



# QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Ashbourne, Derbyshire

## Attendance Policy

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## 1.0 Statement of Intent

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At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School we believe that good attendance supports the school values of Question, Explore, Give and Succeed.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community is treated with unconditional positive regard.

All school staff will work with and support students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. The school target for all students is 95%.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards acknowledging the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents, and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

All attendance and punctuality monitoring procedures are applicable to all Sixth Form students.

## 2.0 Principles

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1. To improve the overall percentage of students at school.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students.
5. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
8. To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies.
9. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

### 3.0 Regulatory Framework

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This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### 4.0 School Procedures

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#### **What to do if...**

#### **...Your child is unwell and unable to attend school**

If your child is unwell at home and unable to attend school because of illness, then you must phone school to report the absence, before 9.00am. To do this simply phone **01335 343 685 and press 1 to speak to Student Services**. If the period of absence is greater than 3 school days you must complete a reason for absence form. This will be given to students, by their Form Tutor, on their return to school as part of their reintegration process, and should be returned promptly back to their tutor. Provided that the reason for absence falls within the regulations set down by the Department for Education, the absence will be recorded as 'authorised'. Absence that falls outside these regulations, or is not supported by the return of the reason for absence form, is deemed to be 'unauthorised' and will be recorded as such.

#### **...Your child has a medical appointment during the school day**

We request that all medical/dental appointments are sought out of school hours where possible, so as not to impact on attendance. However, if your child has an appointment during the school day they should bring a copy of their appointment letter (if applicable) and/or a letter from home explaining

the need to leave school early that day. Your child will need to have this letter signed by their Progress Leader and take it to Student Services to sign out at the agreed time.

The following image gives a simple overview of actions at each level of attendance. There are further actions and support which are also available to the school in addition to the below.

Attendance %	Action
98 - 100 (Best chance of success)	We will celebrate with a half termly postcard sent home
96 -98 (What we expect or better)	Your child's form tutor will talk to your child about how to support their attendance improving
93 - 95 (Cause for concern)	A letter will be posted home outlining our concern
90 - 92 (A serious cause for concern)	A letter will be posted home and then an invitation to meet with Progress Leaders to create an action and support plan
Less than 90% (Unacceptable absence)	A letter will be posted home and then an Attendance Panel meeting arranged. Should this not be successful the school can pursue fines and court proceedings

## 4.1 Attendance Register

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### Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

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

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### School Day

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50 on each school day.

Event	Timings
Form Time	08.50 - 09.10
Period 1	09.10 - 10.10
Lesson Changeover	10.10 - 10.15
Period 2	10.15 - 11.15
Break	11.15 - 11.35
Period 3	11.35 - 12.35
Lesson Changeover	12.35 - 12.40
Period 4	12.40 - 13.40
Lunch	13.40 - 14.20
Period 5	14.20 - 15.20
Total time	6hrs 30mins

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50 and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:40pm.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, states that if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence.

### 4.2 Leave of Absence

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- The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Head teachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to Derbyshire County Council

- The Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with DCC guidance.  
(<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/attendance-behaviour-welfare/attendance-exclusion-and-support.aspx>)

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits. Please find a link to the form here:**

<https://www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk/parents/attendance/>

### **Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)**

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A student is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised.
- Amendments have been made to the 2007 penalty notices regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England)
- (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on 1 September 2013.
- The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure that his/her children’s regular attendance at school.
- The penalty is £60 for those who pay within 21 days and £120 for those who pay within 28 days. Parents who do not pay a fine within 28 days may be prosecuted.
- The procedure for issuing Penalty Notices will be in accordance with the Local Authority’s Penalty Notice Protocol.

### 4.3 Unplanned Absence

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Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents can do this by contacting the reception help desk at Queen Elizabeth’s Grammar School on 01335 343 685 option 1.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide 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.

### 4.4 Medical or Dentist Appointments

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Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

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.

Please notify the school at least 24 hours in advance where appointments have been made. Please notify via telephoning **01335 343 685 and press 1 to speak to Student Services**. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### 4.5 Lateness and Punctuality

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A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Students who arrive late to school will have ICE points deducted. Persistent lateness will also result in them making the time back during their social times.

### 4.6 Following Up on Absence

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The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If a child is absent from school, without notification from the parent/carer, the following will be initiated by the Deputy Heads of Year and Attendance Team:

- A text or telephone service will be activated for all students who are not in school after close of register at 9.30am.
- Parents/carers are asked to respond to let us know of the reason their child is absent.
- This may be followed up with a phone call from the Attendance team to verify the reasons for absence and whether additional support is needed.

(See 'First Day Response' protocol for further detail on subsequent actions)

If a child is absent for 3 days in a row due to illness or other circumstances, a member of the pastoral team may phone home out of courtesy, to see if there is anything further the school can do to support.

#### 4.7 Persistent Absence (Including truancy)

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A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops below 90% for any reason. Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

All students who are PA or are considered to be on track to becoming PA, will be referred to the school's pastoral and attendance team, and may also be referred to appropriate external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section (1) offence and a £2500 fine and up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section (1a) offence.

#### 5.0 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

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##### 5.1 Granting Approval for Term-Time Absence

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Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments.

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils 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.

### **Deletions from the Register**

In accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, students will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order.
- The student has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
- Permanent exclusion has occurred, and procedures have been completed.
- The death of a student.
- A student has transferred between schools.
- A student is withdrawn to be educated outside the school system.
- Failures to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the student.
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age.
- 20 days of continuous unauthorised absence have occurred, and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the student.
- A student has left the school, but it is not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the student.

## **6.0 Attendance and Monitoring**

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The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

## 7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

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### 7.1 Roles and Responsibilities

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The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### 7.2 The Head Teacher

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The head teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### 7.3 The Pastoral team / Deputy Heads of Year

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Monitor the daily attendance for their year group

Send out communications to those pupils who have unexplained absence

Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level

Reports concerns about attendance via regular Inclusion Meetings with the pastoral leaders

Issue attendance letters to parents/carers as appropriate

Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Conducts home visits to support the communication between home and school

Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### 7.4 Teaching and Admin Staff

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Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via Go 4 Schools

Admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## 8.0 Monitoring Arrangements

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This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## 9.0 Links with Other Policies

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This policy is linked to our:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Policy

Child Missing in Education Policy

## Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

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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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school

<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

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

<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

**Aim No 1**

**To Improve the Overall Percentage Attendance of Students at School**

1. Apply Whole School Attendance Policy consistently.
2. Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
3. Relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
4. Monitor progress in attendance using measurable outcomes.

**Aim No 2**

**To Make Attendance and Punctuality a Priority for All Those Associated with the School Including Students, Parents, Teachers and Governors**

1. Produce termly/annual reports to governors.
2. Hold induction Year 7 evening for parents/students.
3. Use school publications and the Academy website to promote and celebrate good attendance
4. Provide training for staff in relation to newly implemented systems regarding attendance
5. Display weekly attendance figures and targets for tutor groups on the notice board
6. Year Leaders to meet bi-weekly with their SLT link to discuss pupils with attendance issues and decide on courses of action. In the first instance the Tutor will meet with the pupil and offer support. If there are further concerns, the Tutor will have a telephone conversation with parent(s)
7. The pastoral teams will contact parents if there are further concerns regarding attendance. A home visit will be made if needed. The Attendance Officer will then arrange a meeting in school if the level of attendance remains a concern. A Common Assessment Framework will be offered at this meeting if the issues relating to the absences are complex or unknown. Referral to the Local Authority for Legal Action will be made if unauthorised absences continue
8. Deputy Head Teacher with responsibility for attendance to liaise with pastoral teams and Year Leaders to discuss intervention for students with persistent absence and/or concerning patterns of absence. To collect monthly information and data to share with the leadership team and the Attendance Governor.
9. Use Award systems, including letters to parents, certificates, end of year prizes, etc.

### **Aim No 3**

#### **To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks**

1. School's pastoral admin team to make contact with parents/carers on first day of absence and pass absence information of 'targeted' students to Attendance Officer.
2. Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
3. Ensure clearly defined late registration procedures.
4. Respond swiftly to lateness (in respect of both students and parents).
5. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure.
6. Have clear procedures prior to referral to external agencies including, where available, EWO support.
7. Review attendance regularly.

### **Aim No 4**

#### **To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students**

1. Highlight attendance in:
  - Tutor time
  - Assemblies
  - Parents evenings
  - Mentoring
  - Academic mentoring
  - Supportive group work
  - School bulletins
2. Involve parents from earliest stage.
3. Use pastoral team to make in person contact with parents to ensure there are open and approachable lines of communication.

### **Aim No 5**

#### **To develop a systematic approach in gathering and analysing attendance related data**

1. Using software to collect and evaluate attendance data for use in awards/rewards and sanctions.
2. Monthly scrutiny of attendance data by leadership team
3. To ensure standardised recording of attendance in Years 7 to 11, teaching staff will only enter / if present or N if absent or L if late. Pastoral admin staff to input any other marks (e.g. holiday, medical, school visit etc.)
4. If no satisfactory explanation given for absence after two weeks, decision to be made by Deputy Headteacher if absence to be unauthorised. Parents to be informed by standardised letter if absence is recorded as unauthorised.
5. Be consistent in the collection and provision of information.

6. Decide what information, if relevant, is provided for:

- governors
- pastoral staff
- other school staff
- parents
- students (individual or groups)
- EWO Casework Officer
- Student Support Panel

7. Identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

### **Aim No 6**

#### **To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school**

1. Initiate first day absence contact.
2. Make full use of computer generated letters
3. Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents.
4. Explore the wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships (see Aim 2).
5. Provide information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written).
6. Encourage all parents into school.

### **Aim No 7**

#### **To implement a system of rewards and sanctions**

1. Actively promote attendance and associated reward and effective sanctions.
2. Ensure fair and consistent implementation.
3. Involve students in system evaluation.
4. Take action which accords with objectives agreed between school and others, e.g., Parent, L.A, CAMHS, etc.

### **Aim No 8**

#### **To promote effective partnerships with external services and agencies**

1. Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
2. Gather and record relevant information to assist completion of EWO case files/prosecution files where available

3. Hold half termly attendance review with key school staff and EWO.
4. Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.
5. Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community e.g. community police officer.
6. Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.
7. Develop understanding of agency constraints and operating environments.

#### **Aim No 9**

#### **To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence**

1. Be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.
2. Personalise timetable where appropriate to reduce potential problems
3. Involve/inform all staff in/or reintegration process.
4. Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback.
5. Consider peer support and mentoring.
6. Involve parents as far as possible.
7. Agree timescale for review of reintegration plan.
8. Include EWO, parents and student in reintegration plan.

## Appendix 3 – Reducing Barriers – Information for parents/carers

How we can help? What can parents do to support?

Health concerns	<p>We can offer support through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- School nurse</li> <li>- Referrals to external agencies</li> <li>- Adapted timetable</li> <li>- SEND support</li> </ul> <p>Parents can support by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contact medical professionals as appropriate</li> <li>- Keep evidence from GPs/hospital</li> <li>- Communicate with school any concerns</li> </ul>
Travel and uniform issues	<p>We can offer support through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loaning equipment and uniform</li> <li>- Breakfast club</li> <li>- Afterschool clubs</li> <li>- Support applying for B-line</li> </ul> <p>Parents can support by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring school knows of any issues</li> <li>- Encouraging students to get buses on time</li> <li>- Encouraging students to wear the appropriate uniform</li> </ul>
School issues	<p>We can offer support through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peer group work</li> <li>- Reparation with staff</li> <li>- Pastoral team support</li> </ul> <p>Parents can support by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encouraging student to speak to staff</li> <li>- Communicating any issues with the school</li> <li>- Checking reports and class charts in a regular basis</li> </ul>
Well being concerns	<p>We can offer support through our graduated response including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wellbeing peer and mentor support</li> <li>- Personal development sessions</li> <li>- Website and planner page of support agencies</li> <li>- Early Help Assessment</li> </ul> <p>Parents can support by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visting GP or A&amp;E is concerns are serious</li> <li>- Communicating concerns with school</li> </ul>