

Attendance Policy



BROOKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Introduction

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

At Brooklands Primary and Nursery School, we expect all our children to attend school on every day that the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We strongly believe that the development of positive attitudes towards school, alongside good relationships in the classroom, is key to ensure children come to school. We strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We encourage them to be proud of who they are and their achievements, to be safe in the school environment and outside, and to be kind to their fellow classmates and community. This policy is designed to put in place a number of procedures which will help our children to attend and achieve.

As a school, in line with the DFE Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024, we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business. We believe attendance matters.

We believe that working together and removing barriers to school attendance we can improve attendance by following the DFE Working together to improve school attendance 2024 guidelines:

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 our schools.

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 and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

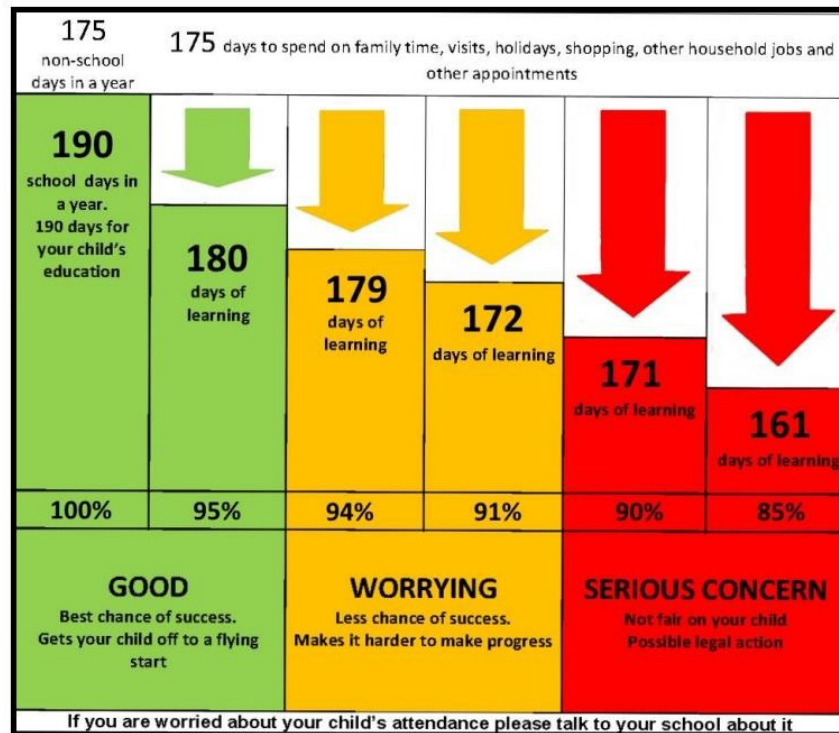
Formalise support

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 venues have been exhausted and support is not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupils right to an education.

Going to school regularly is important for every child's future. Children who miss school frequently potentially miss fundamental building blocks for future learning.



At Brooklands Primary and Nursery School, we are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and supporting parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly;
- Offering supportive strategies to reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence;
- Working in partnership with the Local Authority and other agencies to ensure the good attendance of pupils.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures.

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

By law, all children become compulsory school age at the beginning of the first term following their 5th birthday. Once a child is of compulsory school age, children must receive a suitable full-time education. For most parents, this means registering their child at a school. However, some choose to make other arrangements to provide a suitable, full-time education.

Once your child is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If your child fails to do so, you risk getting a penalty notice or being prosecuted in court.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff, governors and parents in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure excellent attendance for all of our children
- Ensure our universal offer/provision is promoting excellent attendance
- Ensure of school's tiered approach to support is understood by all stakeholders ensuring our families are receiving the right support where necessary
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership to remove them.
- Develop and maintain whole school cultures that benefits high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow up absence. (see appendix)
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place to follow up absence.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and / or disabilities and provide them with additional support.

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Sometimes, even if absence is supported by parent, an absence will be unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent.

Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

Universal support for all

- Promote excellent attendance through assemblies
- Promote excellent attendance through learning environment
- Members of SLT will be on each site at the start of the day and do late gates.
- Rewards and incentives that promote recognition of attendance (best class, etc).
- Promote excellent attendance through a relational approach linked to behaviour policy and developing positive relationships with children and families.
- We will provide opportunities for explicitly teaching the importance of coming school every day
- (curriculum and assemblies).
- We will follow our stepped process below: including first day absence procedures, home visits,

Targeted support (At risk of persistent absence)

- We will use our first day absence procedures.
- We will complete home visits.
- We will send Letters home to inform parents of attendance concerns.
- We will support through informal to formal meetings (identifying push and pull factors with families and the point at which Attendance Support plans are initiated)
- We will provide interventions to support the children and families, working with external agencies,
- e.g. EWO and the specific work, specific roles in school, e.g. Attendance leadership team in terms
- of monitoring attendance and how caseload is assigned.
- We will deploy the Family Support worker to work with families.
- Fines will be issued in line with the National Framework for penalty notices.

Our intention will be to work together to support families and prevent persistent absence.

Specialist support (Persistent Absence)

- School will use formal approaches that support and challenge in line with the National Framework for penalty notices. Formal Attendance Support plans, Team Around the Family approach, external agency support, interventions to support the children and the family.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Our attendance leadership team

Tom Daniel – Headteacher

Jake Bingham – Attendance Lead

Linda Hibbert – Child and Family Support Worker

Olivia Chapman – Attendance Administrator

The attendance team plays a critical role in monitoring and promoting regular excellent attendance. The team's main objective is to ensure that pupils attend school regularly, identify barriers to attendance and implement strategies to improve attendance.

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- Update and maintain the attendance tracker system fortnightly
- Meet fortnightly to monitor and analyse attendance data, with a specific focus on vulnerable groups
- Meet with families inline with graduated attendance procedures
- Identify patterns and trends in individual / group / whole-school attendance
- Identify children at risk of persistent absence and action
- Consider barriers to attendance for individual / group / whole-school attendance
- Collaborate with parents / carers through formal and informal meetings

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Taking daily AM and PM registers to record attendance and absences
- Building and maintaining positive relationships with children and families
- Sharing pupil attendance % at parent's evening and end of year report
- Sharing any concerns affecting attendance with the Attendance Team
- Addressing initial attendance concerns and offering support to families
- Promoting a culture of excellent attendance through education

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of excellent attendance to children and families

- Modelling personal commitment to attendance and punctuality
- Establishing and implementing the attendance policy in line with current legislation
- Ensuring consistent enforcement of the attendance policy
- Overseeing the Attendance Team
- Supporting the implementation of support strategies
- Attending attendance meetings in line with the graduated response to persistent absence
- Reporting on attendance to the Governing Body and Flying High Partnership
- Collaborating with external agencies to improve attendance
- Building staff capacity to ensure excellent attendance
- Recognising and rewarding excellent attendance
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Deputy Head Teacher to be able to do so.
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

Administration staff

Administration staff are responsible for:

- Maintaining attendance records and systems
- Recording / coding absences
- Maintain positive lines of communication between parents and school
- Building and maintaining positive relationships with families
- Contacting families to gain reason for absences
- Producing fortnightly reports
- Sharing any concerns affecting attendance with Attendance Team

Parents

- Parents/Carers are responsible for:
- Prioritising excellent attendance for their children
- Encouraging a positive view of education and promoting the importance
- Modelling punctuality and responsibility
- Setting routines that support excellent attendance
- Be familiar with and adhere to the attendance policy
- Reporting absences through the correct channels in a timely manner
- Providing updates should an absence exceed one day
- Monitoring their child's attendance
- Addressing barriers to attendance
- Attending meetings about their child's attendance
- Working with school staff to improve attendance

- Producing evidence / documentation for absence upon request
- Seeking support, where necessary, for maintaining excellent attendance, by
- contacting Linda Hibbert (Child and Family Support Worker)

Registration

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

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

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

- At 8:40am the school doors open and children are welcomed into their classroom.
- At 8:45am all children are seated and the register is completed. Children are expected to be ready to complete early work by this time.
- Registration will close at 8:50am. If a child arrives between 8:50am – 9:15am, they will be recorded as Late (Attendance Code L). If a child arrives in school after 9:15am, they will be marked as Late After Close of Register (Attendance Code U). This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence threshold for legal decision making.
- Registers will be taken again in the afternoon at 1pm.

A full day counts as 2 sessions (AM and PM)

Each class teacher has the responsibility for marking the attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session.

All attendance records are documented using ScholarPack. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved in line with the relevant retention schedule

Lateness

Children who are persistently late after close of register soon fall behind with their learning.

Any pupil who comes into school after 8:50am will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code

L).

Any child who arrives for school later than 9:15am will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9:15am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

Our process for managing lates will be –

- A member of the Senior leadership team will be on the late gate each morning documenting lates.
- Lates will be monitored and analysed
- A member of the attendance team will contact parents and identify barriers.
- Support from Family worker will be offered.
- Lates will continue to be monitored.

The Attendance Team monitors persistent lateness the Child and Family Support Worker will contact families where lateness is becoming a concern to inform them and offer initial support. The CFSW will aim to work closely with the child and family to identify the cause and help to remove these barriers; this may involve the child accessing additional provision / intervention in school such as a soft start, or external agency involvement for the family. Where a pupil is persistently late for 10 sessions in a rolling period of 10 school weeks and where these are signified as a "U" in the attendance register, the school will consider if it is likely that the attendance will improve with further support. The school may decide to refer the case to the LA for formal monitoring. This may proceed to legal action if the attendance does not improve.

Absences

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent and explain the reasoning.

- School should be contacted by 8:45am by phone on 0115 9732846

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

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any contact from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers each morning to identify those pupils who are absent without explanation and, as a safeguarding requirement, make contact with the parents of these children by telephone.

- If no reason has been provided by 9:15am on the first day of absence, a text message will be sent to request a reason is provided by 9:30am.
- If there is no response, a telephone call will be made to each of the contacts to ascertain the reason for absence.
- Particular focus and emphasis is placed on the attendance of disadvantaged and/or vulnerable pupils.
- If no contact is made by 11:30am, a home visit will be carried out by a member of the Safeguarding Team (DSL/DDSL) to conduct a Safe and Well Check. If no contact can be made, a letter will be posted outlining urgent contact with the school (no later than the end of the school day).
- If the family has previous/or current social care involvement, social services will be contacted for advice. If advised, the police will be contacted.

School will do all it can to contact the pupil each day and will continue to follow professional advice. On day 10 of no contact, the school will contact the Derbyshire Children Missing in Education team.

Known Pupil Absence

- Where there has been contact with the parent/carer but a child has been absent for 4 days, a home visit will be undertaken on the 4th day to check on the wellbeing of the child and to see whether there is anything school needs to be aware of.
- If the child is not seen, the Attendance Team will undertake a risk assessment to decide on level of concern.
- School will contact social services or police for advice and to request a safe and wellbeing check. Professional advice to be followed.

Medical Absence Procedure

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- For all appointments, a letter/appointment card or documentation should be provided to the school office of the appointment prior or straight after to ensure that it is marked as a medical absence.

Applications for Leave of Absence in Term Time

In September 2013 the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers **must not** give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any requests for term time leave should be made on a Leave of Absence Request Form available from the school office and handed in as early as possible, but a minimum of 2 school weeks before the first date of the requested absence whenever possible. You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. (Attendance code G).

Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 97% or above

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns.

Early Intervention:

As outlined above in our universal offer we will offer a range of support e.g. pastoral support, parent workshops, ELSA support, Child and Family Support around strategies to support at home, signposting to agencies.

Our wider universal offer includes a further range of support, e.g. support from class teacher to provide support and to discuss concerns, appointment the SENDCo if child has identified SEND needs, Behaviour Lead, interventions such as boosters, after school clubs (academic and non-academic), lunchtime clubs, etc.

We will include specific targeted support from your tiered approach – e.g. identifying push and pull factors, Attendance support plan written with parents and carers for a period of half term/ term. Where necessary we may refer to specialist support/ agencies.

If a child's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of parental responsibility measures which include the issue of penalty notice fines or other statutory action.

National framework for penalty notices

The new national threshold for consideration of legal action is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, including lates after close of register (Attendance code U) and unauthorised leave in term time (Attendance code G).

If your child's absence falls into this category the school will decide if further offers of support is likely to improve the situation or if a request for legal action should be submitted to the Local Authority.

The new costs and process is outlined below:

- **CONTROLLED First Offence** - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance 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 Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
- **Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)** - The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court.

Parents who decide not to pay a fine and contest the matter in court should seek legal advice before doing so.

If you decide that you wish to take your child for an unagreed Leave of Absence, please do complete a form informing us of this. This means we will not have to undertake daily phone calls to you, all your contacts, conduct home visits or refer to external agencies as we know where your child is.

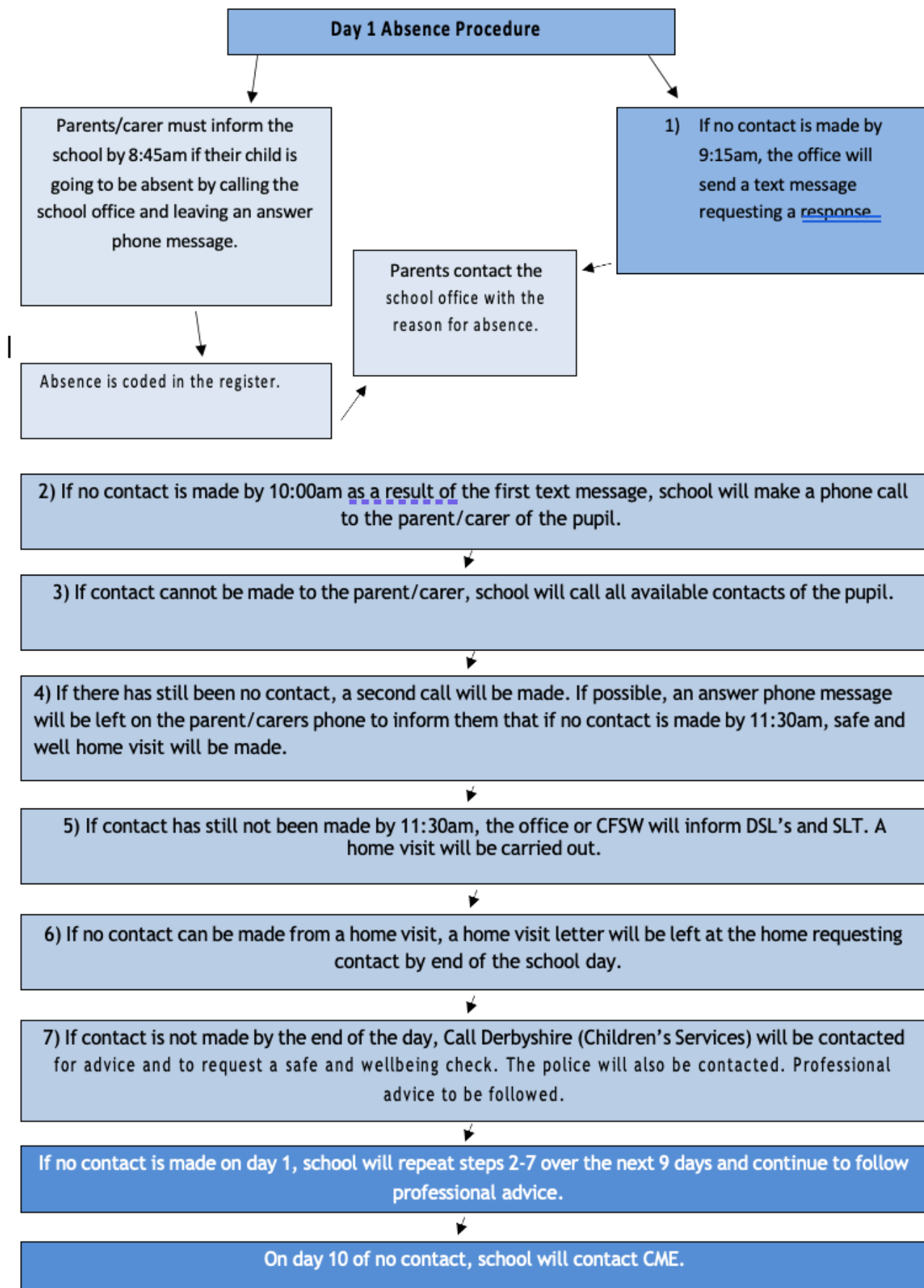
Where a pupil who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days, schools should follow Derbyshire County Council's Attendance Flow chart.

Term time holidays

Pupils should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable. Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time and should only approve the leave if there are exceptional circumstances. If a request for leave is denied and the pupil is absent for 5 days or more then the school is expected to refer the case to the LA. The LA will issue a penalty notice with no requirement for a formal warning to be issued. Penalty notices can also be issued where a pupil is absent for repeated incidents of unauthorised leave in term time that fall below the 5-day threshold. In every case, the request for the Penalty Notice comes in from the school to the LA for the process to be completed.

Add specific appendices referenced within the policy including: DCC Letter to parents, FHP poster and DCC poster, FAQs, attendance specific rewards, staged letters, attendance support plan format

Appendix 2. Day 1 Absence Procedure Flowchart





SCHOOL ATTENDANCE QUICK GUIDE

The school expects attendance of **97% or above**

Key points for the school day:

- **School gates open: 8:30am**
- **School starts: 8:45am**
- **Gates close: 8:50am**
- Entry to school after 8:50am to be via the school office
- Entry to school between 8:50am - 9:15am will be recorded as **Late**
- Entry to school after 9:15am will be marked as **Unauthorised** for that session



Unable to attend:
 If your child is unable to attend school, please notify the school office **by phone** with the reason as soon as possible -**0115 9732846**
 If we have not heard from you by 9:30am, we will contact you via phone or other means

Attendance	Impact
Above 97%	Excellent attendance. Less than 6 days absence a year. Access the whole curriculum.
95% - 96.9%	Attendance has room for improvement. 10 days absence over the year (95%). Access most of the curriculum but may miss some experiences.
90% - 94.5%	Attendance is concerning and needs to improve. 19 days absence over the year (90%). Child will miss key curriculum content and will find it hard to achieve their best.
Below 90%	Attendance is extremely concerning and must improve. 29 days absence over the year (85%). Child will find it extremely hard to access the curriculum and achieve their best.

If you are struggling with your child’s attendance, please speak to Mrs Hibbert, Mr Daniel or Mr Bingham - we are here to ‘Work Together’ to help and support you and your child

Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time and we will only approve the leave if there are **exceptional circumstances**. If we deny the request and your child is absent for **5 days or more**, then the school is expected to refer the case to the LA. The LA will issue a penalty notice with no requirement for a formal warning to be issued.
 The new national threshold for consideration of legal action is **10 sessions of unauthorised absence** in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

PENALTY NOTICES

- **CONTROLLED First Offence** - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance 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 Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
- **Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)** - The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates’ Court.



Attendance Procedure

Attendance monitored weekly by the Attendance Team

Children with attendance of below 95% receive a Class Dojo message from the Headteacher to inform them and offer support from the Child and Family Support Worker (Appendix 4)

Initial Concern: Children with attendance of below 92% receive a well-being call from the CFSW to inform them and offer support. A three-weekly, supportive check-in is made until attendance significantly improves. Each case is discussed with the Headteacher

Attendance falls below 90%

Phase 1: A well-being call will be made to the parent/carer by a member of SLT or the CFSW. The aim of the call is:

- To make them aware of their child's low attendance.
- Find out if any support is required in improving their child's attendance
- Inform them that their child's attendance will continue to be monitored to ensure that it is improved

Phase 2: If there is no improvement in the pupil's attendance, this will trigger a letter (Letter 1) to parents to:

- Inform them that their child's attendance has not improved and that it will continue to be monitored
- Inform them that any further illnesses will not be authorised without a medical note (this will be on a case-by-case basis)
- Inform them that 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period will result in a fixed penalty notice.
- Inform them of any other further action that may be taken if there is no improvement in attendance such as enforcement from the LA.

Phase 3: If there is no improvement, and parents/carers do not arrange a meeting to see how school can support with the child's attendance, a further letter (Letter 2) will be sent informing them:

- Of a given time and date to attend a meeting with Mr Bingham (Attendance Lead) and Mrs Hibbert (CFSW) to discuss the pupil's attendance
- That failing to attend, and if there is no improvement in attendance, a referral for support may be made
- That 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period will result in a fixed penalty notice being requested

Phase 4: If the parents/carers fail to attend the meeting and there is no further improvement in attendance: A fixed penalty notice warning letter (Letter 3) will be sent informing them:

- Of their child's attendance
- That their child's attendance is being monitored and a fixed penalty notice may be requested

If the pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period by this point, a fixed penalty notice letter (Letter 4) will be sent informing parents/carers:

- Of their child's attendance
- That a referral to the Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty notice has been made

Phase 5: The attendance team and CFSW will make regular contact via phone and text to offer help and support and to keep communication open. This will be logged on CPOMs

When attendance improves – no further action is taken.
A phone call to the parents/carers is made to discuss and celebrate the improvements