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# **Student Attendance Policy**

**September 2023- September 2024**

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This policy is available on the school website and is reviewed and ratified annually by the senior leadership team and local governing committee or as events or legislation requires. Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified will be remedied without delay.

Year	Headteacher	School Attendance Lead (SLT)	Nominated Governor Attendance	Chair of Governors
2023-24	Sally Bishop	Lee Wilson	Kathryn Robinson	Kathryn Robinson

## 1. Statement of intent

- 1.1. Prince Henry's Grammar School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, excellent attendance is essential. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.
- 1.2. We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some students find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with students and parents/carers.
- 1.3. We take a whole-school approach to securing excellent attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of wider services on improving student attendance.
- 1.4. We are committed to:
  - Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
  - Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
  - Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our students.
  - Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
  - Ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age will receive a full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
  - Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents/carers and students.
  - Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require more support.
- 1.5. Queries about attendance should be directed to the school's Attendance Officer or year manager of the child, and contact can be made via **info@princehenrys.co.uk**.

## 2. Legal Framework

- 2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
  - Education Act 1996- Part 6.
  - Education Action 2002 – Part 3
  - DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'.
  - DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'.

- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'.
- 2.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:
- Complaints Policy.
  - Children Missing Education - Leeds (June 2022).
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
  - Behavioural Policy.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1. The school defines "absence" as either:
- Arrival at school after the register has closed (**after 9.00am**).
  - Not attending school for any reason.
- 3.2. The school defines an "authorised absence" as:
- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
  - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave. Parents/carers should always aim to arrange appointments out of school hours.
  - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
  - An absence due to a family emergency.
  - Sporting events, music assessments and competitions (dependant on assistant headteacher's approval via request in writing)
  - If a student is on Fast Track due to concerns regarding their attendance, any unavoidable further absence will not be authorised.
  - **Please note:** authorised absence has a negative impact on a child attendance.
- 3.3. The school defines an "unauthorised absence" as:
- Parents/carers keeping children away from school unnecessarily or without reason.
  - Truancy before or during the school day.
  - Absences which have not been properly explained.
  - Arrival at school after registration has closed (**after 9.00am**).
  - Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.

- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- 5 days or more absence without written medical evidence e.g. GP sick note
- If a student is on Fast Track due to concerns regarding their attendance, any further unavoidable absence will not be authorised.
- **Please note:** any form of absence has a negative impact on a child attendance.

3.4. The school defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the academic year for any reason.

#### 4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The Local Governing Committee (LGC), has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school’s ethos and policies.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s Complaints Policy.
- Having regard to ‘Keeping children safe in education’ when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

4.2. The **assistant headteacher** is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of the school and distributing these to parents/carers.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, students, families, and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement.
- Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Open and honest communication with staff, students and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Ensuring that every student has access to full-time education, acting as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.
  - Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
  - Liaising with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
  - Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area/cluster, LAs, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
  - Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
  - The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
  - Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
  - Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
  - Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- 4.3. The Executive Officer: Exams, Data and Curriculum is responsible for informing the LA of any student being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:
- Are being educated from home.
  - No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
  - Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
  - Have been permanently excluded.
  - Moved to another education provider.
- 4.4. The school will provide parents/carers with strategies to increase attendance and be informed that they will be placed onto the Fast Track process if improvements are not made. This is a formal process with legally binding time frames. Attendance meetings may be held in the absence of parents/carers if they fail to attend without contacting us to rearrange the meeting.
- 4.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance by emphasising with student the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Following the attendance policy, and for ensuring students do so too.
- Ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Completing all lesson registers accurately and promptly and within the first 10 minutes of the lesson.
- Alerting the Student Attendance and Support Officer if they notice that there is a child absent who has not been absent for the previous lesson.
- Alerting the Student Attendance and Support Officer immediately if they have any issues with taking their register.
- Understanding their responsibilities in regard to the safeguarding of students and key vulnerable students.

4.6. **Parents/carers** are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- Taking full responsibility for the attendance of their children during term-time.
- Promoting excellent attendance and ensuring their children attend school every day.

## 5. Attendance expectations

- 5.1. The school has high expectations for students' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents/carers and students.
- 5.2. Students will be expected to:
- Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
  - Attend school and every lesson punctually.
  - Attend every timetabled lesson.
- 5.3. The school day starts at 8:30am, and students should be in their form ready to begin learning from this time: therefore, students must be on-site and moving to registration from 8.25am.

5.4. Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- Morning registration opens at **8.30am** and all registers will be completed by **8.40am** at the latest.
- Students will receive a late mark (**L**) if they are not in their classroom by **8.30am**. Form staff will issue a comment in the planner and this will feed in to the whole school positive discipline system to ensure further sanctions can be applied if this is a repeat.
- Students arriving after **8.50am** should sign in at reception to show that the student is on-site and a late mark (**L**) will be issued. The Student Attendance and Support Officer will issue a comment in the students' planner.
- Morning registration closes at **9.00am**.
- Students arriving **after 9:00am** will receive a **U** mark which accounts for unauthorised absence. This results in a student losing their morning registration mark which impacts adversely on their overall attendance. The Fast Track legal process can be started for students with **U** marks.
- The daily absence text will be sent to parents/carers as soon as possible (aiming for all texts to be sent by 10.00am).
- Afternoon registration opens at **12.00 noon** and **closes at 12.30pm**.
- Class teachers will take an accurate register at the start of each lesson **within the first 10 minutes** to ensure that students are attending all timetabled lessons.
- Students arriving to lessons **3 minutes** after the start of the lesson will be issued a late mark (**L**) and a comment will be added to their planner.

## 6. Absence procedures

- 6.1. Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 8:30am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.
- 6.2. Where a student is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **the close of morning registration** to report the absence, a text will be sent to parents/carers informing them that their child is not in school and to request a reason for the absence.
- 6.3. If the school is not notified of the reason for the absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- 6.4. The school will always follow up any absences in order to:
  - Ascertain the reason for the absence.
  - Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.



- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
  - Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.
- 6.5. Where a student is absent for two or more consecutive days, we will be in contact with the parent/carer to ascertain what can be done to ensure the child returns to school as soon as possible. These interactions will be logged on Arbor.
- 6.6. Where a student is absent for more than **3** school days in a row, or more than **10** school days in **one term**, the student's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).
- 6.7. The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances of absence less than **5 days** where a student is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.
- 6.8. Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will begin investigation to remove the student from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the student after making reasonable enquiries.

## 7. Attendance register

- 7.1. The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.
- 7.2. Staff will take the attendance register at the start **of every lesson (and within the first 10 minutes of the lesson)**. This register will record whether students are:
- Present.
  - Absent.
  - Attending an approved educational activity.
  - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 7.3. The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:
- / = Present in the morning
  - \ = Present in the afternoon
  - L = Late arrival before the register has closed
  - C = Leave of absence granted by the school

- H = Authorised holiday
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- S = Study leave
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- N = Reason not yet provided
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- D = Dual registered at another educational establishment
- B = Off-site education activity
- J = At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- V = Educational visit or trip
- W = Work experience
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Student not on admission register

7.4. When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code 'Y' will be used for the relevant students who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

## **8. Authorising parental absence requests**

8.1. Parents/carers will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be reviewed by the assistant headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the assistant headteacher, taking the best interests of the student and the impact on the student's education into account.

- 8.2. The assistant headteacher's decision is not normally subject to appeal; however, an appeal could be made with the headteacher.
- 8.3. The school will only grant a student a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents/carers to complete an Absence Request Form. The form can be found on our website and this can be emailed to [info@princehenrys.co.uk](mailto:info@princehenrys.co.uk) or posted to the school for the attendance and support officer.
- 8.4. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be considered. Where the absence is granted, the assistant headteacher will determine the length of time that the student can be away from school. The school will not grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.
- 8.5. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
- During Year 7 when a student is settling into the school, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member
  - Immediately before and during assessment periods
  - When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
  - Where a student's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason
- 8.6. If term-time leave is not granted, taking a student out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Illness and healthcare appointments**

- 8.7. Parents/carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents/carers will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.
- 8.8. If the appointment requires the student to leave during the school day, the student must sign out at the school office and be collected by a parent/carer where possible.
- 8.9. Students must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.
- 8.10. If a student becomes unwell during the school day, we will contact parents/carers if they need to go home.
- 8.11. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to make sure we have up to date contact names and telephone numbers for this purpose.

- 8.12. Long term absence (**more than 2 weeks**) will require a letter from a specialist.
- 8.13. There are sometimes genuine cases where students return after a prolonged illness. The school will ensure that;
- A personalised package will be considered as part of the re-integration process.
  - Where appropriate, all staff are informed of the circumstances.

### **Performances and activities, including paid work**

- 8.14. The school will ensure that all students engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).
- 8.15. Additional arrangements will be made by the school for students engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the student.
- 8.16. The student will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the student would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a student receives an education:
- For not less than six hours a week; and
  - During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
  - On days where the student would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
  - For not more than five hours on any such day.
- 8.17. Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the assistant headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The assistant headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a student's attendance would fall below **96 percent** unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 8.18. Where a licence has not been obtained, the assistant headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Religious observance**

- 8.19. Parents/carers will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** advance where possible.
- 8.20. The school will only accept requests from parents/carers for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the student's parents/carers would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.
- 8.21. The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

- 8.22. Where a student's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for students from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

## **9. SEND- and health-related absences**

- 9.1. The school recognises that students with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support students who find attending school difficult. Please see appendix 2 for further information.
- 9.2. In line with the SEND Policy and Disability Access Plan, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled students to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or support plan that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.
- 9.3. Where the school has concerns that a student's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a student that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.
- 9.4. If a student is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:
- Inform the LA if a student is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
  - Provide the LA with information about the student's needs, capabilities and programme of work.

- Help the student reintegrate at school when they return.
  - Make sure the student is kept informed about school events and clubs.
  - Encourage the student to stay in contact with other students during their absence.
- 9.5. The school will deploy a range of strategies to help any students with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such strategies will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the student is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.
- 9.6. To support the attendance of students with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:
- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
  - Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
  - Enabling a student to have a temporary reduced timetable.
  - Ensuring a student can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and break times.
  - Implementing a system whereby students can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
  - Temporary late starts or early finishes.
  - Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
  - Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **10. Absence in exceptional circumstances**

- 10.1. Exceptional circumstances will include when a student is unable to attend because:
- Transport provided by the school, LA or parent is not available and the student's home is not within walking distance.
  - There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the student from attending.
  - The student is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.
- 10.2. The use of the '**Y**' code for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

## **11. Truancy**

- 11.1. Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 11.2. All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of students, and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning.
- 11.3. Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return. A parent/carer must collect where possible.
- 11.4. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the member of staff on Phase 5 should be notified, and parents/carers will be contacted in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- 11.5. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:
  - In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents/carers of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
  - If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
  - A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

## **12. Missing children**

- 12.1. Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at school:
  - The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform a member of the pastoral team or member of SLT on Phase 5 immediately.
  - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
  - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises.
  - The school site will be searched systematically.
  - Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.

- If the student has not been found after **10 minutes**, then the parents/carers of the student will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents/carers using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents/carers have had no contact from the student, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents/carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located.

12.2. The assistant headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

### **13. Attendance intervention**

13.1. In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance and support officer and pastoral team, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Send letters to parents/carers.
  - Support to explore attendance barriers and accelerate reintegration
  - Engage with LA attendance teams.
  - Use fixed penalty notices.
  - Run attendance challenges.

13.2. The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a



case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the students whom the intervention is designed to target.

- 13.3. The school will aim to improve attendance in the overall school cohort by acknowledging good attendance in the following ways:
- Rewards assemblies
  - Rewards trip
  - Letters home
  - Attendance stamps
- 13.4. School trips and events are a privilege. Students' attendance must ordinarily be above 90% to be considered for non-compulsory school trips/ rewards unless there are extenuating circumstances that the school are aware of and where proof/evidence is provided. Decisions about access to these opportunities will be made on an individual basis and we reserve the right to challenge on the basis of poor attendance.

#### **14. Working with parents/carers to improve attendance**

- 14.1. The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents/carers and families and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with students and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.
- 14.2. The school will request that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each student wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a student where the student is absent without notification or authorisation.
- 14.3. The school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents/carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open. The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.
- 14.4. If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, we will work collaboratively with the student and their parents/carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the student from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for student

absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

## **15. Persistent Absentee (PA)**

15.1. There are various groups of students who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Students who are eligible for FSM
- Students with EAL
- Students with SEND
- Students who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

15.2. The school will use a number of methods to help support students at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Welcoming the student back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the student and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with the student's parent to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

15.3. The school will focus particularly on students who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these students are facing.

15.4. Where a student at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the student in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

15.5. The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Students who are eligible for FSM
- Students with EAL
- Students with SEND

## **16. Legal intervention**

16.1. The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve students' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect, the following will be considered:

- Allocation of a student wellbeing officer or parent support worker to carry out intensive support to facilitate a child's return to school.
- Initiation of Fast Track (12-week process with legally binding time scales)
- Holding a formal School Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting with parents/carers.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

16.2. Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

16.3. Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

## **17. Monitoring and analysing absence**

17.1. The attendance officer will monitor attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

17.2. The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Year groups preparing for exams.
- Individual students.
- Demographic groups, e.g. students from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.

- Other groups of students, e.g. students with SEND, LAC and students eligible for FSM.
  - Students at risk of PA.
- 17.3. Regular updates will be provided to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures.
- 17.4. The assistant headteacher will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.
- 17.5. The Local Governing Committee will be provided with updates on attendance data, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

## **18. Training of staff**

- 18.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk students as part of their induction and refresher training.
- 18.2. Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

## **19. Monitoring and review**

- 19.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year. The school's attendance target for all year groups is **97%**. The school's target is for PA to be no larger than **10%**.
- 19.2. This policy will be reviewed every year by the assistant headteacher and the senior leadership team. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2024.**
- 19.3. Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

## 20. Appendix 1: Attendance Contacts

<b>Role / Agency</b>	<b>Name and role</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Bishop	info@phrincehenrys.co.uk
<b>School Attendance Lead (SLT)</b>	Lee Wilson	info@phrincehenrys.co.uk
<b>Attendance Officer</b>	Christine Waite	info@princehenrys.co.uk
<b>Student Attendance and Support Officer</b>	Nicky Thompson	info@phrincehenrys.co.uk
<b>Year Managers</b>	Please request to speak to the year manager who is responsible for the year group the child is in.	info@phrincehenrys.co.uk
<b>Governor with responsibility for Attendance</b>	Kathryn Robinson	info@phrincehenrys.co.uk
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	Katherine Robinson	info@phrincehenrys.co.uk
<b>School Attendance Service (SAS)</b>	Queries relating to attendance	0113 3785994 <a href="mailto:Schoolattendanceservice@leeds.gov.uk">Schoolattendanceservice@leeds.gov.uk</a>
<b>Elective Home Education (EHE)</b>	Queries around Elective Home Education	<a href="mailto:EHE@leeds.gov.uk">EHE@leeds.gov.uk</a>
<b>Children Missing Education (CME)</b>	Referrals for children missing education	0113 378 9686 <a href="mailto:CME@leeds.gov.uk">CME@leeds.gov.uk</a>
<b>Education Safeguarding Team</b>	Advice / Training / Safeguarding Audit	0113 3789685 <a href="mailto:estconsultation@leeds.gov.uk">estconsultation@leeds.gov.uk</a>

## 21. Appendix 2: Absence from school related to mental health illness procedures

Emotional Based School Avoidance is a broad umbrella term used to describe a group of children and young people who have severe difficulties in attending school due to emotional factors.

In order for us to amend our normal attendance protocols in relation to actions for students who do not attend regularly for mental health issues we require parents and students to engage with the professional help that is signposted to them.

We will not ordinarily authorise 'mental health' absences unless parents and students follow up on the support offered and resources suggested to them.

These are school's current guidelines about where support can be received:

### **Guidance for parents/carers in accessing external mental health services**

#### **If there is immediate threat to your child's life or health, call 999.**

If your child is expressing suicidal thoughts and/or has self-harmed, or you have an urgent concern about your child's health and safety, it is important that you speak with a medical professional as soon as possible. It is advisable to contact your child's GP for an urgent appointment that day or take your child to A&E if an urgent GP appointment is not possible. If you are uncertain about what to do, please seek guidance from the NHS by calling 111.

If your child is struggling with their mental health, it is vital that they get ongoing support they need. It is advisable to speak with their GP about options of support. You can also refer your child or they can refer themselves (if they are over 13 years-old) to MindMate via telephone on 0300 555 0324 or online via <https://www.mindmate.org.uk/im-a-professional/leeds-mindmate-single-point-access/>. MindMate will be able to identify the most appropriate service for your child at the time.

It may also be useful to speak to your child's year manager or the student wellbeing officer who may already be working with your child for further guidance. However, it is always vital that you seek guidance from a medical professional.

The following mental health services are available for children and young people in Leeds:

- **Teen Connect-** This is a helpline for young people aged 13-18 in Leeds who may be feeling in crisis with their mental health. They offer up to one-hour support via telephone or online chat. It is open from 6pm to 2am every night – **0808 800 1212- [Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service » Teen Connect \(slcs.org.uk\)](#)**
- **The Market Place-** They offer free confidential support around mental health and wellbeing for young people aged 11-24 in Leeds – **0113 246 1659 - [The Market Place – A drop in centre for young people offering advice and counselling on a range of subjects affecting young people \(themarketplaceleeds.org.uk\)](#)**
- **Kooth-** They offer online mental health support via webchat for young people aged 11-24 - **[Home - Kooth](#)**
- **Childline-** They provide telephone support and webchat for children. Support is available in British Sign Language – **0800 1111 - [Childline | Childline](#)**

- **Shout-** This is a free, confidential text support service which can be accessed at any time for anyone in the UK who is struggling to cope. To start a conversation, text the word 'SHOUT' to **85258** - [Shout - UK's 24/7 Crisis Text Service for Mental Health Support | Shout 85258 \(giveusashout.org\)](https://www.giveusashout.org)

Once support has been sought, we will work with professionals to agree how best to support your child in school. The support that is offered will be bespoke to the needs of the young person.

## 22. Appendix 3: Attendance Letters

**Key term:** SAP- School Attendance Panel meeting

This is a meeting in school to agree support and set targets for improved attendance.

### Overview of letters:

- **Letter 1-** *attendance concern*
- **Letter 2-** *attendance concern*
  
- **Letter 3** – *invitation to SAP meeting*
- **Letter 4-** *invitation to SAP meeting review*
  
- **Letter 5-** *invitation to final SAP meeting – last step before legal intervention*

### Fast Track

- **Letter 6-** *Fast Track 1- outline attendance concern and 12-week monitoring*
- **Letter 7-** *Fast Track 2- invite to SAP*
- **Letter 8-** *Fast Track 3 – penalty notice warning*



## Letter 1

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

### Attendance: Letter 1- we are concerned about your child's attendance

**Re: «Pupil\_Full\_Name»                      DOB: «DOB»**

I am writing to you today to explain that we are concerned about your child's attendance which is currently [ATTENDANCE]. Our target for all students is 97%. Whilst we do understand that some absence because of illness may be unavoidable, when attendance falls below 95% concerns are raised about the possible effects on a student's academic progress and social interaction.

The overview below shows the impact of absence on student progress in GCSE examinations:

Attendance over the full year	Days missed	Lesson missed	% of students achieving 5+ GCSE's at grade 9-4 inc. English and Maths
100%	0	0	81.7%
99-96%	2-7.5	10-37.5	73.5%
95-91%	9.5-17	50-87.5	56.8%
90-86%	19-25.5	95-127.5	41.0%

Attendance targets are cumulative throughout each academic year which means that your child's attendance total will increase with further full days in school. As each school year starts in September, it only takes a couple of absent days to fall to 97% in the first term.

If you have any concerns about your child's health or you would like some support from school, please do not hesitate to contact your child's year manager or the school attendance officer.

We want to work collaboratively to ensure that every student has the very best school attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Pastoral Team

## Letter 2

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

### Attendance: Letter 2 – we continue to be concerned about your child's attendance

Re: «Pupil\_Full\_Name»                      DOB: «DOB»

We have already made contact to inform you that «forename»'s attendance is below our school target. Unfortunately, «forename»'s attendance since the start of this school year has now fallen to «percentage\_attendance»%. Whilst we do understand that some absence because of illness may be unavoidable, when attendance falls below 95% concerns are raised about the possible effects on a student's academic progress and social interaction.

The Department for Education regards a child at 90% attendance and below as a 'Persistent Absentee'. We need to make you aware of this.

As a result, we can no longer authorise any absence unless the relevant medical evidence (e.g. prescription/appointment card/hospital letter) is provided.

If there are any issues concerning «forename»'s attendance which you have not already made us aware of, please contact the attendance team so we can update our records and offer support where needed. We do want to help.

Without improvement in «forename»'s attendance further intervention will be required. Our staged procedures for this are in the attendance policy on our website. We would like to remind you that any future absence or lateness needs to be explained by a note in «forename»'s planner or in a letter on their return to school along with any relevant medical evidence. **Please see the enclosed registration certificate and if there are any absences marked U these are absences for which we require an explanation.**

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children attend school regularly and failure to do so may result in action being taken by the Local Education Authority through the Magistrates Court.

Prince Henry's Grammar School works to the Department for Education policy for student attendance which means that from September 2015, schools are no longer allowed to authorise any requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. Parents may receive a penalty notice if their child is absent from school without permission. The cost of this notice will be £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days, and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days.

I hope that we can work together to improve «forename»'s attendance. We thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

xxxx

Attendance Officer

**Letter 3a – invitation to SAP meeting**

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

**Attendance: Letter 3- invite to a School Attendance Panel Meeting**

**Re: «Pupil\_Full\_Name»                      DOB: «DOB»**

Following a recent attendance check I can see there are ongoing concerns about «Pupil\_Name»'s attendance. I enclose a copy of their registration certificate for your information.

As a result of these concerns I would like to invite you to a school attendance panel which will be held in school on «**appointment time and date**». This will be an opportunity to discuss the barriers to excellent school attendance and to agree targets for improvement which will be reviewed in 4 weeks. Progress towards these targets will inform our next steps. The meeting will be with your child's Year Manager and the Director of Key Stage.

If the above appointment is not convenient, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Year Manager or Director of Key Stage on the above number to make an alternative arrangement, as the meeting will go ahead in your absence if you do not attend.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr L Wilson

Assistant Headteacher – Learner Support

**Letter 3b** – invitation to SAP meeting

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

**Attendance: Letter 3- invite to a School Attendance Panel Meeting**

**Re:** «Pupil\_Full\_Name» **DOB:** «DOB»

Following a recent attendance check I can see there are ongoing concerns about «Pupil\_Name»'s attendance. I enclose a copy of their registration certificate for your information.

As a result of these concerns I would like to invite you to a school attendance panel which will be held in school on «**appointment time and date**». This will be an opportunity to discuss the barriers to excellent school attendance and to agree targets for improvement which will be reviewed in 4 weeks. Progress towards these targets will inform our next steps. The meeting will be with the Student Wellbeing Officer allocated to your child and the Attendance Officer.

If the above appointment is not convenient, please do not hesitate to contact us on the above number to make an alternative arrangement, as the meeting will go ahead in your absence if you do not attend.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr L Wilson

Assistant Headteacher – Learner Support

**Letter 3c – invitation to SAP meeting**

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

**Attendance: Letter 3- invite to a School Attendance Panel Meeting**

**Re: «Pupil\_Full\_Name»                      DOB: «DOB»**

Following a recent attendance check I can see there are ongoing concerns about «Pupil\_Name»'s attendance. I enclose a copy of their registration certificate for your information.

As a result of these concerns I would like to invite you to a school attendance panel which will be held in school on «**appointment time and date**». This will be an opportunity to discuss the barriers to excellent school attendance and to agree targets for improvement which will be reviewed in 4 weeks. Progress towards these targets will inform our next steps. The meeting will be with the SENCO and Assistant Headteacher- Learner Support.

If the above appointment is not convenient, please do not hesitate to contact us on the above number to make an alternative arrangement, as the meeting will go ahead in your absence if you do not attend.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr L Wilson

Assistant Headteacher – Learner Support

**Letter 4 – invitation to SAP review meeting**

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

**Attendance: Letter 4 - invite to a School Attendance Panel Review Meeting**

**Re: «Pupil\_Full\_Name»                      DOB: «DOB»**

Following a recent school attendance panel meeting I am writing to confirm that concerns regarding «Pupil\_Name»'s attendance remain. As such, we have organised a review meeting to discuss further barriers to school attendance and to set further targets.

I would like to invite you to a school attendance panel in school on «**appointment time and date**». Failure to provide an acceptable explanation for the absences may result in a Penalty Notice Warning letter being issued immediately following the meeting.

Failure to meet the targets agreed in this meeting will result in one further school attendance panel meeting. At this point it is possible that legal intervention will be requested from the School Attendance Service.

If the above appointment is not convenient, please contact us on the above number to make an alternative arrangement, as the meeting will go ahead in your absence if you do not attend.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr L Wilson

Assistant Headteacher – Learner Support

**Letter 5 – invitation to final SAP meeting**

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

**Attendance: Letter 5 - invite to a final School Attendance Panel Review Meeting**

**Re:       «Pupil\_Full\_Name»       DOB: «DOB»**

Following a recent school attendance panel meeting I am writing to confirm that concerns regarding «Pupil\_Name»'s attendance remain. As such, we have organised a final School Attendance Panel meeting on «**appointment time and date**». This meeting will be with myself and the Attendance Officer. Failure to provide an acceptable explanation for the absences may result in a Penalty Notice Warning letter being issued immediately following the meeting.

Failure to meet the targets agreed in this meeting will result in a request for legal intervention from the School Attendance Service.

If the above appointment is not convenient, please contact the attendance officer to make an alternative arrangement, as the meeting will go ahead in your absence if you do not attend.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr L Wilson

Assistant Headteacher – Learner Support



**Letter 6- Fast Track 1- outline attendance concern and 12-week monitoring**

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

**Attendance: Letter 6 - Fast Track 1- outline attendance concern and 12-week monitoring**

**Re: «Pupil\_Full\_Name»                      DOB: «DOB»**

As the Assistant Headteacher Learner Support at Prince Henry's Grammar School, my role is to improve attendance. I monitor students' attendance regularly and follow up on any frequent or unreasonable absences.

We would like your support to improve «Pupil\_Name»'s levels of attendance, therefore a 'Fast Track Initiative' is currently being run in school in order to address attendance concerns quickly and effectively.

As a result of these concerns, «Pupil\_Name»'s **attendance will be monitored for 12 weeks** starting from XXXXX. **During this time we will only authorise absences if medical verification is provided.** If «Pupil\_Name»'s attendance shows little or no improvement after the monitored period, you will be formally invited to a School Attendance Panel to discuss the barriers to excellent school attendance. Please be assured that this initiative is designed to help support and prevent your child's attendance from deteriorating again.

*I am obliged to inform you that under the provision of Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. Failure to do so could result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings being taken by the Local Authority.*

If you require advice and support with regards to your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the attendance officer.

Yours sincerely,



Lee Wilson

Assistant Headteacher – Learner Support

xxxxxxxxxxxx

Attendance Officer

**Letter 7- Fast Track 2- invite to SAP**

Dear «ParentCarer\_Salutation»

**Attendance: Letter 7 - Fast Track 2- invite to School Attendance Panel Meeting**  
(YM/SWO/Director of Key Stage)

**Re:           «Pupil\_Full\_Name»           DOB: «DOB»**

Further to my previous letter advising you that, «Pupil\_Name»'s had been identified to be part of a cohort for the Fast Track initiative, I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance remains a concern and we have not seen the improvements that were required. I have enclosed a copy of their registration certificate for your information.

As a result of these concerns and in order to discuss barriers to excellent attendance, I would like to invite you to a Fast Track School Attendance Panel which will be held in school on **«appointment time and date»**.

If the above appointment is not convenient, please do not hesitate to contact the attendance officer to make an alternative arrangement, as the meeting will go ahead in your absence if you do not attend.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr L Wilson

Assistant Headteacher: Learner Support

xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Attendance Officer

**Letter 8- Fast Track 3 – Penalty Notice Warning**

Dear «ParentCarer»

**Attendance: Letter 8 - Fast Track 3 – Penalty Notice Warning**

**PENALTY NOTICE WARNING**

**Re: «Pupil\_Full\_Name» dob.....**

It has been brought to my attention that the attendance of your child remains a concern.

The government has introduced powers for the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases where parents do not ensure that their child attends school regularly.

I should inform you therefore that you are liable to be issued with a Penalty Notice under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (as amended). This is due to you having failed to ensure your child, «Pupil\_Full\_Name», being of compulsory school age and a registered student at «School», attends school regularly. During the period «**dates\_between**», your child had «**no\_of\_unauth\_abs**» **unauthorised** absences.

**ANY FURTHER UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES MAY RESULT IN A PENALTY NOTICE BEING ISSUED AGAINST YOU.**

Note: Payment of a Penalty Notice, if paid within 21 days, is £60.00. If you do not pay within 21 days, the fine is increased to £120.00 and you have a further 7 days to make this payment in full.

**Non-payment of a Penalty Notice within the total 28-day period could result in the commencement of criminal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.**

If you are experiencing any problems in ensuring that your child does attend school regularly, please speak directly to your child's year manager or the director of key stage.

Prince Henry's Grammar School shares Leeds City Council and the government's determination to raise the levels of student attendance at school because we want to give the best future opportunity for our children.

Yours Sincerely,

SIGNATURE TO BE INSERTED ELECTRONICALLY

**Miss Bishop**

**Headteacher**