



# Highsted Grammar School

## **Attendance Policy**

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## 1. AIMS

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

- promoting good attendance.
- reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- acting early to address patterns of absence.
- building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school.
- promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements from the Department for Education (Department for Education) and the Local Authority as laid out in the following legislation, setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

[Education Act 1996 – Section 444](#)

[The School Attendance \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

[Statutory Guidance: Working together to improve school attendance \(Department for Education, 2024\)](#)

Kent County Council Guidance

- Kent School Attendance Handbook (KELSI) — guidance for schools on monitoring, intervention, and escalation: [Kent School Attendance Handbook \(PDF\)](#)
- Penalty Notices Code of Conduct (KELSI) — sets out local procedures for issuing penalty notices: [KELSI Penalty Notice Guidance](#)
- Kent County Council Advice for Parents — explains legal powers available to the authority: [Kent School Absences – Kent County Council](#)

[Education Act 2002](#)

[Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[Children and Families Act 2014](#)

[Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools, updated 8 September 2025](#)

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### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.1 The School**

The school will follow the Department for Education and Kent County Council's general approach to attendance which includes but not limited to:

- communication with family (i.e. building relationships.)
- facilitating support (i.e. to identify and unblock barriers which may be within school, but also beyond the school dates.)
- reaching out (signposting and access to universal and additional support.)
- formalising approach (i.e. intensifying support, which would start to bring involvement from Kent County Council, but not a focus on punitive measures.)

#### **3.2 The Governing Board**

The governing board is responsible for:

As improving attendance requires a whole school approach which needs to be robustly reviewed, Section 3 of the Working together guidance highlights the importance of the role played by school trustees and governors. They are expected to:

- recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students or cohorts who need it most.
- ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- ensure trustees and governors have attendance on the agenda at board meetings and have regular discussions about it.

#### **3.3 The Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- implementation of this policy at the school.
- monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students.
- monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

#### **3.4 The Designated Senior Lead Responsible for Attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families.

- monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7.)
- benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher.
- working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, including regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, as well as the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes.
- Oversee staff who have day-to-day responsibility for attendance monitoring to ensure effective processes are in place, such as accurate recording of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensure all teaching and non-teaching staff:
  - understand the importance of good attendance and recognise that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances.
  - know the law and requirements for schools, including keeping registers and applying the school/trust's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up, and improving attendance.
  - are consistent in their communication with students and parents.
  - receive the training and professional development they need.
  - are familiar with processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to students who need it.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the assistant headteacher, Mr P Curtiss, and can be contacted via [email](#) or 01795 424223.

### **3.4 Head of Year Responsibilities**

The Head of Year will have access to SIMS, as well as weekly updates from the Attendance Lead, and will work with other stakeholders on a weekly basis, highlighting any student who falls below the expected 96% attendance.

The Heads of Year are expected to: -

- promote regular attendance and punctuality, and to reduce absence levels by acting on referrals and leading on effective interventions to reduce absences across the school.
- monitor weekly and termly data on attendance/absence for all students and action any Stage 1 or Stage 2 letters.
- work with the Attendance administrators to ensure data is accurate and communication with parents, carers or outside agencies is prompt and clear.
- work with students and parents to improve attendance if there are concerns about a student's attendance level; this may include written or verbal communication, home visits, meeting with families, establishing Attendance Contracts and working with the Senior Leadership team should the need arise to pursue appropriate legal action as per the legislation listed in Section 2.

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In cases where attendance does not improve and/or parents and carers are not engaging with the process, the school will consider all the legal options available to them including penalty notices and referrals (See Appendix 6) to the Local Authority for prosecution under Sec.444(1 and 1A) Education Act 1996 and The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

### **3.5 Form Tutors and Class Teachers**

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes and submitting this information on SIMs within 10 mins of the start of form or lesson. Any student arriving after the start of lesson will be marked as late. Class teachers will also email reception if a student, expected to arrive to lesson, does not arrive to lesson after 10 minutes.

Form tutors will take a register on SIMs during form time (8.40-9.05). Students who arrive late due to bus delays should be recorded as late with a comment 'bus late' for verification by the Attendance administrators. Students who arrive during or after this time will sign in at reception and will be marked in as absent for AM registration but present for period 1.

Form Tutors and class teachers will be professionally curious about any unexplained or unusual absence to their lesson, or across lessons, and seek to work with Heads of Year, Heads of Department and the Attendance administrators to ensure the good attendance and safeguarding of students in their care.

In the case of an otherwise present child being absent from a lesson for unknown reasons, the class teacher must email reception. If the student does not arrive by the end of the period, the teacher must add the comment 'DNA' for 'Did Not Arrive' and follow the school's behaviour policy to implement sanctions where required.

In the case of SIMs not functioning, Tutors and class teachers will email reception informing them of the issue, including any identified missing students, and complete a paper register to be taken to reception as soon as possible.

### **3.5 Non-Teaching, Student Facing Staff**

Non-teaching, student facing staff must ensure that students are accurately recorded as to their presence or absence to a timetabled or un-timetabled period. Depending on access, this must be completed either on Sims (ensuring a clear comment is recorded with staff initial, location and timings,) or by emailing reception. Music Tutors and other external teachers meeting with students must provide their proposed timetables to reception at least a week in advance and have a duty to unform reception via email should the student not arrive at the appointed time.

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### **3.6 School Office Staff**

School office staff will:

- take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system/pass the message to the Attendance administrators.
- transfer messages from parents to the Head of Year to provide them with any information that would help in their role with attendance. See 'Role of Heads of Year below'.
- to assist in the Attendance administrator's role in assuring all marks are accurate during lesson time.

### **3.7 Parents and Carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- make sure their child attends every day on time.
- work with the school and external agencies to ensure attendance is above the Department for Education's target of 96%. Highsted's target is 97%
- email the school or call the school on 01795 423223 and press 1 to report their child's absence before 8.40 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return. Emails are year dependent to ensure they reach the correct person in a timely manner. These are:
  - attendance7@highsted.kent.sch.uk for Year 7
  - attendance8@highsted.kent.sch.uk for Year 8
  - attendance9@highsted.kent.sch.uk for Year 9
  - attendance10@highsted.kent.sch.uk for Year 10
  - attendance11@highsted.kent.sch.uk for Year 11
  - attendance12@highsted.kent.sch.uk for Year 12
  - attendance13@highsted.kent.sch.uk for Year 13
- provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child and ensure at least one of these will be available at any time during the school day and return missed calls from the school in a timely manner with the understanding that seeking clarification of absence is critical in our Safeguarding obligations.
- provide medical evidence such as a doctor / consultant note if your daughter or ward's attendance is below 90% and you have received a letter informing you that their attendance is a cause for concern.
- In the rare instance that a student cannot be located in a timely manner, to be contacted by the school as an additional method of checking accurate records or contacting the student.

### **3.8 Students**

Students are expected to:

- attend every timetabled session on time so that they can be registered accurately and without sanction, ensuring their peers' learning is uninterrupted by late arrival.
- (when in Sixth form) call the school to report their absence before 8.40 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and understand that family members may be contacted to clarify any information or lack thereof.

## **4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE**

### **4.1 Attendance Register**

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 14.20 and will be kept open until 14.30.

It will mark whether every student is:

- present.
- absent.
- late.
- none of the above using the Department for Education approved codes and reasons listed in Appendix 1.
- 

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- the original entry.
- the amended entry.
- the staff code of the person who made the amendment See appendix 1 for the Department for Education attendance codes.
- the date on which the amendment was made
- the reason for the amendment.
- the method of communication used to inform the change of code if required.

We will also record:

- whether the absence is authorised or not.
- the nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity.
- the nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

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

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## **4.2 Unplanned Absence**

### **Absence Procedures**

The school day starts at 8:40 am and ends at 3:15 for Year 7/8, 15.20 for Year 9, 15.25 for Year 11 and 15.30 for Year 12/13. Students should arrive no later than 8:30 am to give them enough time to get to Form by 8:40 am.

If your child is absent for unplanned reasons, you must:

- contact us before 8:40 am on the first day of absence and every further day of absence until they return by phoning our absent line 01795 423223 and press 1.
- provide evidence to support the reason for absence if requested and/or your child's attendance is withing a Stage 2, Notice to Improve window and/or you have received a letter informing you that their attendance is a cause for concern. For example, this could be a doctor's note, hospital letter, appointment card, copy of prescription or packaging from prescribed medication.
- 

If your child is absent for unplanned reasons, we will:

- contact you on the day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- contact, if required, all agreed contacts available in the instance that we cannot get a response from the primary contact.
- contact you to inform you of a Stage 1 or Stage 2, Notice to Improve concern. (See Appendix 3)
- invite you in to discuss the situation with the Head of Year if absences persist.
- Invite you and your child/ward to an attendance meeting to establish an 'Attendance Contract' with a view to exploring the reasons for, and solutions to, absence.
- refer the matter to the Head of Key Stage and/or the Attendance Lead if attendance is a concern.
- refer to the Local Authority Officer if attendance is a concern.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised if the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of any illness or a Stage 2 letter has been issued or an Attendance Contract is in place.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent or carer to provide medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

## **4.3 Planned Absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent or carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Where there are planned absences, the parent must contact the school at least 2 weeks in advance. Confirmation of the appointment will be requested e.g. appointment card, confirmation letter etc.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent or carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 5 lists which term-time absences the school can authorise and Appendix 4 provides the Exceptional Leave of Absence Form which must be completed and returned to the school two weeks before the first day of absence.

#### **4.4 Lateness and Punctuality**

A student who arrives late:

- before the register has closed, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- 3 or more times will receive a sanction from the Head of Year.

The Head of Year will monitor students' punctuality issues. Contact with parents will be made if there are concerns. If the concern persists a parent meeting will be arranged to discuss issues.

#### **4.5 Following Up Unexplained Absence**

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

- call the student's parent or carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach the primary contacts, we may also contact any other agreed contacts. In the event of no contact being made, the school may conduct a home visit or contact the police.
- identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- request the completion and return of an Exceptional Leave of Absence Form (See Appendix 4.)
- request evidence to support an authorised absence claim.
- call the parent/carers on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer (appendix 6.)

#### **4.6 Reporting to Parents or Carers**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be included on written reports and through the Sims Engage app.

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## 5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

### 5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances.' A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances', though do not limit to:

- an unavoidable cause; for example, a one-off and unavoidable emergency which prevents the child from attending school.
- service personnel returning from a tour abroad where it is evidenced the parent/carer will not be in receipt of any leave that coincides with school holidays.
- where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- the death or terminal illness of a person close to the family, with careful consideration given to both the closeness of the person and the length of time requested for absence.
- to attend a funeral of a person close to the family with careful consideration given to both the closeness of the person and the length of time requested for absence.
- the marriage of a close family member with careful consideration given to both the closeness of the person and the length of time requested for absence.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the legal responsibilities as listed in Section 2, specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence and the Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Requests for holidays in term-time cannot be authorised.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include but are not limited to:

- illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail.)
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart (i.e. cannot be observed at another time) for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.

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## 5.2 Legal Sanctions

The school will follow Department for Education guidance and referral process (See Appendix 6) to improve attendance. This may result in the school or local authority issuing a Penalty Notice to parents and carers for the unauthorised absence of their compulsory school-aged child.

If issued with a Penalty Notice, the parents and carers must pay £80 if paid within 21 days, and £160 if paid within 28 days. The fine applies to each parent and carer for each child and can result in prosecution, a fine of up to £2,500 or a prison sentence if unpaid after the deadline. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by the headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision to issue a penalty notice may consider, but is not limited to, whether:

- the student is absent on leave which is unauthorised by the Headteacher (recorded by school as code G on the student's registration certificate) for 10 or more sessions within 10 school weeks.
- the student is absent from school, with 10 or more sessions recorded on their registration certificate by the school as unauthorised using:
  - Code O (absent in other or unknown circumstances).
  - Code U (arrived in school after registration closed).
- any combination of code O, U and G triggering the school to set a 20 school day notice to improve period for the student, which was unsuccessful.
- the student is present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion (recorded as code E on the student's registration certificate).
- in cases of unauthorised absence and where the school has sent a Notice to improve and included all the information set out in paragraph 188 of the Working together to improve school attendance guidance, August 2024, and the 20 school day notice to improve period has been completed.
- in line with the escalation process, there have not been two previous penalty notices issued already at the school or other schools in England within 3 schools years of the issue of the first penalty notice. A penalty notice is classed as issued where they were paid by the parent, or not paid and prosecution was taken forward and the parent pleaded or was found guilty. A withdrawn penalty notice does not count towards the escalation process.
- the school is confident there are no safeguarding concerns about the student (for example, the student has been continuously absent and they have not been seen by a professional or there is uncertainty about their whereabouts).
- the student's attendance is lower than the expected target in the school's attendance policy, and the policy explains the national framework for PNs.
- the student is expected to attend full time.
- the student is currently known to Early Help or Children's Social Care and there are no concerns the work undertaken by the family practitioner to support an improvement in the student's attendance conflicts with the penalty notice.
- the student is not in the care of Kent County Council or another local authority.

The school should only request a penalty notice (not including cases where support is not appropriate such as a holiday in term time) if:

- all available support has been provided and been unsuccessful and/or not engaged with.
- it is believed to be the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this particular family and one of the other legal interventions (for example a request for attendance legal intervention via the Digital Front Door) would not be more appropriate.
- any obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as where a student has a disability have been fully considered and met first.

Kent County Council has the power to prosecute parents in the Magistrates Court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The two types of offences are section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knowingly fails to ensure their child attends school regularly. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500). Parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision may be prosecuted under section 444ZA. Sentences for a 444(1) offence may also include parenting orders, conditional discharges, and absolute discharges. Sentences for a 444(1A) offence may also include a curfew, community order, rehabilitation activity requirement, or custodial sentence of up to 3 months. From 19th August 2024, KPAS Attendance Officers will investigate the offence under section 444(1A) automatically, even if there have been no previous convictions.

## **6. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE**

Highsted Grammar School celebrates good attendance through:

- weekly form time attendance session. Form and individual attendance figures are celebrated.
- assemblies.
- termly letters home to notify parents of attendance.
- termly certificates/postcards home.
- attendance displays and posters throughout the school.

## **7. ATTENDANCE MONITORING**

### **7.1 Monitoring Attendance**

Highsted Grammar School monitors attendance through: -

- Attendance administrators tracking attendance of students throughout the day and over time.
- actively seeking students who appear to have not attended a period
- Heads of Year tracking and monitoring student attendance across their year groups and will liaise with form tutors.
- attendance processes being implemented where there are concerns. Parents will be contacted using Letter 1 (see Appendix 2). If attendance does not improve, Letter 2 will be issued (see Appendix 3). If attendance continues not to improve the student may be referred to the local attendance service.

- monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level.
- identify target groups whose absences may be a cause for concern.

The Attendance Lead will liaise with Heads of Year to discuss interventions for students whose attendance is a concern.

The school will also share attendance data with Kent County Council and the Department of Education for monitoring purposes. This includes but is not limited to:

- deletion returns: All schools have a statutory duty in accordance with Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to notify Kent County Council of any student's name being deleted from its admission register under grounds specified in Chapter 7 of the Working together guidance (paragraphs 222 to 281).
- attendance returns: All schools have a statutory duty in accordance with Regulation 13 of The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to notify Kent County Council of the full names and addresses of all compulsory aged students who are continuously absent for at least 10 school days, where 1 or a combination of the 4 unauthorised absent codes are recorded (G, N, O and/or U) – see section 7(b). Kent County Council requests schools to make returns on a termly basis, and within 10 school days of the new term (for example, returns should be made within 10 school days of term 2 for all students who meet the criteria during term 1). Kent County Council will also collect additional details such as if the student is a Child in Care, has an EHCP or subject to a CP plan with Children's Social Care in order to triage if any action is required by Kent County Council teams to address absences following contact with the school.
- Sickness returns: All schools have a statutory duty in accordance with Regulation 13 of The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to notify Kent County Council of the full names and addresses of all compulsory aged students where there are reasonable grounds to believe the student:
  - Will be unable to attend because of sickness for at least 15 consecutive school days; or
  - Will be, or will have been, unable to attend because of sickness for a total of at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or not.

## **7.2 Analysing Attendance**

The school will:

- analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or groups that need additional support with their attendance and provide targeted support for students and their families when required.
- look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence and develop and implement strategies to address these patterns.

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### **7.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance**

The school will:

- provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, Head of Years and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families.
- use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions to modify them and inform future strategies.

### **7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence**

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- follow the Department for Education's and Kent County Council's guidance from the Kent Pru and Attendance service (KPAS) (See Appendix 6)
- use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- communicate with parents to inform, advise and assist wherever possible.
- hold regular meetings with the parents of students, who the school and/or local authority consider to be vulnerable or persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.
- liaise with parents and carers to create an Attendance Contract following the Department for Education's Working together to improve school attendance and KCC's Referral Pathway. (See Appendix 6).

### **7.5 Children Absent / Missing from Education**

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.

The school will:

- follow statutory Department for Education guidance on Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools, updated 8 September 2025.
- Report concerns to Kent County Council.
- analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students at risk.
- look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence and develop strategies to address these patterns.
- act promptly with professional curiosity and in line with legislation.



## **7.6 Elective Home Education**

Schools have a statutory duty to notify the LA when a parent provides notification of their intention to electively home educate their child.

## **8. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or Department for Education is updated and, as a minimum, annually by the designated senior leader responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **9. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICES**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Data Protection Policy

## 10. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 - Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the Department for Education's guidance on school attendance.

Code	General Use
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Off-site, approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances
C1	Performance-related leave
C2	Reduced timetable (authorised)
D	Dual registration (at another school)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision)
G	Holiday (not agreed)
I	Illness
J1	Interview (e.g. job, college)
K	LA-arranged alternative provision
L	Late (before the register closes)
M	Medical / Dental appointment
N	Reason not yet provided
O	Other unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
Q	No access provided (e.g. transport failure)
R	Religious observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after register closed)
V	Educational visit / trip
W	Work experience
X	Not required to attend (non-compulsory age, etc)
Y1	No transport available (usually LA-provided)
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Part of school closed
Y4	Whole school closed
Y5	Criminal justice detention
Y6	Public health guidance / law prevents attendance
Y7	Other unavoidable emergency
Z	Not on roll
- (dash)	No mark entered yet
#	Whole school closed (e.g. INSET, polling day)

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## APPENDIX 2 - Letter 1: Stage One

Dear **Both Parents**

### Stage 1 Attendance Concern

Highsted Grammar School is keen to ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop their full potential academically and socially. Therefore, the Governors, Headteacher and staff in partnership with parents and carers, have a duty to promote full attendance with the expectation that all students achieve 100%.

**Student's Name** attendance has recorded a level below the recommended 96% attendance expected at Highsted Grammar School and by the Department for Education. **Last year, Student's Name attendance was %**. Evidence shows that this level of attendance may have a detrimental impact on attainment. As part of our attendance policy, this level of attendance activates Stage 1 of the attendance action procedure.

It is now incredibly important to make every effort to ensure that **Student's Name** attends school regularly and punctually to improve their overall school attendance. If I or the school can help, please contact me and we can arrange a time to meet or speak on the phone.

If there is no sustained improvement in **Student's Name** school attendance, the matter will be referred to the Attendance Lead and Key Stage Lead for further action to improve your daughter or ward's school attendance.

If you are aware of any factors which may be impacting **Student's Name** attendance or punctuality that have not already been discussed, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Head of Year 7, 8,9,10,11, Sixth-Form**

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## APPENDIX 3 - Letter 2: Stage Two, Notice to Improve

Dear **Both Parents**

### Stage 2 Attendance Concern

### Notice to Improve

I write following our previous communication regarding **Student's Name** attendance.

**Student's Name** attendance has continued to fall below the recommended level of attendance expected at Highsted Grammar School and the Department for Education of 96%. Regular attendance is a legal requirement under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996. Currently, **Student's name** attendance is % and as it has not improved since our previous letter, **and last year's attendance was also below 96% (%),** it is now at Stage 2 as per our Attendance Policy.

You will find attached a copy of **STUDENT'S NAME** registration certificate which details the absences. In that time, the school has:

Evidence shows that this level of attendance may have a detrimental impact on attainment and emotional development. Any absence from school can seriously disrupt **Student's Name** learning. Not only do they miss out on learning while they are away but they are also less prepared for future lessons when they return. As part of our Stage 2 Concern policy, the matter will now be referred to The Attendance Lead and Key Stage Lead for closer monitoring. If there is any evidence you can provide which you feel needs to be taken into consideration, please provide this as soon as possible. Additionally, we would like to remind you of the opportunity to access a range of support options that may address any challenges your family or **STUDENT'S NAME** are currently facing and would recommend, if you have not already done so, to contact me to explore these options.

No further absences will be authorised from **X DATE to X DATE** (20 school days) unless supported by clear and compelling evidence. This applies to absences due to illness. It is imperative that **STUDENT'S NAME** attendance improves to at least **100%** per week in that time.

Continuing unauthorised school attendance can result in being liable to a Penalty Notice or prosecution for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of your child in accordance with Section 7 Education Act 1996. Among other thresholds, Penalty Notices are issued if a student has a total of 5 day's or 10 sessions of unauthorised absences. All Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct June 2020. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child, and the amount will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the charge will be a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 days period may result in prosecution by the Kent PRU and Attendance Service. In the event of three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

In the meantime, should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me on 01795 424223 or by email at **XXXXXXXXXX** who will work with you to find a solution. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Head of Year 7,8,9,10,11, Sixth-Form**



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## APPENDIX 4 - Notice of Penalty Notice

Dear **Both Parents / Carers**

As a result of the following circumstances surrounding the attendance of **Student's Name**, we are obliged to notify you that a request to Kent County Council for a Penalty Notice will be made under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Circumstances:

For your convenience I also attach a copy of **STUDENT'S NAME** current Registration Certificate detailing the record of her attendance this academic year to date.

Among other thresholds, Penalty Notices are issued if a student has a total of 5 day's or 10 sessions of unauthorised absences. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child, and the amount will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the charge will be a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 days period may result in prosecution by the Kent PRU and Attendance Service. In the event of three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

Yours sincerely

Philip Curtiss  
Attendance Lead

**APPENDIX 5 - Application or Exceptional Leave of Absence**

**Highsted Grammar School  
Application for Exceptional Leave of Absence  
Please complete two weeks before the first day of absence**

The Department for Education's Student Registration Regulations prevents the Headteacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time cannot be authorised.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, and / or the student is absent for 10 or more unauthorised sessions (the equivalent of 5 days) the case may be referred to the Attendance Service who will issue a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child, and the amount will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the charge will be a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both instances failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 days period may result in prosecution by the Kent PRU and Attendance Service. In the event of three or more periods of unauthorised absence within a 3 rolling year period, a penalty notice will not be issued. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

Please provide supporting evidence or further explanation on additional paper, if required.

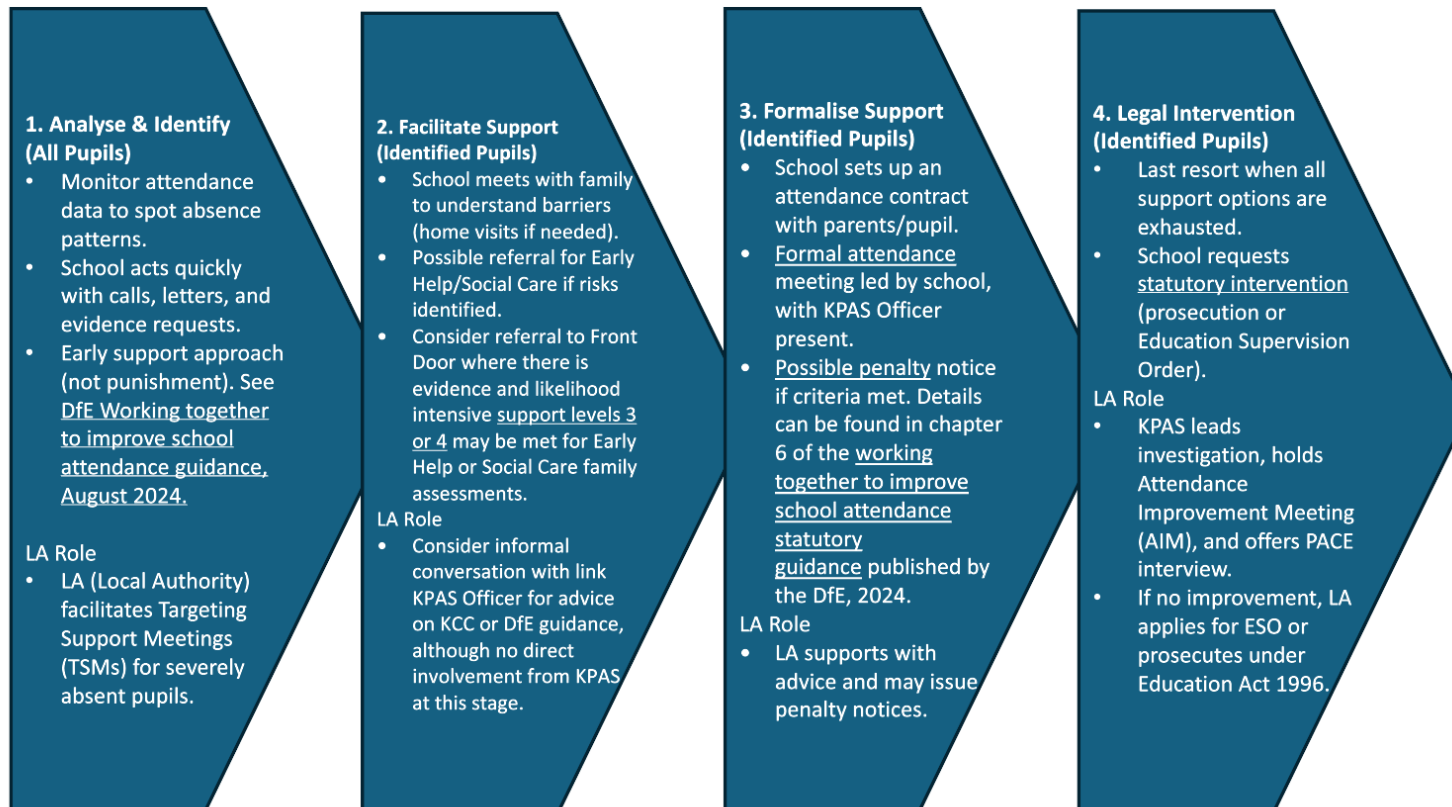
The school will respond within 7 days to confirm the authorisation decision by email or SIMs Engage.

**Section A**

<b>Student's Full Name:</b>	<b>Form:</b>
First date / time of proposed leave of absence:	
Last date / time of proposed leave of absence:	
Number of school days / lessons missed:	
Details of leave request:	
Reasons why request cannot be made during non-school days:	
In submitting this application, I understand that the school's decision is final and that I will abide by it.	
Signed:	Parent / Carer Date:

APPENDIX 6 - Kent School Referral Pathway - KPAS

## KENT PRU AND ATTENDANCE SERVICE (KPAS): INTERVENTION LEVELS



**APPENDIX 7 - Attendance Contract**

<b>ATTENDANCE CONTRACT (Initial meeting)</b> <i>In accordance with the <a href="#">Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003</a></i>			
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>Time of meeting:</b>	<b>Face to face or virtual:</b>	
<b>Chair of meeting:</b>	<b>Role of Chair:</b>	<b>Lead professional for parenting contract:</b>	
<b>Student name:</b>	<b>Student DoB:</b>	<b>Year Group:</b>	<b>School:</b>
<b>Student address:</b>			
<b>Student's attendance % (Sep to present)</b>	<b>Authorised absence % (Sep to present):</b>	<b>Unauthorised absence % (Sep to present):</b>	
<b>Parent / carer (1) full name:</b>		<b>Parent / carer (2) full name:</b>	
<b>Parent / carer (1) address (if different from student):</b>		<b>Parent / carer (2) address (if different from student):</b>	

<b>MEETING PARTICIPANTS</b>			
<b>Full name</b>	<b>Role (School, Parent etc)</b>	<b>Present (Y / N)</b>	<b>Contact number and email address</b>
<b>BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE: What are the reasons for the student's absences</b>			

<b>REQUIREMENTS FOR PARENT(S): What do/does parent(s) need to do to help unblock the barriers to the student's attendance?</b>			
<b>Action point</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Who may be able to help with this?</b>	<b>When will this need to be done by?</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
<b>VOICE OF THE STUDENT: What does the student feel they can do to help? (If the student attended the meeting and they are age and ability appropriate to be able to participate).</b>			

<b>SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL</b>			
<b>Action point</b>	<b>Support to be provided and for whom is it?</b>	<b>Which action in the requirements for parent(s) section does this relate to?</b>	<b>When will this be put in place or completed?</b>
<b>1</b>			
<b>2</b>			
<b>3</b>			
<b>4</b>			
<b>5</b>			

<b>SUPPORT FROM SERVICES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL (I.e., multi-agency teams such as Early Help)</b>			
<b>Action point</b>	<b>Support to be provided and for whom is it</b>	<b>Which action in the requirements for parent(s) section does this relate to?</b>	<b>When will this be put in place or completed?</b>
<b>1</b>			
<b>2</b>			
<b>3</b>			
<b>4</b>			
<b>5</b>			
<b>ANY OTHER COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS PRESENT:</b>			

**Parental consent to information sharing:** I/we understand that information about me/us has been and will continue to be collected by schools and local authority services (where relevant) to assess and provide appropriate support. I understand the school and/or local authority may also use this information for monitoring and safeguarding purposes and information could be shared with external agencies and service providers, without parental consent.

A copy of this attendance contract will be circulated to all participants present as well as any relevant professionals unable to attend the meeting. As stated in part (7), section 19 of the [Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#) a parenting contract must be signed by parent(s) and signed on behalf of the governing body, therefore this contract may be viewed by the chair of governors.

Additional information for schools parents and local authorities about parenting contracts can be found in Department for Education guidance, including [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

<b>PARENT DECLARATION</b>	<b>Parent (1)</b>	<b>Parent (2)</b>
By signing this contract, I agree to comply with the requirements for parent(s) specified within it for the duration the contract runs.	<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	<b>SIGNATURE:</b>
I am aware that refusal to commit to meeting the expectations set out in this contract may result in its termination and other routes being pursued by the school, including a referral to the local authority which could subsequently lead to prosecution in accordance with the Education Act 1996 444(1), 444(1A); or 444 (ZA) in the case of an alternative curriculum provision	<b>PRINT NAME:</b>	<b>PRINT NAME:</b>
I am aware that refusal to commit to meeting the expectations set out in this contract may result in its termination and other routes being pursued by the school, including a referral to the local authority which could subsequently lead to prosecution in accordance with the Education Act 1996 444(1), 444(1A); or 444(ZA) in the case of an alternative curriculum provision.	<b>RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT:</b>	<b>RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT:</b>
	<b>DATE:</b>	<b>DATE:</b>

<b>SCHOOL DECLARATION</b>			
<p>By signing this contract, I agree to provide support to the parent(s) to help achieve the requirements as outlined above and that a signature by a member of school staff is made on behalf of the governing body as set out in section 19 of the <a href="#">Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003</a> part (7).</p>			
<b>NAME</b>	<b>JOB TITLE</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<b>Date of next meeting</b>	<b>Time of next meeting:</b>	<b>Location of next meeting:</b>	

ATTENDANCE CONTRACT (Review meeting) <i>In accordance with the <a href="#">Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003</a></i>			
Review Number:		Date of meeting:	Time of Meeting:
Location:		Chair of meeting:	Lead Professional for parenting contract:
MEETING PARTICIPANTS			
Full Name	Role (School, Parent etc)	Present (Y / N)	Contact number and email address
Student Attendance % (Sept to present):		Authorised absence % (Sept to present):	Unauthorised absence % (Sept to present):
Attendance % change since previous meeting:		Authorised absence % change since previous meeting:	Unauthorised absence % change since previous meeting:

<b>REVIEW OF PREVIOUS REQUIREMENTS</b>				
<b>No</b>	<b>What was the requirements</b>	<b>Who was helping to achieve the requirement?</b>	<b>Was the requirement achieved?</b>	<b>What is needed next? (If requirement not achieved)</b>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS:**

**DECLARATION**

For parents, a signature is acknowledgement that failure to comply with the requirements set out in this attendance contract without justifiable reasons may result in the contract being terminated and other routes being pursued, including prosecution by the local authority in accordance with the Education Act 1996 444(1), 444(1A); or 444(ZA) in the case of an alternative curriculum provision.

For schools, a signature by a member of staff is made on behalf of the governing board as detailed in part (7), section 19 of the [Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#)

FULL NAME	ROLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Date of next meeting:	Time of next meeting:	Location of next meeting:	

## 11. POLICY REVIEW DATE

<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>Date: September 2025</b>
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	<b>September 2024</b>	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	<b>September 2026</b>	