



2gether
cluster

Attendance Policy

Manor Wood Primary School

School attendance is a key protective factor in safeguarding children and young people.

September 2023

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the most effective schools recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. Schools that have good attendance recognise that it is not a discrete piece of work but rather it is an integral part of the school's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance, all schools recognise that regular and punctual school attendance creates positive outcomes for children. When children do not attend school, it impacts on their overall achievement and well-being. Leeds City Council – Children's Services clearly outlines the association between poor attendance and poor outcomes, and this is why improving attendance in Leeds is one of the Child Friendly Leeds 'obsessions'.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, it is the legal responsibility of the parent to ensure their children attend school. However, it is a collaborative responsibility of the parent, school, cluster and other related partners to work together restoratively to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to regularly attend school, providing our children with the skills to achieve the best possible future.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant legislation and guidelines from the Department for Education, as well as guidance from Leeds City Council – Children's Services. Cluster procedures are defined in this policy to give professionals an understanding of their role and responsibilities when managing and promoting regular attendance in the 2gether Cluster.

The safety, welfare and wellbeing of all our pupils is paramount. Therefore, if your child is absent and there is no contact between school and home, or there are safeguarding or child protection concerns for a child, this will be referred to a member of our safeguarding team and further action will be taken as necessary.

The Attendance Team Manor Wood Primary School

Our Senior Leader with responsibility for the strategic approach to attendance in school is *Kate Humphries (Head Teacher)*.

Attendance team:

- **Farzana Kauser- Office Administrative Assistant.**
- **Nim Matharu- Pastoral & Safeguarding Lead**

Schools in the 2gether Cluster have an attendance target of 96%

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress both socially and academically.

- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school and higher education, employment, or training.

% Attendance expressed in number of days absent:

Attendance / absence is presented as a percentage figure, but it's helpful to equate this to a number of days off:

| Attendance percentage | absence per week | absence per term | Absence per academic year |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| 98% | | | fewer than 4 days absent in a school year |
| 95% | | | fewer than 10 days absent in a school year |
| 90% | ½ a day | 1 week 2 days | 4 weeks |
| 80% | 1 day | 2 weeks 4 days | 8 weeks |
| 70% | 1 ½ days | 4 weeks 1 day | 12 weeks |
| 60% | 2 days | 5 weeks 3 days | 16 weeks |
| 50% | 2 ½ days | 7 weeks | 20 weeks |

Over 5-year period children with an average attendance of 85-90% will have missed half a school year of education while children with an average attendance of 80% will have missed a whole school year.

Department for Education guidelines class any child with attendance of 90% or below as persistently absent

Parental Responsibility on reporting absence:

If your child is absent, you must.

- Contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Medical evidence may be required if your child has had above average illness, this could be a copy of prescription, appointment card or labelled medication.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Make contact with you by telephone, text or home visit, if we have not heard from you, this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety.
- If your child misses 10 sessions (5 days) in a term, they will be placed on the Fast Track initiative.
- If absence falls below 90%, we may refer the matter to Leeds City Council (see appendix 2)
- If we believe that your child is absent due to a holiday you may be issued with a penalty notice, £60 per parent per child.

Authorised absence is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – at Head teachers' discretion
- Religious observance – no more than two days per academic year
- Approved leave in term time where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Head teacher.

Unauthorised absence is defined by:

- Holidays in term time where permission has NOT been given by the school
- Late, after registers have closed (a U code will be used)
- Unexplained absence. Any child whose absence is on-going and remains unexplained for 10 days will be referred to the local authority as a child missing education.
- Taking the rest of the day off, before or after a medical appointment
- Staying at home to care for sick relatives.
- Birthdays, weddings or anniversaries
- Transport issues i.e. car broken down
- Going shopping or having a hair cut

Lateness

Being late to school has a significant impact on the amount of learning time lost over a school year. The table give you an indication of how much time is lost if regularly late.

| Minutes late per day | Number of days over year |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5 Minutes | 3.4 days |
| 10 Minutes | 6.9 days |
| 15 Minutes | 10.3 days |
| 20 Minutes | 13.8 days |

Exceptional circumstances

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time. Absence in term time will only be considered if parents / carers make a request to the school on the appropriate form giving exceptional reasons why the application for absence has been requested and provide information to support their application. Please note that the definition of 'exceptional' means 'very unusual'. Therefore, a second request for absence based on 'exceptional circumstances' is unlikely to be authorised.

The Head teacher will decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. Parents / carers who take their children out of school during term time without authorisation, may be issued with a penalty fine. In order to request exceptional leave parents should complete the form in appendix 1.

Children Missing Education

If there is no contact between school and the family and the child's whereabouts are unknown it is possible for a child to be removed from a school roll. This will only happen in circumstances where children do not return to school for ten days after an authorised absence or are absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days.

Fast Track Initiative

Fast tracks place pupils on a structured programme with monitored periods giving the opportunity for improvement. Where unauthorised absence continues parents will be invited to attend a formal School Attendance Panel to discuss the reasons for poor attendance and to examine any support needs. Parents may be issued with a penalty warning letter and subsequently a penalty notice for irregular school attendance if unauthorised absence persists.

Case work

A referral can be made to the attendance lead. School must have met with parents and made them aware of the attendance concerns. School should hold a meeting with parents and give them 4-6 weeks to improve attendance, if attendance continues to be a concern a referral can then be

completed, an up-to-date registration certificate must be provided along with one from the previous academic year.

Continuing concerns around school attendance

School could start to ask for medical evidence before authorising any further absences if your child's attendance falls below 96%

If attendance continues to be a concern, then this will lead to a referral being made to the 2gether Cluster attendance Lead. Ultimately parents/carers can be held to account for failing to ensure that their children attend school punctually and regularly. Leeds City Council, school attendance service carries out this statutory function on behalf of the local authority to uphold the right of children and young people to access their education.

The safety, welfare and wellbeing of all our pupils is paramount. Therefore, if your child is absent and there is no contact between school and home, or there are safeguarding or child protection concerns for a child, this will be referred to a member of our safeguarding team and further action will be taken as necessary.

Where necessary statutory action can and will be taken under section 444 Education Act 1996 or Education Supervision Order under the Children's Act 1989 this may take the form of a penalty notice, prosecution of parents in the Magistrate Court resulting in a fine, or a statutory order.

MANOR WOOD PRIMARY – Attendance Procedures

General Procedures and attendance and times of the school day

The school gates open at **8.30am**. **There is a member of the Senior Leadership Team present each morning.**

The school day for attendance purposes is as follows:

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| 8.30am | School Gate Opens | A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be on the gate to greet families. |
| 8.45am | Doors to school open | Children can come into the school building from 8.45am ready for an 8.50am registration . |
| 8.50am | Registration | Registers will be taken at 8.50am. The doors to the school building will close. Children will need to come in via the office if they arrive later than this time. <u>They will receive a late mark.</u> |
| If you arrive after 8.50am please can you come and sign in a via the school office. Parent/Carers will need to support their child to do this and any issues with signing in will need to be reported to the school office. | | |
| 1pm | Afternoon Registration | Afternoon registers will be taken at this time. |

Recording Attendance and Absence

Attendance will be recorded electronically at the start of the 1st morning session and 1st afternoon session. 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.

Registers are legal records and school must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 3 years from the date of entry. 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, school 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 and title of the person who made the amendment.

Registers will open at **8.50am** and close **9.30am**. This should be the same for every session, and depending on the structure of the school day, not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.

Paper registers will be used if there are any computer problems, and the office team will ensure these are distributed and returned in a timely manner.

Children arriving after 8.50am must enter school via the school office and sign in using the electronic system. Parents must support children to do this to ensure that they are signed in and report any issues with the electronic system to the school office.

School, except those where all the pupils are boarders, must keep an attendance register in accordance with regulation 6 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended. 198. School must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder) is:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational activity as defined in regulation 6(4); or
- Unable to attend school due to exceptional circumstances as defined in regulation). School must record whether the absence of a pupil of compulsory school age is authorised or not. There is no requirement for school to record whether the absence of pupils not of compulsory school age is authorised or not, but where possible school should use the national attendance and absence codes to help them monitor their attendance and to form good attendance habits.

School must record the nature of the activity where a pupil of compulsory school age is attending an approved educational activity.

School must also record the nature of the circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

School cannot delete a pupil's name from the attendance register unless they have a reason (as set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended) to delete the pupil's name from the admission register; the pupil's name must be deleted from both registers at the same time.

Attendance and Absence Codes

The national codes enable school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education. See appendix 3 for full list of codes.

Parents/Carers must

- Contact school on the first day of absence by calling **0113 268 9160 (absence line)**. The parent/carer must clearly state the name of the child, class and specific reason for absence. Contact school on each day of a child's absence (as detailed above), unless school has received advanced notification of the length of absence, in the form of a hospital admission or medical certificate.

First Day Calling

- The Attendance Team will contact parents/carers via phone, email, text for any child who is absent without a reason.
- The Attendance Team will also contact parents/carers if the reason provided is not reasonable.
- If there is a safeguarding concern, the Attendance team will seek authorisation from the Attendance Lead to prioritise a home visit.
- Once the Attendance Team have taken every step to find out the reason for absence and there is still no response, then the Manor Wood Primary Safeguarding team will be informed.
- All communication will be recorded on the child's record on SIMS and may be used as evidence to support legal intervention if attendance does not improve.

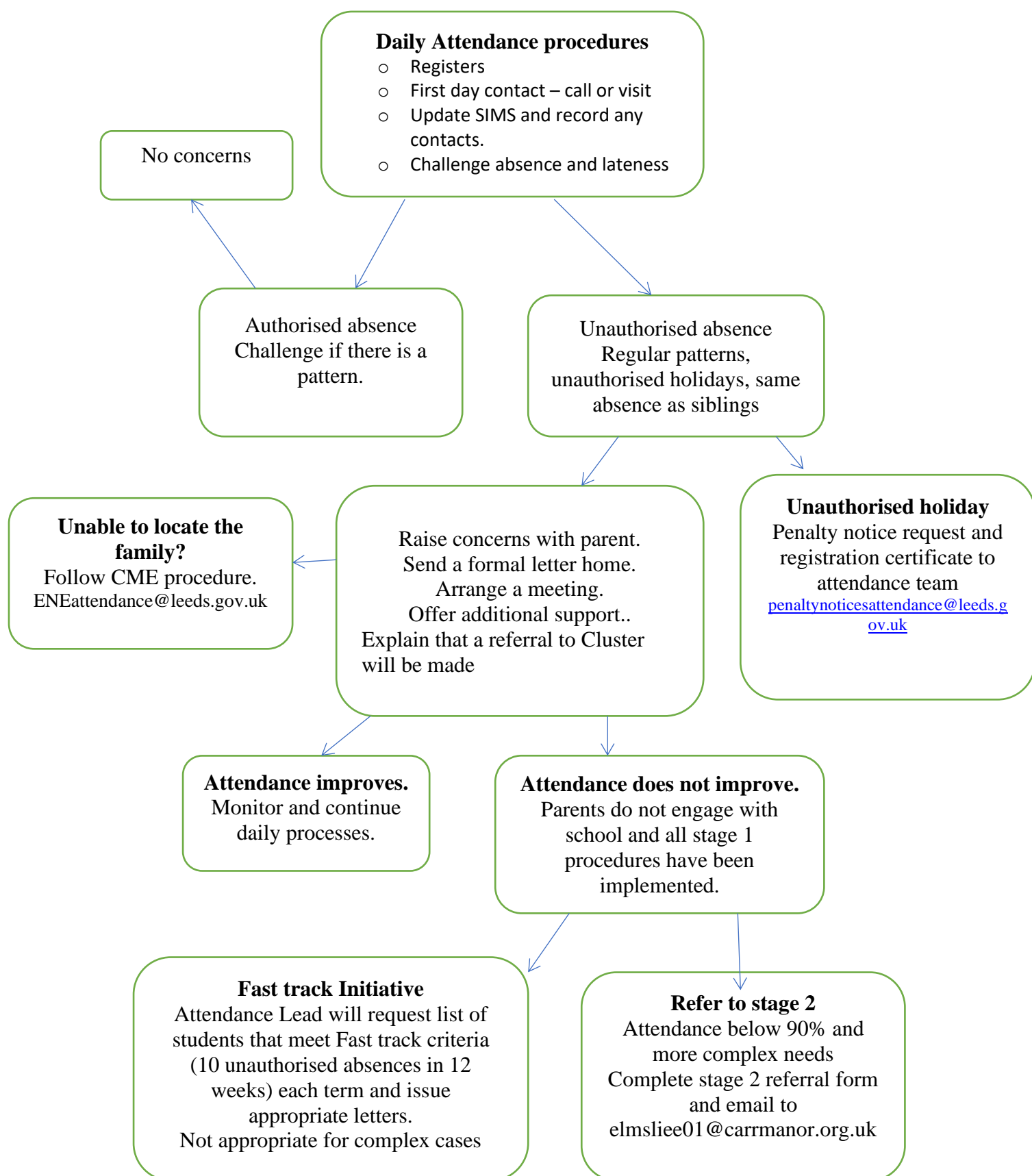
Lateness

- **Children arriving to school after 8.50am will need to enter school via the school office.**
- The Attendance team will monitor lateness on a daily basis.
- The Attendance Team will challenge the parents as to why their child(ren) is late.
- The Attendance team will then record them on the register along with any reasons for absence.

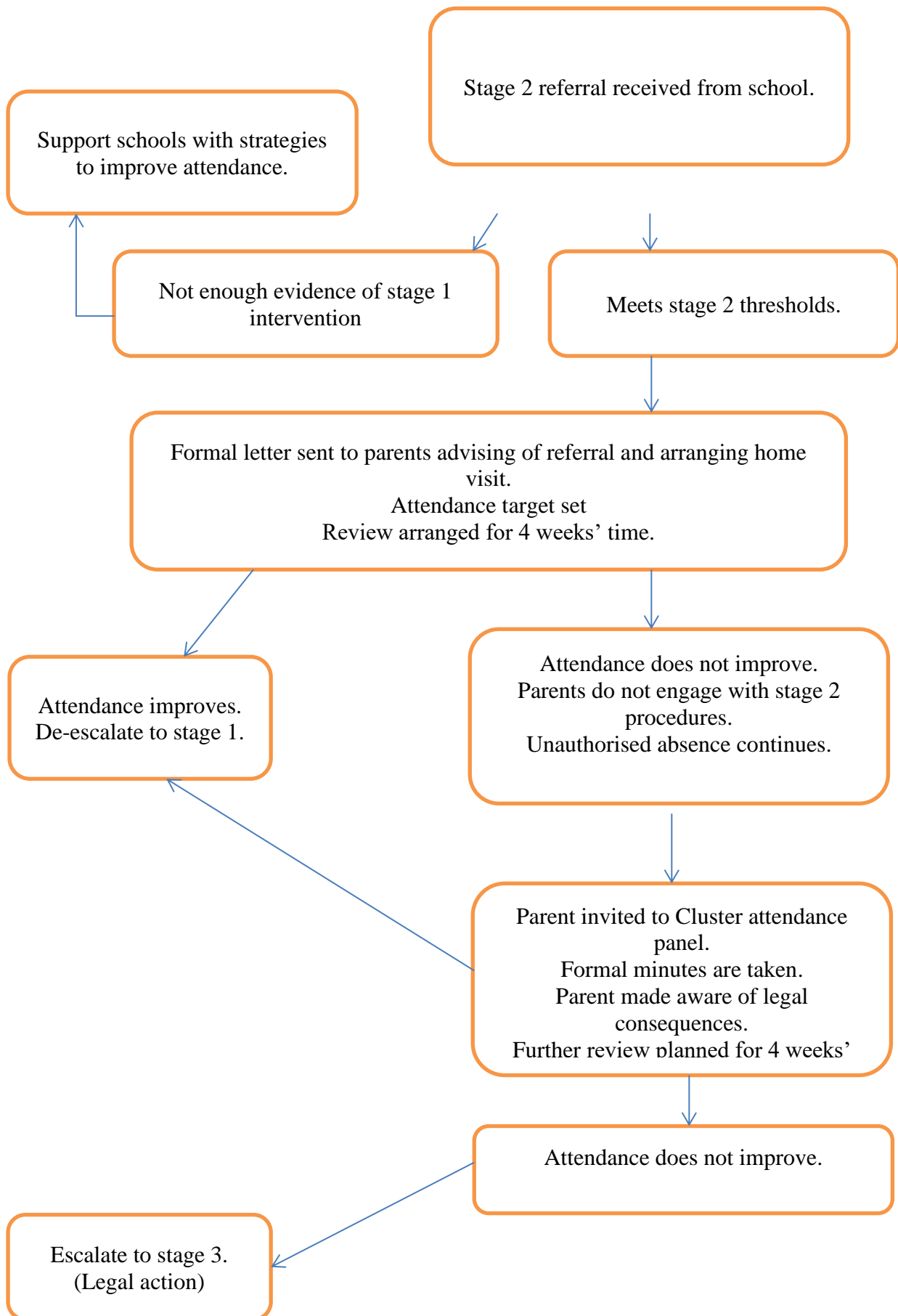
Attendance Stages

- Children's attendance will be monitored very closely by the Attendance Team.
- Attendance Team will also monitor a specific case list of children who currently have less than 96% attendance.
- The Attendance Team will monitor the punctuality of children and steps to address this will be taken as needed for each individual circumstance.

Stage 1 attendance procedure – schools' responsibility



Stage 2 attendance procedure – responsibility of Cluster Attendance Lead



Appendix 1

Exceptional circumstances request form

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| SCHOOL: | | DATE OF REQUEST: | |
| First Name | Surname | Date of Birth | Class |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Leaving date: | | Date due back in school: | |
| Length of absence applied for (number of school days only): | | | days |
| | | | |
| Siblings in other schools: Please note this request information will be shared with the attendance lead in the school in which the sibling/s attend | First Name | Surname | School |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Contact Details | | | |
| Parents: (eg. Mother, Father, Grandparent, Carer): | First name: | First name: | |
| | Surname: | Surname: | |
| | Address: | Address: | |
| | Postcode: | Postcode: | |
| | Email: | Email: | |
| | Home phone number: | Home phone number: | |
| | Mobile: | Mobile: | |
| | Alternative number while away: | Alternative number while away: | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | |
| Reason for absence including full explanation (use a separate sheet of paper if necessary) The exceptional circumstances are... | | |
| Point of departure (eg. Airport, Coach, Train Station etc.): | Destination: | |
| Time of departure: | Flight numbers and name of airline: | |
| Emergency Contact Details (preferably someone who is staying in Leeds): First Name: Surname: Address: Postcode: Relationship to the child: Contact Number: | *Provide copies of travel plans to support your request.* If child is not leaving with parent(s) who is accompanying them? Who will be caring/responsible for the child? Why is/are the parent(s) not leaving with the child? Name: Relationship to child: Address: Postcode : | |

Statutory Declaration

Legal responsibility

As a parent/guardian I understand all children aged between 5 and 16 are required by law to receive an education, and under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, it is my responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular school attendance of my children and that failure to do so could result in legal proceedings being taken by the Local Education Authority.

*I understand that requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are **exceptional circumstances**, and **holidays are not considered exceptional**. They must also be made to the school in advance, as the **Department for Education** has told schools that they cannot authorise any absences after they have been taken.*

Fines

*I understand if my request is unauthorised I am most likely to be fined, **£60 per parent, £60 per child** (for example a family of 4 with 2 parents and 2 children will be fined a total of £240).*

*Once the penalty notice is issued, I have **21 days in which to pay the fine**. If I fail to pay in that time period, the fine **will double** and I then have **another seven days in which to pay**, taking the total time in which to make payment to 28 days.*

If I fail to make payment after 28 days then the local authority has the power to prosecute me in the magistrate's court for the offence of failing to ensure my child attends school regularly. A guilty verdict at court can lead to a fine of up to £1000, and a criminal record which can affect employment opportunities.

School places

I am aware that a referral will be made to the Local Authority Children Missing from Education Team (CME) if my request is unauthorised and my child hasn't returned to school on the agreed date. This can result in my child losing their school place.

I am also aware that there is a shortage of places in the area, so if my child loses their school place it could result in having to travel to a school out of area or my child without a school, being a detriment to their education and causing implications to my own employment.

Parent's Full Name:

Parent's Signature:

Date:

Parent's Full Name:

Parent's Signature:

Date:

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|------------------------|--|
| School Section Any previous request Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | | Is the requested absence during exams Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Reason for refusal/Comments | | | | |
| Authorised <input type="checkbox"/> | Approved | | for School days | |
| Unauthorised <input type="checkbox"/> | Not approved | | for School days | |
| Headteacher's Signature | | | | |

Appendix 2 -Attendance referral form

| DETAILS OF REQUESTING WORKER | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|------|---------------|--------|--|
| Name | | Role | | Agency | |
| Contact Number | | | Email Address | | |
| Date of Request | | | | | |

| DETAILS OF CHILD / YOUNG PERSON | | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|--|------------|--|
| Child's Name | | School | | Year Group | |
| Date of birth | | Age | | Gender | |
| Home language | | Interpreter required? | | Ethnicity | |
| Home Address (including postcode) | | | | | |
| Parent/Carer 1 Name Address Date of Birth Contact number | | | | | |
| Parent/Carer 2 Name Address Date of Birth Contact number | | | | | |
| GP Details | | | | | |

| WHO LIVES IN THE FAMILY HOME? (Please include children's school or setting if under 18 years) | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|--------|--------------|------------------|--|--|
| Name | Date of Birth | Gender | Relationship | School / Setting | If this person is an adult do they work? | Does this person have Parental Responsibility? |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | |
| Any other significant people we should know about who do not live in the family home? | | | | | | |

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| | |
|---|--|
| Current School Attendance % Please attach registration certificate | |
| Previous Year School attendance % | |

| ARE THERE ANY OTHER AGENICIES CURRENTLY OFFERING SUPPORT TO THE FAMILY? | | |
|---|--------|-----------------|
| Name | Agency | Contact details |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| PLANS IN PLACE | | |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Child Protection Plan | Child In Need Plan | Child and Family Assessment |
| Early Help Plan | Behaviours Plan or IEP | Education, Health and Care Plan |
| Lead Professional/Key person for the child or family | | |

| Are you aware of any risks or concerns that should be considered when visiting the family at home? E.g. aggressive adults in the home, risk of domestic abuse, aggressive pets | | | |
|--|-----|----|---------|
| | | | |
| | Yes | No | Details |

| | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Have you attached an up to date registration certificate with this referral? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Has the child/ young person had 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in the last 12 school weeks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Have reasonable attempts been made to make contact with the parents/ carers whenever the child has been absent? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Has a meeting been held with parents/ carers within the last 6 weeks to discuss attendance concerns and offer support to address them? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Date of meeting: We would expect a 4-week monitoring period following the meeting to allow parents to implement any changes and engage with any support | | | |
| Have parents been informed that this referral for an Attendance Officer would be made, and that they could face a legal penalty, if attendance did not improve? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

What reasons, if any, have been provided for the child/ young person's absences from school?

What support has been offered to parents/ carers to improve school attendance prior to this referral being made? E.g.: breakfast club, referral to Cluster for parenting/behaviour support, referral to other services to address issues or support needs.



Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. Where persistent absence is preventing this from happening, schools have a safeguarding duty to address this and can work with the Local Authority who have legal powers to prosecute parents where appropriate. As such, signed consent is not required from parents for this request to be accepted by the Cluster Team.

Following a request for a Cluster Attendance Officer, the school retain responsibility for making first contact with parents/ carers when their child is absent from school, and from conducting welfare visits as needed and in line with schools' policy. Please speak with the Cluster Attendance Support Offer for more information on what can be expected following allocation to an Attendance Officer.

Appendix 3- Codes from DFE guidance

Present Relevant regulation: / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm . Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed 205. Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate. Absent Authorised Absence from School Relevant regulation: Authorised absence means that one of a specific set of circumstances applies, as set out below:

Code C: Leave of absence granted by the school. Only exceptional circumstances warrant granting a leave of absence. Wherever referred to in this guidance a leave of absence should not be, and from certain types of school⁶ must not be, granted unless it has been applied for in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the headteacher believes the circumstances to be exceptional. Schools must consider each application for a leave of absence individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion. ⁶ Schools maintained by the local authority or special schools not maintained by the local authority. Specific leaves of absence may also be granted where: A pupil is participating in a performance. A school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence for a pupil to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance, within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 if the local authority have given the pupil a licence for that performance. Legislation sets out that a local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. There are some exemptions, including the granting of Body of Persons Approval (BOPA). BOPAs can be issued by the local authority where a performance is to take place, or by the Secretary of State (generally only if there are to be many children involved and a number of different locations, but legislation does not limit this to those situations). Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where the licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. However, where the terms of the licence or BOPA do not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to grant leave of absence. A pupil is subject to a temporary part-time timetable ²¹². All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour. A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to

a parttime timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised. A pupil is pregnant. Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence. We would expect schools to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each case. Ultimately it is at the headteacher's discretion how much leave to grant.

Code H: leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school. Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable. An application for leave of absence should (and from certain schools must) not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with, and the school is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made. If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are suspended from school or excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register. When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive day of any suspension or exclusion. Where alternative provision is made schools should record this using the appropriate code for attending an approved educational activity.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment) Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools must record absences as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointments system particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. Pupils with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. This applies whether or not the child is registered at a school and whatever type of school they attend. The education must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. Local authorities should have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs. Code M: Medical or dental appointment. Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

Code R: Religious observance. Schools must record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents)

As a general rule, we would interpret 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' as a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance. If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day as authorised on this basis; the rest of the request would be a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C. Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as: • Setting term dates around days for religious observance; • Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance; 60 • Schools taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and • Providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave. Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete, it should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise. 229. As study leave is unsupervised it must be recorded as absence.

Code T: Traveller absence- A number of different groups are covered by the generic term traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should not be used for general absences by those groups. It must only be used when the pupil's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes and the school has granted a leave of absence following a request from the parent. This code should not be used to record any other types of absence by these groups. Pupils from these groups whose parent(s) do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to attend school as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirements to attend school regularly once registered at a school. Where a pupil has no fixed abode because their parent(s) is engaged in a business or trade that requires them to travel, there is an expectation that the pupil attends at least 200 sessions per year. The pupil must attend school as regularly as the business permits and therefore, if the business or trade permits the pupil to attend for more than 200 sessions per year, they should do so. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes, it is expected that the pupil should attend school elsewhere when their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school. Unauthorised Absence from School Relevant regulation: 6(1)(ii) and 6(3) 235. Unauthorised absence is where a pupil's absence is not one of the types of absence listed as authorised in regulation or where the reason for a pupil's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school. Where the school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday, but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer than the period of leave granted. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not (and from certain types of school cannot) be granted.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided. School must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has been established the school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant code. 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 more than 5 working days after

the session. Code N should not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established after 5 working days, schools should amend the pupil's record to Code O.

Code O: Absent without authorisation. Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed. Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. Attending an approved educational activity. An approved educational activity is where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered or taking part in off-site activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or unregistered alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it is approved by the school, of an educational nature and supervised by someone authorised by the school. Ultimately, schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils taking part in an off-site educational activity so it would be reasonable to expect that the school would only authorise someone who was answerable to the school to supervise an activity. The activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded and for pupils of compulsory school age the school must record the nature of the activity. Attending another school at which the pupil is registered.

Code D: Dual registered at another school. The law allows for a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the school in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. 248. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absence are promptly followed up. Attending an educational activity that takes place outside the school Relevant regulation: 6(1)(iii), 6(1)(c) and 6(4)(a)

Code B: Off-site educational Activity 249. Attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. For pupils of compulsory school age, schools must also record the nature of the activity, examples are: • attending taster days at other schools; 63 • attending courses at college; • attending unregistered alternative provision arranged or agreed by the school. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code. This code must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity i.e., when a pupil is at home doing some schoolwork.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment. Attending an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be

satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education, or transfer to another school. This must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity. Taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school. If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. However, the final decision on approving the activity rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code V: Educational visit or trip. Attendance at an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school. The educational visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the organiser of the visit or trip notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code. Code W: Work experience. Work experience is for pupils in the final 2 years of compulsory school age. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. Where a pupil is unable to attend school because:

- the school site or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause at a time when pupils are due to attend; or
- the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance; or
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

Schools must also record the nature of the circumstances in which a pupil is unable to attend school. Walking distance. In relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available safe route. Pupil in custody. Code Y is also used where the pupil is in custody; detained under a court order for a period of less than 4 months or is returning to the school at the end of their custodial period. 65 Administrative codes Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school. Where a pupil not of compulsory school age is attending school part-time. For example, where parents have chosen for their 4-year-old child to attend parttime until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age.

Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register. To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must enter a pupil's name on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place offered, the local authority can inform schools on behalf of the parents and notify the school when the parent has agreed that the pupil will attend school. This can also be the case where the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications for school places. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed

starting day, the school must establish the reason and record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure. Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms;
- half terms;
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of school as a polling station.

Partial school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- 'staggered starts' or 'induction days' where different term dates have been agreed for different year groups - this code is used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend; and
- Use of part of the school as a polling station.

Appendix 4 – How to manage problematic attendance.

