

Attendance Policy & Intervention Checklist

A practical checklist for school administrators to monitor attendance, detect early warning signs, and apply consistent interventions to reduce chronic absenteeism.

1. Attendance Policy Foundations

Use this section to confirm that your school has a clear, documented attendance framework.

- Written attendance policy approved by leadership
 - Clear definition of excused vs. unexcused absences
 - Defined tardy policy
 - Threshold for chronic absenteeism (e.g., 10% of school days)
 - Attendance expectations communicated to families
 - Attendance procedures included in the school handbook
 - Teachers trained on attendance recording procedures
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2. Daily Attendance Tracking

Ensure attendance is recorded consistently and accurately every day.

- Attendance recorded for every class or period
 - Late arrivals documented
 - Early departures recorded
 - Absence reasons logged when available
 - Attendance finalized by teachers at a set daily deadline
 - Administrative review of daily attendance summary
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3. Weekly Attendance Monitoring

Review attendance trends regularly to identify potential risks early.

- Weekly attendance dashboard reviewed by admin
- Students with 2-3 recent absences flagged
- Students with frequent tardiness identified
- Grade-level attendance trends reviewed

- Teachers notified of concerning patterns
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4. Early Intervention Triggers

Define clear thresholds that trigger follow-up with families.

- Flag after 3 unexcused absences
- Flag after 5 total absences
- Flag for repeated tardiness
- Pattern of absences around specific days or subjects

When a trigger occurs:

- Parent or guardian contacted
 - Reason for absence documented
 - Teacher notified
 - Student support needs assessed
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5. Family Communication Process

Maintain consistent communication with families regarding attendance.

- First notification sent after early warning threshold
 - Follow-up message after additional absences
 - Phone call or meeting scheduled if pattern continues
 - Communication logged in student record
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6. Attendance Intervention Plan

For students approaching chronic absenteeism.

- Individual attendance plan created
 - Parent meeting scheduled
 - Academic or social barriers identified
 - Support actions assigned (tutoring, counseling, schedule adjustment)
 - Weekly progress check-ins scheduled
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7. Chronic Absenteeism Response

For students exceeding chronic absenteeism threshold.

- Formal intervention meeting held
 - Attendance contract created with family
 - Counselor or support staff involved
 - External support resources considered if necessary
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8. Reporting & Documentation

Ensure accurate records for internal reviews and compliance.

- Monthly attendance report generated
 - Chronic absenteeism rate calculated
 - Attendance reports available for leadership review
 - Documentation prepared for regulatory or state requirements
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9. Term or Semester Review

Evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies.

- Attendance trends reviewed by leadership
 - Intervention effectiveness assessed
 - Policy adjustments discussed
 - Staff training needs identified
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Quick Implementation Tip

Schools reduce chronic absenteeism most effectively when attendance data is reviewed frequently and intervention steps are clearly defined. A simple, repeatable process ensures that small attendance issues are addressed before they become long-term patterns.