Whole School Policy

Attendance Policy

Action	Policy to be reviewed annually		
	Committee	**Date**	**Completed**
Reviewed	Director of Pastoral Care	June 2026	✓
Approved	Education Committee	October 2026	✓
Next review	Director of Pastoral Care	June 2027	

The Law

This policy is drawn from Working together to improve school attendance, The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations, National Minimum Standards for boarding, and guidance from Norfolk County Council.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the "School Roll", and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met. Every entry in the school register must be preserved for a minimum period of six years since the date the entry was made.

The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session, and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

Boarding pupils are covered by the Boarding Standards: National Minimum Standards. Standard 20 places a legal requirement upon staff who have boarders in their charge to know their whereabouts at all times and the missing pupil protocol within the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on the website.

Policy Statement

For pupils to fully benefit from the educational opportunities provided by Gresham's it is vital that high levels of attendance and punctuality are sustained throughout the academic year. Gresham's has an expectation that all pupils will be striving for a culture of 100% attendance and 100% punctuality. Poor levels of attendance will negatively impact the personal, social and academic development of the pupil. It may also be an indicator of abuse or neglect or in itself may indicate that a child is at immediate risk of harm. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms, including crime. Consequently, the attendance and registration arrangements set out in the document below are hugely important. The school however appreciates that some pupils have specific needs and there may be barriers to them achieving high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Support pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance;
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences;
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by the following policies: Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti Bullying, Rewards, Behaviour and Discipline and SEND and Most Able. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Gresham's has a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve (where relevant) attendance. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and is therefore seen as everyone's responsibility in School. That it is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.
The School is also required to inform the LEA of any pupil who fails to attend School regularly or has been absent without the School's permission. The School has agreed to inform the LEA if, for any pupil, unauthorised absences exceed 10% of their total attendance for the year. The DSL and AO has a Target Support Meeting with an Attendance Officer from Norfolk County Council termly.

The School will also inform the relevant LEA and/or Children's Services, as appropriate, immediately if:

- (New pupil and Deletion returns) A pupil of compulsory school age is removed or added to the admission register at non-standard transitions, i.e. where a compulsory school-aged child leaves the School before completing the School's final year or joins after the beginning of the School's first year.
- A pupil of compulsory school age is to be deleted from the School register when the next School is not known. This may be when the pupil has been taken out of School to be home educated; when the family has apparently moved away; when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend; when the child is in custody for more than four months; when the child has been permanently excluded.
- (Attendance returns) A pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded unauthorised.
- (Sickness returns) A pupil of compulsory school age who has been recorded with (I – Illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. A single absence, or repeated absences, raises child protection concerns

In the first two cases, the School is required to report the circumstances, as soon as possible after the grounds for deletion are met, to the LEA, or relevant authority in which the pupil lives, and in any event before the pupil's name is deleted from the register. For non-standard admissions, the notification is to be made within five days of the entry on the admission register.

Gresham's uses attendance data to identify any patterns of low attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched. On occasion it may be necessary for the school to complete a home visit in order to fulfill our Safeguarding duties, this could be triggered due to the number of days absent, or other welfare concerns.

In the Senior School the HSM monitors attendance on a day-to-day basis, whilst a weekly report is analysed by the Attendance Officer and Senior Attendance Champion/(DSL) (SS) to identify any pupil whose attendance is giving cause for concern. Monitoring of attendance that falls below 90% (PA) is part of this. At the Prep-School it is the tutor that monitors their tutees on a day-to-day basis with the Attendance Officer and Attendance Champion/DSL (PS) meeting on a weekly basis to analyse this data. At the Pre-Prep school it is the class teacher who monitors this day-to-day attendance. This process allows the identification of any patterns of concern. If a pattern is identified, we will discuss the situation with the pupil and their parents to understand the barriers to attendance and to agree how all partners can work together to resolve them. Gresham's will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in- School barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the School's control, Gresham's will work to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. The School will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a Social Worker or is otherwise vulnerable. Support may include for example, an adjusted timetable, phased returns to School, involvement of Learning Support, home visits and individualised pastoral support. All support will be regularly reviewed.

Understanding types of Absence

A pupil is defined by the Government as a **'persistent absentee' (PA)** when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Over a full academic year this would be 19 school days (38 sessions) missed. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent' (SA)**. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support. If all avenues of this support have been facilitated (both internally and externally) but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues for a period of not less than 20 days, Gresham's may delete the pupil's name from the Admissions Register. If this decision is taken, then we will inform NCC of such deletion straight away. We recognise our wider duties when this decision is made in helping to identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

The attendance of all pupils at Gresham's is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in our policy. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

Key staff within Gresham's (all 3 sites) who have responsibility for Attendance:

Senior Attendance Champion (SS)	Lyndsay Fielding	lfielding@greshams.com
Attendance Officer (SS)	Molly Underwood	attendance@greshams.com
Named Governor for Attendance (Across all 3 sites)	Sarah Maxwell	via (Clerk to Governors) clerk@greshams.com
Housemaster/mistress (SS)	Chris Cox (Tallis)	ccox@greshams.com
	Alex Mitchell (Arkell)	amitchell@greshams.com
	Tom Burnett (Farfield)	tburnett@greshams.com
	James Beales (Woodlands)	jbeales@greshams.com
	JC Cowan (Howsons)	joecowan@greshams.com
	Emma Fern (Edinburgh)	efern@greshams.com
	Olivia Ravilious (Oakeley)	oravilious@gresahms.com
	Vi Seldon (Queens)	vseldon@greshams.com
Senior Attendance Champion (PS)	Jemma Fenn	prepattendance@greshams.com
Attendance Officer (PS)	Jamie Horsley	prepattendance@greshams.com
Senior Attendance Champion (PPS)	Sophie Stephens	preprep@greshams.com
Attendance Officer (PPS)	Amanda Waters	preprep@greshams.com

The Governing Board at Gresham's recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named member of SLT to lead on attendance.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the school engages and work effectively with the local authority Attendance Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The Senior Leadership Team at Gresham's will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Report the school's attendance to the Governors in the annual report and on a -termly basis to the lead governor for attendance.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

All staff at Gresham's will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Ensure they do not pre-populate registers prior to the session unless this is prearranged (for valid reasons) with the attendance officer.

The Attendance Officer responsible will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data.
- Undertaking weekly attendance meetings with the Senior Attendance Champion) and other relevant staff members.
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole school attendance.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Monitoring individual action plans for pupils causing concern
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from school without contact from parents.
- Implementing whole school initiatives such as awards and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

Gresham's requests that parents:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their HSM, tutor, or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

Pupils with medical conditions or special educations needs and disabilities

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They have the same right to education as all other pupil therefore the attendance ambition of these pupils should be the same as it is for any other pupil but additional support may need to be provided. Gresham's works with parents to understand the individual needs of their child and family. We work in partnership with the family to put in-school support in place, such as a time limited phased return to school, or consider adjustments to school practice, in order to meet the need of that pupil. We also work with the local authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available). We regularly review and update the support approach in order to continue to meet the pupils individual needs.

Attendance Rewards

Providing regular recognition for good and improved attendance sends a clear message that being in school every day is a priority. We celebrate good and improved attendance at the SS in a number of ways:

- Weekly in House focus on attendance and punctuality, celebrating both areas.
- Termly 100% attendance certificates
- Termly House Cup
- 100% Attendance for the Whole Academic Year certificate

The School Day

The Senior School (SS), Prep School (PS) and Pre-Prep School (PPS) run a slightly different and age-appropriate schedule.

<u>The Senior School Day</u>

All pupils are expected to be in roll call in their Houses by 8:05am. The normal school day ends at 5.30pm Monday to Friday after which day pupils may ask their housemaster/mistress to stay in houses until 6.30pmor 7.45pm. Sixth form may be collected at 8pm. All day pupils must sign out. On a Saturday, pupils may leave by 3.30pm or after their fixture (again signing out of house).

It should be anticipated and expected that pupils are actively involved in Games, drama and the rich variety of extra-curricular pursuits offered by the School. In some cases, these will require additional and in some instances substantial time to be spent in excess of the above at School. Registers are taken for all of these activities via the SOCS system.

Pupils are registered in the morning and in the afternoon in House. They are also registered in lessons by their classroom teachers using SIMS.

All pupils are cared for by a Housemaster/mistress and a team consisting of an Assistant Housemaster/mistress, Resident tutor and Matron. Together, they are responsible for pupils during term time, including ensuring that boarders and day pupils staying late are safely occupied outside normal school hours. It is also required that Housemasters/mistresses will monitor attendance, and

meet with the DPC/DSL to discuss absences within their house that fall below the 90% point. Any patterns of absence or concerns about a pupil are also discussed.

Requesting Absence
If a pupil is unwell the parent should contact the Housemaster/mistress (copy in the Attendance Officer: attendance@greshams.com) before 08:00 each and every day of absence. Requests for planned absences should be sent in writing to the Housemaster/mistress who will refer to the Deputy Head Pastoral if appropriate.

Leave of Absence

Term dates are published over a year in advance on the website in order that parents can arrange holidays and/or travel arrangements to/from School without disrupting a pupil's education. Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Any requests for a pupil to leave early or return late outside of these published dates will require the permission of the Deputy Head Pastoral (Mrs Lizzie Alexander) – lalexander@greshams.com

The Prep School Day

All pupils are expected to be in School by 8:15am. The normal school day ends at the following times:

Monday	5.00pm (4.30pm for Yrs 3 & 4)
Tuesday	5:00pm (4.30pm for Yrs 3 & 4)
Wednesday	4.00pm or once games commitments have finished
Thursday	5:00pm (4.30pm for Yrs 3 & 4)
Friday	5:00pm (4.30pm for Yrs 3 & 4)
Saturday	(Years 5 to 8 only)3.30pm or once games commitments have finished

Pupils are registered on weekdays in the morning in Tutor Period. In the afternoon pupils are registered in P7 subject lesson in the afternoon, other than Year 5 to 8 on Wednesdays when they are registered in lunch. On Saturdays Years 5 to 8 are registered, via SOCS, in Chapel in the morning and at lunch in the afternoon.

Requesting Absence
If a day child is unable to attend school for any reason, parents are asked to telephone or email the School Office between 7.45 - 8.15am and leave a message. Requests for planned absences should be submitted via the Parent Portal or sent in writing to the Head of the Prep School – PrepHeadsPA@greshams.com Requests for absence should also go to Prep Office email, in case the PA is ever absent.

The Pre-Prep School Day

All pupils are expected to be in class for registration at 08.55am.

The normal school days ends at 3.30pm for Nursery, Reception and Year1 and at 3.45pm for Year 2. The Pre-Prep week is Monday to Friday.

Requesting Absence
When the pupil is absent, the parent should contact the school by email or telephone before 9.00am on the first day of absence. Parents should contact the school prior to the day of absence if the absence is planned (e.g. dental appointment). Requests for planned absences should be requested via the absence request form on the Parent Portal.

APPENDIX A
Registration Procedure and Protocols in the Senior School
Registration is carried out by Housemaster/mistress or nominated member of staff at 8.10am and 1.45pm.

AM registers will remain open until 8.30am and PM registers are rolling; due to Games timings, but will remain open until 2pm.

On a Saturday AM register will take place at 8.10am and will remain open until 8.30am and PM registers will take place between 11am – 12.15pm and will remain open until 12.30pm.

A housemaster/mistress will leave a comment in SIMS if a code has been entered into the register to further assist the Attendance Officer.

Other staff taking pupils out of AM/PM registration for a trip, music lessons etc, must ensure that they inform the Attendance Officer of which pupils this will effect, so the correct code can be inputted into the system.

AM and PM Registration will be followed up by the Attendance Officer or a nominated deputy where pupils are shown as N. Under this system, an N is first entered when no reason has yet been provided for absence. This is later corrected (no later than 5 working days after the session) using the appropriate code. The N is not allowed to remain indefinitely. The process followed by the Attendance Officer is as follows:

- Check Period 1 attendance
- Ring house staff
- Ring Health Centre (check if pupil has a MH Nurses appointment).
- Ring parents (Day Pupils).

*A pupil marked **N** is a serious concern; HSM and Attendance Officer will liaise to resolve or the missing pupil protocol may be used.*

Attendance
Period attendance has two functions:

- to confirm Registration is complete and accurate, and
- to inform academic and pastoral review processes.

It is the teacher's responsibility to confirm that lesson registration is accurate and complete.

It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure pupils in school are attending their lessons and for tutors to follow up.

Registers must be completed within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.
In Period 1 or Period 6, if a pupil has been marked as an **N** in the preceding Registration slot, staff should send them to Reception, where they must sign in. This must be done immediately during the lesson.

Pupils who have been registered as absent – for whatever reason, except illness – in advance of the lesson should also have informed teachers of their absence. Pupils who fail to inform you of absences are subject to sanctions

APPENDIX B – Senior School Framework for monitoring attendance

Attendance monitored weekly by Hsm. AO inputs attendance data weekly onto CPOMS for any pupil below 90% (PA). Hsm comments on this alert on CPOMS (although not crucial that this is completed weekly) noting any further action. Attendance and Punctuality data is shared weekly with all pupils within each house to make them aware of their own data, raising the importance of this within school.

NOTED on CPOMS (Attendance/internal monitoring)

→ Attendance improves no further action required.

↓ Attendance does not improve/continues to drop. Discuss at the Welfare Meeting.

Attendance monitored weekly by Hsm using the AO info entry on CPOMS. Attendance continues below 90% which means that the pupil has **2 consecutive weeks** below 90%.

Hsm identifies any patterns in attendance, re particular days/subjects using SIMS. Depending on what Hsm finds following steps may be taken.

Hsm to contact home (if relevant) to communicate the impact absence is having on academic work (this info gathered by tutor and passed to Hsm). Support offered to parents and pupil.
Hsm to raise these pupils at the Hsm Meeting, to be minuted.

NOTED on CPOMS (Attendance/Below 90% (PA) contact with parents)

→ Attendance improves to above 90% the following week no further action required apart from monitoring.

↓ Attendance does not improve/continues to drop.

Attendance continues to be below 90% which means that the pupil has **3 consecutive weeks** below 90%.

In consultation with the Hsm, the DSL contacts parents, ensuring that the seriousness of poor attendance is explained. Further support offered to parents and pupil.

NOTED on CPOMS (Attendance/Below 90% (PA) contact with parents)

→ Attendance improves to above 90%, no further action required, apart from monitoring.

↓ Attendance does not improve during the half term.

improvement of attendance, parents invited in to attend a meeting with Hsm and DSL. Discussion about key reason for absence, discussion about what outcomes are wanted and how these will be achieved.

Attendance plan completed and shared with parents after the meeting. Agreed timeframe for review of attendance plan.

NOTED on CPOMS (Attendance/Attendance plan)

→ Agreed outcomes not achieved and attendance remains below 90%.

Onward referral to Deputy Head Pastoral/Academic/ Headmaster.

Registration Procedure and Protocols in the Prep School

Morning & Afternoon Roll Call

- Roll call is taken electronically by Tutor during Tutor Period (am) and Teacher (pm) and information goes through to the office. On Wednesday and Saturday lunch a paper copy is taken to the Office for Year 5 to 8 and the Office then enter the information electronically. On Saturday mornings SOCS is used in Chapel and this information is transferred onto the system by the Office.
- Secretary identifies Unauthorised Absences and contacts parents, keeping the Head informed.
- Secretary makes any updates and completes by 9.15am and 2.15pm.
- A list of absentees is emailed to all staff. A paper copy is in the office for fire purposes. A log is kept of when pupils leave school and return to school outside of registration times.
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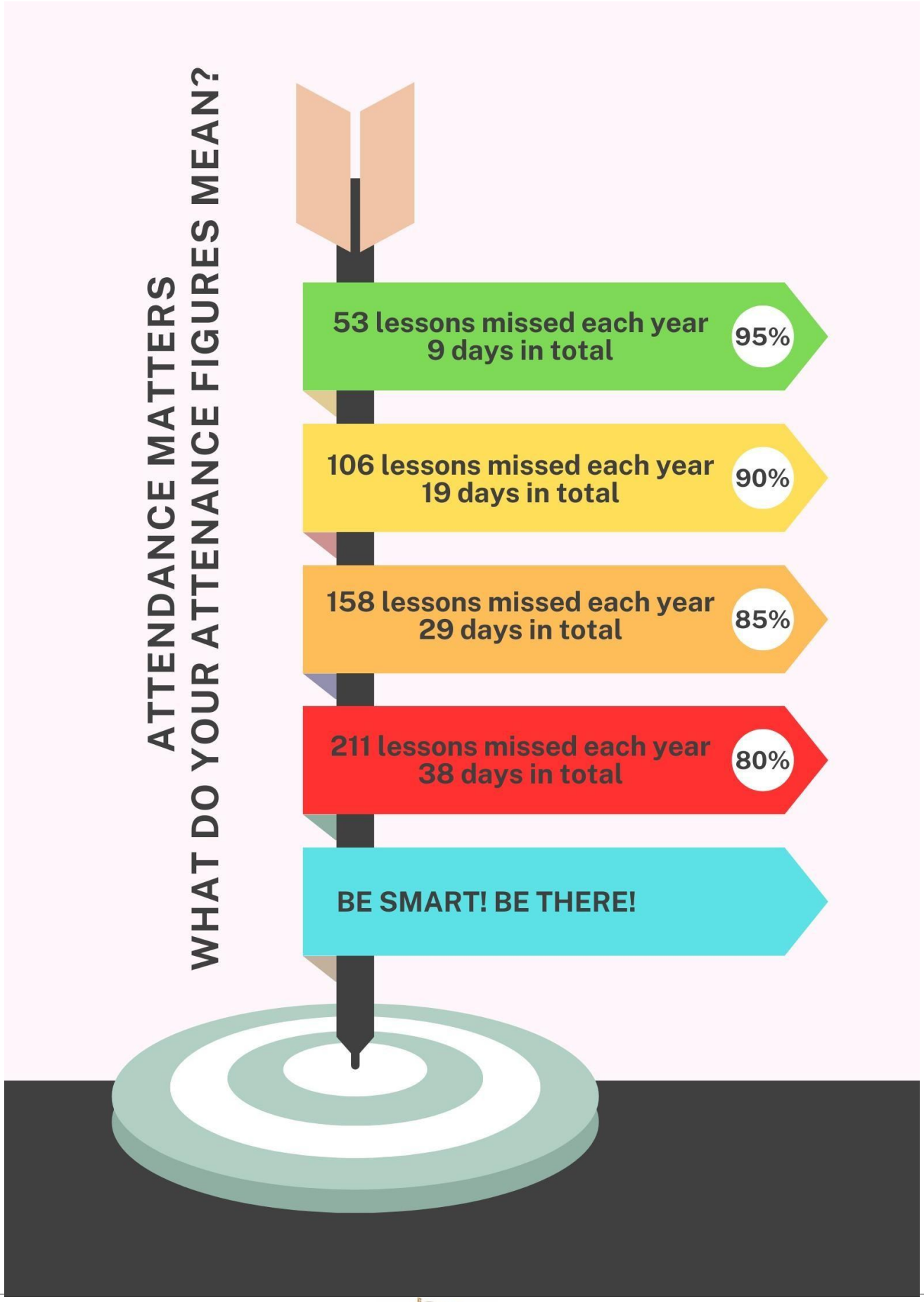
Lessons

- Teacher checks class at the beginning of the lesson.
- Teacher lets Prep Secretary know if a pupil is missing.
- If the pupil is located, Secretary informs teacher.
- If the pupil is not located, Secretary informs Deputy Head, Housemaster/mistress.
- If a pupil has gone home during the day, it is noted on the IN/OUT sheet kept in the office.

APPENDIX C


ATTENDANCE MATTERS
WHAT DO YOUR ATTENANCE FIGURES MEAN?
53 lessons missed each year
9 days in total
95%
106 lessons missed each year
19 days in total
90%
158 lessons missed each year
29 days in total
85%
211 lessons missed each year
38 days in total
80%
BE SMART! BE THERE!