

Attendance Policy-school level appendix for Black Torrington Primary School

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This policy has been written with consideration given to working practices. By adopting this policy, a reduction in workload has been facilitated by reducing the need for individual academies to interpret the policy locally.

This appendix draws from and must be read in conjunction with the [Trust Attendance Policy](#), [DFE Guidance working together to improve school attendance](#) and [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#).

Attendance is everyone's business, and everyone involved with the care of children is equally responsible for ensuring children's attendance. This means schools, LAs, social care, NHS workers and community partners all have a responsibility to see every child in school every day, and to wrap support around that child. All partners should make children's attendance a top priority. Every child should be in school every day, supported and ready to learn. Every child has the right

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to a fantastic education (Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's commissioner for England). We encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality so that they are able to access the curriculum and take full advantage of the opportunities available to them.

1. Contact details

1.1 The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance is Jo Luxford

1.2 The name and contact details of school staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis is Jo Luxford/Emily Stevenson

1.3 The name and contact details of school staff who pupils and parents should contact for more detailed support with attendance is:

Jo Luxford – jluxford@dmatschools.org.uk

Emily Stevenson – admin@blacktorringtonprimary.org.uk

2. Managing Attendance:

2.1 The start of the school day is 9am. Pupils are expected to arrive at the school site at 9am. The register opens at 8.45am and closes at 9am. Pupils arriving after registration opens but before registration closes are deemed as late 'before registration closes'. Pupils arriving after registration closes are considered 'late after registration has closed'. They will lose their mark for the whole session and the absence is recorded as 'unauthorised'. The school day ends at 3.30pm. Afternoon register is taken at 1.15pm, after the Lunch break.

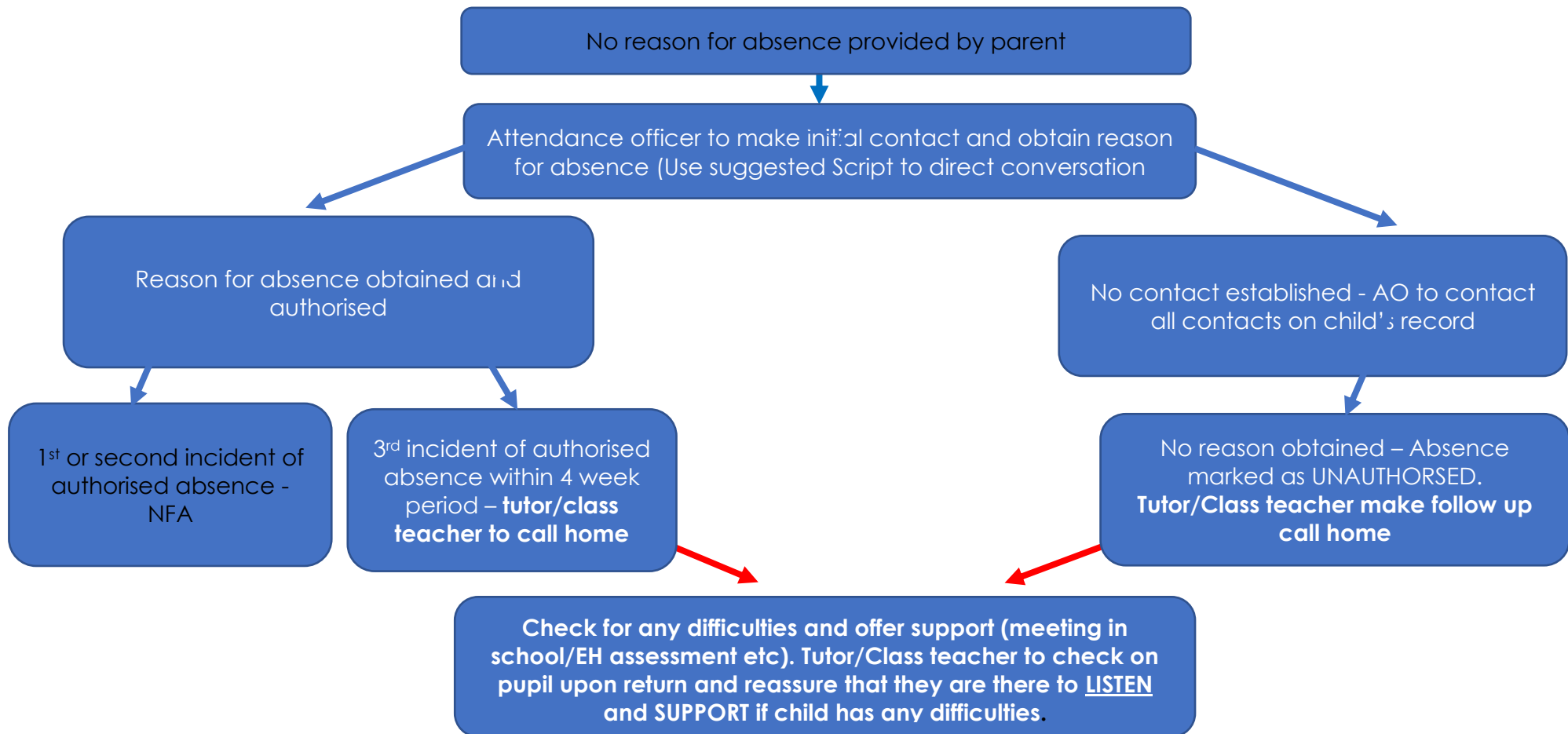
2.2 Parents are expected to inform the school by 8am if their child is absent by calling 01409 231262 or by emailing admin@blacktorringtonprimary.org.uk - giving the reason for absence.

3. How the school is promoting and incentivising good attendance

We promote good attendance in the school at any given opportunity. We use our newsletter to promote those with great attendance and will celebrate those children who have also made efforts to improve their attendance.

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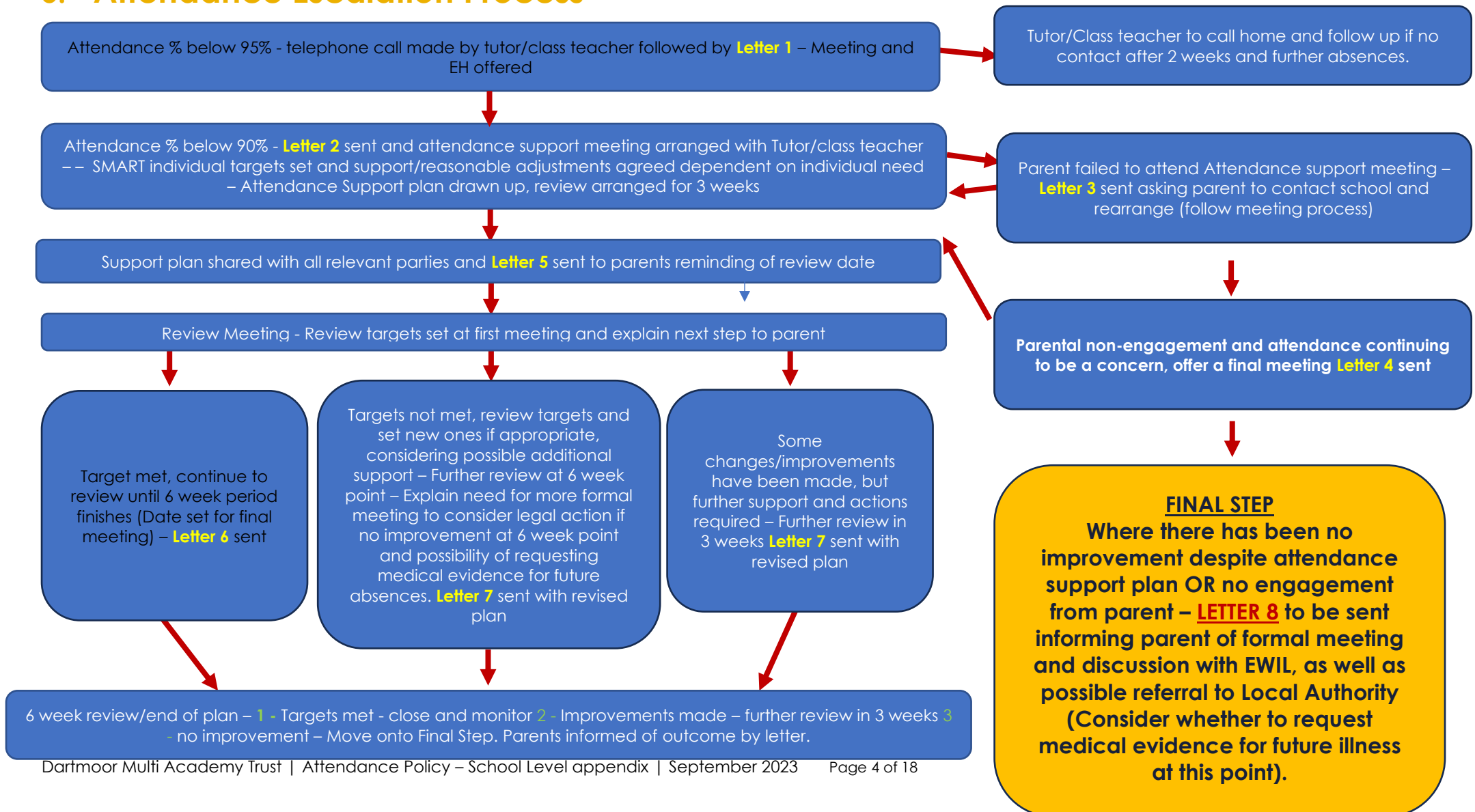
4. First Day Absence Procedures Flowchart



** - If no contact has been established with the family or named contacts, and child does not return to school following the first day of absence, DSL to be consulted and safeguarding procedures to be followed where appropriate.

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5. Attendance Escalation Process



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6. Appendix 1: Holiday Warning Letter

Date «date»

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» - Holidays and Avoidable Absences in Term Time

We believe that in order for a pupil to fully benefit from their education, good attendance is crucial. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement and full attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

As of September 2013, an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 came in to force and greater clarity was introduced to the issue of schools authorising absence requests. These changes reinforced the Government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should only be granted authorised absences by the school in 'exceptional circumstances'.

A family holiday is not normally considered by the Government to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and therefore will not be authorised by this school.

I must take this opportunity to remind you, that should you choose to take your child out of school without the authorisation of the school, then Parental Responsibility Measures could be instigated. This could mean receiving any of the following;

- A Penalty Notice
- A summons to the Magistrate Court which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment for up to 3 months.

Schools are required to notify the Local Authority if a pupil has a number of unauthorised absences. Unauthorised absences can be acquired when;

- 1) Leave has been requested, but the circumstances are such that the school is unable to authorise the leave and it is taken anyway.
- 2) Leave is not requested and/or the school has grounds to believe that the child has been taken out of school for an avoidable reason (example – a family holiday). Only the Head teacher can authorise an absence. This year there have been occasions when schools have been notified that the pupil is sick, but the school later discovers and reasonably believes that the reason given for the absence is not genuine.
- 3) A child continually arrives late after the registration period has closed.

This school will be notifying the Local Authority in all of the circumstances listed above.

Should a Penalty Notice be issued as a result of unauthorised absence then one notice will be issued to each parent/carer for each child involved. Currently, each Penalty Notice is for £120, which is reduced to £60 if paid within the first 21 days. If a Penalty Notice goes unpaid after 28 days, then court proceedings will be initiated.

We understand the disappointment that the refusal of a leave request may cause and we apologise, but as you can appreciate this policy represents the schools responsibility and commitment towards providing your child's education and supporting their future life opportunities. We hope you will support us by ensuring that your son/daughter obtains the maximum benefit from their time at school by attending punctually for the 190 days each year that the law requires (unless prevented from doing so by an unavoidable circumstances).

Thank you for your anticipated support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Principal

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7. Appendix 2: Late letter 1 – 5 occasions within one half term – sent by attendance officer

Date **[[date]]**

Dear **[Parent Name]**

Re: **[pupil Name]**

Ensuring the wellbeing of every young person is a priority at Black Torrington and this is at the centre of our school's attendance policy. An important part of attendance is ensuring that all of our children are in school on time and ready to learn, so as they can make the most of their education and learning.

We are contacting you as **[child's name]** has been late for school **[no.]** times **and/or** missed registration **[no.]** of times this half term. **[Lateness after the register has been taken is classified as an unauthorised absence and your child will not receive a present mark for the whole session.]**

Children who arrive late are greatly disadvantaged because they miss starting the day with their peers and the beginning of lessons. This means that they are often unsettled and confused about tasks. It is essential that your child arrives at school on time to prevent disruption to your child's own learning and that of others.

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions, please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

If you are experiencing any difficulties with punctuality and would like to talk to us about it, please contact **[attendance officer/admin]** on **[contact number/email address]** so that we can provide support if necessary.

Many thanks in anticipation, for your continued and continuing support for Black Torrington, it is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer



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8. Appendix 3: Late letter 2 – 10 occasions within one half term – sent by attendance officer

Date «date»

Dear [Parent]

[Child Name] – [Total No of sessions late]

I hope this letter finds you well. As a school, we believe that regular and punctual attendance is crucial for your child's academic success and overall development. Ensuring the wellbeing of every young person is a priority at Black Torrington and this is at the centre of our school's attendance policy.

At Black Torrington, we strive to create a positive and engaging learning environment that fosters growth, achievement, and a sense of responsibility. Punctuality plays a vital role in maintaining this environment and ensuring that every student receives the maximum benefit from their education.

Following our previous letter, [child's name] has continued to be late for school on some occasions and has now been late [no.] times [and/or missed registration [no.] of times] so far this year. [Lateness after the register has been taken is classified as an unauthorised absence and your child will not receive a present mark for the whole session.]

We hope you can support us by:

1. Reinforcing the importance of punctuality: Please have a conversation with your child about the importance of being on time for school. Stress the value of punctuality and the impact it has on their education and future success.
2. Establishing a morning routine: Help your child establish a consistent morning routine that allows them to arrive at school on time. This routine should include time for breakfast, getting ready, and organising their school materials.
3. Addressing potential barriers: If there are any specific challenges or circumstances that contribute to your child's lateness, please let us know. We are here to support you and your child, and we may be able to provide assistance or suggest alternative strategies to overcome these challenges.
4. Regular communication: Please keep us informed if there are any ongoing issues or changes that may affect your child's punctuality, such as medical appointments or family emergencies.
5. Joined up approach: Let us work together to support your child in developing better time management skills and a stronger sense of responsibility for their attendance and punctuality.

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions, please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive. Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help and support you and your child.

Many thanks in anticipation, for your continued and continuing support for [School name], It is very much appreciated

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Officer

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9. Appendix 4: Late letter 3 – 15+ occasions within one half term – sent by attendance officer

Date «date»
Dear [Parent Name]

Re: (pupil Name)
Ensuring the wellbeing of every young person is a priority at Black Torrington and this is at the centre of our school's attendance policy. An important part of attendance is ensuring that all of our children are in school on time and ready to learn, so as they can make the most of their education and learning. Following our previous letters, [child's name] has continued to be late for school on occasion and has now been late [no.] times [and/or missed registration [no.] of times] so far this year. [Lateness after the register has been taken is classified as an unauthorised absence and your child will not receive a present mark for the whole session.]

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions, please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

Due to the number of times [childs name] has been late to school this year, I would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss how we can work together to identify any support needs there may be. The meeting will take place on;

Date:
Time:
With: (Attendance Officer)

Please confirm you can attend this meeting by contacting the school office on (attendance line)

Many thanks in anticipation, for your continued and continuing support for [School name], It is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer



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10. Appendix 5; Late Process Flowchart



Punctuality follow up procedure

5 sessions late in one term - Late letter 1

10 total sessions late - Letter 2

15 total sessions late - Late letter 3 and
meeting with Attendance Officer/Admin
(if not being followed up in absence
process)

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11. Appendix 6: Letter 1 - 95% Attendance

Date «date»

Dear [Parent Name]

Re: [pupil Name] Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

Ensuring the wellbeing of every young person is a priority at Black Torrington and this is at the centre of our school's attendance policy. We seek to support young people who have been absent from school, whether this is authorised or unauthorised absence.

The Trust has a 100% attendance target for all pupils in school and we will work alongside parents and pupils to achieve this by supporting at the earliest opportunity. If there are challenges which affect a pupil's attendance, we will investigate, identify and work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

We understand that each child's circumstances are different, and we appreciate that occasional absence is unavoidable, however, [pupil name] has been absent on a few occasions resulting in their attendance dropping below 95%.

#We would like to discuss how we can support you and your child to identify any potential difficulties or barriers in school which are impacting on their attendance. If you consider that there are additional issues outside of school which may impact on your child's ability to attend school regularly, it may also be possible for the school to access some additional support through Early Help so if you would like us to look into this with you then please discuss this with us.

I enclose a copy of [Child's name] attendance this year to date and an Early Help Leaflet for your information.

Please contact [form tutor/class teacher name] so any issues that may be affecting attendance can be discussed and we can consider how best to support [child's name] moving forwards.

Yours sincerely,

Tutor / Class Teacher

(Follow up call made by form tutor/class teacher if no contact has been made within 2 weeks?)

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12. Appendix 7: Letter 2 – 90% attendance

Date «date»

Dear [Name of parent]

Re: [pupil Name] Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

Ensuring the wellbeing of every young person is a priority at Black Torrington and this is at the centre of our school's attendance policy. We seek to support young people who have been absent from school, whether this is through authorised or unauthorised absence. The Trust is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, punctual, daily attendance is crucial.

The Trust has a 100% attendance target for all pupils in school and we will work alongside parents and pupils to achieve this by supporting at the earliest opportunity. If there are challenges which affect a pupil's attendance, we will investigate, identify and work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

We would like to discuss how we can support you and your child to identify any potential difficulties or barriers in school that are impacting on their attendance, therefore I have arranged a meeting for us to discuss any concerns you or your child has to enable us to work together to develop an Attendance Support Plan, ensuring [child's name] can reach their full potential and achieve the best possible outcomes going forward.

If you consider that there are additional issues outside of school which may impact on your child's ability to attend school regularly, it may also be possible for the school to access some additional support through Early Help so if you would like us to look into this, we can discuss this when we meet.

We are committed to supporting you and while this letter is highlighting our concern, we really want the opportunity to talk to you so to see if we can offer any additional support so that [Child's name] attendance improves.

I have arranged a meeting in school on the following date and time;

Date:

Time:

With:

Please confirm you can attend this meeting by contacting the school Attendance Officer on [phone number]

I enclose a copy of [Child Name] attendance this year to date and an Early Help Leaflet for your information

Yours sincerely,

Tutor / Class Teacher

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent over a school year	Description
100%	Perfect Attendance	0	This is the best chance of success for your child
97%	Good Attendance	5	
95%	Improvement Required	9	Less chance of your child succeeding as it is harder for them to make progress – Support will be offered to remove any barriers to attendance
92%	Concern	19	
90% (persistent absence)	Serious Concern **	30	Serious Concern Missing this much education can cause a significant disadvantage to your child. An attendance support plan will be put in place to ensure your child's attendance can improve. Without improvement to attendance the consequence could be legal action.

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13. Appendix 8: Letter 3 – No engagement from parents to date (sent by tutor)

Date «date»

Dear [Name of parent]

Re: [pupil Name] Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

It is unfortunate that you were unable to attend the meeting arranged for [date of meeting missed] to discuss [Child's name] attendance at school. The purpose of the meeting was to support your family and child in school and to explore any barriers that may be impacting on their ability to attend school regularly.

Currently [Child's name]'s attendance for the academic year is [percentage]% with total number of absences sessions of absences of which [number of unauthorised absences] sessions have been recorded as unauthorised.

Ongoing low attendance is a factor linked to low levels of academic achievement: therefore, it is important that it is dealt with as early as possible. We wish to help [Child Name] to improve [His/her] attendance and would appreciate your support to make sure it improves.

If there is an ongoing medical issue that we are not aware of or if there is anything that you would like to discuss with myself or another member of staff regarding the absences, please do not hesitate to contact the school so we can discuss this when we meet. If you consider that there are additional issues which impact on your child's ability to attend school regularly, it may also be possible for the school to access some additional support through Early Help

We would like to discuss how we can support you and your child to identify any potential difficulties or barriers in school that are impacting on their attendance, therefore, Please can you contact me within 5 days of receipt of this letter to rearrange a suitable meeting date to give us the opportunity to support you and [Child's name] attendance at school.

I look forward to hearing from you so we can discuss how we can support you and your child and identify any potential difficulties or barriers in school that are impacting on their attendance.

I enclose a copy of [Child Name] attendance this year to date.

Yours sincerely,

Tutor/Class teacher

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent over a school year	Description
100%	Perfect Attendance	0	This is the best chance of success for your child
97%	Good Attendance	5	
95%	Improvement Required	9	Less chance of your child succeeding as it is harder for them to make progress – Support will be offered to remove any barriers to attendance
92%	Concern	19	
90% (persistent absence)	Serious Concern **	30	Serious Concern Missing this much education can cause a significant disadvantage to your child. An attendance support plan will be put in place to ensure your child's attendance can improve. Without improvement to attendance the consequence could be legal action.

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14. Appendix 9: Letter 4 – Final invite to support meeting

Date «date»

Dear [Name of parent]

Re: (pupil Name) Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

We previously wrote to you to outline our worry that [Child's name] is not attending school regularly and to invite you to a meeting to explore any support we could offer.

This letter is to inform you we are now becoming really concerned about the number of absences your child has had from school. [Child's name] is part of our school community and we want them to thrive during their time with us and for that to happen, we need all our pupils attending 100% of the time.

Currently [Child's name] attendance is recorded as [% attendance] with [no. sessions absent] half day sessions of absence. This attendance percentage will be having an effect on your child's overall education.

Due to this, future absences we will now *only* be authorised if we are satisfied that the reasons for the absence are completely unavoidable. This means we may need medical evidence for any future illnesses. You are invited to provide the school with additional information or documentation to enable us to make an informed decision regarding authorisation for each absence.

We are committed to supporting you and while this letter is highlighting our concern, we really want the opportunity to talk to you so to see if we can offer any additional support so that [Child's name] attendance improves.

Therefore, I would like to invite you into the school on the following date and time.

Date: Enter date

Time: Enter time

With: Enter staff name

If there is someone already supporting your family and you would like them to be invited to this meeting, please let me know as they can also be invited to this meeting.

During this meeting we will explore with you and your child if there is any additional support that can be offered either within school with an Individual Health Care Plan or, it may be possible for the school to access some additional support through Early Help.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, then please contact me on details above at your earliest convenience so we can arrange a more suitable time.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year/Class teacher

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15. Appendix 10: Letter 5 – Support meeting and plan

Date «date»

Dear [Name of parent]

Re: [pupil Name] Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

Thank you for attending the Attendance support meeting on [date of meeting] I am writing to enclose a copy of the plan agreed by you to help support [Child's name] improve the attendance at school.

If you any concerns or questions regarding the plan or you have further concerns at any time, please contact me.

As discussed, a review meeting has been arranged and I stress the importance of you attending the review meeting with [Child's name] so that we can review progress and confirm any future necessary action, as well as make any changes to the support in place.

The Review meeting will be held on;

Date: Enter date of meeting.

Time: Enter time of meeting

With: Enter staff name

If you are unable to attend this meeting, then please contact me on the details above at your earliest convenience so that we can rearrange to a time more suitable for you.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year / Class Teacher

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent over a school year	Description
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97%	Good Attendance	5	
95%	Improvement Required	9	Less chance of your child succeeding as it is harder for them to make progress – Support will be offered to remove any barriers to attendance
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90% (persistent absence)	Serious Concern **	30	Serious Concern Missing this much education can cause a significant disadvantage to your child. An attendance support plan will be put in place to ensure your child's attendance can improve. Without improvement to attendance the consequence could be legal action.

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16. Appendix 11: Letter 6 – Attendance Support meeting review – Improvement made

Date «date»

Dear [Name of parent]

Re: (pupil Name) Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

Thank you for attending the attendance review meeting on [Enter date of review] regarding [Child's name] attendance, I enclose a copy of the further plan made at this meeting.

The recommendations of this meeting were [Choose an item].

If you any further concerns that require support, please let me know at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year / Class Teacher

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent over a school year	Description
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97%	Good Attendance	5	
95%	Improvement Required	9	Less chance of your child succeeding as it is harder for them to make progress – Support will be offered to remove any barriers to attendance
92%	Concern	19	
90% (persistent absence)	Serious Concern **	30	<p>Serious Concern</p> <p>Missing this much education can cause a significant disadvantage to your child. An attendance support plan will be put in place to ensure your child's attendance can improve. Without improvement to attendance the consequence could be legal action.</p>

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17. Appendix 12: Letter 7 – Attendance Support meeting review actions – Target not met – no improvement

Date «date»

Dear [Name of parent]

Re: (pupil Name) Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

Thank you for attending the attendance review meeting on [Enter date of review] regarding [Enter child's name] attendance, I enclose a copy of the plan made at this meeting.

As discussed at the review, the attendance targets have not yet been met so a further review of the plan was agreed at:

Date: [Enter date of meeting]

Time: [Enter time of meeting]

With: [Enter staff name]

If you are unable to attend this meeting, then please contact me on the details above at your earliest convenience so that we can rearrange to time more suitable for you.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year / Class Teacher

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent over a school year	Description
100%	Perfect Attendance	0	This is the best chance of success for your child
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18. Appendix 13: Letter 8 – No improvement despite support plans and/or no engagement from parent

Date «date»

Dear [Name of parent]

Re: (pupil Name) Attendance at School - Current attendance [%]

Following our previous letters [and meetings], [Student's name] attendance has failed to improve and is below acceptable levels.

A copy of [Child's Name] registration certificate is enclosed for your attention, showing a breakdown of sessions' absence and [his/her] overall attendance of [%].

Due to the continuing absences, I will be discussing the present concerns with the Trust Education Welfare and Inclusion Lead, to see how we can best work together in order to improve [Student's name] attendance to Black Torrington (** DELETED WHERE APPROPRIATE - Unfortunately we are no longer able to authorise any absences for illness unless medical evidence is provided.)

We have arranged a formal Attendance meeting to see if there is any way to avoid referring the concerns to the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Team.

The meeting will take place;

Date: Enter date of meeting.

Time: Enter time of meeting

With: Enter staff name

If attendance does not improve despite the plans in place, The Local Authority Attendance Improvement team will decide on appropriate action moving forward which may include legal proceedings. If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

The decision to prosecute rests solely with the LA as an independent prosecuting authority, but in deciding whether to prosecute the local authority may wish to consider:

The level of engagement from the parent and whether prosecution is the only avenue left to demonstrate the severity of the issue to the parent and/or cause parental engagement with the support they require.

I look forward to seeing you at the arranged meeting.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Lead