



ST. THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL
ACADEMY

GUIDANCE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed and approved by SLT on:	September 2023
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Next Review	September 2025

Mr Daniel Cauchi
Chair of the Governing Body

The School's Mission Statement
To inspire,
To learn,
To achieve,
To keep our Catholic ethos at the centre of our lives,
To fulfil our educational potential, welcoming all and
reaching out to the wider world,
To truly be God's servant first

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR ST THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL

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School Attendance Policy

Introduction

This school Attendance Policy is based upon the guidance given from the Department of Education (DfE) document [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#). This policy is non-statutory but is intended to produce guidance to ensure the school maintains a high level of school attendance and to plan the school day and year to meet the legal framework. This policy also sets out possible interventions available to address student's poor attendance and behaviour at school. This Policy should be read alongside the statutory guidance given in the **School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures (School Attendance and Behaviour) -January 2015**.

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the schools governing body.

St Thomas More High School believes that high attendance at school is central to raising standards in education, ensuring all students can fulfil their potential and benefit from their education.

Absence from lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind, and lower achievement and that high absence rates can be a potential safeguarding indicator.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- To ensure all students are punctual to school and to their lessons

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The latest Local Authority 'code of conduct' under the provision of the education (penalty notices) regulation 2004:- Sept 2024 is also referred to. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs

- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- The Link Governor for Safeguarding and Attendance will have termly meetings with the Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising The Attendance Lead to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Geoff Mason and can be contacted via 01702 344933 or by email at GMASON@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher or Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is Edel Sedgwick and can be contacted via telephone 01702 606799 or email ESEDGWICK ESEDGWICK@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk

3.5 Form and Class Teachers

Form and class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information using the schools electronic system.

3.6 School Reception/Attendance Officer

School reception/attendance officer will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Pastoral Team where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)
- Parents are expected to:
 - Make sure their child attends every day and are in school on time
 - Contact the school their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (either by phone, through school gateway app, via email to attendance@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority

- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Attendance Officer, Edel Sedgwick on 01702 606799 or email on ESDGWICK@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Pupils are expected to:
- Attend school every day on time
- Attend every timetabled session on time
- Sixth form students are also required to call the school to report their absence before 9am (via email attendance@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk , by phone to Mrs Hudson 01702 606783) on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.40am and ends at 3.30pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by contacting the school attendance line who can be contacted via telephone 01702 344933 or by email attendance@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk. (see also section 8).

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides medical evidence.

Parents/carers can request a medical leave of absence form from the school reception, inform us of any planned absences through the school gateway or alternatively email attendance@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk

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

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

If a pupil arrives after 8.45am they will sign in through the 'late gate' and will be expected to attend a short 15 minute detention at break time on the same day. If the pupils fails to attend that detention or is late more than twice in a week, they will be set an after school detention.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the Local Authority/Police if there is a safeguarding concern.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, a notice to improve or a penalty notice or another legal intervention will be considered. (see section 5.2 below).

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via school progress reports, alternatively parents/carers can monitor their child's attendance via the school gateway.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as any absence that is required for an emergency and cannot be carried out at any other time. (Please refer to appendix 6 for guidance on 'Should I send my child to school')

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via school reception. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- As a rule of thumb, holidays taken during school time will not be authorised. There are 190 school days throughout the year so there are plenty of other opportunities for children to go on holiday that is not in term time.
- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
 - Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
 - Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
 - Attending provision arranged by the local authority
 - Attending work experience
 - If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We have developed a number of strategies to promote good attendance.

Weekly – there will be points awarded for the top house in each year group and a mention in contact/attendance newsletter to forms.

Monthly - At the end of each month we will announce the form class with the best attendance, they will get a certificate (given out in the headteachers assembly) to place on their form class board, house points will also be awarded (see appendix 4) and any form that achieves over 97% in any month will receive points for their house.

Termly - During presentations assembly there will be an attendance cup which is given to the form with the best attendance in that term (which they can keep in their form room until the end of term).

The 100% Attendance Club offers rewards and incentives to those pupils achieving 100 per cent attendance across a whole term (names will be put into a draw for the end of the year)

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

- Students returning to school following absence due to complex needs will be given a variety of support within the pastoral framework of the school
- This support will be specific to the needs of the student and according to whether they have special education needs, maybe LAC/PLAC, health issues, emotional wellbeing issues or any other barriers limiting their attendance
- The school attendance team in liaison with the Local Authority attendance team will be the initial vehicle to which the meeting of key staff required to support the needs of the returning student will be discussed and roles allocated.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

A student returning to school following an absence due to mental or physical ill health or SEND, parents and students will be invited in for a meeting with the attendance, pastoral and/or SEND teams to look at the support required for a successful reintegration back in to school.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

- A reintegration meeting with the Pastoral/SEND teams to discuss a successful reintegration will be facilitated
- Relevant support from the academic pupil progress team will also be considered to ensure the student is able to continue their studies

8. Attendance monitoring

We look at attendance across the school by separating the data into:

- Year groups
- Gender (in sixth form)
- Ethnic minorities (avoid grouping distinct ethnic groups together, as this may mask disparities between them)
- The pupil premium (itself separated into disadvantaged, looked-after/post looked-after children, and service children)
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils

We will identify (using appropriate timeframes) pupils whose attendance is falling below 90% (in which case they become persistent absentees) 10% of the school year equates to 19 days absent.

We expect form tutors to monitor and challenge daily absence/punctuality, but when the attendance falls below 98%, the pupil progress mentor for the year group will monitor and challenge (Letter 1 will be sent out to parents/carers)

Below 95% is when the attendance officer will get involved and pupils will have a meeting with the attendance officer (Letter 2 will be sent out to parents/carers).

Below 90% a Level 1 letter will be sent out (see Letter 3), and if things do not improve a follow up Level 2 letter will be sent out. (see Letter 4)

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Attendance data is available on the schools electronic system to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum once per year by Schools Strategic Leadership Team. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

APPENDIX 1

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing!

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

St Thomas More will ask for medical evidence of appointments and illness

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

APPENDIX 2- Headteacher Letter-Unauthorised Request for Leave

Title
Address

Date

Dear

Name: Form:

Thank you for your letter regarding your request to take **(name)** out of school for the purposes **(Reason)** from **(Date)**

I have considered your application and regret to inform you that your application for leave has not been granted.

The Department for Education advises that leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. I am unable to authorise this holiday as the reasons stated on your application form are not deemed as exceptional.

If you decide to take your child/children out of school for this period, you may be subject to a Penalty Notice issued by the Local Authority on your return. Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23(1), the issuing of a Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £80.00 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days rising to £160.00 per child, per adult if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. (NB. In the case where the Penalty Notice has not been paid within 28 days of issue, the case may be escalated to prosecution in Magistrates Court for non-school attendance). If this is the second unauthorised leave taken within a three-year period, there will be no option of the lower amount and the Penalty Notice issued will incur a fine of £180. A national limit of two Penalty Notices can be issued to parents for the same child withing a rolling 3-year period. If a third offence is committed, then parents could be prosecuted for their child's absence with no option of paying a fine.

I have included a leaflet which has been issued by the Local Authority in relation to Penalty Notices for poor school attendance and unauthorised leave during term time.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher
Enc.

APPENDIX 3- Notice to Improve

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

School attendance is hugely important. For your child to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, wellbeing, and wider development, they need to attend on time, every day possible.

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school or fails to attend regularly the child's parent may be guilty of an offence under s.444 Education Act 1996.

You, «FORENAME» «SURNAME» are a parent/carers of «Students_Name», (called in this notice "the pupil") who is a registered pupil at St Thomas More High School.

The school have offered support to you and your family to try and help improve «Students_Name»'s attendance, including:

1. **Telephone calls.** The school contacted you every day your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer their support with any issues your child may be having.
2. **An Attendance Overview Letter.** The school wrote to you, letting you know about «Students_Name»'s attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
3. **An Attendance Support Meeting Invite.** The school invited you to a meeting to discuss your child's unauthorised absences and to offer support to ensure that their attendance improved. You were notified of the consequences should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and you did not effectively engage with the support offered.

Unfortunately, despite the support that was offered to your family, attendance remains a cause for concern. Between «START_DATE» and «END_DATE» the pupil failed to attend regularly at St Thomas More High School which resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.

You now have 30 school days (6 weeks) in which to improve your child's attendance. During this time your child must show significant improvements in attendance and avoid having any unauthorised absences from school during this period. Should we not see sufficient improvement and further unauthorised absences take place during this period, a Penalty Notice may be issued. A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is usually the opportunity to pay a reduced amount of £80 if paid within 21 days. Please see fact sheet included with this warning, which explains when and how a penalty is issued.

If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss what further support is available, please contact our team as soon as possible:

Yours sincerely

Director of Attendance and Safeguarding

APPENDIX 4- Headteacher Letter- Leave of Absence

Title _____ Date _____
Address _____

Dear _____

Name: XX Form XX

It has been noted that **(Name)** had **(number of days)** day's absence for the period **(Dates)** and we have reason to believe that this absence was due to a family holiday because. We have checked our records and can find no holiday application form from you regarding this absence.

The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 prohibits Headteachers granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the Headteacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

If leave of absence is not authorised, and is taken without permission, the Access and Inclusion School Attendance Team may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent of £80 for each child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the time scale the penalty will increase to £180. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, the Access and Inclusion School Attendance Team will then institute legal proceedings against you in the magistrate's court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child attends school regularly.

If this is the second offense within a three-year period, there will be no option of the lower amount and the Penalty Notice issued will incur a fine of £180. A national limit of two Penalty Notices can be issued to parents for the same child withing a rolling 3-year period. If a third offence is committed, then parents could be prosecuted for their child's absence with no option of paying a fine As I have not been given a reason for this absence, I have taken the decision to record it as unauthorised leave taken for a term time holiday.

Please contact me by **(Date)** to discuss if there are any special circumstances that you feel should be taken into consideration before I apply to the Local Authority for the issue of Penalty Notices.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

APPENDIX 5- Headteacher Letter- Suspension and Exclusions

Title
Address

Dear

Name: Form:

Further to my letter dated [**date**] regarding the period of suspension/exclusion for your child, you were advised that it is an offence for a parent/carer to allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours for the first five days of suspension/exclusion, (Section 103 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006). Your son was seen

At [**place**]
On [**date**]
At [**time**]
Seen by [**add details**]

This was during the first five days of [**name**]'s suspension/exclusion from school. Before I request a Penalty, Notice be issued to you, I invite you to provide me with the reason to support why your child was seen in a public place.

Please either contact the school to speak with me directly or providing your reasons in writing within the next seven school days.

If I do not hear from you within that time, or if I do not consider your reasons to be a justified, a penalty notice will be sought under S.105 Education and Inspections Act 2006. A Penalty Notice imposes a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 days and 28 days. If you do not pay the Penalty Notice and the notice is not withdrawn, you will be prosecuted under S.103 Education and Inspections Act 2006 and could receive a fine of up to £1,000.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

APPENDIX 6 : Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law

Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

APPENDIX 7 ATTENDANCE PROCESS

Action if no improvement: -

1. Level 1 parent contacted by school and targets set, review after 4 weeks
2. Level 2 meeting with parents and LA Attendance Officer targets set- reviewed 4-6 weeks
3. LA now leads- LA write to parents and make weekly visits, Attendance Officer continue to monitor. PSCO involvement.
4. LA arrange a legal pupil planning meeting at Civic Centre. First warning issued. Review 6 weeks.
5. At Review PPM parents issued with final warning, court case considered
6. No improvement- parents to court

Persistent Absence:-

Below 95% Attendance Officer to monitor.

LA Attendance Officer meeting every week to decide any action.

Update all 'N's and make first contact home for those without reasons for absence. Ensure all missing marks are cleared at end of school day

If N's for one period only email Teacher for explanation and amend SIMS accordingly

Ensure all morning AM registers have been taken and email staff for any missing registers

Morning Update

Attendance Officer to update records for all absences by 10.30am

Attendance Officer to contact home regarding any concerning/questionable reasons

Absence Line/School Comms

Attendance Officer

To take absence notifications from absence line and enter on SIMS accordingly

Lates = loss of appropriate time at break

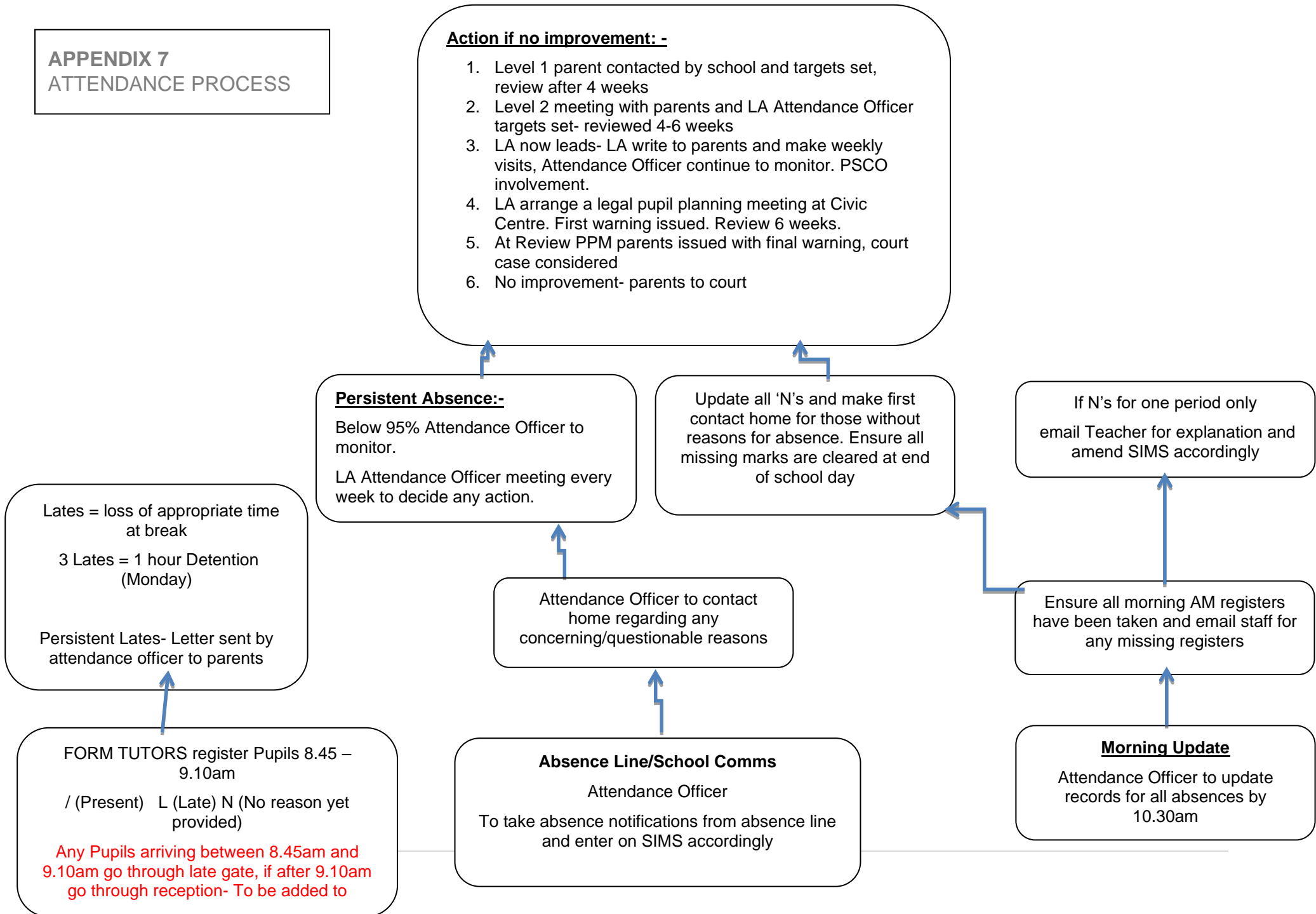
3 Lates = 1 hour Detention (Monday)

Persistent Lates- Letter sent by attendance officer to parents

FORM TUTORS register Pupils 8.45 – 9.10am

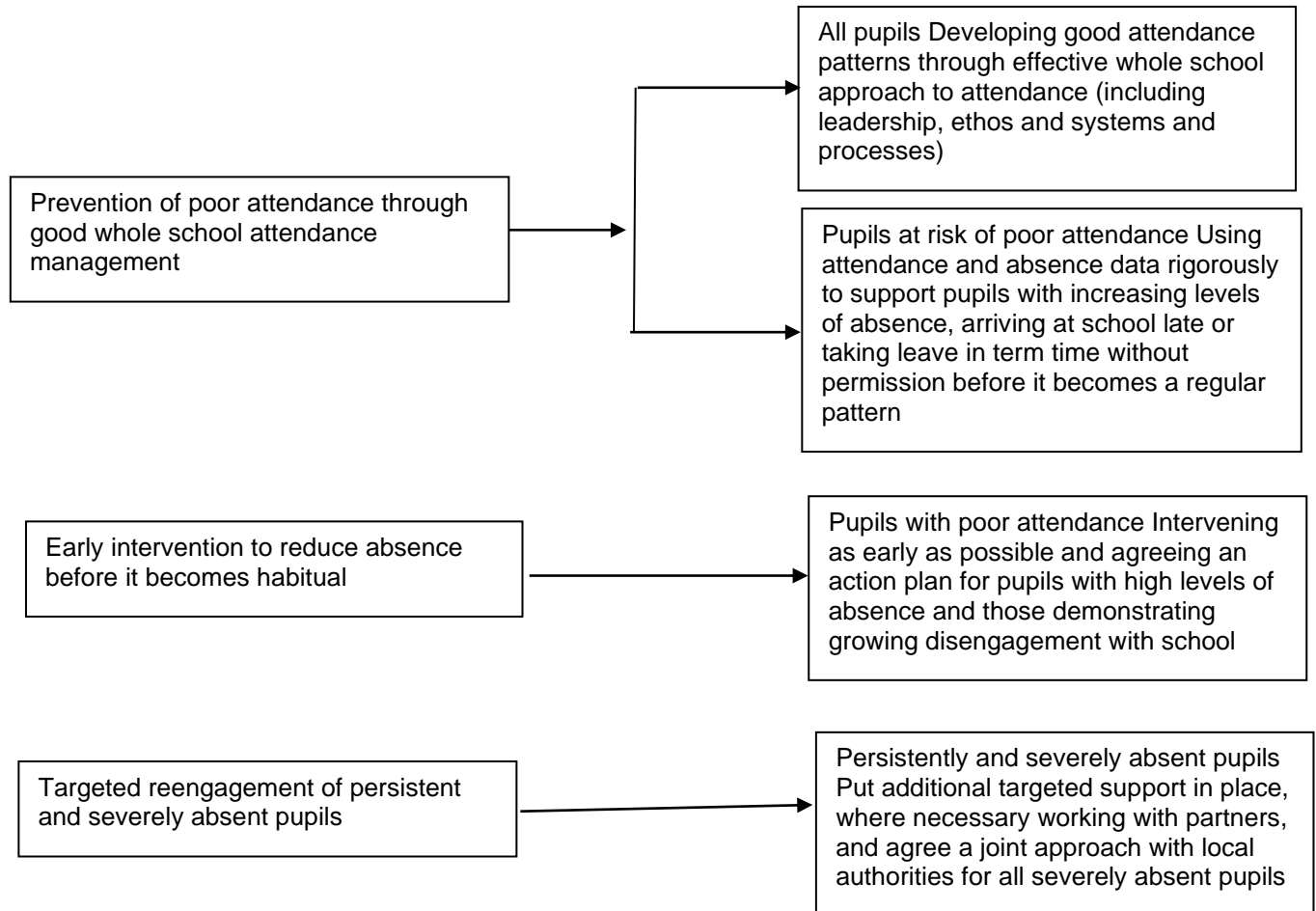
/ (Present) L (Late) N (No reason yet provided)

Any Pupils arriving between 8.45am and 9.10am go through late gate, if after 9.10am go through reception- To be added to



APPENDIX 8- Management of Attendance

Effective school attendance improvement and management



APPENDIX 9

LETTER 1 – Fall below 98%

RE: Attendance for <Pupil Name>

In order to maintain high attendance and punctuality, we regularly review the school registers. This also helps to identify pupils who may need some support in improving their attendance or punctuality.

We are concerned that <PUPIL NAME> has only <figure> % attendance and is falling below what we would expect of students which is 98%. May I take this opportunity to remind you that parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. We would request that if there are any issues that are affecting <PUPIL NAME>'s attendance that you inform myself so we can best support <PUPIL NAME> and your family.

I would be grateful if I could call on your continued support in this matter and please feel free to contact me at any time.

I thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Sedgwick
Attendance Officer

LETTER 2 – Below 95%

RE: Attendance for <Pupil Name>

In order to maintain high attendance and punctuality, we regularly review the school registers. This also helps to identify pupils who may need some support in improving their attendance or punctuality.

We are concerned that <PUPIL NAME> has only <figure> % attendance compared to the school average of 95%. This is now falling to a level we find really concerning. May I take this opportunity to remind you that parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. We would request that if there are any issues that are affecting <PUPIL NAME>'s attendance that you inform myself so we can best support <PUPIL NAME>.

I would be grateful if I could call on your continued support in this matter and please feel free to contact me at any time.

I thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

**Mrs E Sedgwick
Attendance Officer**

LETTER 3 - Level 1 Sample Letter

RE: Attendance for <Pupil Name>

In order to maintain high attendance and punctuality, we regularly review the school registers. This also helps to identify pupils who may need some support in improving their attendance or punctuality.

We are concerned that <PUPIL NAME> has only <figure> % attendance compared to the school average of 95% and below 90% which is a huge concern. May I take this opportunity to remind you that parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. We would request that if there are any issues that are affecting <PUPIL NAME>'s attendance that you inform myself so we can best support <PUPIL NAME>. We are getting to a concerning stage that means we may need to get the Locally Authority Attendance Officer with Southend City Council involved, if <his/her> attendance doesn't improve. May I remind you that 90% means that your <son/daughter> has missed over 19 days of school.

I would be grateful if I could call on your continued support in this matter and please feel free to contact me at any time.

I thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Sedgwick
Attendance Officer

LETTER 4 - Level 2 Sample Letter

RE: Attendance for <Pupil Name>

In order to maintain high attendance and punctuality, we regularly review the school registers. This also helps to identify pupils who may need some support in improving their attendance or punctuality.

We are concerned that <PUPIL NAME> has only <percentage> % attendance compared to the school average of 95%.

As <PUPIL NAME>'s attendance is not at the levels we would expect at St Thomas More, you are invited to attend a meeting with myself and <PUPIL NAME>, our Local Authority Attendance Officer on <DATE> at <TIME> to discuss the problems that are affecting <PUPIL NAME>'s attendance in school.

I would be grateful if you could contact me to confirm you are able to attend this meeting. I thank you for your continued support in this matter and please feel free to contact me at any time to discuss any problems that <PUPIL NAME> may be experiencing that may affect full attendance.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Sedgwick
Attendance Officer

LETTER 5 – Request for Medical Evidence

Dear *(Name of Parent)*

We understand that some absence due to illness is unavoidable. However, as your child attendance is below 90%, we ask that you provide medical evidence such as a doctor's note, appointment card, or copy of a prescription for absence that is due to illness to enable us to authorise any future absence due to illness.

We will continue to monitor *(pupil name)*'s attendance. If you wish to discuss your child's attendance please contact the school.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Sedgwick
Attendance Officer

APPENDIX 10 – Should I send my child to school

<div> <div>What to do Advice on childhood illnesses</div> <div>Go to school; if needed get treatment as shown</div> <div>Can be catching. Some restrictions for school attendance</div> <div>Don't go to school and see the GP</div> </div>				
What it's called	What it's like	Going to school	Getting treatment	More advice
Chicken Pox	Rash begins as small, red, flat spots that develop into itchy fluid-filled blisters	●	Pharmacy	Back to school 5 days after on-set of the rash
Common Cold	Runny nose, sneezing, sore throat	●	Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
Conjunctivitis	Teary, red, itchy, painful eye(s)	●	Pharmacy	Try not to touch eye to avoid spreading
Flu	Fever, cough, sneezing, runny nose, headache body aches and pain, exhaustion, sore throat	●	Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
German measles	Fever, tiredness. Raised, red, rash that starts on the face and spreads downwards.	●	G.P.	Back to school 6 days from on-set of rash
Glandular fever	high temperature, sore throat; usually more painful than any before and swollen glands	●	G.P.	Child needs to be physically able to concentrate
Hand, foot & mouth disease	Fever, sore throat, headache, small painful blisters inside the mouth on tongue and gums (may appear on hands and feet)	●	G.P.	Only need to stay off ill feeling too ill for school
Head lice	Itchy scalp (may be worse at night)	●	Pharmacy	
Impetigo	Clusters of red bumps or blisters surrounded by area of redness	●	G.P.	Back to school when lesions crust or 48 hours after start of antibiotics
Measles	Fever, cough, runny nose, and watery inflamed eyes. Small red spots with white or bluish white centres in the mouth, red, blotchy rash	●	G.P.	Back to school 4 days from on-set of rash
Ringworm	Red ring shaped rash, may be itchy rash may be dry and scaly or wet and crusty	●	G.P.	
Scabies	Intense itching, pimple – like rash Itching and rash may be all over the body but commonly between the fingers, wrists, elbows, arm	●	G.P.	Back to school after first treatment
Shingles	Pain, itching, or tingling along the affected nerve pathway. Blister-type rash	●	G.P.	Only stay off school if rash is weeping and cannot be covered
Sickness bug/ diarrhoea	Stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea	●	Pharmacy	See GP if symptoms persist after 48 hours
Threadworms	Intense itchiness around anus	●	Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
Tonsillitis	Intense Sore throat	●	Pharmacy	See GP if temperature lasts more than 48 hours or cannot swallow
Whooping cough	Violent coughing, over and over, until child inhales with "whooping" sound to get air into lungs	●	G.P.	Back to school after 5 days of antibiotics or 21 days from onset of illness

See www.patient.co.uk for further information on each of these conditions

This leaflet has been produced in partnership between



This information is a guide and has been checked by health professionals however, if you are unsure about your child's wellbeing we recommend you contact your pharmacy or GP to check.

APPENDIX 11 – House Points for Attendance

WEEKLY

10 points to be awarded to the top form in each year group. They will also get a mention in contact on a weekly basis and this will also be sent to form tutors each week.

MONTHLY

Along with the monthly certificate for the form with the highest attendance merit points will be given to the winning form PLUS any form over 97%.

100 points for the winning form

20 points for each form with over 97% attendance for that month!

TERMLY

Along with termly attendance cup being awarded to the form with the highest attendance at presentations assembly there will be merit points awarded for the top 3 spots.

1st – 250 points

2nd – 150 points

3rd – 50 points

APPENDIX 12 – Timings of the School Day

Bell	Period	Timings
8.40 8.45 late	Registration	8.45 – 9.10
9.10 9.15 late	P1	9.10 – 10.10
10.10 10.15 late	P2	10.10 – 11.10
11.25	BREAK	11.10 - 11.30
11.30 late	P3	11.30 – 12.30
12.30 12.35 late	P4	12.30 – 1.30
2.25	LUNCH	1.30 – 2.30
2.30 late	P5	2.30 – 3.30