



East Midlands Academy Trust

Attendance Policy 2022/2023

'Every child deserves to be the best they can be'

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	Reviewed by:	Kathryn Wright Deputy Headteacher
	Approved by:	Local Advisory Board (NIA)
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1. AIMS AND PURPOSE

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to achieve their full potential. **Northampton International Academy** (NIA) believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become resilient, confident, and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Our attendance target for pupils at Northampton International Academy is 97% and we are committed to working proactively to help and support parents and pupils to achieve this. If pupils do not attend school regularly, they will not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Every young person is entitled to an education, being absent from school means a lost learning opportunity.

NIA values all pupils and we will work with families to identify the reasons for attendance that drops below our target and try to resolve any difficulties.

Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and SEN.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Parents/Carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present.
- absent.
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

3. ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE AT NIA

Where pupils at compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

3.1. Procedures for reporting absence

Parents/Carers must advise the school by telephone on 01604 212 811, option 1 on each day of each absence **by 8.30am**, providing the school with the reason for their child's absence and an expected date of return. This should be followed up with medical evidence should a child have visited a doctor/dentist etc. This can be in the form of an appointment letter/card or a copy of a prescription.

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children, including those who are Looked After Children (LAC), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with the highest priority. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home, a home visit or by a call to the Local Authority duty line in order that a same-day visit can be made. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be treated with similar priority.. It is essential that the school works closely with vulnerable pupil's parents/carers and appropriate agencies to support their learning and ensure their safety.

3.2. Categorising absence

Absence will be categorised as follows:

- **Illness** Parents/Carers may be asked to provide medical evidence to allow the Headteacher to authorise absence where appropriate. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.
- **Medical/Dental Appointments** Parents/Carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils must attend school for part of the day. Parents/Carers must show the appointment card to school.
- **Other Authorised Circumstances** This relates to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, e.g. serious family illness or bereavement.
- **Suspension** (No alternative provision made) Suspension from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. In these circumstances, the school will arrange for work to be sent home.

3.3. Requesting a leave of absence

Parents/Carers who need to take their **child out of school during term time due to exceptional circumstances must send a written request to the Headteacher** using the school's Term Time Absence Request Form (See Appendix A). Retrospective requests for a term time absences will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

All requests for term time absence will be responded to in writing outlining whether the request for absence has been granted.

If a pupil fails to return to school and contact with the parents/carers has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013. This means that the child will lose their school place.

If the permission to take term time absence is not granted and the parent takes their child out of school the absence will be unauthorised. In such cases, the school may request the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice or consider other legal sanctions including prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

3.4. Religious Observance

NIA acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and that this may result in the need for a term time absence request. Any absence request for religious observance must be in line with DfE guidance relating to absence for religious observance. NIA may authorise a one day absence per occasion where the day is exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the Parent/Carer belong. Parents/Carers will be aware of these dates in advance and a Term Time Absence Request Form should be submitted to the school (Appendix A). Any further days taken will be unauthorised. If a Term Time Absence Request Form is not submitted the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Where necessary, the Academy will liaise with, and seek advice from, the relevant local religious bodies.

3.5. Late Arrival to School (Punctuality)

Lateness to school or poor punctuality can impact on pupils' learning. If a pupil is late by 5 minutes, over 1 academic year this adds to 3 whole days of learning lost, 10 minutes adds to 6 and a half days of lost learning and 15 minutes adds to 10 days. Remember, 10 days is 50 hours of lost learning and can seriously impact on a pupil's achievement and life chances.

Registration begins at the following times for our pupils:

- 8.30am for Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)
- 8.30am for EYFS and Primary (Reception, Years 1,2,3,4,5, & 6)
- 9.00am for Key Stages 4 & 5, (Years 10,11,12 & 13)

Registration is completed by a member of staff and pupils are given a code to show their attendance status. The codes used are detailed in Appendix B.

Pupils are expected to arrive on time however, we **encourage all pupils to arrive to school 15 minutes before school begins** so that they are in their classroom ready to learn. Lateness to school is not acceptable.. Pupils who arrive after formal teaching has started will be marked as 'Late' on the registers (coded L). Poor punctuality not only disrupts your child's learning but the learning of others. Not only is poor punctuality disruptive but good timekeeping leads to good practice in your child's future.

The register will close 30 minutes after school begins for all pupils. Pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late. This will not be authorised and will be recorded as an unauthorised half day absence. Statutory action may be taken where appropriate. Lateness will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation and evidence for the late arrival is provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment.

Pupils arriving after the close of register must immediately report to **the relevant main reception (Primary or Secondary)** to ensure that they are registered correctly and that staff are made aware that the pupil has arrived in school.

Due to the importance of punctuality, all pupils who arrive late to school will be issued with a detention (please see the behaviour and attitudes policy for more details).

3.6. Unauthorised absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents/carers have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the Headteacher.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday.
- Shopping for uniform or any other shopping activities.
- Having their hair cut.
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET or other purposes.
- "Couldn't get up".
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school.
- Family holidays.
- Looking after a family member

[Click here for the DfE current guidance for Attendance 2021-22](#)

4. ABSENCE PROCEDURES – SCHOOL ACTIONS

4.1 If a child is marked absent when registration opens, and this has not been reported by parents/carers by the expected time (see above), the attendance team will make a telephone call to the parent/carer on the same day to clarify the reasons for the absence and ensure the absence of a child is made known to the parent/carer. Contact will be made by text message and followed up with a phone call. If a child is deemed to be vulnerable and we have not had a response then we will make a home visit and inform the relevant agencies as appropriate (Police, Social Care etc).

4.2 If a pupil is absent for three or more consecutive days and it has not been possible to make contact with the parent/carer, a home visit will be made. For any child who is absent without explanation and contact is not able to be made, advice will be sought from the Local Authority in order that further investigations can be made. Police and/or other relevant external agencies may also be notified where the school has concerns.

4.3 Where there are unexplained or unauthorised absences, the school will contact parents/carers for more information. Also, where there is a pattern of unauthorised absence, the school will contact parents/carers to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could support the family and/or the child with their attendance

4.4 Reasons for absence must be reported by parents/carers. Where a pupil gives a reason for an unauthorised absence, the school will contact the parent/carer to discuss this absence.

4.5 A Child Missing in Education (CME) referral will be made where the following criteria applies:

- A child has been absent from school for a period of 10 consecutive school days
- The absence was unauthorised
- The school have been unable to contact the parents
- The family do not appear to be living at the home address

4.6 The school will take disciplinary action against any pupils who are discovered to be truanting. Truancy may be the pupil absconding from lessons and/or absconding from school. In the event of truancy, parents or carers will be contacted to discuss possible reasons and school systems that could support the family and child to reduce the risk of any further absence

5. LOW AND PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA): ATTENDANCE BELOW 90%

Communication in writing will be received by parents/carers every half term if their child/children's attendance falls below 97% and warning letters will be sent prior to any legal action being taken to ensure the school can support the family and the declining attendance.

Percentage Attendance	Number of days absence	Learning hours lost	What happens?
Pupils with attendance 100%	0	0	Maximised chance of success
Pupils with attendance 99 – 97%	2 to 6 days	10 to 30 hours	Discussions with Pastoral Team
Pupils with attendance 96 - 94%	7.5 to 11 days	37.5 to 55 hours	Letter 1 sent (Appendix D)
Pupils with attendance 93 - 91%	13 to 17 days	65 to 85 hours	Letter 2 sent (Appendix D) Parent contract and monitoring period set
Pupils with attendance below 90%	19 days or more	95 hours or more	Letter 8 sent (Appendix D) Referral to Local Authority for issue if fixed penalty notice

The school may take further action, including referring the case to the Local Authority to begin criminal proceedings if attendance drops below 90%.

Parents/Carers should do everything possible to encourage all school-age children to attend. However, if the reason for their reluctance appears to be school-based, such as difficulty with work, please discuss this with the school at the earliest opportunity and the school will do everything possible to resolve the problem.

School refusal/school phobia is a psychological condition that usually has been medically diagnosed. Other arrangements may be put in place for a child with a genuine school phobia diagnosis and referrals to external agencies will be sought to support the pupil in receiving their education.

6. REMOVAL FROM THE SCHOOL REGISTER

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, pupils can be removed from the school's register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
- Permanent exclusion has occurred, and the correct process has been completed and the Local Authority have indicated the pupil can be removed from roll.
- Transfer to a new school; the pupil will not be removed from the register until we have received confirmation of their new provision and evidence they have started.
- Pupil is withdrawn by the parent/carer (in writing) to be educated outside the school system.

- Failure to return from an extended holiday after the school has tried to locate the pupil, continuous unauthorised absence and/or the school has not been able to locate the pupil. The school will complete a Child Missing in Education (CME) application to the Local Authority and will await confirmation from the Local Authority before they are removed from roll.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

NIA believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils, and the wider school community.

7.1 The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Regularly review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Agree school attendance targets and, where appropriate, link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

7.2 The Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance. For example, good teaching and learning experiences that encourage pupils to attend and achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and are able to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Department for Education as required and on time.

- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Ensure that all the above priorities are shared with and reinforced by all relevant school staff.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Use the standard documents to support a move to legal proceedings should that be necessary.

7.3 Teachers and Support Staff will:

- Be pro-active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families.
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement.
- Ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's Attendance Policy, legislation and government guidance, and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue.
- Ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily.
- Communicate with parents/carers on a regular basis about attendance. Every term a letter will be sent to all parent/carers outlining current attendance percentages. Further letters to support attendance will be sent out if a child attendance falls below the trust target of 97% or falls into persistent absent category (below 90%) in line with statutory requirements.
- Contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed.
- Work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.

7.4 Parents and Carers will:

- Talk to their child about school and education. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Encourage their child to look to the future and aspire.
- Contact the school on each day of their child's absence to let school know the reason why and the expected date of return by 8.30am on each day of absence.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to become involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.

- Not keep their child off for reasons that are not essential, for example to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time. Where this is unavoidable, and in exceptional circumstances, parents/carers will need to complete a Term Time Request for Absence Form prior to the absence.

8. MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Specific measures to monitor attendance must be embedded and regularly checked to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils through specific and tailored interventions.

- Registering pupils accurately and efficiently – recording within the first 5 minutes of every lesson on SIMs. In the event this system is down, a paper register must be sent to the attendance office immediately.
- Setting attendance targets for individual pupils and year groups, in line with national expectations.
- Monitoring the attendance of vulnerable groups in relation to national figures for all pupils.
- Using Pupil Premium funding to address persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils, regularly monitoring the impact of such interventions.
- Contacting parents/carers on the same day when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised. Contact will be made by text message and followed up with a phone call. If a child is deemed to be vulnerable and we have not had a response then we will make a home visit and inform the relevant agencies as appropriate (Police, Social Care etc).
- Regularly monitoring pupil attendance and punctuality, reporting overall absence and persistent absence rates for all pupils to the Governing Board and East Midlands Academy Trust (EMAT).
- Persistently monitoring low attenders over time to ensure rigorous intervention strategies are provided.
- Reporting school attendance statistics to parents, Local Authority and DfE as appropriate.

8.1. Internal Truancy

All pupils are expected to attend lessons as set out on their individual timetables. If a pupil does not attend each lesson the teacher will mark the register with an absent mark (N).

All teaching staff ensure that registers are recorded accurately and will change the absence (N) to a late mark (L) if a child arrives after the register is taken. A comment will be recorded in the register as to why they are late.

Pastoral staff and the attendance team monitor and track all 'N' marks to lessons. They will analyse patterns of attendance to see if a pupil has been absent since the start of the school day (this will be picked up by the first-day response team) or if they have been attending other lessons and are absent for just one lesson during the school day. This would indicate possible internal truancy.

The Pastoral Support Team will locate in the school site, any pupils who are absent to lessons but were registered at the start of the school day and liaise with s of year, the mental health hub staff and other school teams.

Truancy will be dealt with through the behaviour and attitudes policy. Please see the behaviour and attitudes policy for more details.

If we are unable to locate a pupil

In the event that an absent pupil cannot be located following the checks made by the pastoral team, a member of the safeguarding team will be notified that the pupil is missing. The safeguarding team will liaise with the parent/carer by telephone to inform them that their child has not attended their class and has not been located in the school. This telephone call is not to alarm the parent/carer, but to identify if there are any reasons for the absence, and to clarify the next steps to ensure the pupil's safety. Where necessary, the Police and/or other agencies will be contacted to support in locating the pupil. When the missing pupil is located, a phone call will be made home to notify the parent or carer by the same member of staff who made the original call, and clarify with the parent/carer, the next steps in response to the pupil's absence.

8.2. Absence and attendance codes

National absence and attendance codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps Schools, Trusts, Local Authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for absence.

Details of the codes and Government guidelines regarding school attendance can be found in Appendix B and in the following document:

[Click here for guidance on attendance codes – pages 10-16.](#)

8.3 Using Attendance Data

Pupils' attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a student's attendance is a cause for concern.

The Attendance Manager will provide data to the relevant teachers/tutors for each pupil within their form group/class.

The list will be presented in numerical descending order with the highest attenders at the top; every pupil will be colour coded as indicated below:

- GREEN pupils with attendance 100% - 97%
- AMBER pupils with attendance 96 - 94%
- RED - AMBER pupils with attendance 93 - 91%
- RED pupils with attendance below 90%

Parents/Carers will be able to access their own child's attendance data via the online platform Edu link. Electronic letters will also be sent home termly to update parents/carers of their child's attendance. In addition, further information letters about school attendance meetings and parent contract meetings will be sent out to parents and carers for pupils whose attendance is in the Amber and Red Categories (Appendix D).

9. SUPPORT SYSTEMS

NIA recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a pupil's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents/Carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

NIA also recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, and looked after children.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance.

Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies – Early Help
- Learning Mentors
- Pupil Voice activities
- Friendship groups
- PSHE
- Family learning
- Reward systems
- Time limited part-time timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion units
- Reintegration support packages via our Family Support Workers.

All support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with parents/carers and pupils.

Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, NIA will consider the use of legal sanctions.

10. LEGAL SANCTIONS AND PENALTY NOTICES

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accrued unauthorised absence following written warnings to improve.

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £120 if it is paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the date the Notice was issued.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with the Local Authority.

10.1 Prosecution

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court.

It is important that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring their child's attendance at school. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent/carer fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child, if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent/carer found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices, and/or an Education Supervision Order.

Parenting Contracts (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)

A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

It is important to note that, while a parenting contract is used as an alternative to prosecution, parents/carers who do not engage with the contract and/or fail to carry out agreed targets identified in the contract may be subject to future prosecution. Furthermore, evidence of failure to engage with the parenting contract can be used as evidence in subsequent prosecution.

11. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The implementation of this policy is carried out by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and other appropriate members of the Leadership Team and the Attendance Team. Changes will be recommended to Governors and ratified by the Full Local Advisory Board.

Appendix A

TERM TIME ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please complete all sections and where applicable please provide evidence of the absence

Learner Name		Date of Birth		Form Group	
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Home Address and Post code	
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First Date of Absence		Date of Return		Total Number of days absent	
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<u>REASONS FOR REQUEST</u>

Name of Parent/Guardian whom learner resides	
Mobile Telephone Number	
Email	
Signature of Parent	
Date	

FOR ATTENDANCE OFFICER USE - % Attendance:

Date Received		FPN Referral Date	
Authorised	YES/NO	Added to SIMS	
Decision sent to both parents		Added to Excel	
Head Teacher Signature		1 – Reg Cert 2 - Request 3 - Response	

Appendix B – Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

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

Appendix C – Recording attendance in relation to Covid 19

[Link to latest guidance updated 6th May 2022](#)

This guidance sets out how schools should record where pupils are not attending school for reasons related to coronavirus in the 2021/22 academic year.

Attendance Expectations

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education

Pupils with symptoms of COVID-19 are no longer advised to get a test, and most of the scenarios that this category was brought in to record no longer apply.

Pupils who have symptoms or a positive test for COVID-19

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 should follow the latest government guidance about when they should stay at home.

Where a pupil is not attending because they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had a positive test, schools should record this using Code I (illness) unless another more appropriate code applies.

Schools may continue to use the sub-code (I02) to record illness due to suspected COVID-19 although they are not required to.

Schools should refer to the department's emergency planning guidance and the latest UKHSA guidance for further information.

Appendix D – Template letters sent to parents/carers

LETTER 1 – Initial warning letter

At Northampton International Academy, attendance is taken very seriously and the amount of time that your child has been absent from school is of concern. It has been noted that **** has an attendance rate of ++% which is below the school expected attendance rate.

Due to the concerns, we are setting a monitoring attendance target of **96% over the next 5 school weeks** and would expect to see an immediate improvement. If you have any current medical evidence to support any of the absences, please send them into school so a copy can be taken and placed on file. Should this not be available, this may be required later.

During this time if attendance continues to decline and we feel that there has been little or no improvement, we will invite you to attend a Parent Contract Meeting. The aim of the meeting will be to explore the reasons regarding the irregular school attendance and to draw up a Parenting Contract to help improve your child's attendance at school.

Whilst your involvement in any Parenting Contract is voluntary, you should be aware that, should the attendance remain irregular, the Local Education Authority may take more formal action. This could result in a conviction of an offence of failing to ensure regular attendance of your child at school under **Section 444, 1/1A Education Act 1996**, and a fine up to **£1,000/£2,500 and/or receive a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months**.

I hope that you will work with us to improve their attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be implemented. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

LETTER 2 – Invite to attendance meeting

Attendance Percentage:

Expected Percentage: 96%

At Northampton International Academy, attendance is taken very seriously and the amount of time that NAME has been absent from school is of concern. It has been noted that NAME has an attendance rate of ++% which is below the school expected attendance rate.

I would therefore like to invite you to meet with me on **DATE and TIME** at Northampton International Academy to discuss current issues and offer any support that is suitable for all concerned. If you have any current medical evidence to support them, please bring this with you to the meeting so a copy can be taken and placed on file. Should this not be available, this may be required at a later date.

Whilst your involvement in any meeting is voluntary, you should be aware that, should their attendance remain irregular, the local Education Authority may take formal action. This could result in a conviction of an offence of failing to ensure regular attendance of your child at school under **Section 444, 1/1A Education Act 1996**.

Should you have any special requirements, please do not hesitate to contact me so that arrangements can be made prior to the meeting. If you cannot make this meeting time, please let me know as soon as possible so that a mutually convenient appointment can be arranged.

Yours sincerely

LETTER 3 – Parent Contract Review

Re:

As you are aware we completed a Parent Contract with you on *****(date), the purpose of which was to improve your child's attendance to school and avoid legal proceedings being implemented. I am disappointed to see that the attendance target set over the monitoring period has not been met. The attendance during this period was only ***

Therefore, we will be referring this matter to the Local Authority who will be in touch with you shortly to discuss this further.

This could result in a conviction of an offence of failing to ensure regular attendance of your child at school under **Section 444, 1/1A Education Act 1996**, and a fine up to **£1,000/£2,500 and/or receive a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months.**

Yours sincerely

LETTER 4 – Invite to Parent Contract Meeting

Attendance Percentage:

Expected Percentage: 96%

I am writing to you concerning the irregular attendance of (name), which as you are aware is causing concern.

I would like you to attend a Parent Contract Meeting on (date & time) at Northampton International Academy. The aim of the meeting, which will be chaired by me, is to explore the reasons regarding the irregular school attendance and to draw up a Parenting Contract to help improve your child's attendance at school. **If you fail to attend this meeting the Contract will be completed in your absence.**

I appreciate there may be some medical evidence to support these absences and would request you bring this to the meeting.

Whilst your involvement in any Parenting Contract is voluntary, you should be aware that, should the attendance remain irregular, the Local Education Authority may take more formal action. This could result in a conviction of an offence of failing to ensure regular attendance of your child at school under **Section 444, 1/1A Education Act 1996**, and a fine up to **£1,000/£2,500 and/or receive a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months.**

I hope that you will work with us to improve their attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be implemented.

Should you have any special requirements, please do not hesitate to contact me so that arrangements can be made prior to the meeting.

Yours sincerely

LETTER 5 – Did not attend Parent Contract Meeting

Dear

Student:

I was disappointed that you did not attend the Parenting Contract meeting arranged for *****. As you will be aware from my invitation letter, the aim of this meeting was to draw up a Parenting Contract to improve your learner's attendance.

We have therefore completed the contract in your absence and a copy is enclosed. The contract will be reviewed after 5 weeks or sooner if there has been little or no improvement.

The targets set are as follows: -

-
- Attendance between ***** to be at least 96%
- Medical Evidence to be provided for all absences
- You must send ***** to school even if they say they are ill, if they are unwell, we will send them home
- To arrive to school on time for morning registration.

If the targets are met the case will be closed, however, if they are not met, a referral will be made to the Education Inclusion Partnership Team at Northampton County Council. As previously notified to you in writing this could result in legal action being taken.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

LETTER 5A – Did attend Parent Contract meeting

Dear

Re:

Thank you for attending the Parenting Contract meeting on (date). I have enclosed a copy of the Parenting Contract for your perusal.

During this time if (name) s attendance continues to decline and we feel that there has been little or no improvement, we will refer the case to the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team at Northamptonshire County Council. This could result in legal action being taken against you under **Section 444 1/1A of the 1996 Education Act**. You could be fined up to £1000/£2500 and/or receive a term of imprisonment.

I hope that you will work with us to improve their attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be implemented. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01604 212811 and I will be happy to discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely

LETTER 6 – Late Concern Letter

Dear

Re:

Our attendance records show that (name) has been late on (number of) occasions this academic year both for am/pm registration and/or lessons. I am sure you will agree that this lack of punctuality cannot be tolerated at Northampton International Academy as we work hard to maintain very high expectations of our students.

Lateness can be very disruptive to the school day, missing the start of lessons means instructions and other essential information will have to be repeated which will delay the start of lessons and young people's learning. Furthermore, when one pupil arrives late, it disrupts the entire class and the teacher – **everyone's education is compromised.**

I must advise you that it is your responsibility to ensure that the student arrives at school regularly and on time and would therefore be grateful if you could explain to them that persistent lateness without very good reason is now legally classed as truancy.

I hope you can work with us to support an immediate improvement in your child's punctuality to school. We will continue to monitor the situation and will be in touch again if their lateness persists. However, if you have any queries please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

LETTER 7 – No reason for absence letter

Dear Parent/Carer of Year.....

According to our records your child has been absent from school on the following date(s) without a valid explanation having been received.

Date(s).....

Would you please provide the reason for this absence on the reply slip in order that our attendance records may be amended. Should we not receive a valid reason for absence within the next 5 days, we will have no alternative but to change the marks to "unauthorised absences".

It is the parent's responsibility to contact the school office before 8.30am on the first and each day of absence. If you would like any help or advice, please contact the school on 01604 212811. Please help us to help your child work in partnership to raise their achievements during this academic year.

Your cooperation in this matter is much appreciated and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE EXPLANATION - PLEASE RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Learner's name	
Date of absence	
Reason for absence	
Signature	

LETTER 8 – Penalty Notice Letter

Dear Parent/Carer

The criteria for issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised term time absence is 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days in a 6-week period).

I understand CHILD'S NAME has been marked as absent for XXXX sessions since XXXX.

The reasons given for these dates of absence have not been granted by the headteacher and do not fit the criteria for "exceptional circumstances".

I will be referring the matter to the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team for consideration of further action and as such I need to make you aware that the outcome could be a Penalty Notice, payable direct to the Local Authority. The Penalty Notice is £120 per parent/adult for each student to be paid within 28 days, decreasing to £60 if paid within 21 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

Please recognise that persistent absences have a significant impact on their children's education. We support the government's stance on trying to reduce the amount of school missed.

Yours sincerely