Bridekirk Dovenby CE Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Relevant roles held and by whom (correct at the time of publishing)	
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Position:	Head teacher
Signed:	*Mrs. J. E. Fish*
Date:	7th September 2024
Proposed review date[2]**:**	September 2025

REVIEW SHEET

Each entry in the table below summarises the changes to this Policy and procedures made since the last review (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	September 2022
2	Updated following publication of revised DfE statutory guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' coming into force 19 August 2024	September 2024

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National Framework for Penalty Notices (from 19 August 2024)
Table 1 - DfE School Attendance Codes
Flowchart 1 - Attendance Escalation of Intervention – ABSENCES
Flowchart 2 - Attendance Escalation of Intervention - LATENESS

Please note – Links below are to documents available from the KAHSC website or external websites and are for school use only.

Model Attendance Letters to Parents
Model Lateness Letter to Parents
Cumberland LA Notification of a Child Missing in Education Form (CME 1)

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POLICY STATEMENT

1. Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy and procedures, the following definitions apply:

Parent – (from Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) includes all natural parents (whether they are married or not), all those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person, and those who have day to day responsibility for a child or young person (i.e., lives with and looks after the child).

Compulsory school age – A child is of compulsory school age from the term commencing on or after their fifth birthday until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen and applies to the parents of all children who are registered at any state provided educational setting including academies.

Absence – arrival at school after the register has closed or not attending school for any reason.

Authorised absence – An absence from school that only the Head teacher can authorise where parents have explained that their child is unable to attend school for an agreed and/or exceptional reason, for example:

- Their child is too unwell to attend, and the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- A family emergency.
- Parent travelling for occupational purposes accompanied by the child.

When periods of illness are regular or repeated, the school will request medical evidence before authorising absences.

Unauthorised absence – Any absence that is not agreed and/or where the reason given is not exceptional and which can carry the risk of prosecution under Section 44 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, for example:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Persistent absenteeism – Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason. This means that persistent absence is equal to 38 sessions (19 days) absence from school in any one academic year.

2. Introduction

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk) states that:

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability, and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

This means that it is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by *regular* attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

DfE statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance aimed at schools and local authorities (LA) provides clear evidence linking regular attendance at school to improvements in a child's

attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances as well as reducing their exposure to extra-familial harms like crime or violence (see p9 footnotes as linked above). Throughout this document reference has been made to the DfE statutory guidance and schools must refer to that guidance for additional detail and information.

The statistics tell us that children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Build a firm and secure knowledge and understanding across all curriculum subjects.
- Ensure they consistently meet and build upon expectations for their age or developmental stage.
- Develop good habits and important life skills.
- Maintain friendships.
- Gain better qualifications.
- Have access to a wider range of opportunities when they leave school.

This school understands that improving attendance is everyone's business; that barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates; and that they are often specific to individual pupils and families. We recognise that good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be – a calm, orderly, safe and supporting environment.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school so at all stages of improving attendance, we are committed to working in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. This Policy seeks to explain how, and it has due regard for relevant legislation, and statutory and non-statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) which sets out the fundamental right and freedoms that everyone is entitled to, and the UN Convention on the rights of the child
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Statutory guidance on School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures
- Statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education
- Statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance
- Statutory guidance Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- Non-statutory guidance Behaviour in schools: advice for Head teachers and school staff
- Non statutory guidance Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- https://bridekirkdovenbyceprimaryschool.secure-primarysite.net/absence-procedures/

This Policy and procedures should be read alongside other school Policies and procedures as follows:

- Child Protection Policy and associated Policies and procedures
- Behaviour Policy and procedures
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and procedures
- Equality Policy and procedures/Objectives
- Special Educational Needs Policy/Information Report
- Admissions Arrangements
- First Day Calling procedures
- Missing Child procedures (whilst in the care of the school)
- Complaints procedure
- Code of Conduct for Staff and other Adults

3. Aims

By writing and implementing this Policy and the procedures that support it, we aim to:

- Ensure the safeguarding, child protection and welfare of all pupils.
- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.

- Achieve an attendance for all pupils, that is in line with the National Average, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Provide additional support to those pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness among parents, carers, and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our Policy applies to reception so that we promote good habits at an early age.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families by working in partnership and collaboratively with pupils, parents, staff, and others, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance to remove them so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere – a place pupils want to be - in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of a Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) on the school's leadership team and the role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.
- Provide effective strategies for early intervention to ensure pupils are not deprived of educational opportunities through non-attendance or lateness.

4. Communication and Review

Communicating the school Policy and procedures to all members of the community is an important way of building and maintaining trust and our school's culture. It helps make expectations transparent to all pupils, parents, and staff, and provides reassurance that expectations on attendance, and responses to issues are consistent, fair, proportionate, and predictable aimed at removing any barriers.

We will provide a copy of the Attendance Policy and procedures to a family when their child becomes a pupil at our school, and we will remind parents about it annually at the beginning of the school year and whenever it is updated. We also publish our current Attendance Policy on our website.

As the barriers to attendance can evolve quickly, we will review and update our Attendance Policy and procedures as necessary, and we will seek the views of pupils and parents when we make significant changes.

PROCEDURES

1. Roles and Responsibilities

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. This means that we all need to work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. To ensure all leaders, staff, volunteers, pupils, parents, and carers understand these expectations, we have developed this Policy and procedures.

1.1 Governors

Our Governors are responsible for:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across our school's ethos, Policies, and procedures ensuring that they also help us meet our Equality Objectives and do not discriminate.

- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Evaluating our effectiveness on attendance by regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) who need it most.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Nominating a Governor responsible for the monitoring of attendance (see Policy front page).
- Dealing with representation by parents or carers if their application for an authorised absence is refused and handling complaints regarding this Policy as outlined in our Complaints Procedure.

1.2 Head teacher

Our Head teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group, and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns.
- Providing Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of this Policy and practice.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the school Attendance Policy and procedures.
- Having effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance.
- Ensuring that all staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, understand their responsibilities for following the Attendance Policy, modelling good attendance behaviour, and ensuring pupils follow the Policy as well and that it is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Making parents and carers aware of the school Attendance Policy and procedures by making them available on the school website, on request from the school office, or through an attendance leaflet for parents.

1.3 Senior attendance champion:

Our Senior attendance champion is responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, making sure they are followed by all staff, using absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school.
- Monitoring and evaluating the progress of individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality and ensuring useful data is reported to the Head teacher half termly.
- Contact and work with parents or carers regarding concerns about their child's attendance.
- Arranging meetings with parents or carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties. These will involve the pupil where they are old enough to understand.
- Supporting admin staff in offering initial challenge and support when pupils are late or absent and working with key partners if attendance and/or punctuality becomes an issue.
- Monitoring attendance data thoroughly and ensuring both the Head teacher and Governors receives the data and reports every half term.
- Providing attendance "watch" lists to school administrators for daily monitoring.
- Coordinating daily punctuality checks with late pupils.
- Processing all legal documentation regarding attendance monitoring including penalty notices to the LA.

1.4 Staff taking registration

Teachers and other staff who take the register in the morning or afternoon are required to:

- Provide an accurate record of the attendance of each pupil in their class. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. Details of codes to be used are provided at Table 1 below.
- Respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by admin staff.
- Arrange for appropriate work and resources to be sent home to pupils who have missed lessons and who are expected to be absent for an extended period of time.
- Record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate record.
- Raise any attendance or punctuality concerns (in line with the escalation of intervention described in Flowcharts 1 and 2 at the end of this document) to the Senior Attendance Champion.

1.5 Administrative staff

Our administrative staff are responsible for:

- Recording pupils arriving late or leaving early on a daily basis.
- Preparing, managing, and coordinating use of Scholar Pack (school management system)
- Monitoring and tracking attendance patterns for all pupils and preparing relevant attendance reports when necessary, using an electronic attendance register with the correct coding, which includes statutory reporting to the DfE in consultation with the Senior Attendance Champion.
- Contacting any parent who has not told us why their child is absent on the first day of their absence.
- Using the Short Messaging Service (SMS) system to request the reason for an absence from parents.
- Ensuring that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each pupil by the end of each week.
- Making a judgment together with the Senior Attendance Champion about whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Ensuring that the attendance or admission register is preserved for 6 years from the date the data was entered.

1.6 Local Authority Access and Inclusion Officer

Our LA provides us with an Access and Inclusion Officer Linzi Bennett, linzi.bennett@cumberland.gov.uk 07825430688 whose job it is to:

- Enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- Support our whole school response to attendance through regular Targeting Support meetings, monitoring of individual pupil's attendance, and support with specific attendance, access, or inclusion issues as they arise.

2. Attendance Expectations

2.1 What to expect from school

This school will:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing.
- Have a clear school Attendance Policy which all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand.
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels. We will also include clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers to include relevant detail of any absences or lateness and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify individual pupils or groups of pupils that need support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place. This will not only focus on persistent and severe absence but will look at all severities of absence to identify pupils who can be supported earlier before patterns become entrenched.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work in partnership with families to remove them. In doing so, we will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support.
- Build strong relationships with foster carers, Social Workers, Youth Offending Team workers and the Local Authority Virtual Head teacher in relation to cared-for children.
- Challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like.
- Ensure that where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, the best placed person in the school works with, alongside and supports the family and wherever possible, the person remains consistent.
- Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance e.g. bullying or harassment. For more information on this refer to the School Behaviour Policy and procedures.

- Work in partnership with parents of pupils with mental or physical health conditions or special education needs and disabilities to ensure that the barriers to attendance these pupils face are minimised, providing additional support where necessary, to help them access their full-time education.
- In line with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, consider formal reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, those with an EHCP and adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school. Any adjustments will be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with, the pupil and their parents.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in our area, our local authority, and other partners when a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe. This includes referring to the Local Authority Access & Inclusion Officer, any pupil whose attendance causes concern and where parents or carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve. These actions will be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.
- Share information from the register with the Local Authority, for example, in relation to new pupil and deletions returns; attendance returns, sickness returns.
- Report statutory attendance statistics to the DfE.

2.2 What school expects from parents and carers

Parental responsibilities for attendance include:

- Making sure their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability, and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have (under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996). This can be by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise (including the parent choosing to educate their child at home).
- Ensuring their child attends school every day once enrolled unless there is a genuine reason for absence.
- Ensuring their child is not late for school.
- Contacting school by telephone, in person, by text, email or written note **before 8.45am on the first day of absence** and regularly if it is ongoing.
- Providing us with accurate and up to date contact details (including a minimum of 2 emergency contacts) and updating us as soon as possible if those details change.
- Trying to make health, doctor, dentist, hospital etc. appointments outside of school hours where possible or at the very beginning or end of the school day so that their child can attend as much of the school day as possible to minimise the amount of learning missed. Pupils should be absent from school only for as long as it takes to attend their appointment and they should not be absent for entire whole or half days unnecessarily.
- Telling a member of school staff about something that may affect their child's school attendance.
- Avoiding taking their child out of school for non-urgent matters.

2.3 What school expects from pupils

This school expects that all our pupils will:

- Attend school every day and strive for 100% school attendance. Every day counts!
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day see our Behaviour Policy and School Day times for more information.
- Where age and stage appropriate, promptly tell their teacher, an administrator, or another suitable member of staff, about any problems that may affect their school attendance.

3. Registration Procedures

Pupils are registered every morning and afternoon. Registers will be taken punctually each day at 8.45am and at 1pm.

The register closes at 9.15am and 1.30pm.

Pupils will be recorded as absent or late by teachers using our attendance system. Admin staff will record whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised (see Table 1 at the end of this document for current school registration codes).

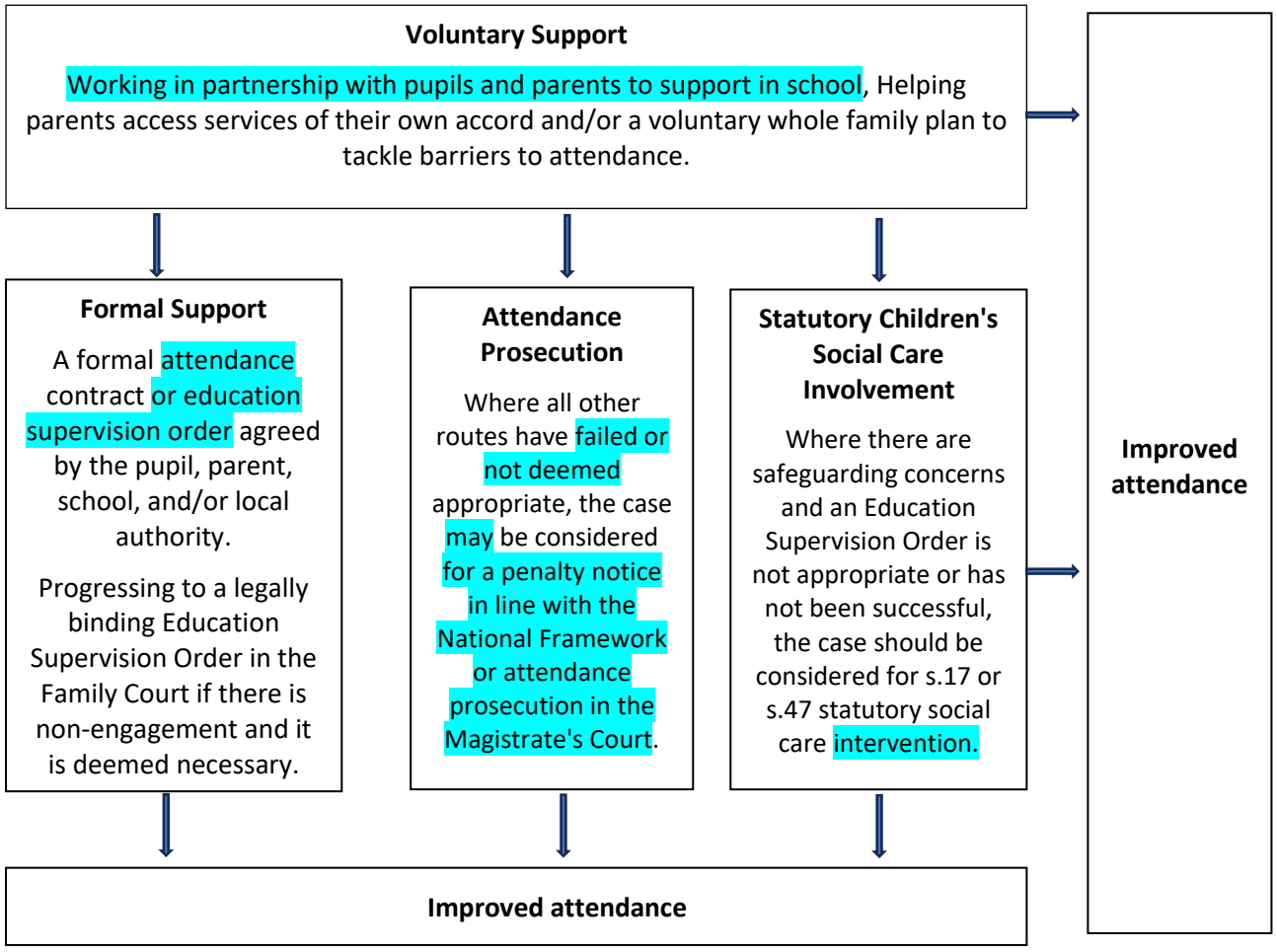
Registers are legal records and we will preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date of entry. It will only ever be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it becomes necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, we will ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name and title of the person who made the amendment.

4. Absence Procedures and Intervention

Absence is often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, and we are committed to working with our local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide the right support.

Supportive approaches are most effective when they are put in place as early as possible and it is essential that all partners work together.

Where that is not successful, interventions are failing, or are not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions will always be made on an individual case by case basis in 3 broad stages as follows.



Rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution, there are other legal interventions available to schools. Each case will be considered individually, but any of the following may be used:

- **Attendance contracts** – a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or LA to address irregular attendance at school. Attendance contracts are not legally binding but allow a more formal route to secure engagement with support. The aim of an attendance contract is to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution.

- **Education supervision orders (ESO) -** Where a voluntary early help plan, or formal attendance contract has not been successful, an ESO is an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.
- **Attendance prosecution -** If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. The decision to prosecute rests solely with the LA.
- **Parenting Orders –** Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made.
- **Penalty Notices -** Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided. Penalty notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes and that absence(s) constitutes an offence. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence). Further information on Penalty notices is provided in point 9. below. 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 fixed or permanent exclusion. In this case, the school must have notified the parent of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place.
- **Notice to improve –** A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support. Details of what sufficient improvement means or looks like will be made clear in the Notice to Improve.

If the school register closes (for either morning or afternoon sessions) causing a pupil to be recorded as absent when there is no authorised absence agreed for them (see Definitions on p1), we will take the following action:

1. Implement our First Day Calling procedure to find out where the child is - see below.
2. Follow our Escalation of Intervention Procedure (see Flowchart 1 at the end of this document) where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging.
3. Routinely send letters for information to all parents about their child's termly school attendance and specially send a letter home when we have identified absences leading to attendance below 96%.
4. When termly attendance monitoring identifies persistent absentees (below 90%), we will send a letter home advising parents or carers that their child's attendance will be closely monitored during the following half term and if there is no improvement, they will be invited to a meeting with the Head teacher and/or senior attendance champion to discuss any support needed.
5. Conduct a review after one half term, and if there has been no improvement in attendance, we will consult with our LA Access and Inclusion Officer to determine the next course of action. This may be an Early Help Assessment, a referral to another agency, or an agreement to formally refer the matter to our Access & Inclusion Officer for official involvement and the consideration of legal action.

We will keep a detailed chronology of all interventions and action taken to improve attendance.

5. Attendance Monitoring Procedures

To properly monitor and manage attendance this school has in place:

- A First Day Calling protocol.
- Follow up phone calls and other methods of communication like SMS, email, app notifications etc.
- Fortnightly attendance reports and individual attendance reports for analysis for patterns and trends.
- Strategies to support young carers and children with a social worker.

- Close monitoring of our identified disadvantaged pupils' attendance for comparison with their non-pupil premium counterparts.
- A regular attendance section in the school newsletter.
- RAG (red, amber, or green) attendance letters issued at the end of every term.

6. Late Procedures

Lateness to school can affect a child's wellbeing and their education by disrupting their routines and learning opportunities. It can also be disruptive for teaching staff and the rest of the class as latecomers arrive.

6.1 Late Arrivals

If a pupil arrives after 8:50am they are late for school.

If school has not yet been secured for the day, late pupils should enter through the usual entrance and report to their teacher who will add them to the register. The School is secured at 8.50am.

If school has been secured for the day, late pupils should use the porch to access Reception and report to a member of admin staff to register and gain entry to class.

If a parent or carer is present when a late pupil arrives, they will be asked to enter their child's details and reason for lateness on the school entry system or the admin will record this directly on Scholar Pack.

6.2 Persistent Lateness

It is to be expected that *very occasionally* a pupil will be late for a genuine reason. We are concerned when late arrivals become often and/or regular (persistent), especially if the reasons given seem repetitive and avoidable.

We will monitor lateness regularly and, where necessary, will implement our Escalation of Intervention: Lateness process (see Flowchart 2 at the end of this document) at the Head teacher's discretion as follows:

- If a pupil is late once after their lateness has been identified as a concern, admin staff recording the late arrival will remind the parents or carers who are with their child of the importance of punctuality and support strategies available for tackling it. If a parent or carer is not present with the late pupil, the reminder should be given to them as soon as possible on the day of lateness e.g. our template slip, email, SMS, or app notification.
- If lateness continues, the Attendance Champion or Head Teacher will contact parents or carers informally for a discussion about avoiding persistent lateness.
- If lateness continues, the Head teacher will write a formal letter to parents or carers about improving punctuality.
- If lateness persists then parents or carers will be invited to a formal meeting with the Head teacher and the link Governor for attendance to establish the reasons and agree an action plan to address the issue.
- If lateness persists action will be move to our Escalation of Intervention: Absence process (see Flowchart 1 at the end of this document) which may include a referral to the LA Access and Inclusion Officer for the most persistent cases.

7. Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a health-related, medical, dental, therapy, hospital etc. appointment is an authorised absence. Advanced notice to school is required to get our authorisation for these absences. Parents or carers can tell us about these appointment in advance by telephone, email, letter, or verbally in person (although we may provide pen and paper and ask for the date, time, place, and reason for the appointment to be written down for us).

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

8. School roll procedures and children missing education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation, or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training) later in life.

Effective information sharing between parents and carers, schools, local authorities, and other safeguarding children partners is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. We encourage parents to inform us of any changes whenever they occur in order to ensure that the school admission register is kept up to date.

Our attendance monitoring procedures allow us to quickly identify pupils at risk of missing vital education so that we can take prompt action to address issues, lower a child's risks, and improve their outcomes.

8.1 Updating the School Roll

We must notify our local authority when we are about to remove a pupil name from our School Admission Register under any of the 15 grounds listed in the Children Missing in Education Regulations 2016 annex A.

We must also notify our local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to our Admissions Register. This will include all the information held within the admission register about the pupil.

We must complete the 'Pupils Gains and Losses Information Sheet' and send it to the local authority at the end of each week if gains or losses occur in the school.

If a pupil leaves our school and their destination is not known to us then we must complete form CME1 and forward it to our LA Child Missing Education (CME) officer as soon as possible (see section 8.2 below).

We must enter pupils on our electronic Admission Register before or at the beginning of the first day on which we agreed or were notified by a person with control of the pupil's attendance, that the pupil will attend our school. If no date is agreed, we will enter the pupil's name on the first day they attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, we will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and consider notifying our Local Authority about a potential child missing education at the earliest opportunity.

8.2 What happens when a school thinks a child is missing education

This school understands that we have a duty of care to ensure we have conducted 'reasonable enquires' to locate a child missing education before it is reported to the Local Authority CME officers.

Where a pupil leaves without advance notice or their destination is unknown, we will:

- Check possible whereabouts with staff.
- Contact parents using their last known telephone number, email address, app accounts or other reasonable route.
- Contact any other emergency contacts held for the pupil.
- Make a home visit to the last known address.
- Check with neighbours and any known friends.
- Contact any agencies known to be involved.
- If the pupil is statemented or has SEND check with SEND services.
- If the pupil or family is known to Social Services inform their named social worker in accordance with the child's plan and previously agreed arrangements.
- Ask the pupil's friends and their parents if they are aware of the pupil's whereabouts.
- Check any social media sites e.g. Facebook.

If the pupil's whereabouts is still not known, the school will complete a CME1 referral and email it securely to janice.ogilvie@cumbria.gov.uk (Tel: 07866 649190). LINK This will enable the LA to make further enquires, as appropriate, to try and locate the pupil.

The pupil should remain on our school roll for **20 school days** and their absence should be recorded.

We will contact the CME officer to **agree the date** that the pupil should be removed from our school roll before we actually remove the pupil from our roll. On this date, the CME officer will forward a CME2 form to us. We will ensure the pupil's attendance data is up to date on that day and remove them from our roll with the correct leaving date.

8.3 Admission of children from overseas

These procedures apply to all schools where the Local Authority is the admissions authority.

This school understands and will comply with the Schools Admission Code when dealing with an application for a child who is not a UK National. We cannot refuse a school place simply because of doubts about a child's immigration status, neither can we check the immigration or nationality status of foreign national children as a pre-condition for admission. In addition, we must not ask to see passports or other immigration information as a condition of admission. With the exception of children who are Irish nationals, we must not actively recruit foreign national children who are still resident overseas as pupils. For more information, see DfE guidance on School applications for foreign national children and children resident outside England.

Any EEA or Swiss national who arrived in the UK by 31 December 2020 was eligible to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme by 30 June 2021, to continue to be able to live, work and study in the UK if their application was successful. The scheme is still open for joining family members and those who have 'reasonable grounds' for not applying by the 30 June 2021 deadline.

If they are not eligible to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme, EEA and Swiss national children entering the UK after the end of 2020 will be treated the same as other foreign nationals. This means they will not have the right to enter the country to access a state-funded school unless they fall within the categories of children who can enter the UK and attend a school (see following sections).

Those EEA and Swiss citizens already living in the UK have a right to continue to attend a state-funded or independent school in England. State-funded schools must not ask them to prove their right to live in the UK before offering them a place.

Children aged under 18 can enter the UK and attend a school:

- as a dependant of a foreign national parent who has settled status in the UK;
- as a dependant of their parent(s) who are in the UK on a Work visa or Student visa;
- as part of a family entering and residing in the UK under the immigration route for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (BNO) and their dependents;
- as part of a family entering and residing in the UK under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme or Ukraine Family Scheme;
- as part of a family entering and residing in the UK under:
    - the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme;
    - the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy;
    - the Afghanistan Locally Employed Staff Ex-Gratia Scheme.

All these categories of children can study at a state-funded or independent school once in the UK. Dependent children who do not arrive in the UK at the same time as their parents would need to apply for a visa separately as a dependent child.

9. Leaves of absence during term time

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time and parents or carers must apply to school for a leave of absence.

The Department for Education allows a Head teacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time in 'specific circumstances' and in 'exceptional circumstances'. We are required to consider each application individually taking account of the specific facts and circumstances, and relevant background context behind the request.

Parents and carers who the child normally lives with must complete a 'Leave of Absence' form outlining in writing the exceptional circumstances for the request. A paper copy of the form can be obtained from the school office. The form must be returned to school for a decision at least 2 weeks before the first day of

leave requested (except for a bereavement or other serious family emergency). The Head teacher may invite you to attend a meeting to discuss your request.

'Specific circumstances' include:

- **Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad**: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA).
- **Attending an interview**: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- **Study leave**: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- **A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable**: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable. (For full details please see part-time timetable)

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event or problem which a parent or carer cannot control or did not expect.

No holidays taken during term time will be authorised unless an exceptional circumstance *also* applies. Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Valid reasons for applying exceptional circumstances and allowing an authorised absence *may* include:

- Being too unwell or infectious to be in school, medical or dental appointments, or an absence from school recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from physical or mental ill-health or injury.
- The school site, or part of it is closed due to an unavoidable cause when it should be open.
- Transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance (2 miles measured by the nearest available safe route for a child aged 7 and under and 3 miles for children aged 8 and over).
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel or daily activities which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
- Service personnel close to the family returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be able to take leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- 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.
- Pupils travelling with their parents/carers 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.
- Bereavement or unexpected and serious personal or family problems.
- To attend the wedding of a person close to the family – up to 1 day.

Evidence may be required in each case to support any application for leave.

If a request meets the exceptional circumstances criteria but falls within the following times, the Head teacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils);
- Year Six transition days;
- Year Six SAT's week;
- Year Two – SAT's week (week to be decided by school);
- Any designated teacher assessment period (decided by school and notified in advance);

As well as the specific and exceptional circumstances described above, there are certain educational activities where a leave of absence may be granted by the school, for example:

- To attend an offsite approved educational activity.
- To attend another school at which the pupil is registered (dual-registration).
- To attend provision arranged by the local authority. e.g. alternative provision or as part of an education, health and care plan.
- To participate in an approved sporting activity.
- To attend an educational visit or trip arranged by the school.
- To attend work experience.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head teacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school, and they may not authorise the whole period requested. If a pupil does not return to school on the day after their authorised leave of absence ends, their attendance will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the Head teacher, are cumulative (they are added together with all past periods of absence or persistent lateness at this school). Parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a Notice to Improve and/or Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended). For a first offence, the amount is £80 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £160 (per parent per child) if paid between 21 and 28 days. The second time a Penalty Notice is issued (within 3 years) for unauthorised absence the amount will be £160 (per parent, per child) paid within 28 days. See information in table below. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice within 28 days may result in prosecution. Before issuing a penalty notice and where thresholds have been met, we will consider each case individually taking into account the circumstances leading to the absence or persistent lateness, the support already provided to the child or family and the impact of any action taken or being considered.

Although not included in the National Framework, where the school has notified the parent that their child must not be present in a public place during school hours during the first 5 days of a fixed or permanent exclusion and this has been allowed, a penalty fine of £120 (reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days) may be issued.

We will comply with the LA local code of conduct for issuing penalty notices which is available on the Cumberland council website.

10. Incentives and rewards

Pupils will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level and we will positively encourage and celebrate good and improving school attendance as follows:

- Every day, pupils are celebrated and target pupils receive praise being in school and on time. Teachers will use their discretion as to what this will look like depending on the individuals concerned.
- Staff and pupils talk about the benefits of school attendance and punctuality, regularly and celebrate weeks of overall good attendance. No child should be made to feel of less worth because of low attendance - this should be addressed with the parents.
- We work inclusively with pupils who need support at school with their medical conditions to ensure a safe learning environment that helps them to manage their health well and stay in school and that helps them feel involved and up to date when they are not able to attend.
- If a child needs an attendance Action Plan it will describe any incentives or rewards in place for their attendance achievements to build up to participating in the whole school scheme.
- We publish information about the importance of good school attendance on the school website and in regular newsletters

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing from 19th August 2024

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

From 19 August 2024 there is 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.

Please note: The DfE **does not** consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

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.

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.

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.

*Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

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 could 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 may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Table 1: National School Attendance Codes

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder).

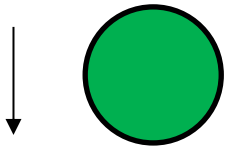
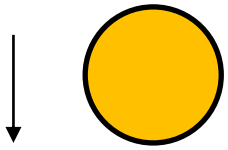
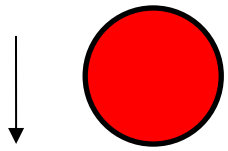
Code	Definition	Scenario (present mark)
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed. If a pupil is recorded 'N' but arrives later in the session, the attendance register must be amended to record them as absent using code 'U' or another appropriate code.
B	Approved educational activity	Attendance at any other approved educational activity arranged by the school e.g. Alternative provision not arranged through the approved framework (See 'K' below); transition/taster days at other schools; course at college. Record nature. Education provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code. Pupils who are absent from school but receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the relevant absence code.
K	Education provision arranged by the LA	Attending education provision arranged by the LA e.g. home tutoring; approved framework for alternative provision; course at college; blended learning. Not provision arranged by the school where codes 'P' or 'B' must be used. Record nature. Education provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered e.g. PRU; hospital education; education at a secure/residential site; off-site direction/managed move. This code may be used by either setting. All unexpected and unexplained absences must be promptly followed up by school.
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a physically supervised sporting activity approved by school. Record nature. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
V	Educational trip or visit/off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a school staff supervised off-site educational activity or on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by school. Record nature. Relevant code must be used if the pupil does not attend the activity.
Q	Unable to attend	Pupil unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements i.e. a failure by the LA to make travel arrangements for the pupil to which the pupil was entitled.
W	Work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement provided by the school or LA. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
Authorised absence		
C	Leave of absence granted by the school	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from schools for pregnant pupils. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Generally a holiday or other absence for leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
C1	As above.	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad under a licence or exemption.
C2	As above.	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a temporary or permanent part-time timetable.

E	Suspended or Permanently excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds but their name is still entered in the admission register and no alternative provision has been made. Alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion.
J1	Interview	Pupil is attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment. Application for leave must be made in advance by parent or pupils over compulsory school age. If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend an approved medical or dental appointment during the session, no absence needs be recorded for that session.
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day or part day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). If a religious body sets apart a single day and the parent applies for more than one day, only one day should be recorded using this code, any other additional dates should be recorded using the relevant code 'C'.
S	Study leave	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes accompanied by the pupil (mobile child)	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business which requires them to travel from place to place. For a child aged 6 or over, the parent must prove that the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months.
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday or term-time leave that was not granted or approved by school or in excess of the period authorised by the school. The school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively.
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended with the correct absence code as soon as the reason emerges, but no more than 5 school days after the session or replaced with code O if no reason for absence is established within 5 school days).
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence or are not made aware of the reason for absence within 5 school days.
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed.
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age who is not required to attend school. If the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend school, the absence must be recorded using the relevant absence code.
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause or exceptional reasons. 'Y' codes are broken down below.
Y1	Not expected to attend	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available and school is not within walking distance of their home (normal walking distance rules apply).
Y2	As above.	Unable to attend due to widespread (local, national or international emergency) disruption to travel.
Y3	As above.	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed and pupil cannot practicably be accommodated in other open areas of the school.

Y4	As above.	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating. Not to be used for planned closure e.g. weekends or holidays.
Y5	As above.	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	As above.	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. Travel to or attendance would be contrary to, or prohibited by, any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease which says they should not attend.
Y7	As above.	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending, bail conditions prevent attendance or the pupil is legally required to attend Court. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The nature of the unavoidable cause must be recorded.
Z	Pupil on admission register (does not attend)	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school. This code is not collected for statistical purposes.
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day/use of the whole school as a polling station. Not collected for statistical purposes.

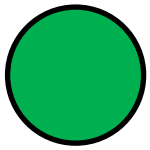
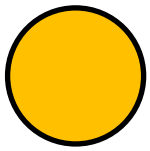
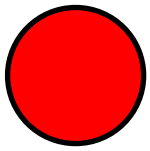
Flowchart 1: Attendance Escalation of Intervention - ABSENCES

Attendance is monitored termly and in some cases half termly. Issues with attendance can arise at any time so action on concerns can take place at any time in the school year but may fall in line with monitoring.

% Attendance	Level of Intervention	Responsibility
100%  **Lower Green** **96 – 99.9%**	**No attendance concerns.** • Analyse the end of term monitoring. • RAG Attendance Letters to be sent home termly.	The School Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) on these actions
Upper 94 -95.9%  **Lower** **90 – 93.9%**	**Attendance concerns.** • First day response to be actioned. • Speak to the individual in school. • Rewards to be given as per the current school strategy. • Analyse the end of term monitoring. • RAG Attendance Letters to be sent home termly about the impact of poor attendance (Upper or Lower Amber as appropriate). • Parents to be invited to come to school voluntarily to learn about Early Help or other support which might improve attendance.	The School SAC on these actions
Below 90 % 	**Significant attendance concerns.** • Analyse the end of term monitoring. • RAG Attendance Letters to be sent home with a warning that further monitoring will take place over the next half term. At the end of the half term monitoring period: • If there is improvement, communicate and celebrate appropriately and continue monitoring. • If there is no improvement, convene a meeting (with the Head teacher and/or senior attendance champion) to enable the school and parents to agree and write down a parent/pupil/school 'attendance contract' and action plan to improve a child's attendance e.g. TAF, Early Help / Plan of Support. Plan to monitor for a further half term and agree a review date with parents. At the end of the further half term monitoring period: • Invite parents to review the action plan (this meeting will be held, and decisions made in a parents' absence if they fail to attend). • If there is improvement, communicate and celebrate appropriately and continue monitoring. • If there is no improvement then escalate by referring the pupil to [insert LA Access and Inclusion Officer with evidence– this may lead to prosecution	School SAC School SAC/LA Officer School SAC /LA Officer

Flowchart 2: Attendance Escalation of Intervention - LATENESS

Lateness is monitored on a weekly basis and sometimes more often, and the following action triggers are in place.

% Attendance	Level of Intervention	Responsibility
No lateness 	**No lateness concerns.** • Analyse the end of term monitoring. • Celebrate punctuality.	The School SAC on these actions
1 or 2 late arrivals in a week 	**Lateness concerns.** • Lateness is to be challenged by the member of staff admitting the late child into school by speaking to the parent where possible and asking them why their child is late. • Offer advice or support to parents if necessary. • Record it in the school's late system. • Send a lateness warning letter to parents outlining concerns and consequences if punctuality does not improve.	The School SAC on these actions
3 or 4 late arrivals in a week 	**Significant lateness concerns.** • Regularly monitor the need to issue lateness letters. • Issue written warnings (lateness letters) about concerns at the Head teacher's discretion At the end of monitoring: • If there is improvement in punctuality, continue monitoring. • If there is no improvement in punctuality convene a lateness meeting (with the Head teacher and/or senior attendance champion) to enable the school and parents to agree and write down a parent/pupil/school 'attendance contract' and action plan to improve a child's punctuality. • If lateness continues, escalate the lateness to consideration as unauthorised absence and move over to the attendance escalation procedure.	School SAC School SAC /LA Officer