



Harborne Primary School

Attendance Policy **2025 - 2027**

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The name of the Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance across Harborne Primary School is: Mrs S Brown

Current Context

'Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school'.

The Government expects schools to promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence, ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence. This policy has been updated in line with the DFE school attendance guidance (August 2024)

Parent/carers* are expected to perform their **legal duty** by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school, attend regularly and arrive to school on time.

*Definition of parent/carer: Section 576 of the Education Act 1996

A parent/carer in relation to any child or young person, includes any person who is: -

- a) a natural parent or carer, whether they are married or not.
- b) not a parent/carer but who has parent/carer responsibility for him/her; or
- c) responsible for the care of him/her.

This also includes all absent parent/carers who must have regular contact and an ability to influence the child including their attendance (separated parent/carers who do not accompany the other parent/carer on the unauthorised leave should not be included). Parent/carer partners can be included (whether or not they are married or the natural parent/carer of the child as they have 'care' of the child). If a pupil lives with a grandparent/carer or older sibling as their main carer they can also be included as they are the main care provider.

It is also important to note that even though a parent/carer may not live in the same home as the pupil that parent/carer is still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day.

Parents and carers are required to provide the school with two up to date, quality (easy to reach) telephone numbers in the event of a responsible adult needing to be contacted.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. At Harborne Primary School we have a culture that promotes the benefits of excellent attendance. We believe in the 'support first' approach and will work together with our pupils, their families and wider partners, including the local authority, voluntary and community sector where needed to ensure barriers to attendance are overcome and excellent attendance is secured. Below are the names and roles of key staff members who support our culture and follow up pupil absences.

Attendance Champion	Mrs S Brown
Attendance Officer	Mrs Anderson-Lo
Local Authority School Attendance Team Named Officer	TBC by LA
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Francis
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-Ordinator	Mrs T Cockayne
Pastoral Lead	Mrs C Hollis

Aims

At Harborne Primary School, we believe that excellent attendance and punctuality are important in helping pupils achieve the best that they can be. Education is important. Pupils should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. All research shows that 'every moment counts and pupils who attend well achieve well'.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting excellent, 100% attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Working with each identified pupil and their parents/carers to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school/out of school barriers to attendance.
- Recognising improved attendance.
- Supporting and signposting pupils and their families to appropriate services if required.
- Proactively managing lateness and being alert to patterns of late arrival.

We will also support parent/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and we will promote and support punctuality in attendance to lessons.

Good attendance (at least 97%) is essential to the learning, achievement and well-being of all pupils, and particularly for those pupils with SEND and/or from disadvantaged backgrounds, looked after children and for those who have had previously disrupted education.

1. Legislation and Guidance

The 1996 Education Act (section 444) states that parents (including non-related adult carers in the child's household) have a **legal responsibility** to ensure that those of compulsory school age are educated, either by 'regular' attendance at school or 'otherwise'. The 2008 Education and Skills Act (section 155) specifies the same requirement regarding regular attendance at alternative provision.

The duty on parents/carers is to ensure that their children are educated, either at school or 'otherwise'. Education is therefore compulsory. In terms of 'otherwise' children may be educated by their parents at home, by a private tutor or in establishments other than schools, i.e. – FE colleges from the age of 14, special units, hospitals or in alternative educational programmes or work experience. The law allows parents/carers to choose the alternative options, provided they can demonstrate to the Local Authority that the education is fulltime and 'suitable' to the child's education needs, up until the relevant leaving-date for all young people.

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment. **(DFE guidance – August 2024)**

This policy meets the requirements of the [attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendances](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern academy attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Amendment Regulations 2024](#)

Relevant Legislation Referenced within the Local Authority Code of Conduct

[The Education Acts 1996 and 2002](#)

[The Children Act 1989](#)

[The Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)

[The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Sentencing Act 2020](#)

[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

[The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)

[The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

[The Children and Young Persons Acts 1933 and 1963](#)

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

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

2. School Procedures

2.1 Attendance Register

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

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

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

On each occasion when the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code will be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age). Whilst the statutory guidance for school attendance sets out guidance for children of non-compulsory school age, as a school our expectations remain high for this age group as we want our pupils to get the most out of their school experience, meeting an expected and higher standard of education at both key stage 2 and 4.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 6 years after the date in which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9:00am on each school day.

2.2 Absence from School

Parent/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible.

To report an absence parent/carer should contact the attendance team on 0121 464 2705 (main site) or 0121 464 2705 Option 1 (Annex).

Once contact (verbal and/or written) has been made by the parent/carer the school will determine if the absence is to be **authorised** or **unauthorised**.

Parents/ carers are reminded that by law, only the school headteacher can make the decision to authorise an absence.

Persistent and severe absenteeism to school has a significant impact on a child's learning and overall attainment, as outlined below:

1 day lost = 4 lessons (280 minutes of learning) and 85 minutes of personal, social and recreational development.

5 days lost = 20 lessons (1,400 minutes of learning) and 425 minutes of personal, social and recreational development.

10 days lost = 40 lessons (2,800 minutes of learning) and 850 minutes of personal, social and recreational development.

National data shows that at key stage 4, pupils not achieving grade 9-4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4. The overall absence rate of learners not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%). Research indicates that in a significant number of cases, where academic expectations were not met by the end of key stage 4, erratic patterns of attendance had been identified at primary school.

2.3 Medical or Dental Appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

The school will only **authorise** a medical absence (M) if the circumstances are unavoidable. The school has the right to request medical evidence if a parent/carer rings the school to confirm the pupil is unwell: medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a professional, doctor's note, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence

Where it is not possible for medical / dental appointments to be made out of school hours, the pupil should be out for the minimum amount of time necessary and be in attendance prior to their appointment / or return afterwards.

To report an upcoming medical or dental appointment parent/carers should contact the attendance team on 0121 464 2705

2.4 Lateness and Punctuality

The 1996 Education Act requires that every pupil should attend school and be on time. It is better to be late than not to be in school at all, **BUT** when pupils arrive late it makes it difficult for everyone. The class teacher has to stop and wait for the latecomer to settle down, the rest of the class is disrupted, and the latecomer misses the often vital, first part of the lesson.

Persistent lateness to school does have a significant impact on a child's learning and overall attainment, as outlined below:

Pupil is late to school 5 minutes each day = 3.4 days of learning lost during the academic year

Pupil is late to school 10 minutes each day = 6.9 days of learning lost during the academic year

Pupil is late to school 15 minutes each day = 10.3 days of learning lost during the academic year

Pupil is late to school 20 minutes each day = 13.8 days of learning lost during the academic year

Pupil is late to school 30 minutes each day = 20.7 days of learning lost during the academic year

If you are aware your child will be arriving late, please send them with a note explaining the circumstances or contact the school by telephone/email, i.e. - unplanned appointment at the doctors.

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed (9:01-9:20am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L).

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed (9:21am onwards) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U). Patterns of late arrival will be recorded, monitored and challenged by the school.

Pupil punctuality at Harborne Primary School is carefully monitored by our Attendance Team.

If pupils are persistently late to school following the closure of the register, then unauthorised absence procedures will apply.

Parents/carers will be regularly informed about their child's punctuality to school and will be required to attend a formal meeting with a member of the attendance/pastoral team should lateness become a concern.

2.5 Following up Absence

As absence can be a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, the school will always work together with parents, carers, pupils and other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support.

Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through a legal framework.

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

Unauthorised absences will be challenged initially by our attendance team to ascertain reasons for this absence. If this is unsuccessful, members of our wider attendance team including where necessary, an educational welfare officer/external attendance staff, will contact parent/carers for further clarification. Please be aware that Harborne Primary School works closely with Birmingham City Council in applying their legal processes. From September 2024, schools are able to use their judgement and evidence to request that a penalty notice is issued.

Each local authority has an Attendance Support Team who will hold regular conversations with their schools to identify pupils who are persistently and severely absent or who are at risk of becoming so.

Where there are out of school barriers, the local authority will provide the identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, the local authority in conjunction with the school, will facilitate a voluntary Early Help Assessment (EHA), where appropriate.

The local authority will also work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.

An attendance contract may be drawn up providing a formal agreement between the family and the school. The requirements of the plan will depend on the individual case circumstances and will be tailored to the needs of the pupil and their family.

The attendance contract will outline details of:

- the requirements the parent(s)/carer(s) is expected to comply with
- a statement from the school and/or local authority agreeing to provide support to the parent(s)/carer(s) to meet the requirements, setting out details of the support.
- a statement by the parent(s)/carer(s) that they agree to comply with the requirements for the period of time specified by the contract. This can be up to 10 weeks.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the local authority will ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.

Notice to Improve

A notice to improve is a final opportunity for a parent/carer to engage in support and improve their child's attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met, and support is appropriate, but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent/carer, or have not worked, the school can request that the appropriate local authority issues a penalty notice to parents. All referrals and cases are managed on a case-by-case basis.

2.6 Reporting to Parent/Carers

Parent/carers will receive regular attendance and punctuality updates for their child.

Where absence intensifies, so will the support provided by the school and other services, if appropriate.

3. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

3.1 Granting Approval for Term-time Absence

Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Parents/carers are required to submit a written request/application for their child to take a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances during term time. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Legislation does not allow schools to authorise any holidays in term time or authorise leave retrospectively.

Parents/carers are required to provide the school with adequate information/documentation in advance of any leave their child may take from school during term time.

Should this information not be adequately provided, and the pupil is absent from school for 5 consecutive days or more, the school is required to make reasonable enquires into the location of the pupil. The child's absence may be reported to the local authority with the child then deemed as 'missing in education'.

If the request is due to a family emergency, careful consideration is required as to whether it is appropriate or in the best interest of the child to miss school for emergencies being dealt with by adult family members.

It is essential for your child to be in school regularly to benefit fully from their educational opportunities. Good attendance will ensure that your child can reach their full potential. To achieve this, your child needs to attend school every day. For example, two weeks absence is equivalent to around 50 lessons missed which will never be repeated.

Parents also need to be aware that the child can lose their school place if extended leave is taken without the head teacher's permission:

- he/she may be reported to the Local Authority as a missing child and/or removed from the school register in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Authorised absence codes are noted within appendix 1.

3.2 Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. This is classed as an **offence** by the parent/carer. The circumstances noted below is not an exhaustive list, and may include:

- A pupil not attending school to go shopping for school clothes.
- A pupil not attending school as it is her birthday or the birthday of a family member.
- A pupil not attending school as the family have gone to the airport to meet a visiting relative.
- A pupil not attending school due to attending a hospital appointment for another family member.
- A pupil not attending school due to the fact the family returned late in the previous evening from a family holiday or event in another part of the country.
- A pupil not attending school as they are looking after younger siblings.
- A pupil not attending school as a sibling is unwell.
- A pupil attends a medical appointment in the morning but then fails to return to school for afternoon lessons.

Code G	The school has not granted a leave of absence, and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.
Code N	Reason not yet established (within 5 days of a reason not being established)
Code O	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.
Code U	Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.

However, the head teacher will take specific circumstances into account and use their discretion to determine if an absence is to be unauthorised. It is important that parents/carers notify the school in advance of an absence, and where possible, seek the head teacher's authorisation.

Where clarification needs to be gained, the school will also request reasonable medical evidence in cases where more information is required to accurately record absence in the attendance register.

4. Safeguarding

This policy will contribute to the protection and safeguarding of our pupils and promote their welfare by adopting a whole school approach to attendance.

The school reserves the right to invite parents/carers into the school to discuss any attendance issues that raise potential safeguarding concerns. Potential risks of a pupil being exposed to multiple harms including violence, extremism, exploitation, discrimination, or victimisation.

In addition, if the school suspects that a pupil may be at potential risk as a result of their absence from school the safeguarding team reserve the right to refer these concerns to the appropriate external agencies, i.e. – social care (children's services), police. The school will inform parents / carers if a referral is to be made. However, this may not be appropriate in every circumstance depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern and a referral may be made without informing the parent / carer.

Children Absent from Education

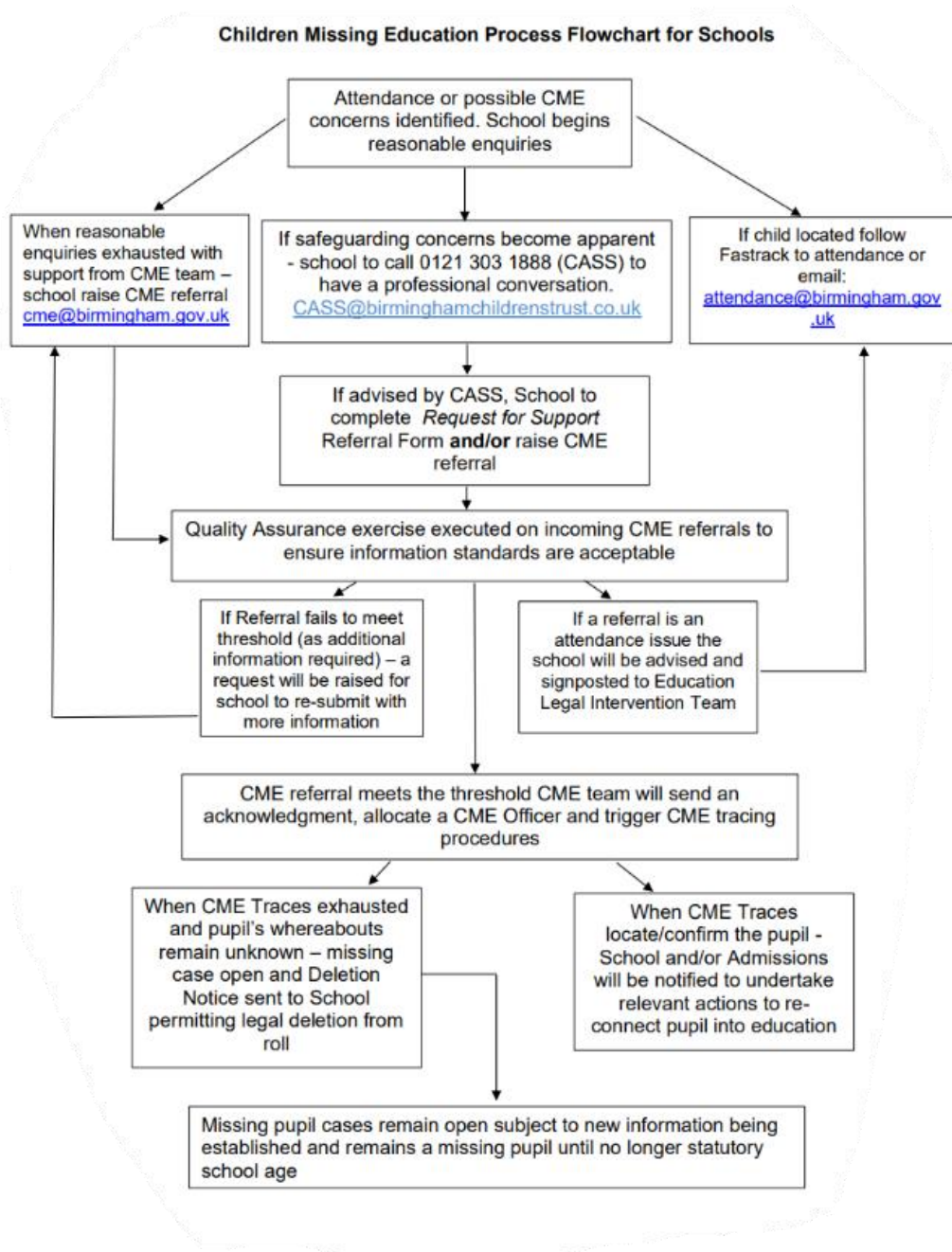
Where a pupil has not returned from a period of leave or has had a continuous period of absence, the school and the school's Local Authority may need to carry out joint reasonable enquiries under regulation 9(1)(h) or

(i) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to try to find out where the pupil is.

In conducting these enquiries, the school and the school's Local Authority will also liaise with the home or temporary local authority (should the pupil live in one local authority and attend a school in another) to investigate whether the child is a Child Missing Education. This feeds into each local authority's responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.

The school reserves the right to contact relevant agencies to seek advice (Children's Social Care, Police 101 Safe and Well-being referral, CME) if any child is absent from school for more than five days without confirmation from parents/carers.

Should a child with a named social worker have an unexplained absence the school will make contact with the social worker on day 1.



Every attempt will be made to communicate with parents/carers to ensure a child is safe and well, including home visits by school staff members / external support staff (see appendix 3).

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, as outlined below.

- Child is at risk of harm / neglect (the school will follow standard child protection procedures for referrals to social care / police).
- Children of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families (the school will inform the local authority when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination school).
- Families of Armed Forces (school will contact MOD Children's Education Advisory Service for advice on making arrangements for continuity of education).
- Missing children / runaways (direct referral to Children's Services and Police).
- Children supervised in the Youth Justice system.
- Children who cease to attend a school.

Concerns

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.

Falling into a pattern of absence from school might exacerbate anxiety and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about returning to the school environment.

If this is the case, please contact the school as soon as possible to speak to the relevant member of staff. In any of these circumstances, we will work closely with you and your child to address the concerns and put relevant support measures in place.

This may involve working with our Safeguarding and Pastoral Team or accessing support from appropriate external agency.

The Government guidance ('Working Together to Improve School Attendance' 2024), advises that pupils do not need to be absent from school in cases of 'mild and moderate' anxiety, as this can be counterproductive.

Home Education

Under the DFE guidance on attendance (August 2020); 'Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education, but this does not have to be at a school'.

If a parent wishes to withdraw a child from the school, the child will be known as 'Electively Home Educated'. Any parent/carer wanting to withdraw their child from the school should inform the school's attendance officer and express their wishes.

Parent/carers may be invited into school to meet with a member of the senior leadership team to discuss their wishes and explore all options available.

Parents/carers will be provided with a local authority information pack. Parents/carers will be required to confirm their decision in writing to the head teacher.

The school will forward this letter to the Local Authority and the child will be removed from the admission register in line with the School Attendance and (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 guidance.

The Local Authority will then determine whether to accept this new arrangement or challenge it. However, parents/carers are unable to withdraw their child from school if they are subject to a 'School Attendance Order'.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) can be home educated. Where the EHCP sets out special educational provision that the child should receive at home, the local authority is under a duty to arrange that provision. The local authority must review the child's EHC Plan annually.

5. Legal Sanctions

Schools are legally bound to escalate persistent absenteeism to their Local Authority which can result in a penalty notice being issued to parents / carers via the relevant local authority for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The National Framework for issuing a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

1. **Attendance:**

When a pupil has had a minimum of 10 sessions of any unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period.

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).

- a school or place of alternative educational provision has commenced the relevant local authority legal intervention process and
- despite that process being followed by the school, there has been little improvement in the pupil's attendance.

2. **Unauthorised Leave in Term Time:** When:

- a pupil has been taken on an unauthorised "leave of absence" from school or a place of alternative educational provision for minimum of 10 continuous sessions (five days) and
- the school or place of alternative educational provision have followed the relevant local authority legal intervention process, a penalty notice may be issued.

3. **Excluded Child in a Public Place:** When:

- a pupil of compulsory school age is excluded on disciplinary grounds, the parent/carer of that child, provided they have been served with Notice under Section 104 of the act, must ensure that the child is not present in a public place during school hours during the first five days of that exclusion without reasonable justification. Where parents/carers fail to ensure their child is not in a public place under these circumstances, a penalty notice may be issued.

Penalty Notice Fines

1) 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.

2) 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.

3) 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.

4) In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This may include a case being put forward to the Magistrates courts and a higher tariff of £2500 being issued to parents, it may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions. Failure to pay the penalty fixed notice can result in a custodial sentence.

The payment must be paid directly to the local authority regardless of who issued the penalty notice. Each parent/carer will receive a separate Penalty Notice for each child.

Please see links below for specific local authority guidance:

Birmingham:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/29350/draft_education_penalty_notice_code_of_conduct_-_september_2024.pdf

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20014/schools_and_learning/1502/school_attendance_advice_for_parents

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

“One of the most effective ways that schools can improve achievement is by improving attendance. Even the very best teachers struggle to raise the standards of children who are not in school regularly. Schools that relentlessly pursue good attendance get better overall attainment”.

Charlie Taylor. Government Advisor.

Excellent attendance is rewarded regularly through: assemblies, certificates, badges, attendance award events. The school's approach to teaching and learning and behaviour management is designed to create a culture that encourages pupils to want to attend school, by helping them to feel valued, supported and successful.

7. Attendance Monitoring

Our Attendance Officer monitors pupils' absence on a daily basis.

Parent/carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health or any other reason. Should communication not be made by parents/carers by 10:30 we will make a 'day 1 phone call' to discuss the reasons for this absence. If contact cannot be made, a home visit will take place.

If after contacting parent/carers, a pupil does not return to school within a reasonable timeframe, we will consider involving our wider Attendance and Pastoral Team and escalating to local authority external partners.

The school has a responsibility to reduce the number of pupils whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. **Pupils with attendance below 90% fall into the 'Persistent Absentee' category.** This is particularly relevant if any of the child's absences are unauthorised.

Where a child's attendance hits 95%, the school will send the Helpful Headteacher letter to alert parents/carers to the need for attendance to improve.

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of education (equivalent to 1 day or more, a fortnight across a full school year), the school, external attendance support staff and the local authority are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils.

A particular focus will be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more from school).

These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support from a range of services.

The school may also consider implementing an **attendance plan/contract** if a pupil continues to be absent from school without authorisation. An **attendance plan/contract** is an agreement between the school and parent/carer (as noted above) and will contain improvement targets with set timescales and an overview of the support provided by the school to support the child and their family.

Parental failure to comply with the plan may be used as evidence if the Local Authority decides to prosecute parents/carers.

Both school based and local authority Early Help will also be offered to all families in support of wider circumstances that they may be experiencing which is impacting on their child/ren's attendance and/or punctuality.

Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person or their family as soon as an issue emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth to adulthood and applies to any problem or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on their own. It also applies to all children and young people, with any form of need. Early help may be offered via the school's own systems of support and provision.

<https://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/early-help>

Pupil-level absence data is collected daily and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with the Local Governing Body.

The school and Local Governing Body will collect and store attendance data via the Management Information System (MIS). Data will be analysed, monitored and evaluated to track the attendance patterns of:

- individual pupils
- groups of pupils (including boys, girls, SEND, looked after children, ethnic minority background, age group, those in receipt of additional funding)

These analyses will inform the trust's interventions with pupils and groups of pupils, and parent/carers, to support improved attendance.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 The Local Governing Body (LGB)

The LGB is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the school on at least a termly basis. It scrutinises how effectively this policy is put in place and reports the impact of the policy to the Board of Trustees.

8.2 The Head Teacher

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school level absence data and reporting it to the LGB.

The head teacher also supports other staff members in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and requesting fixed penalty notices, where necessary.

8.3 The Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer

- Carry out daily absence protocols as outlined in appendix 3.
- Monitor attendance data at the school and at individual pupil, and group level.
- Arrange calls and meetings with parent/carers and pupils to discuss attendance barriers and concerns.
- Co-ordinate a range of in school 'support first strategies' to help individual pupils attend school, with the support of key staff members including class teachers, DSL, SENDCo, mentors, pastoral leads.
- Challenge unauthorised absences.
- Co-ordinate wellbeing support, strategies, assessments and referrals to external agencies including Early Help and social, emotional and mental health services.
- Report concerns about attendance to the Head teacher / Senior Leadership Team.
- Work with education welfare officers or any other external attendance service to address and support persistent absence.
- Carry out safe and well home visits.
- Advise the Head teacher when to request fixed-penalty notices and explore possible solutions.
- Provide regular updates to all staff about the attendance figures for individual pupils and groups.
- Provide evaluation of the impact of actions taken to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Create and maintains individual intervention and support logs for pupils with persistent and severe absenteeism, including attendance contracts where appropriate.
- Provide half termly up-to-date analysis of attendance trends and patterns for school, the LGB and external scrutiny groups.

8.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes. All staff are responsible for promoting and encouraging excellent and improved attendance through their daily interactions with pupils and through the provision of high-quality teaching. Class teachers have a pivotal role in monitoring and improving attendance through their relationships with pupils and their families, tutoring work, and the robust implementation of rewards systems for excellent and improved attendance.

8.5 School Administration, Attendance, and Pastoral Team

Our main office, Attendance and Pastoral Teams are often the first port of call when taking calls from parent/carers about reasons for pupil absence, forwarding messages on and recording details on to the school system. A support first approach is adopted by our various teams to ensure any issues can be resolved, along with appropriate levels of challenge when unauthorised reasons for absence are given. Parents and carers are advised to follow the appropriate options when dialling into school (0121 464 2705) or contacting via email (enquiry@harborne.bham.sch.uk)

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Strategic Attendance Lead (overall policy), Head Teachers, Attendance Champions and external partners such as the Educational Welfare Service (with local adjustments made for context). At every review, the policy will be shared with the LGB.

10. Links with Other Policies

This policy is linked to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

Table 1

CODE	MEANING	TYPE
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity: - Alternative provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present mark
C	Authorised circumstance (see Table 2: The C code for breakdown).	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school.	Present mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made.	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or term-time leave not granted by the school.	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment).	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority: - Home tutoring - Approved framework for alternative provision - Blended learning.	Present mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed.	Present mark
M	Attended a medical appointment.	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established.	Unauthorised Absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances.	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity.	Present mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements.	Not expected to attend
R	Religious observance.	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed.	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an educational trip or visit.	Present mark
W	Attending work experience.	Present mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school.	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see Table 2: The Y code for breakdown).	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register.	Not expected to attend

Table 2

CODE	MEANING	TYPE
The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following subcodes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available.	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel.	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following subcodes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. 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 school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence

Appendix 2: Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities (published 29th February 2024 applies from 19th August 2024).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance applies from 19 August 2024 .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf)

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.
Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).	Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.	Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.	Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.
Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.	Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.	Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.	Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.
Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.	Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.	Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.
	Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.		
	Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.		

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

Appendix 3: Daily Attendance Flowchart

If contact is made with the family on day one of an absence, contact will be maintained until the pupil returns to school. This may include telephone check-ins or home visits to see how the child is doing. If contact is made with the family and the reason for absence is provided, the school will then determine if the absence is to be authorised or unauthorised.

The School have a legal responsibility to promote good attendance.

Daily attendance flow chart

Gates open at 8:35am
8:50-9am Children to go directly to their classroom to be registered by the class teacher with a present mark.
Gates close at 9am
Registers to be submitted by 9:00am



Child arrives at 9:01—9:20am
Parent to sign the child in at the front office
Office staff input late mark 'L'.



Child arrives after 9:20am office staff input an unauthorised code 'U'



Attendance officer and Office staff to make phone calls home for children who have marked with the 'N' code.



Contact has been made with parent or carer, record the reason for the child's absence on SIMS

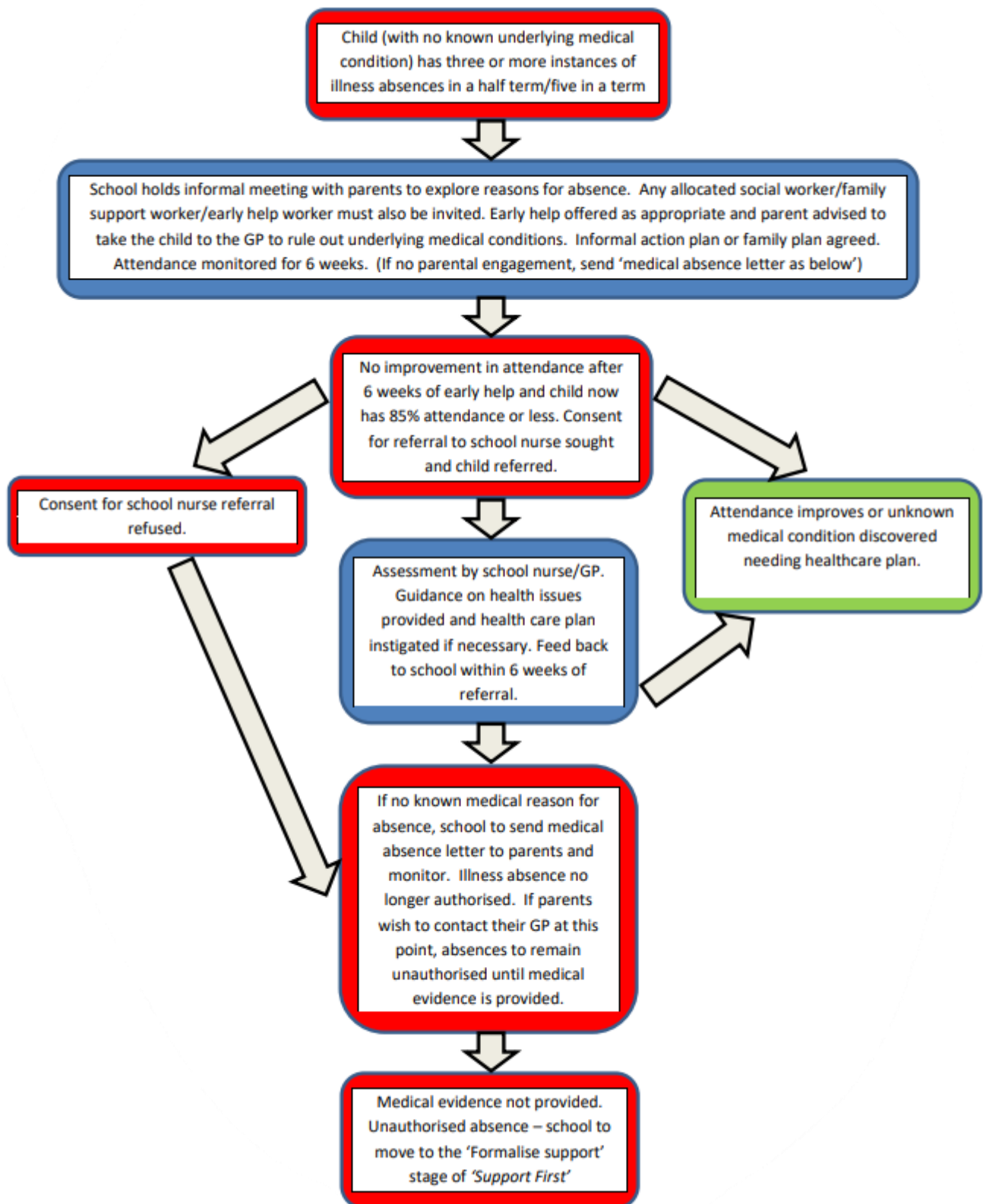
If by the 3rd day of absence, no contact has been made with parents or emergency contacts, please conduct a home visit. If no one is home leave a 'home visit' letter.
If staff are concerned a home visit can take place on the 1st day of absence.



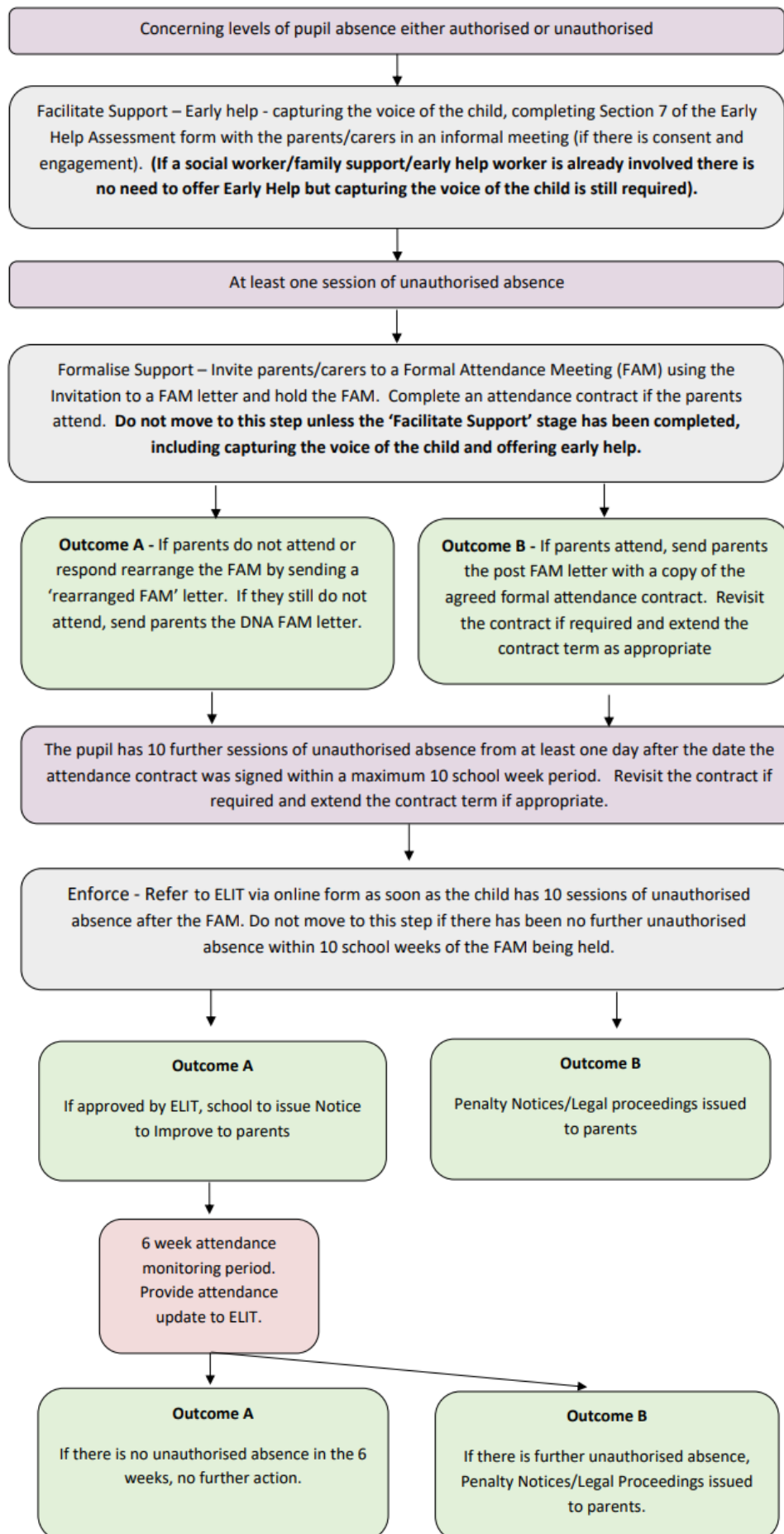
If no contact is made with parents or anyone locally and school are concerned about the child, then the DSL must contact the police. **If by the 5th day there has been no contact, the school must make a referral to the CME Team.**

Appendix 4: Unauthorised Absence Flowchart

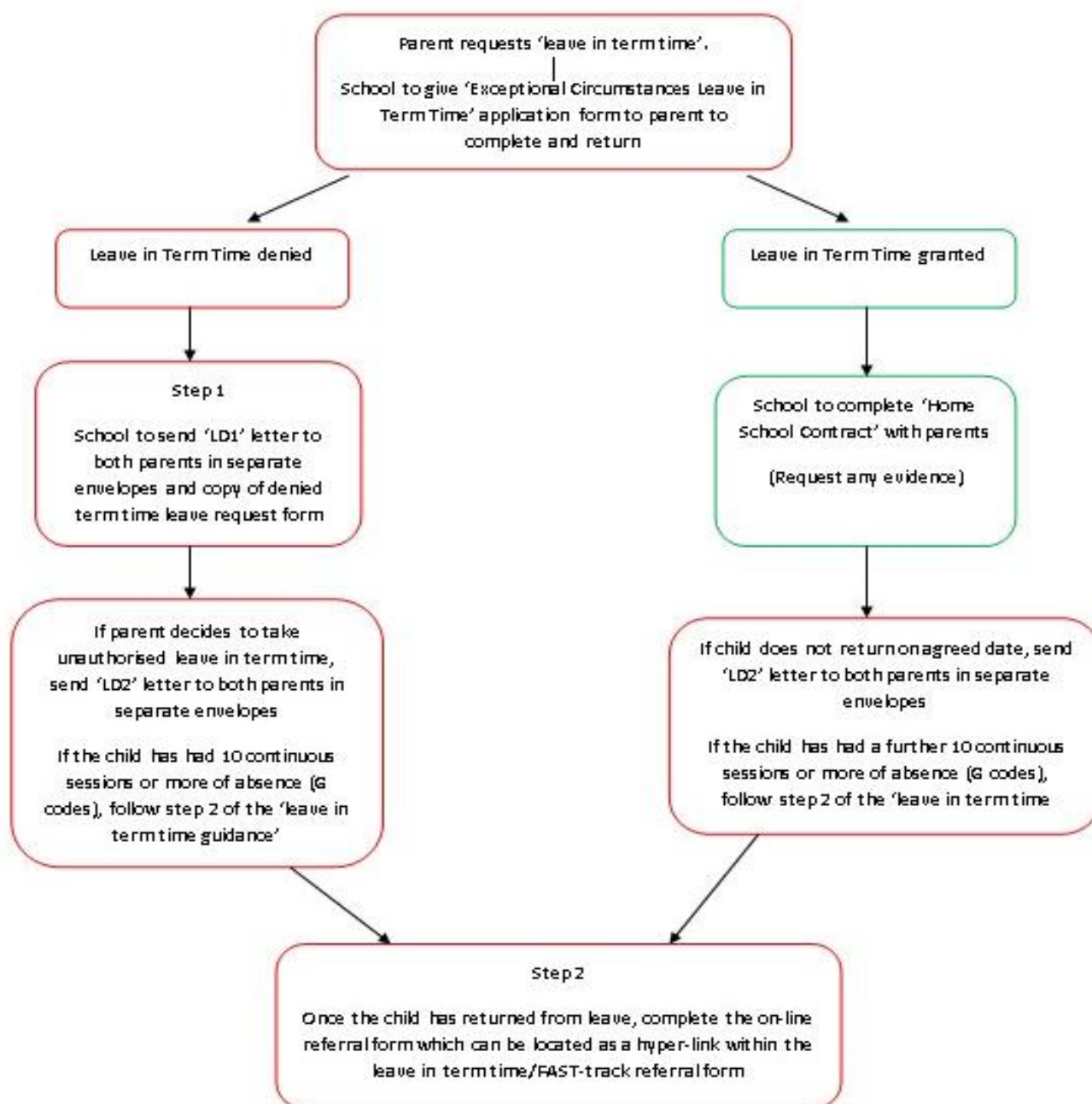
Frequent illness absence (no known medical condition)



Appendix 5: Formal Attendance Procedures Flow Chart



Appendix 6: Leave in Term-time



Appendix 7: Attendance Poster for Parents

Working together to improve school attendance.

1 I'm a single parent of one child and we want to go on holiday for a week



Your holiday will not be authorised and you must talk to the school before you book anything. As your child will miss 5 school days, you may be given a fixed penalty notice fine. The fine is £160 but if you pay in 21 days it will be reduced to £80.

2 For every child a penalty is given



+£160 +£160 +£160

3 Irregular Attendance



If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks and their absences are unauthorised, the council may consider prosecution.

4 For a family of two parents



Happy Pupils Succeed

Appendix 8: Support First Guidance for Parents



'SUPPORT FIRST' SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

LEGAL ACTION INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This leaflet is for only parents/carers whose child/ren's attendance has not improved following offers of support from their child's school, including a formal meeting. To avoid Legal Action being taken against you for failing to ensure your child/ren attend school regularly, you are advised of the following:

- Ensure your child attends school every day it is open, on time, escorting them into school if necessary and handing them over to a member of staff. (Please be aware your child may get an unauthorised absence mark when they arrive after registration closes).
- Contact school on the first day of every absence by 9:30am stating the reason for absence and the likely return date.
- Take your child to the doctor if unwell and provide the school with: medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a professional, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence. (The Head Teacher will not authorise medical absence without evidence).

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons



Appendix 9: Support First Process

