



**THE**  
**KEYSTONE**  
ACADEMY

## Attendance Policy



<b>Policy developed by</b>	A Bellaby	<b>Date:</b> June 2022
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## CONTENTS

1	Introduction
2	Expectations
3	Attendance and absence
4	Day to day process for managing attendance
5	Roles and responsibilities
6	Positive measures to promote good attendance
7	Responding to absence
8	Monitoring arrangements
Appendices – Letter frames	

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

At the Keystone Academy we are passionate about achieving the best possible outcomes for our pupils. We are committed to providing all pupils with an excellent education in a safe and happy environment. Each child is welcomed, valued and respected and encouraged to respect themselves and others. We aim to empower all children to gain the essential skills, that will equip them for life and we believe that education is essential for all.

To achieve their full potential, pupils need to attend regularly and punctually. We recognise that regular attendance promotes achievement and progress as well as supporting safeguarding and reducing risk from harm. Non-attendance at school for any reason is an important issue that must be treated promptly and seriously. In all cases of non-attendance, it is essential that early action is taken. To promote good attendance, we take care to work in partnership with parents / carers and other services supporting pupils and families. We have an open-door policy and utilise various methods of communication to ensure families have access to the support and advice needed to ensure their child is attending school regularly.

We aim to put strategies in place to ensure pupils feel able to attend school and recognise it as a safe space.

Staff at the academy acknowledge that there is a strong link between high attendance and pupil progress, so we will always encourage regular attendance to ensure that learning and progress can successfully take place. Where there are barriers to attendance, we will work with our pupils, families, and other agencies, to remove them.

## **2. EXPECTATIONS**

The Keystone Academy expects pupils to:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time, appropriately dressed and be prepared for the day
- Arrive to lessons on time

The Keystone Academy expects parents/carers to:

- Encourage their children to attend school
- Contact the office immediately if their child cannot attend school
- Send a note, medical card etc. to the school on return from sickness or absence. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> absences, a doctor's sick note will be required.
- Contact the school immediately if they become aware that their child is reluctant to attend school

Pupils and parents/carers can expect The Keystone Academy to:

- Ensure that there is regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance and time keeping as a statutory and legal requirement
- Contact home on first day of non-attendance
- Establish early contact with the home when a pattern of non-attendance and lateness emerges
- Act immediately on any problem notified to us
- Maintain confidentiality
- Provide positive measures to encourage good attendance
- Provide support for pupils - to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum which supports personal, social, emotional, academic and moral development
- Provide a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment in which each pupil is valued, supported and feels safe
- Build and maintain effective partnerships between the school and its parent/carer body, external support agencies and the wider community

## **3. ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE**

### **Why it is important to attend school regularly**

School attendance is central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential. The government has set a target of 95% attendance for all pupils. This rate allows for periods of illness or particular circumstances when absence from school is unavoidable.

We want your child to attend school regularly as this supports their learning. If your child is not well or if you have a planned reason why your child cannot attend school, please inform the school at the earliest opportunity.

In our context we know that many of our students have faced significant barriers to their attendance with some not attending school for significant periods of time before joining Keystone. With this in mind we will work to put in place plans to support and develop positive attendance making sure that even the smallest steps forward in attendance are acknowledged and praised.

### The Law

Children of compulsory school age must, by law, receive a full-time education.

Each person with day-to-day parental responsibility could be taken to court and fined for each child who is not attending school regularly or who is persistently late.

The Education Act 1996 states that all pupils should attend school regularly and punctually. 'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.'

Some key attendance facts:

- Attending 90% of the time or less will have a serious effect on learning.
- One day's absence every two weeks will give 90% attendance.
- Up to the age of 16, 90% attendance will mean losing over a year of school

Number of days off school a year	Percentage attendance	Number of lessons missed	Level of concern
<b>0 days</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0</b>	No Concern
<b>2 days</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>10 lessons</b>	No concern
<b>5 days</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>25 lessons</b>	No concern
<b>10 days</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>50 lessons</b>	Form tutor monitor
<b>20 days</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>100 lessons</b>	Pastoral team monitor
<b>30 days</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>150 lessons</b>	Significant concern

### Unplanned absences

Please inform the school before 8.30am on the morning of the first day of absence.

Keep the school informed if the absence is to continue.

A written explanation of your child's absence may be required on return to school.

### **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

The school can only authorise any absences in the following circumstances:

- Genuine illness (please note that on the third and subsequent illness of an academic year we will require a Doctor's note)
- Medical appointments (these should be made out of school hours where possible)
- Close family bereavement
- Recognised religious observance
- Examination

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

The Keystone Academy understands there may be extenuating circumstances resulting in a child's absence. Authorising such instances will be at the discretion of the Headteacher and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any parent/carer taking their child out of the school during term, for any reason, without the permission of the Headteacher will result in an unauthorised absence and possible referral to the Localities Services.

### **Planned absences**

Where possible, organise authorised absences well in advance.

Please try to arrange medical appointments during holiday times or out of school hours.

If you cannot make doctor or dentist appointments out of school hours, wherever possible, the child should come to school before the appointment and return to school afterwards.

### **Religious Observance**

If you wish to take your child out of school for a religious observance, please inform the school.

### **Family Holidays**

Family holidays must not be taken during the school term. The guidelines from the DfE states that schools should not authorise absence for holidays or other circumstances on the grounds of cost.

If you take your child on holiday without authorisation, the Local Authority has the power to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 per parent per child, rising to £120 if not paid within 28 days.

### **Arrival at School**

#### Primary

Students in our primary setting will be able to enter school from 8:30am where breakfast will be available in the canteen. Students in our primary setting should arrive to school no later than 8:45am.

#### Secondary

Students in our secondary setting will be able to enter school from 8:50am where breakfast will be available in the canteen. Students in our secondary setting should arrive to school no later than 9:05am.

For both settings students will arrive through reception and will hand over electronic devices and make their lunch selections for the day.

## **4. DAY TO DAY PROCESS FOR MANAGING ATTENDANCE**

### **Registration**

The school records two marks in the register each day – AM and PM. The morning mark is completed on arrival at the start of the day and the afternoon mark is completed immediately after lunch.

The register will close at 9:10am. Pupils who arrive after this time will have to provide a reason for lateness and will receive a late mark in the register.

Afternoon registration takes place immediately after lunch.

### **Attendance and punctuality**

As the majority of pupils will be transported to school by taxi, lateness caused by a taxi company will not result in the pupil receiving a late mark. Any issues of this kind will be resolved between school and the transport company.

### **School response to absence**

The school operates a First Day Response and will telephone families where children have failed to attend school in time for morning registration.

Parents/carers will be notified if a recurring pattern of lateness or non-attendance develops. If this persists, further action will be taken and parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting to discuss any barriers that they are faced with. In the case of

persistent lateness and absence, procedures may lead to the involvement of external agencies.

The Keystone Academy will use a variety of supportive interventions to address issues of attendance and punctuality. We will work both independently and with other agencies, including Shropshire Local Authority, in establishing the correct intervention to be applied. Interventions may include:

- Various academic and emotional wellbeing and mental health interventions in school
- Support from outside agencies, such as CAMHS (BeeU), Youth Service and NHS
- Pastoral Support
- Parental Support
- Early Help Assessments and action plans
- Fixed Penalty Notices

### **Internal truancy**

Due to the nature of our cohort, we understand that there may be reasons that pupils cannot manage during a period of learning and may require time out of class. During this time students will be directed to identified spaces to support regulation to move to a place where they are ready to re-engage with learning. These periods of time out of class will be monitored and any patterns identified so that more bespoke intervention can be put in place to engage students in their learning.

### **Bespoke timetables**

Due to the nature of the cohort, we understand that some of our students may find completing a full timetable of learning challenging. Where this is the case, individual progression plans will be put in place to support increased attendance in school over time. These plans will be evaluated and monitored by staff and SLT to ensure that pupils' needs are fully met and taken into consideration. Any amendments to timetables or the school day will be at the discretion of the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

### **Understanding barriers**

At Keystone Academy we understand that a pupil may experience a variety of barriers which impact on their attendance. We will always work together with families and agencies to understand these and offer tailored support where required.

For some pupils with SEND and / or medical conditions, it will be necessary to make reasonable adjustments to support their personal circumstances. This may include putting in place an individual healthcare plan and working together to review and update this regularly.



## **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **All Staff**

- Communicate any concerns they have with regards to attendance and punctuality at the earliest opportunity
- Remain vigilant of the fact that registers are legal documents and that false or inaccurate recordings may lead to prosecutions in some instances
- Communicate any concerns they have with regards to attendance and punctuality at the earliest opportunity to the Pastoral Lead, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.
- Communicate effectively with families ensuring that any barriers to attendance are raised with the relevant staff.
- Use class Dojo to celebrate good and improving attendance.

### **Admin team and Pastoral Support Team**

- Ensure that AM and PM registers are completed.
- Initial point of contact to parents/carers.
- Ensure that attendance calls are completed by the school Office daily to parents/carers of non-attendees.
- Update registers where necessary.
- Support Form Tutors with the monitoring of attendance.
- Ensure that periods of non-attendance are followed up.
- Track and target individual pupils to improve levels of attendance.
- Communicate regularly with parents/cares of non-attendees and follow up concerns to staff.
- Work with Form Tutors to address issues of non-attendance to draw up action plans and implement appropriate strategies to support the pupils and improve attendance.
- Monitor the attendance of offsite provisions and ensure that registers are received.
- Coordinate and implement any reward scheme that is linked to attendance and punctuality.

### **Pastoral Lead**

- Ensure that the attendance policy and procedures are implemented and carried out effectively.
- Will oversee a service which enhances existing provision in order to support learning, participation and encourage social inclusion.
- Will attend meetings with parents/carers and pupils.
- Work with young people and their families who are referred for attendance reasons to identify strategies and support systems to ensure reintegration and improved attendance.
- Work alongside and support other key staff to implement targeted support strategies to address issues of non-attendance.

- Complete home visits to pupils and their families to ascertain reasons for poor/non-attendance.
- To work alongside other key professionals in order to support improved and regular attendance.
- To maintain and monitor Pupil Profile, documenting trends in absenteeism.
- To implement, monitor and update progression plans for identified students.

### **Form Tutors**

- Will provide a service which enhances existing provision in order to support learning, participation and encourage social inclusion
- Will attend meetings with parents/carers where necessary.
- Work with pupils and their families who are referred for attendance reasons.
- Work alongside other key staff to implement targeted support strategies to address issues of non-attendance and truancy.

### **Deputy Headteacher**

- Take a strategic lead on raising levels of attendance.
- Be responsible for overseeing all issues regarding attendance and will meet regularly with the Pastoral Lead to review and implement strategies for raising attendance.
- Authorise absences and referrals where appropriate.
- Communicate regularly with The Keystone Academy staff and the Senior Leadership Team regarding all issues of attendance.
- Prepare formal reports for the Headteacher and The Keystone Academy Local Support Board as and when required.
- Support with updating the school KPI document supporting a trust wide overview of attendance.

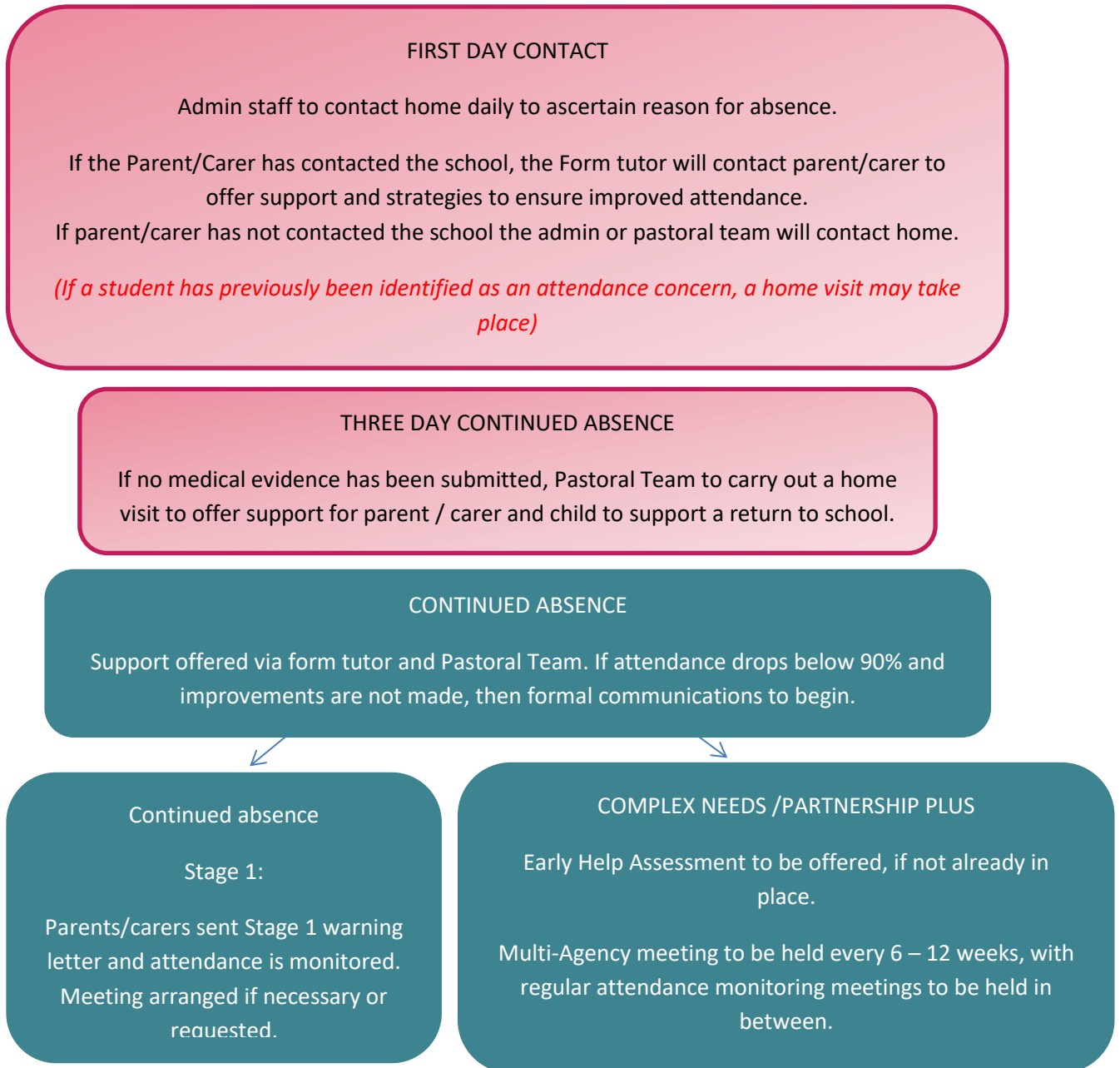
## **6. POSITIVE MEASURES TO PROMOTE GOOD ATTENDANCE**

The Keystone Academy will seek to encourage good attendance and punctuality with all pupils through tutorial work and assemblies. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised with rewards such as certificates and prizes.

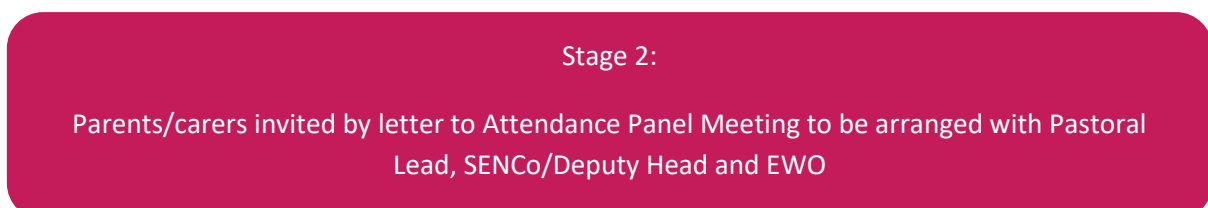
Pupils will be rewarded with certificates, termly and annually for achieving 100% attendance. There will be a permanent display of pupils who achieve 100% attendance each week which will be displayed in our rewards assembly. Students will also be rewarded with Dojo's for daily and weekly attendance as well as improving attendance. Postcards will be sent out to families to celebrate attendance and thank them for their support, recognising that they play a key part in students having positive attendance.

## **7. Absence process**

The Keystone Academy uses our MIS, Arbor, to monitor pupils' attendance. The Keystone Academy will identify pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. These pupils will be targeted to receive additional support from the school and/or relevant external agencies. The following chart shows how we will respond to absence;



*Contract failure, disguised compliance or Early Help refusal and continued absence:*



Possible Fixed Penalty Notice

*Contract failure, disguised compliance or Early Help refusal and continued absence:*

Stage 3:

Parents/carers invited by letter to Attendance Review Meeting to be arranged with Pastoral Lead, SENCo/Deputy Head and EWO

FPN Unpaid

Prosecution

Lack of engagement

Prosecution and if needs continue to be multiple and complex referral by DSL to Targeted Early Help

Parental Pupil Engagement

=

Educational Supervision Order

Attendance Reviews

Attendance will be reviewed by staff regularly and letters will be sent to parent/carer at various trigger points - if a child's attendance drops below 90% and 85%. If a child's attendance drops below 85% parents/carers will be asked to attend a meeting in school and the Education Welfare Officer will be informed.

Extenuating Circumstances

**If there are extenuating circumstances resulting in absence and families are engaging with the school and external agencies, families will NOT be fined, and the case will not progress to FPN or following stages. Progression through each stage will be monitored, assessed, and evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.**

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

**The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003**

Section 23 of the Act gives powers to the local authority to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is failing to ensure their child's attendance at school.

### **What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?**

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court to secure an improvement in a pupil's attendance. Payment of a Penalty Notice enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction.

### **What Are the Costs?**

Payment within 28 days of receipt of a Notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this but within 21 days.

### **How Are They Issued?**

By post to the home address.

For more information visit Shropshire Council's Education Access Service at: [School attendance or exclusion | Shropshire Council](#)

## **8. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

The strategic leads for attendance in the school will regularly scrutinise the whole school and individual attendance data. The information gathered will be used to inform decisions and actions, to ensure a tailored approach is used to:

- identify potential barriers to attendance and punctuality.
- identify and implement appropriate support and interventions in a timely manner.
- measure impact of interventions.

Historic or emerging patterns across the school will be highlighted through this regular scrutiny of data, which will enable us to develop appropriate strategies to address these.

The Deputy Headteacher, in conjunction with the Pastoral Lead, will regularly report on progress, allowing for continual evaluation of processes and support mechanisms being used across the academy. Our approaches will be regularly reviewed, and both pupils and parents/ carers will be invited to provide feedback.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Letter of commendation**

Dear (Insert parent/carer name),

I trust this letter finds you well. It is with great pleasure that I take a moment to express my gratitude for your continued support and involvement in (INSERT STUDENT NAME) education at Keystone. As we navigate the academic year, it is essential to acknowledge and celebrate the positive contributions each student brings to our school community.

I am writing to commend (INSERT CHILDS NAME) positive attendance at Keystone which currently is currently (INSERT CURRENT ATTENDANCE). Regular attendance is a fundamental aspect of academic success, and your commitment to ensuring your child is present in school has not gone unnoticed. The value you place on education is evident in the dedication you show towards encouraging (INSERT CHILDS NAME) to attend school regularly.

Research consistently demonstrates that regular attendance is a key predictor of academic achievement and overall well-being. It lays the foundation for building strong work habits, essential life skills, and a sense of responsibility. By attending school regularly, your child not only maximizes their learning opportunities but also contributes to the vibrant and dynamic atmosphere of our school.

We understand that your partnership in your child's education extends beyond the classroom, and we appreciate the collaborative effort between home and school. It is this shared commitment that allows us to create an environment where each student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. As we move forward in the academic year, I encourage you to continue emphasising the importance of regular attendance with (INSERT CHILDS NAME). Consistent attendance not only supports their academic progress but also fosters a sense of belonging and community within our school.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt appreciation for your ongoing support and commitment to (INSERT CHILD'S NAME) education at Keystone. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Together, we can ensure a positive and enriching educational experience for every student.

Thank you for being valued members of The Keystone Academy family.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Bellaby

## **Attendance Concerns 1**

Dear [Parent/Carer],

### **RE: Stage 1 Attendance Warning – [Student's Name]**

I hope this letter finds you well. We appreciate your ongoing support and involvement in your child's education at Keystone. As part of our commitment to ensuring the success and well-being of every student, we regularly monitor attendance to identify and address any concerns that may impact their academic progress.

It has come to our attention that your child, [Student's Name], has recently experienced a decline in attendance, which has fallen below 90%. We understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise, but consistent attendance is crucial for academic success and overall social and emotional development.

Regular attendance is directly linked to a student's ability to fully engage in classroom activities, grasp essential concepts, and build positive relationships with peers and teachers. It also fosters a sense of responsibility and discipline that extends beyond the school setting. Research consistently supports the notion that students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes.

In light of the current attendance situation, we want to work collaboratively with you to address any challenges that may be contributing to this decline. We believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential for the success of our students.

To support your child's academic journey and maintain a positive learning environment, we kindly request that you take the necessary steps to improve your child's attendance. If there are specific concerns or circumstances impacting attendance that you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help and find solutions that best meet the needs of your child.

It is important to note that this letter serves as a Stage 1 Attendance Warning. If there is no improvement in attendance, it may lead to further interventions, progressing to Stage 2. Our goal is to work together to ensure your child's success in school.

We appreciate your immediate attention to this matter and look forward to working with you to support [Student's Name]'s continued academic progress. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at [admin@thekeystoneacademy.org](mailto:admin@thekeystoneacademy.org) or 01743 599011.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

*Mrs Bellaby*

## **Attendance Concerns 2**

Dear [Parent/Carer],

### **RE: Stage 2 Attendance Warning – [Student's Name]**

I hope this letter finds you well. As partners in your child's education at The Keystone Academy, our goal is to provide a supportive and enriching learning environment that facilitates the academic success and overall well-being of every student.

It has come to our attention that despite the initial communication regarding attendance concerns, the attendance of your child, [Student's Name], has not shown the expected improvement and has now dropped below 85%. Regular attendance remains crucial for academic achievement, social development, and overall success in school.

To address this matter, we are initiating Stage 2 of the Attendance Warning process. At this stage, we would like to invite you to participate in an Attendance Review Meeting, which will provide an opportunity to discuss the challenges your child may be facing and explore potential solutions collaboratively.

The Attendance Review Meeting is scheduled for [Date] at [Time] in [Location]. During this meeting, we aim to gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to the decline in attendance and work together to formulate a plan to support your child's consistent attendance.

It is important to emphasise that attendance is a critical factor in academic success. Continued absence from school can significantly impact a student's progress, hindering their ability to engage in learning activities and build important social connections within the school community.

If, following the Attendance Review Meeting there is no significant improvement in attendance, the matter may progress to Stage 3. At Stage 3, a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued as per legal regulations. Our primary objective, however, is to collaborate with you to find effective solutions and prevent the need for further intervention.

We understand that each family's situation is unique, and we are committed to working together to support your child's attendance and overall well-being. If you are unable to attend the scheduled meeting, please contact us at [admin@thekeystoneacademy.org](mailto:admin@thekeystoneacademy.org) or 01743 599011 to arrange an alternative time.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to ensure [Student's Name]'s success at The Keystone Academy.

Yours sincerely,

*Mrs Bellaby*



### **Attendance Concerns 3**

Dear [Parent/Guardian's Name],

#### **RE: Stage 3 Attendance Warning – [Student's Name]**

I trust this letter reaches you well. We appreciate your ongoing cooperation and commitment to your child's education at Keystone. As partners in the educational journey, it is crucial that we work together to address any challenges that may impact your child's academic progress.

It is with concern that we note that despite our previous communications and interventions during Stages 1 and 2 of the Attendance Warning process, the attendance of your child, [Student's Name], has not shown the expected improvement and continues to be below the required standard. As a result, we are now entering Stage 3 of the Attendance Warning process.

In Stage 3, a further Attendance Review Meeting will be convened to discuss the ongoing attendance issues. This meeting will be attended by the Education Welfare Officer, who will provide additional support and guidance to help identify and address the underlying factors contributing to the attendance concerns.

The Attendance Review Meeting is scheduled for [Date] at [Time] in [Location]. It is imperative that you attend this meeting to collectively explore strategies to improve your child's attendance. During the meeting, we will discuss the specific challenges your child is facing and collaborate on a plan to support their regular attendance.

It is crucial to reiterate the significance of consistent attendance for academic success and overall well-being. Prolonged absence from school can significantly impact your child's educational progress, social connections, and future opportunities.

If, following the Attendance Review Meeting there is no significant improvement in attendance, it may lead to further legal actions. This could include the issuance of a Fixed Penalty Notice or, in more severe cases, prosecution. Our intention is to work collaboratively with you to prevent the need for such measures.

We understand that circumstances may vary, and we remain committed to supporting your child's success. If you are unable to attend the scheduled meeting, please contact us at [admin@thekeystoneacademy.org](mailto:admin@thekeystoneacademy.org) or 01743 599011 to arrange an alternative time.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to ensure [Student's Name]'s continued success at The Keystone Academy.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Bellaby