



## Pupil Attendance Policy

**Author / staff lead: Mrs R Small**

**Abstract:** This policy lays out the school's expectations of attendance of children and the procedures for monitoring attendance and absence.

|                     |                                   |  |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Approved by:        | Mrs M Young<br>Chair of Governors |  |
| Approved by:        | Mrs J Watson<br>Headteacher       |  |
| Last reviewed on:   | 01/06/2026                        |  |
| Next review due by: | 01/06/2027                        |  |
| Policy number:      | LRS0032                           |  |

## Aim

We recognise the intrinsic value of good school attendance and punctuality to obtaining a good education and ultimately to children's life chances and we are committed to embedding a whole-school community culture of good attendance and punctuality as we work to enable children to Learn Reach and Shine:



## Expectations

### Pupils

Attend school every day, on time.

### Parents

- Ensure your child attends school every day unless they are too unwell to do so.
- Ensure your child is on time to school every day - this means they are ready in their class when the register is taken at 8:55am.
- Collect children at 3.15pm (unless they have a club). Children should not be collected early without good reason.
- Take family holidays and other leave of absences in school holiday time.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

- Inform the school by 9am if your child will be absent that day and again on every proceeding day of absence, providing a reason for all absences and advising when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Be positive about school.
- Communicate openly and honestly with us. We want to support families to ensure every child can access the full-time education they are entitled to.

### **Staff**

- Log attendance in the register accurately.
- Monitor attendance to identify families in need of additional support.
- Act quickly to identify individual barriers to attendance and build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school without tolerating further poor punctuality or low attendance.
- Apply attendance rules fairly and consistently in line with the school's policy on equal opportunities.

### **Roles and responsibilities in school**

Parents wishing to discuss attendance and punctuality including leave of absence requests should in the first instance contact Miss Hannah Slade on 01628 662913 or by emailing [wellbeing@lrschool.co.uk](mailto:wellbeing@lrschool.co.uk).

### **The governing body has responsibility for:**

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### **The Headteacher has responsibility for:**

- Ensuring the policy is implemented at all levels in the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **The School Attendance Champion, Rachael Small, has responsibility for:**

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

Rachael Small can be contacted on [dsl@lrschool.col.uk](mailto:dsl@lrschool.col.uk).

**The Attendance Officer, Hannah Slade, has responsibility for:**

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Process and record requests for leave of absence
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the School Attendance Champion
- Working with the Attendance Champion and education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Hannah Slade can be contacted via [wellbeing@lrschool.co.uk](mailto:wellbeing@lrschool.co.uk) or 01628662913.

**Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the registers systems.

Class teacher are responsible for sharing any concerns they have with the Attendance Officer or Champion.

**Daily routines**

The school gate opens at 8:30am until 8.45am.

- The register for the morning session is taken at 8:55am.
- The register closes at 9:15am.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed at 9:15am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed at 9:15am will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The register for the afternoon session is taken at 12.45pm for Reception and KS1.

The register for the afternoon session is taken at 1.30pm for KS2.

## Recording attendance

### Attendance register

- We will keep an admissions register, and place all pupils on roll onto this register.
- We will take our attendance register 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
  - The appropriate code to describe their attendance or absence in line with DfE attendance code descriptions.
  - A comment to provide further information about absences where required
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
  - The original entry
  - The amended entry
  - The reason for the amendment
  - The date on which the amendment was made
  - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible using the Studybugs app or by calling the school office on 01628 662913. Parents / carers should provide the name, class and reason for absence including the nature of any illness. Office staff will follow up where the information provided has not been detailed enough to provide an accurate record of the absence.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

We understand that children with mild illness such as a cough or cold may still be well enough to attend school and this should be considered where possible. The NHS provides guidance on parents as to when they should keep their child home with specific illnesses or symptoms:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1070910/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my-child-off-school-guidance-A3-poster.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1070910/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my-child-off-school-guidance-A3-poster.pdf)

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

A good general rule for parents is ‘if I had the same thing would I go to work?’

### **Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil’s parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents should request leave through the school office.

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

The pupil’s parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

### **Approval for term-time absence**

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time in ‘exceptional circumstances’. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher’s discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school may request evidence to support leave of absence requests.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks before the absence. Parents can obtain a leave of absence form from the school office or download a form from the school website [www.lrschool.co.uk](http://www.lrschool.co.uk). The school will send a letter via the ParentMail app to confirm if the leave of absence will be authorised.

Parents who would like to discuss a leave of absence request in more detail should speak to Miss Hannah Slade, Attendance Officer by emailing [wellbeing@lrschool.co.uk](mailto:wellbeing@lrschool.co.uk) or by telephoning 01628 662913.

### **Lateness and punctuality**

Persistent lateness is determined as 3 or more lates within a half term period. Persistent lateness can often be an indicator of future issues with attendance. It also impacts significantly on pupil’s causing them to miss the vital start to lessons or in some cases entire sessions. Arriving late can single children out, cause the embarrassment and anxiety, as well as disruption to the rest of the class.

Persistent lateness will be identified in monitoring using the same process as absence (detailed later in this policy) and the school will work with families to identify the barriers to attending on time.

### **Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Text the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. This will be followed up by a telephone call if no response has been received by 12pm to all numbers including emergency contacts if necessary. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may use emergency measures, e.g. contact local children's services or contact Police. This is particularly important where a child has previously been identified as vulnerable. A list of children who fall into this category is provided by the DSL and kept securely in the school office. See appendix ii for the absence monitoring process for vulnerable children.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained - this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. The absence will be risk assessed and staff may take additional measures such as a home-visit or contact the Police or Social Care for a welfare check.
- Staff should complete a Child Missing Education referral to the child's home local authority where a child is absent for 10 days or more without a reason.

### **Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, highlighting cause for concern and monitoring arrangements. Attendance will be documented in each school report and discussed at each parent consultation evening.

### **Authorised and unauthorised absence**

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the

school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

### **Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

### **Penalty Notices**

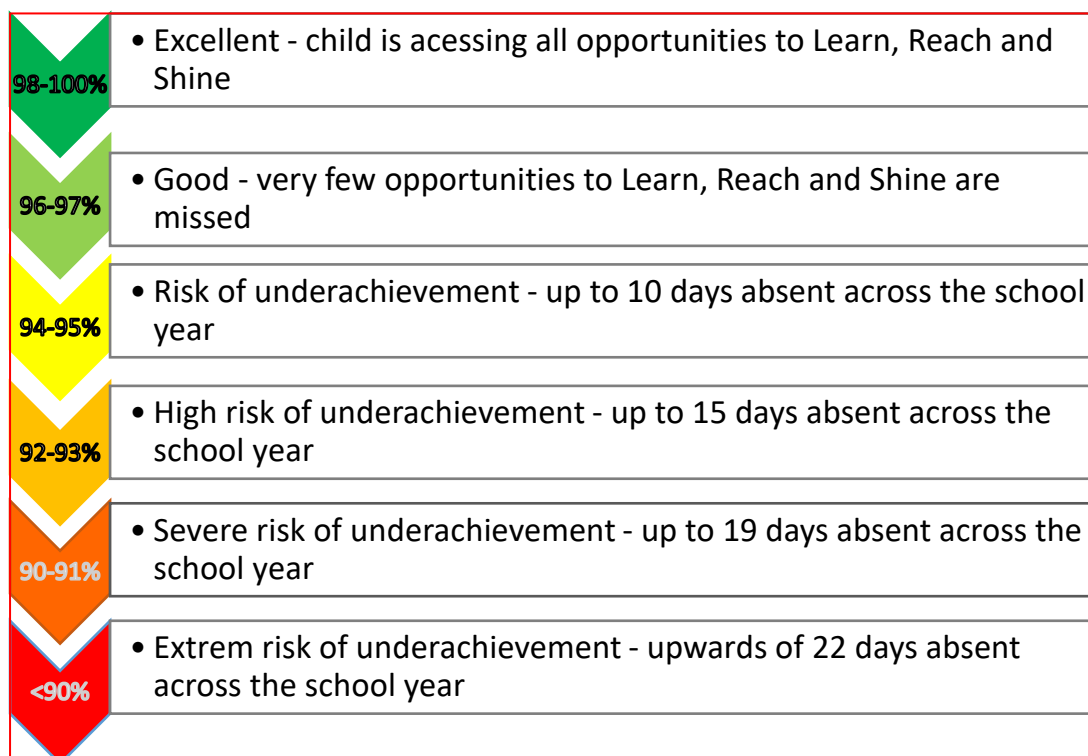
First Offence: The first time a penalty notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence: The second time (within three years of the first offence) a penalty notice is issued for term leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

Third Offence: The third time an offence (within three years of the first offence) is committed for term leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates court. This could result in a fine of up to £2500 under Section 444 (1A) a Parenting Order or other sanctions at the Magistrates' disposal.

If the penalty notice has not been paid in full before the 28 days allowed, the Local Authority is required to commence legal proceedings, through the Single Justice Process or in Magistrates Court, for the original offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school. If proven, this could result in a fine of up to £2500 under Section 444 (1A) a Parenting Order or other sanctions at the Magistrates' disposal.

## Attendance monitoring



The school will:

- Monitor half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and every three weeks at an individual pupil level
- Identify if there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern including:
  - Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% without understandable reason (e.g. hospital stay, approved family holiday, bereavement)
  - Pupils with patterns of absence e.g. high level of absence on a particular day
  - Pupils with more than 3 lates in a half term

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

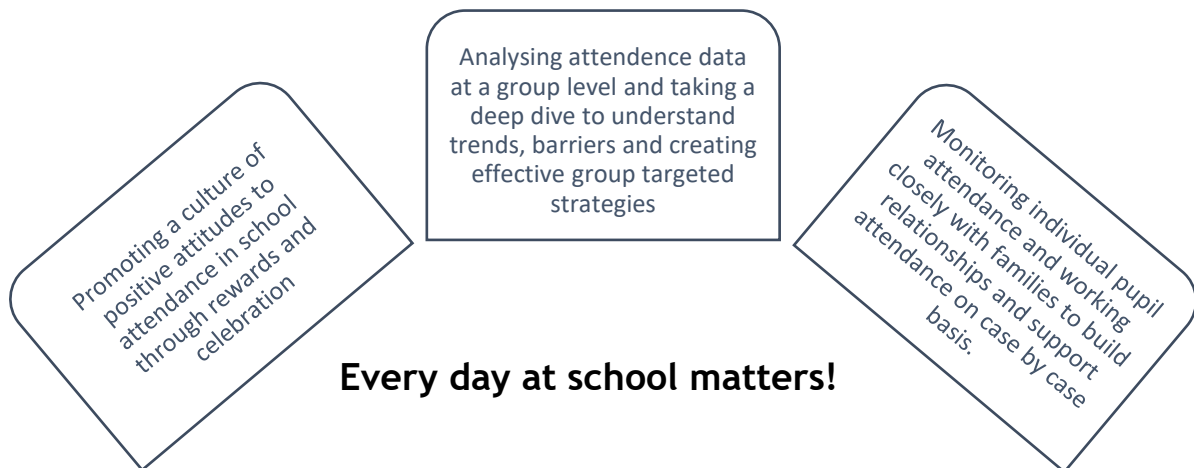
The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

- The school will focus specific groups who may have struggled in the past to achieve high attendance including children with SEND and children eligible for Free School Meals.

### Strategies for improving attendance

The school will take a three-pronged approach to improving attendance:



### Celebrating positive attendance

- The school celebrates class attendance weekly during SLT assemblies to promote positive attendance. The class in each phase with the highest attendance receives a whole class award with each individual class member receiving an award if 100%.
- Children who have an increase in attendance are celebrated with a postcard home.
- The school celebrates termly and end of year 100% attendance with certificates and an attendance reward.
- Children who have significantly improved and sustained good attendance with also receive certificates at the end of the year.
- The monthly newsletter celebrates the classes who have the highest attendance and the biggest improvement in attendance, as well as offering advice on staying positive about school and encouraging good attendance.
- An attractive permanent display in the board celebrates our class attendance champions.
- Weekly email to families and staff with class weekly attendance.

### Using data to improve attendance

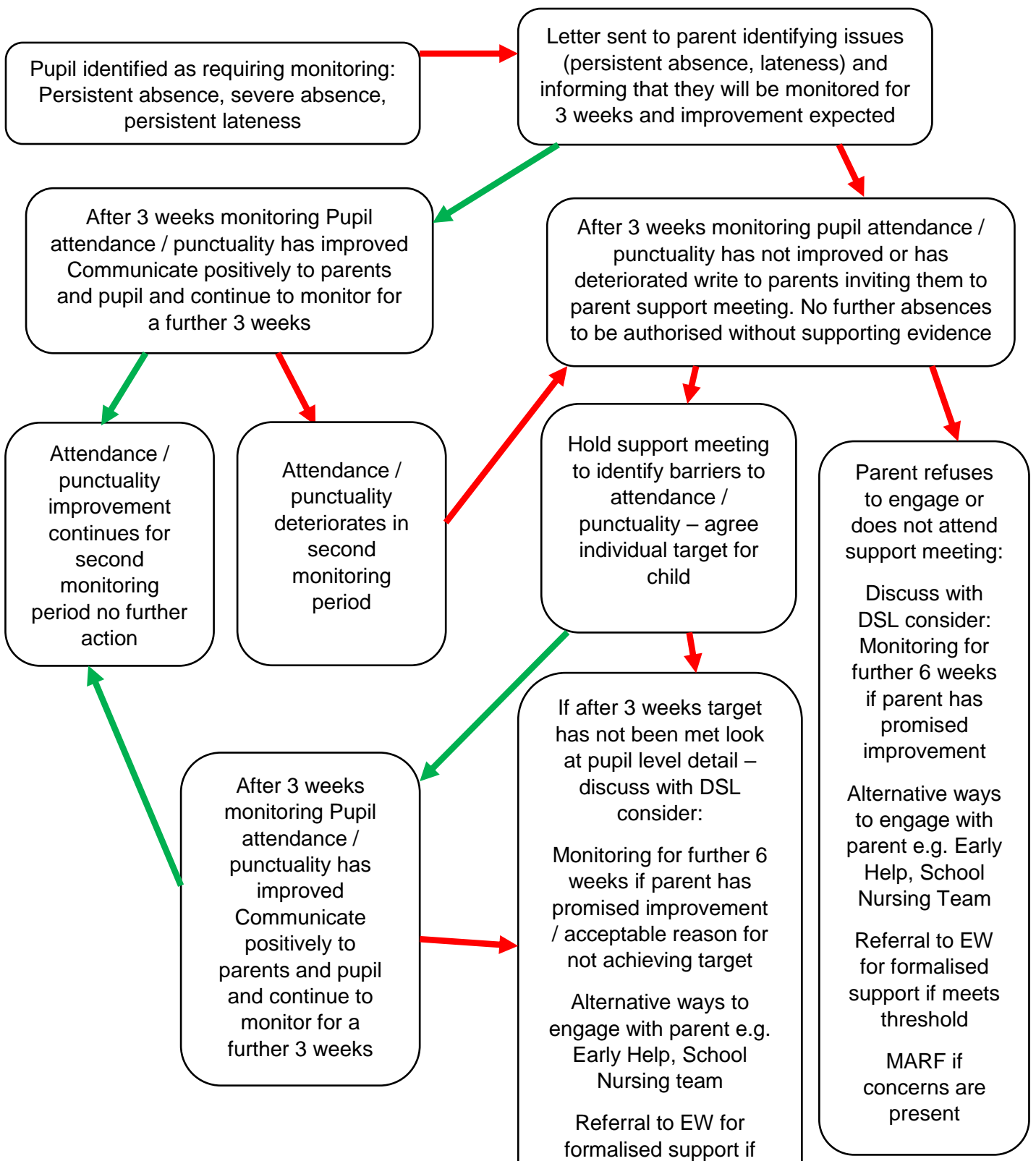
The school will:

- Provide monthly attendance reports to SLT to analyse trends, attendance issues and identify groups in need to targeted support.

- The school will consider a variety of options to support group attendance based on the specific needs of the group. The Headteacher will work with the local school liaison group to share best practice.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Use FFT Aspire Attendance tracker to benchmark and compare data to national trends.

### Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.



## **Understanding barriers to good attendance and punctuality**

Open communication without bias or judgement is key to understanding the barriers that families face to achieving good attendance and punctuality. These should be explored on an individual level through Attendance Support Meetings.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## **Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>, and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

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, 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

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

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

| Code | Definition                    | Scenario  |
|------|-------------------------------|---|
| /    | Present (am)                  | Pupil is present at morning registration  |
| \    | Present (pm)                  | Pupil is present at afternoon registration                                      |
| L    | Late arrival                  | Pupil arrives late before register has closed                                   |
| B    | Off-site educational activity | Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school   |
| D    | Dual registered               | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered  |
| P    | Sporting activity             | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| V    | Educational trip or visit     | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school     |
| W    | Work experience               | Pupil is on a work experience placement   |

| Code                      | Definition                  | Scenario   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Authorised absence</b> |                             |  |
| C                         | Authorised leave of absence | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| E                         | Excluded                    | Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made         |

|                             |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| I                           | Illness                           | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness   |
| M                           | Medical/dental appointment        | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment   |
| R                           | Religious observance              | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance   |
| S                           | Study leave                       | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations  |
| T                           | Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence | Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school   |
| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> |                                   |   |
| G                           | Unauthorised holiday              | Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school   |
| N                           | Reason not provided               | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| O                           | Unauthorised absence              | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence   |
| U                           | Arrival after registration        | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed   |

| Code | Definition                   | Scenario   |
|------|------------------------------|--|
| X    | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| Y | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody |
| # | Planned school closure                            | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day  |

## Appendix 2

### Procedure for vulnerable children with unexplained absence

