL must be made aware if a child has been absent for 3 or more days.	<p>along with the form tutor for further actions. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requesting medical evidence which needs to be recorded on Arbor detailing what the health issue is • The form tutor continues to call daily to speak to the parent to see how the child is. • Requesting to speak to the child on the phone. • A home visit - or asking a 3rd party to do a home visit (one of the emergency contacts/ police/ social worker) • Parent/carer meetings if this pattern is repeated.
Day 7	<p>If no contact from parent for 7 days one of the following must happen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be contact by a member of staff from school to an emergency contact • If an emergency contact is spoken to, they must confirm they have seen/ spoken to the child within the last week • Home visit to be completed by a member of staff 	<p>Liaison with the Director of Learning about continuous periods of absence for this child.</p> <p>AIO/ form tutor should be keeping a list of actions (through Arbor) of attempts to contact different emergency contacts during the 7 day period.</p> <p>“Attendance letter - DoL” to be sent and a meeting set up with parent/carer, tutor and DoL.</p>
Day 10	<p>The Local Authority must be informed of the child's absence. Call the attendance duty west line on 01442 454778, the 10 day absence forms do not need to be filled out if you make the call.</p> <p>Form must be sent via Herts FX through the admin team.</p> <p>The Local Authority must be informed when the child returns to school if the form is sent/ telephone call made.</p>	<p>Liaison between the form tutor and DoL to decide on who will be calling/ completing and sending the form.</p> <p>Please record on CPOMS as an attendance and a safeguarding concern under 10 days consecutive absence - with all actions that have been taken and a copy of the form (if sent) or a record of time and person spoken to on the phone at the Attendance Duty West Team.</p>

Attendance Plan

Stage	Percentage Attendance	Action
1 Form teacher/ class teacher	<95%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form teacher and/or class teacher to discuss attendance with the student. 2. Call parents/carer to highlight under 95% attendance - record discussion on Arbor. 3. Raise any concerns with DOL year/ department and consider school avoidance, mental health, contextual information
2 Form teacher/ DOL	90% (persistent absence)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Letter 'DOL attendance letter' sent home when a student falls under 90% (issued by AIO). 2. One to one meeting with the student (Form tutor or DOL) to go through their attendance certificate. Identify any patterns/ trends and discuss any barriers with the student. Plan strategy to improve attendance. 3. Phone parent/ carer to discuss <90% attendance and inform of meeting with the student. 4. Parent/ carer meeting with DOL year if necessary.
3 DOL Year	80%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance letter 1 or 2 to be sent. 2. Seek advice from AHT about next steps - these may include medical evidence being needed to authorise absence/ meeting with line manager of year/ department to discuss attendance 3. Introduce 'Attendance improvement plan' through parent/ carer meeting 4. Contact HFL attendance team to gain advice if necessary. 5. Put together chronology of steps already completed to improve attendance (8 weeks needed for support from HFL with no improvement).
4 AHT with DOL Year	<50% (severe absence)	<p>AHT i/c attendance to lead interventions at this stage. Interventions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FPN warning letter ● Liaison with HFL attendance team and referral to HFL ● Referral for Early Help

Appendix 4

SUPPORTING GOOD ATTENDANCE AT TOWNSEND

Townsend C of E School believes good attendance is critical for students achieving success. We strive for excellent attendance and punctuality across the school for all students of any need or disability and of any age. The school can only achieve this with parent/carer support.

What are some of the things we do to support promoting attendance?

- All staff at school take a shared role and responsibility for attendance
- There is regular monitoring and checking of attendance and data by the school attendance officer, form tutors, Directors of Learning, Subject Tutors and the senior leadership attendance link.
- Attendance reports are regularly shared with school governors
- The school works closely with the Local Authority seeking support guidance and advice when required and appropriate
- The school work with an extensive range of external agencies that support children and families with specific needs or vulnerabilities. This includes access to a Family Worker.
- The school work closely with ESMA (Education Support for Medical Absence) where a child is unable to attend school on medical grounds
- The school will deploy a member of the education support team to provide a 'meet and greet' service for parent/carer and child where there is a reluctant attender and as appropriate
- The school deploy a member of the education support team to support students with particular emotional needs that impact attendance
- The school will consider making timetable adjustments for a fixed period of time where it is appropriate and supports a student returning to school after an absence or remaining in school where there is a reluctance to attend
- The school use a variety of rewards and incentives to recognise excellent attendance or improved attendance.
- The school will provide support advice and guidance to any parent/carer who is struggling to get their child to school. On occasions this may also involve seeking external advice for parents/carers
- The school identify any attendance issues/patterns of absence promptly so that intervention is early
- Buddies and 6th form students are provided for those students who may benefit from additional support arriving at school or once in school
- The school will meet with parents/carers and students to identify potential barriers and used the attendance improvement plan to ensure there is collaborative working between school and home and ensure that the voice of the child is heard. (See appendix 5)
- Where there is a sudden and short term financial difficulty or another exceptional circumstance at home, the school may be able to consider financial support for transport to and from school for a fixed period of time
- The school provides additional support for any child who is identified as requiring further support through the transition process from year 6 to year 7. This may be through additional school visits prior to starting year 7 or additional support in the first few weeks
- Home visits to students who are not attending school to provide support and plan for re-integration.

The school is always willing to meet and discuss with a parent/carer any issues around a child's attendance. The initial contact should be with the child's form tutor and should be as early soon so that a 'worry' does not become a barrier to attending school.

Appendix 5

Townsend School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP)

Student: _____ Date: _____

Year Group: _____ Form group: _____ DOB: _____

Parent/ Carer Name/s: _____

Address/ phone number: _____

Current attendance data

Attendance % _____ (current academic year)

Authorised absence % _____ Unauthorised absence % _____

Notes/ comments:

School support/ external agency support

Reduced timetable

Well-being lead involvement

Home visit Date: _____

Change of form/ lessons

Use of external agencies to support

Notes/ comments on school support given and use of external agencies:

Possible causes

Documented Illness (Medical/Anxiety)

Substance Abuse Concerns

School Avoidance

Safeguarding

Social Issues (Peers/Bullying)

Home Challenges (Child care, medical)

Mental Health (Anxiety/Self-esteem)

Transportation

Academic Challenges (Poor Grades)

Other: _____

Student and parent view

Notes on student and parent explanations and what support has been tried at home:

Plan

Student Information
Strengths:
Motivators/ likes:
Teachers/ mentor:
Student actions
<input type="checkbox"/> Make teachers aware of social concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a supportive adult
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help from teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Complete homework
<input type="checkbox"/> Take medications <input type="checkbox"/> Attend well-being appointments
<input type="checkbox"/> Check in, Check out with form tutor/ DOL <input type="checkbox"/> Get up earlier/set alarm
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide parent excuse letters <input type="checkbox"/> Outside Services:
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Family actions
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure student goes to bed earlier <input type="checkbox"/> Get medical care as needed
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure student completes homework <input type="checkbox"/> Identify back up plan for transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Write excuses/obtain medical evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Engage others to ensure school attendance
<input type="checkbox"/> Enforce rewards/consequences <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
School actions (different from those already applied)
<input type="checkbox"/> Continuously review attendance
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide a student/adult mentor
<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage student tutoring sessions
<input type="checkbox"/> Involved Local Authority attendance team
<input type="checkbox"/> Change of Form/ lessons
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to appropriate agencies:
<input type="checkbox"/> Appointment with well-being lead
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

As parents/ carers, we understand that while school has demonstrated support and assistance, by law, it is our responsibility to ensure school attendance. This plan was created collectively to assist the student in improving attendance, to enlist the support of parents/ carers and to document the schools' attempt to provide recourses to promote student success. This document, along with the student profile (attendance, grades and behaviour record etc.) may be shared with the Local Authority attendance team if attendance continue to be low.

Student: _____ Date: _____
Parent : _____ Date: _____
School : _____ Date: _____

Outcomes and actions:

Appendix 6

Support from the Integrated Services for Learning (ISL) Attendance Team

The ISL Attendance Teams fulfil the statutory duty of the County Council in enforcing regular school attendance. In doing so it enables schools and parents/carers to meet their respective responsibilities. Each school in Hertfordshire has a link Local Authority Attendance Officer who will work in close partnership with the school. Rebecca Porzio from West Attendance Team is Townsend's link Local Authority Attendance Officer. In working closely with schools, the Attendance Teams will offer the following services:-

Attendance Duty team

A dedicated telephone line through which schools can contact between the hours of

9.00 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Thursday and between the hours of 9.00 am to 3.30 pm on a Friday.

Types of enquiries may include –

- School issues e.g. register coding, holiday absence etc.
- enquiries relating to a pupil
- 10 day absence returns
- Request for Early Intervention letters
- Fixed Penalty Notice enquiries
- Removal from Roll enquiries
- Requests for referrals

Visits to Schools

Our named Local Authority Attendance Officer will liaise with the school and undertake whole schoolwork for Townsend.

Whole School Attendance Overview

This will be the first meeting of the year with each school to ensure all schools meet statutory requirements and have systems in place to promote high levels of attendance. Any issues arising from this visit will inform targeted whole schoolwork for the academic year, focusing on supporting schools to reduce Persistent Absence and the absence of vulnerable groups.

Data analysis is an important part of this process and AIOs will support schools to analyse their attendance data and draw up plans to address any specific issues. Analysis may include:

- persistent absence
- absence profile
- use of register codes
- comparison of form groups in individual years
- percentage of absence due to holidays
- attendance of vulnerable groups
- types of absence e.g. a few pupils with significant absence or many pupils with occasional absence
- lateness after registers close
- year by year percentage attendance
- Attendance trends – is attendance increasing or decreasing?

Other than engaging in casework there are a variety of supportive ways in which AIOs can work with schools to increase attendance levels. The Local Authority Attendance Officer can also support through

- a) advice on particular issues raised by the school
- b) attendance at Parent/Carer Evenings and/or Year 7 New Intake Evening
- c) support with staff training
- d) attendance at Governors meeting to share information about some of the different areas of attendance

Where a student's attendance causes concern and the full range of school's actions and interventions appear to have limited or no impact on improving the child's attendance, the school will formally refer the individual to the Attendance Team. Once a case is accepted, the Local Authority Attendance Officer will undertake direct work with pupils and their parents/carers. This may include:

- arranging meetings between the school, parents/carers and pupils
- making home visits to assess the situation and determine what action needs to be taken
- offering specific support to parents/carers and individual pupils, either at school or elsewhere
- facilitating meetings
- enabling the pupil and parents/carers to access appropriate support from other services and agencies

Local Authority Attendance Officer will usually work with children whose absences have not been authorised. However, Local Authority Attendance Officers may work with children whose absences have been authorised, such as persistent absentee (PA) pupils (see appendix 1).

The Use of Legal Action

If a pupil, who is registered at a school, fails to attend that school regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the Attendance Improvement Officer and the school fail to secure that pupil's return to regular attendance, the County Council will take legal action.

A complaint may be laid against the parents/carers in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, or an Education Supervision Order relating to the pupil under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989 will be applied for. Any exceptional mitigating circumstances relating to the pupil's absence will be taken into account, when considering legal action.

'Exceptional mitigating circumstances' will be determined by the Central Attendance and Employment Support Team Manager on behalf of the Local Authority. 'Exceptional mitigating circumstances' might include the death of a close relative, certain medically recognised conditions, awaiting SEN placement, specific child protection concerns, change of provision. Legal proceedings can be considered at any stage if no progress has been made and no exceptional circumstances are deemed to exist.

If, after legal action has been taken, the child still fails to attend school regularly the AIO will keep the case open and will, if appropriate, take further legal action at a subsequent date.

In cases where parents/carers wilfully withhold a pupil from school, or persistently refuse to co-operate with efforts aimed at affecting a return to satisfactory school attendance, the ISL Attendance Teams will begin legal proceedings promptly on the grounds that no other course of action is available. The Central Attendance & Employment Support Team Manager on behalf of the Local Authority will give approval before legal proceedings are commenced.

The Attendance Teams will consider applying for an Education Supervision Order when a parent/carer finds it difficult to exercise an effective influence over a child who has developed a pattern of poor attendance. Education Supervision Orders will not usually be applied for in relation to pupils in Years 10 or 11.

Before an application is made for an Education Supervision Order:

- other possible means of dealing with the pupil's poor attendance will be explored
- the attitudes of the parent/carer and pupil towards the poor attendance, and their wishes as to how it should be dealt with, will be noted
- the Local Authority will be of the view that the Order will have a significant effect on the pupil's attendance at school.

Education Related Penalty Notices for Parents/Carers of Truants

Subsection (1) of section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 added two sections (444A and 444B) to section 444 of the Education Act 1996. These sections introduced penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution and enable parents/carers to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty.

A penalty notice is a suitable intervention in circumstances of parentally condoned truancy, where the parent/carer is judged capable of securing their child's regular attendance but is not willing to take responsibility for doing so. For example it could be used where a parent/carer has failed to engage in any supportive measures

Further information on penalty notices is available at www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml or from the local Attendance Team Manager.

School Attendance Orders

If a parent/carer fails to register, a child of compulsory school age at a school (and he/she does not intend to educate the child otherwise than at school). The LA will serve a School Attendance Order under Sections 437 - 439 of the Education Act 1996. This requires the parent/carer to register their child at a school named by the Local Authority

Appendix 7

Late to School Procedure

Number of times late per week	Sanction	Responsibility
1	Student is given a warning by form tutor / Attendance Officer when next seen (PM registration)	Form tutor / Attendance Officer
2 +	30-minute centralised SLT detention on Wednesday or Friday (next closest day)	Attendance officer will issue detentions and inform form tutor

- If a pupil is late once in a week, this will be recorded on Arbor but no sanction will be issued.
- If a pupil is late on more than one occasion per week, they will be issued a centralised 30-minute senior leadership lunchtime detention for each time they are late.
- Detentions will be recorded and monitored by the attendance improvement officer, who will inform the form tutor of the child.
- If parents/ carers provide a reason that the school deems acceptable for the lateness, it will be recorded as a late, but no sanction will be issued.