

Attendance Systems

The purpose of this document is to clarify the attendance systems used across the Athena Learning Trust, with support resources and a 'who does what?' list. For students to receive a world-class education, they must attend school.

100% attendance is our expectation, so that students can learn more, remember and succeed more. We support students and families in attending as close as possible to 100%. As a trust, we prioritise support for attendance teams, so that they can support attendance to be as close as possible to 100%.

For students that are in stage 1 or above of the attendance process, they need to progress or be praised each fortnight.

Students **escalate** when they have not improved their attendance sufficiently, they move to the next stage in the attendance system.

Students are **praised** when they have improved their attendance, they are given a 'proud of you' postcard and positive phone call home.

Stage	Name	Who does what?
Stage 1	Absence concern Letter 1 email and post letter home Phone call home	<i>Letter</i> - Attendance officer <i>Phone call</i> - Pastoral support, attendance officer, attendance mentor or DSL
Stage 2	Attendance support plan Letter 2 text, email and post letter home & text day before meeting meeting 1 pro forma Letter 2* , failure to attend	<i>Letter</i> - Attendance officer <i>Meeting</i> - Head of year, Pastoral support, attendance officer, attendance mentor, DSL and/or SLT
Stage 3	Medical evidence request Letter 3 Letter 3* , Autumn reminder	<i>Letter</i> - Attendance officer
Stage 4	Attendance Action Plan Letter 4 text, email and post letter home & text day before meeting meeting 2 pro forma Letter 4* , Autumn reminder	<i>Letter</i> - Attendance officer <i>Meeting</i> - SLT, EWO & Attendance officer
Stage 5	EWO involvement	

Further detail

[Term-time absence & penalty notices - Devon](#)

[Term-time absence & penalty notices - Cornwall](#)

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Term-time absence & penalty notices - Devon

Further detail - [Managing term time absence and referring to DCC for a penalty notice - Support for schools and settings](#)

Process to progress parents to penalty notice for absence in term-time for **holiday**

1. September, January, April - send out [whole school warning letter](#)
2. A copy of the [leave of absence request](#) completed by the parent (**S2**)
3. School [writes](#) to parents to refuse
4. Family takes the UNAUTHORISED leave, and the school updates registers accordingly.
Upon return to the school, the school waits for 2 weeks and collects 10 days of attendance marks following the absence.
5. Two weeks following the pupil return after the absence, school completes these forms:
[PR1](#)
[PR3](#)
attaching the following:
Copy of fully completed [S2](#)
Copies of letters containing the [legal warning](#)
Registration Certificate (ensuring that the dates match exactly the dates cited on PR3, this is very important).
6. The Headteacher, School Attendance Officer or other agreed person must complete a referral for each individual parent/carer and each child, in full and send it to:
Penalty Notice Officer, Room L60, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QD
or
educate.schoolabsencepenaltynotices-mailbox@devon.gov.uk .

Contact for other languages:

Term-time absence & penalty notices - Cornwall

Process to progress parents to penalty notice for absence in term-time for **holiday**

1. September, January, April - send out [whole school warning letter](#)
2. A copy of the [leave of absence request](#) completed by the parent;
3. School [writes](#) to parents to refuse
4. Gather any other relevant information including records of meetings in relation to the leave of absence;
5. dates of all actions and communications relevant to the case, including, but not limited to, telephone calls, video calls or face to face communications with the parent;
6. Generate registration certificate(s) covering 100 school sessions preceding the absences for which the Penalty Notice is being requested and showing a minimum of 12 sessions of unauthorised absence, which may include unauthorised lateness. The registration certificate **must also show that the child has returned to school following said unauthorised leave of absence**;
7. History of change report generated from SIMS or other equivalent attendance monitoring system;

Contact for other languages:

If you would like this information in another format or language please contact: Cornwall Council, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY e: customerservices@cornwall.gov.uk t: 0300 1234 100

Internal Processes

Unexplained absence? There is a legal duty to explain absence from school

1. Text
 - a. Register is N until response from carer
 - b. Parents regularly not reporting? Attendance support plan
2. No response to text
 - a. Leave N code to generate unexplained absence by end of the week
 - b. Call **that day** to all contacts
 - c. Give parents 5 days to respond to letter
 - d. No response, change code to O (unauthorised)
3. Second day of unexplained absence
 - a. Repeat calls and leave message
4. Third day of unexplained absence
 - a. Repeat calls at 9am, leave message informing of home visit that day
 - b. Home visit takes place on **third day**
5. Fourth day of no contact, call social care for advice and complete MARU/MASH referral
6. **CP/CIN students**
 - a. Any absence reported to DSL immediately

Absence concern

Stage 1 letter

Phone call home (log substance of phone call with email to parents outlining discussion-build chronology)

Exceptions:

- Ongoing treatment relating to a chronic medical condition for which the school holds a healthcare plan
- An emergency hospital admission, i.e. appendicitis, an accident or the onset of a medical condition
- Bereavement of an immediate family member

Attendance Support Plan

Stage 2 letter

Parents/carers invited in for plan meeting

- Any barriers to learning?
 - Bullying
 - Friendship issues
 - Medical conditions that school is unaware of
 - Anxiety
 - Undiagnosed SEN needs
 - More complex issues at home, including illness, financial, housing concerns, divorce or bereavement
 - Issues in certain lessons
- What support measures are needed?
 - School based - agree on support school can offer such as:
 - A medical support plan
 - A referral to mentor or other pastoral/support services in school
 - A referral to the SEN team for assessments to be carried out
 - A referral to the safeguarding team
 - Short term support with transport to school (minibus pickups, bus tickets)
 - Assigned **consent** to hold certain medications in school, such as paracetamol, ibuprofen
 - In exceptional circumstances, a change of class/tutor group can be considered
 - Careers guidance
 - Mentoring
 - External support - agree on external agency support such as:
 - A referral to outside agencies for support for the child or the wider family

- Make parents aware of the escalation route (see above) of medical evidence, external agencies and EWO service.
- Texts, calls and unexplained absence letters will continue
- Fully minute the meeting
 - Signed by all parties, including student
 - Ensure parents/carers have a copy of the minutes
 - Upload copy to **SIMS**
- Set review date for **four weeks time**
 - Make parents/carers aware of escalation route
 - School will be monitoring student attendance regularly
 - Document any further parent/carer contact

Medical Evidence

Stage 3 letter

Failure to engage with supportive measures from the Attendance Support Plan meeting

- Student added to daily monitoring list

Send parents/carers formal letter informing that all further absences only authorised with suitable medical evidence

- Hospital and GP letters
- Photo of a prescription or medication (with name and date)
- Appointment card (with name, date and surgery stamp)
- A letter from a specialist stating that the student is unable to attend school
- Non-urgent appointments such as the dentist or opticians will not be authorised

AO- students should be coded N (unexplained) until medical evidence is received

- No evidence received? Send medical evidence letter by the end of the week (for each week where there is absence in at least one session)
- Give parents five school days to provide evidence
- No evidence received? Change codes to O (unauthorised)

Attendance Action Plan

If there is:

- Continued deterioration in attendance
- No suitable medical evidence provided

Schools should set up an attendance action plan

Stage 4 letter

Invite parents in - setting time and date of meeting in letter

- SLT (and EWO if possible) must be present to demonstrate the level of escalation
- Set three clear targets and supportive measures to accompany them, *consider*:
 - Adapted timetables (**not** reduced), must be agreed to by all parties
 - Referrals to alternative provision, must be agreed to by all parties

- Small group work in school
- Change of tutor group/classes
- Withdrawal from a lesson for targeted support
- Daily pick up by minibus (if available)
- Offer of further support, such as breakfast, support with homework or revision
- Approaching the local authority for respite at an alternative provision
- If requested by the parent, support with an in-year transfer to another school
- A managed move
- Careers guidance
- Mentoring
- Two week review date
 - Low or no engagement in targets should see measures removed
- If parents fail to attend?
 - Send another letter outlining alternative date and time
 - If they fail to attend this, hold meeting anyway and set targets, send out minutes to parents in letter

Final warning - Failure to attend action plan meeting or targets not met

- Final warning letter sent to parents/carers outlining the next stage, which could be:
 - A referral to children's social care
 - A request for a police welfare check
 - A home visit
 - A referral to the local authority for a penalty notice to be issued
 - A referral to the local authority asking them to initiate legal proceedings
- Final letter should evidence working with family, offered solutions to non-attendance
- Local authorities will only start their attendance process if we have documented evidence that we have offered support and intervention at each stage.

Referral to Local Authority

- Send paperwork to LA
 - Provide full chronology, detailing all support, timetable adaptations, meetings, interventions and referrals
- Continue to follow all normal attendance procedures
 - Report any concerns, as you would normally do

