



Pupil Attendance Policy

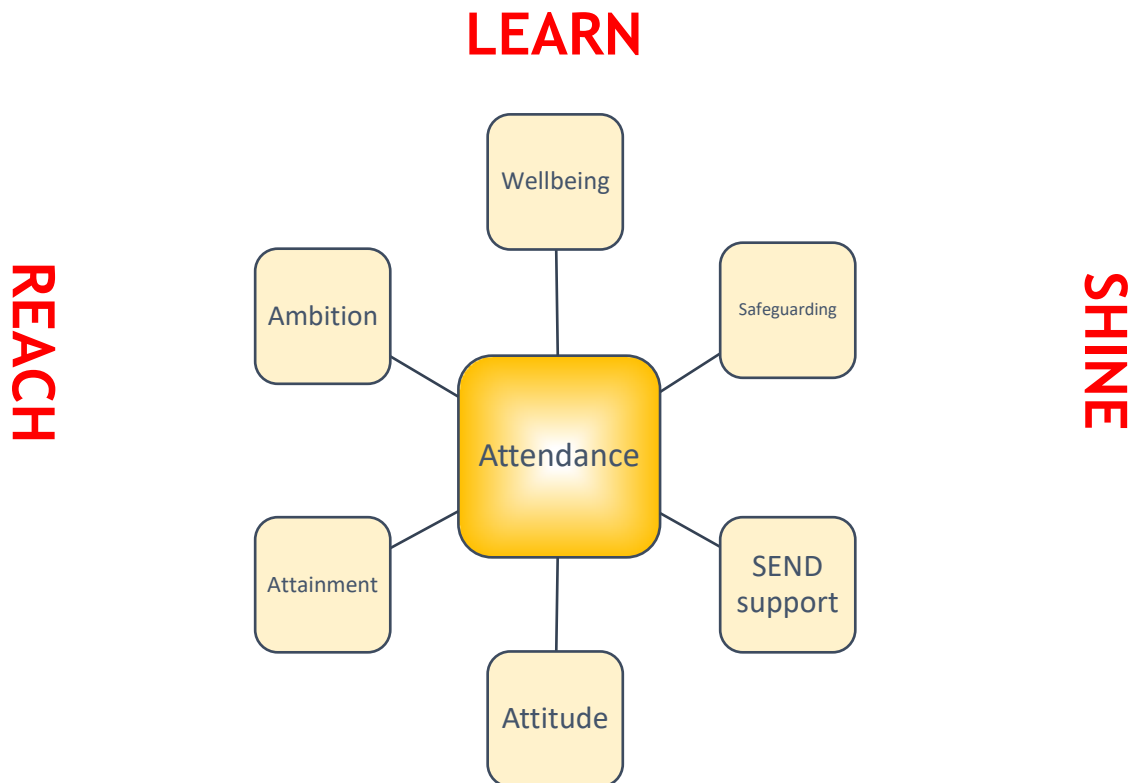
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Abstract: This policy lays out the school's expectations of attendance of children and the procedures for monitoring attendance and absence.

Approved by:	Mrs M Young Chair of Governors	
Approved by:	Mrs J Watson Headteacher	
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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:



At Lent Rise we will:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of 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.
- 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 support them.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, 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

Expectations

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day, on time.

Parents

Where Parents decide to have their child registered at a school they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance, statutory guidance for schools Aug 2024

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day unless they are too unwell to do so.
- Ensure their child is on time to school every day - this means they are ready in their class when the register is taken at 8.45am.
- 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 their 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 school. We want to support families to ensure every child can access the full-time education they are entitled to.

Staff are expected to:

- 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.
- Treat all pupils and parents with dignity and model respectful relationships between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance
- Discuss attendance in its wider context including links between attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing.
- Challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like.

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.

The school attendance officer, Hannah Slade has responsibility for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Processing and recording 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.

Staff training

All staff should:

- understand the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances.
- understand the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers.

- be aware of the school/trusts' strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance, and the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

Dedicated attendance training is provided to any staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. In addition, this should include:

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data.
- any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

Daily routines

The school gates open at 8:30am.

- The register for the morning session is taken at 8:45am.
- 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 YR and KS1

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

Recording attendance

The school used SIMS to record and maintain the school Admissions and Attendance registers

Registers

- 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 at the start of 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

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

Registers are legal records and every entry in the attendance or admission register must be preserved for 6 years from the date the data was entered.

As the attendance register is a record of the pupils present at the time it was taken, the register should only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry.

Where amendments are made, all schools must 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 of the person who made the amendment.

Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code should be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 working days after the session.

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 Parentmail 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. The attendance officer 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://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.

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

All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or employment abroad

- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable, where parents 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.
- Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. It must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. We will then consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. 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.

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

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 from the school office or download a form from the school website 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 Mrs Barnard, Office Manager by emailing office@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:

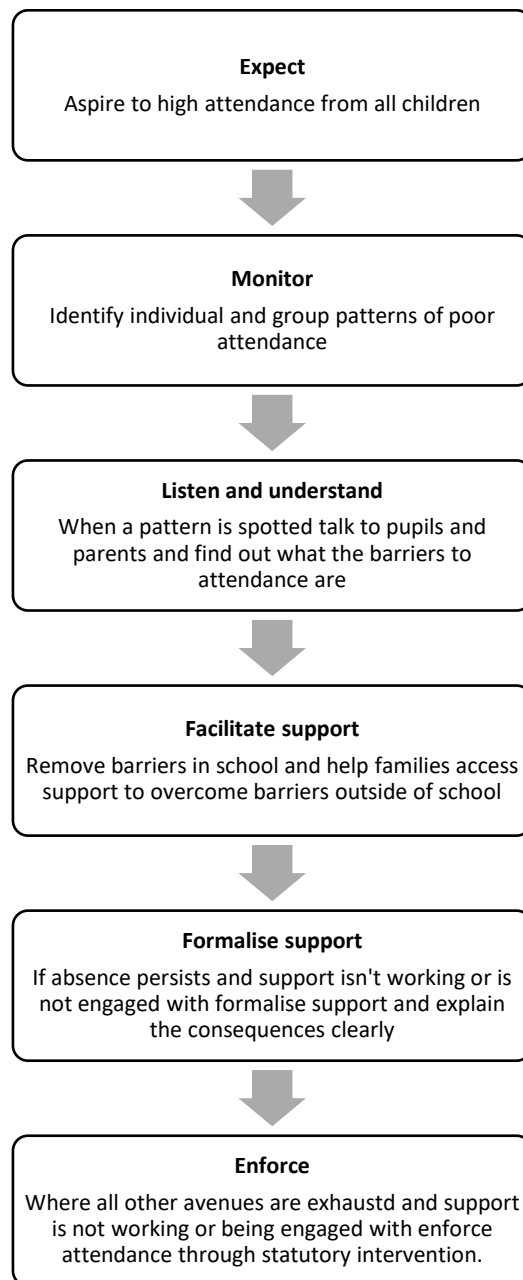
- Text the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. This will be followed up by a telephone call if no response has been received by 12pm to all numbers including emergency contacts if necessary. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's 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.

Improving attendance



The school will:

- Monitor half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and every three weeks at an individual pupil level.
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, 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
- Benchmark attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence among groups and then develop strategies to address these patterns, focusing on specific groups who may have struggled in the past to achieve high attendance including children with SEND and children eligible for Free School Meals.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented.
- Provide data and reports to the governing body

Sharing data

- The school will work with local authorities and other local partners to share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms).
- All schools are also legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:
 - notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.
 - providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U).
 - providing the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year
- The law also allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools, trusts and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts.
- If the child has an education health and care plan, school staff should communicate with the local authority where a pupil's attendance falls or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

Targeted support meetings

- Targeted support meetings will be held with the local authority to agree approaches to support persistently absent children

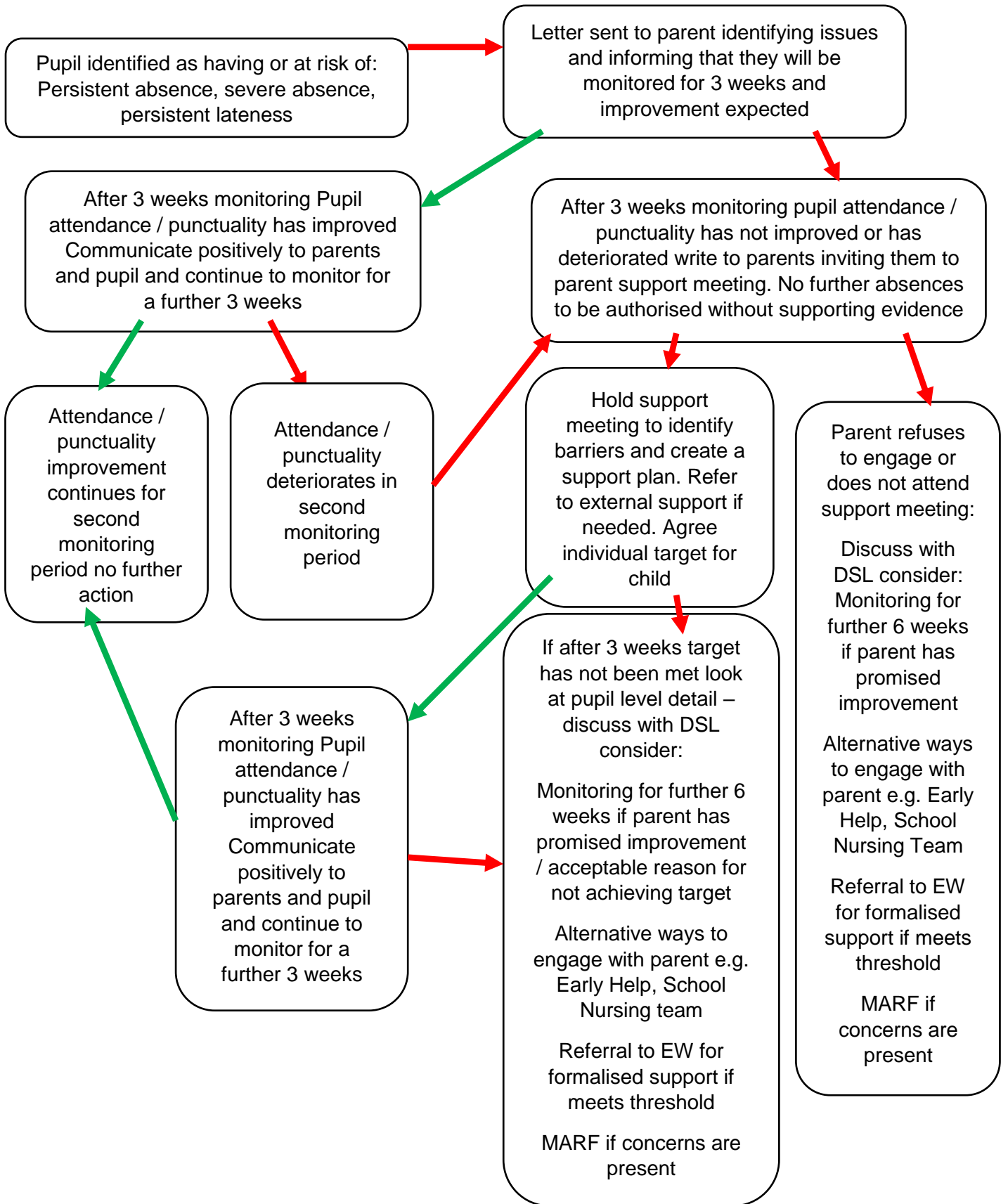
Celebrating positive attendance

- 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.
- Children who have an increase in attendance are celebrated with a postcard to their home address.
- Children with an attendance support plan who have achieved 100% attendance in a week will receive an improvement attendance reward.
- 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.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

98-100%	• Excellent - child is accessing all opportunities to Learn, Reach and Shine
96-97%	• Good - very few opportunities to Learn, Reach and Shine are missed
94-95%	• Risk of underachievement - up to 10 days absent across the school year
92-93%	• High risk of underachievement - up to 15 days absent across the school year
90-91%	• Severe risk of underachievement - up to 19 days absent across the school year
<90%	• Extreme risk of underachievement - upwards of 22 days absent across the school year

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.

Barriers could include:

Barriers in school

- Lack of self-esteem
- Friendship issues
- Isolation or loneliness
- Bullying
- Sensory issues
- SEND
- Breakdown in relationship with school
- Dislike of a particular lesson (e.g.PE)
- Dislike of a particular staff member
- Dislike of change or difficulty with transitions

Barriers outside of school

- Physical illness
- Mental illness
- Poor sleep
- Parental physical or mental illness
- Transport issues
- Housing
- Parental engagement
- Parental conflict
- Low value placed on education
- Cultural
- Language
- Poverty
- Uniform
- Caring responsibilities
- Chaotic home life
- Cleanliness
- Parental substance abuse
- Domestic violence
- Gender expectations
- Neglect
- Safeguarding issues including physical, emotional, sexual abuse
- County Lines or other forms of child exploitation
- Attitudes to menstruation

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the

underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance, statutory guidance for schools Aug 2024

The Wellbeing Ambassador takes a proactive role in supporting children with everyday worries about school and home. They can also provide targeted support and link children to other support such as ELSA.

The Wellbeing Ambassador will work with the family to create a support plan to address barriers. Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment.

Where engagement in support is proving challenging, the school will hold more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand). This is likely to be led by the school's senior attendance champion and may include the school's point of contact in the local authority School Attendance Support Team. These meetings will clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but should also be an opportunity to continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.

Where safeguarding issues are suspected this should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead through the usual safeguarding concerns processes.

Where voluntary support has not been effective or has not been engaged with the school will work with the local authority to:

- Put formal support in place in the form of an attendance contract or an education supervision order.
- Issue a Notice to Improve and/or penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour.
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).
- Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

Legal interventions

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 should be made on an individual case by case basis.

- Legal interventions include:
 - Attendance contracts
 - Education supervision orders
 - Attendance prosecutions
 - Parenting orders
 - Penalty notice
 - Notice to improve

Detailed information regarding each of these is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf

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 school

- A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence.
- 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).
- Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time).
- Penalty notices must be issued in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended. They must also be issued in line with Local Codes of Conduct which are drawn up and maintained by each local authority.
- The school does not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and will make judgements on each individual case.
- The national threshold 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 (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).
- There is a two penalty notice limit with escalation in cases of repeat offences. Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:
 - The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
 - A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
 - A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
 - Once 3 years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases it would not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behavior

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of [working together to improve school attendance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/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 2

Procedure for vulnerable children with unexplained absence

