

Upham CE (A) Primary School

Policy for Attendance



Approved by Governors – Full Governing Body July 2025

Review date – by end of July 2026

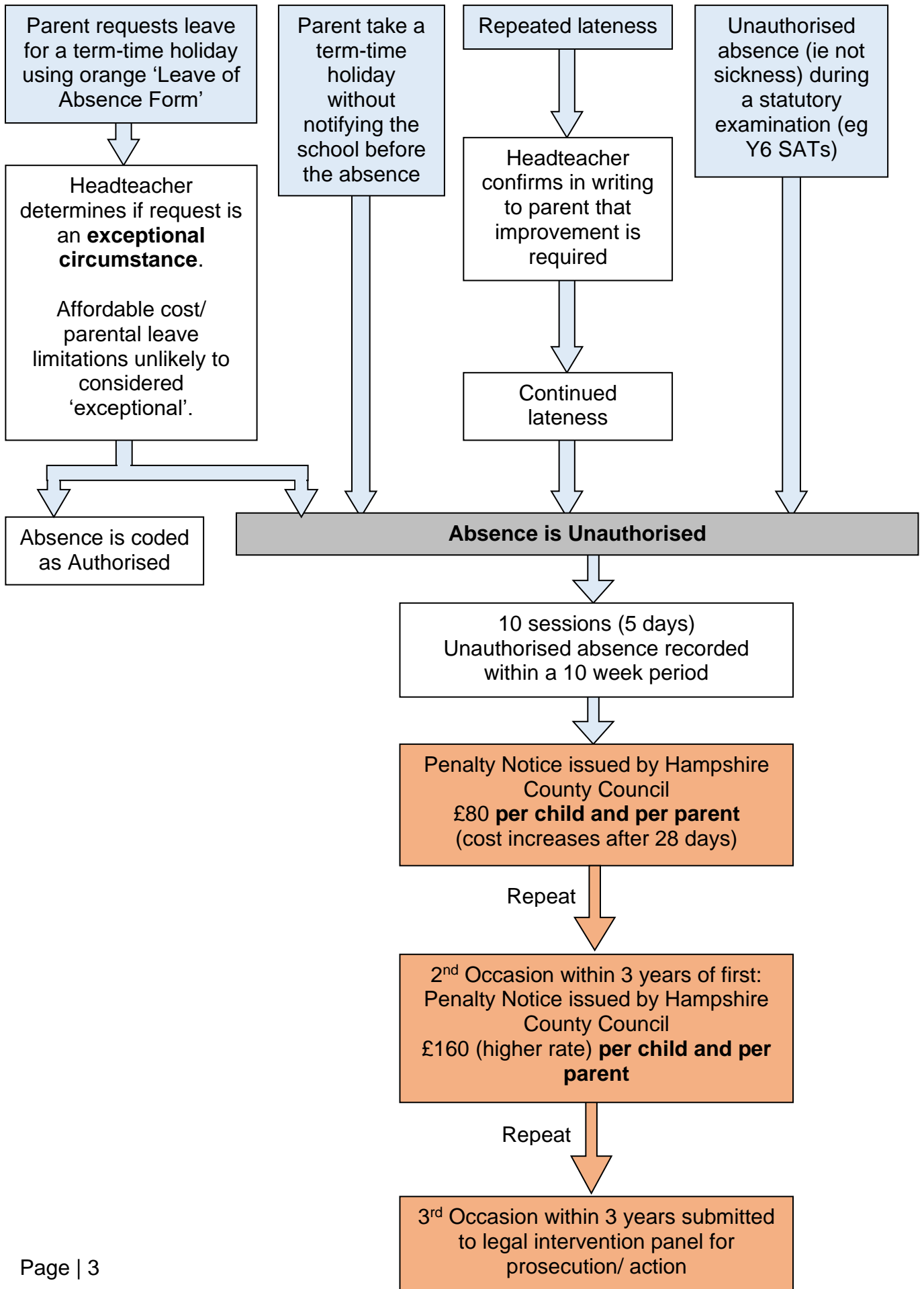
Reviewed by D.Woolley

Attendance Policy – Upham CE(A) Primary School

Quick Access Overview of Contents

Quick Access Chart – when penalty notice might be issued	p3
1. Rational	p4
2. Roles & Responsibilities of staff, children & parents	p5
3.1 Recording attendance in the register – school sessions	p6
3.2 Lateness defined	p6
3.3 What to do if your child is absent (if they are ill)	p7
Procedures if Longer periods of absence	p7
3.4 How the school tracks attendance for children	p8
Table showing how a few days each term builds up to concerning levels	p9
3.5 How Parents are included in identifying Absence Trends or Concerns	p9
Flow chart to explain communication with parents	p10
4. Request for absence (such as term-time family holiday)	p11
5. Types of absence – authorised and unauthorised	p12
6. Penalty Notices (Fines) when these might be issued	p12-14
7. Other information	p14
8. Record	p15
9. Consulting and Communicating Policy with parents	p15
10. Reference documents	p16
Appendix – Examples of Communication letters for high absence	p16-18

Quick Access: Overview Chart of When penalty Notices might be issued



Attendance Policy – Upham CE(A) Primary School

Section 1: Rationale/statement of intent

Upham Primary School believe that for a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We endeavour to provide an environment where all children feel valued and welcome. Parents and children play a part in making our school successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence above 5%
- regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- regular attenders find school routines, school work 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.

In our school, the headteacher leads on all matters to do with attendance and promoting a climate of high attendance. He will lead on communication with parents, decision making around coding, working together with families to reduce absence, decision making around leave of absence and responding to any safeguarding implications of absence.

Senior Attendance Champion: David Woolley (Headteacher)

Section 2: Operating the policy

1. Promoting Good Attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home School Agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- provide information on all matters related to attendance in our school newsletters
- report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance, absence and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment

- set targets for the school for attendance and communicate this to parents

2. Roles and Responsibilities

All partners should work together, in partnership, to successfully treat the root causes of absence and remove barriers to attendance. This is described withing 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' (DfE Aug 2024) as:

Expect: Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school. Monitor Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand: When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support: Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support: Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce: Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Responsibilities of school staff

- Ensure that all children are registered accurately
- Promote good attendance with children at all appropriate opportunities
- Liaise with the Headteacher on matters of attendance and punctuality
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence
- Support children with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school

Responsibilities of children

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Arrive in school on time.
- Remain on school site during school hours.

Responsibilities of parents/carers

- Ensure the school is informed on their child's first day of absence
- Discuss with the class teacher any planned absences well in advance
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or by letter if a phone is unavailable, on the first and subsequent days of absence
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- Take responsibility for registering at the School office if they are late or are leaving

- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Section 3: Attendances, Absence and Lateness

3.1 Recording attendance

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school and again for the afternoon session. Note that 1 school day therefore = 2 sessions.

At Upham Primary School this is:

- 8.55am School Day Starts, Morning Registration
- 9.25am Register closes (after this a late would be a whole session absence)
- 1.15pm Afternoon session Begins, Afternoon Registration
- 3.30pm End of School Day

3.2 Lateness/punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions. The beginning of each session is used to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late they can miss work time with their class teacher, getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be unsettling for the child.

- At Upham Primary School the school day begins at 8.55am and all **pupils are expected to be in school by this time.**
- Morning registration is at 8.55am and it closes at 9.25am.
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded *U* in line with Hampshire County Council and Department for Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded *M*. Please be advised that, where possible, doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Children who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other children. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as **unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action** (see Section 6 for further detail).

Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school to discuss the problem and support that can be offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, the school or Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a Penalty Notice in accordance with Hampshire County Council's Code of conduct: issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools (See Section 6 of this policy for further detail).

3.3 What to do if my child is absent?

First day absence

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding** matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

If your child is absent you must:

- contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence

If your child is absent we will:

- telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you – this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance
- When absence is persistent, parents will be invited in to discuss the situation with the headteacher. If this persists, this will be referred to the Hampshire County Council's Attendance Legal Panels, if absence is unauthorised, falling below 90%.

The school will discuss attendance problems with the child's parents/carers and should agree a plan with you to improve the child's attendance.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is not in the child's best interest to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for a child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

Unexplained Absence

If a child is not seen and contact has not been established with any named parent/carers we will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to all known contacts (as provided on the registration document), known friends and wider family. This might include measures such as visiting the family home. If the absence continued to be unexplained, this would also be escalated as a safeguarding concern with children's services. After three days of absence, the school is required to start missing in education procedures, as set down by Hampshire County Council.

Ten days' absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any child who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number.

Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education.

Where children are absent due to essential medical treatment and appointments, especially those which relate to medical or special educational needs and disabilities, the school will work closely with parents to support the family. These absences would therefore be coded as authorised.

Absence due to Unforeseen Circumstances such as Government Health Advice

There are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due, such as during times during the COVID-19 outbreak from 2020 – 2022. Other contagions or viral outbreaks could occur either within the UK or in other countries where children may have recently travelled which could have an impact on school attendance.

In all cases, government health advice (from the NHS, Home Office or similar government source) will always be followed and suggested to parents. This advice might change throughout the course of a developing situation or ongoing pandemic - the latest guidance and government advice will be followed. In line with whatever expectations the Secretary of State might publish at the time, no parents would be penalised for following official health advice for their child.

Parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that in the event of a health concern their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine which would further damage attendance in school.

3.3 Staff Responsible for Attendance

Staff responsible for strategic tracking, monitoring of attendance and decision making regarding coding/ authorisation of leave of absence:

Headteacher, David Woolley

Staff responsible for day-to-day attendance matters:

Admin Manager: Sarah Bettridge & Admin Assistant: Fran Baber

How to Contact Admin Staff regarding day-to-day attendance matters:

Telephone 01489 860355 (leave answerphone message out of school hours)
or email adminoffice@upham.hants.sch.uk

Staff responsible for updating records/ chasing unexplained absences/ preparing overview data/ maintaining registers/ processing penalty notices:

Admin Manager: Sarah Bettridge & Admin Assistant: Fran Baber

3.4 The School's Strategy for Using Data to Target Improvement Efforts to Pupils or Groups Who Most Need It

Overview data from the ends of half terms and academic year are used by the headteacher to evaluate attendance of groups, classes and individuals. This data is regularly shared with governors at in order to involve them in evaluation processes. This data is numeric in nature and not related to individual children or families. This summative data is also used to identify children or families where attendance has fallen below that which is expected including those at 'persistent absentee levels' for particular tracking for the subsequent term/ academic year.

The headteacher also scrutinises weekly attendance patterns through weekly information of sessions individual children have missed. Actual missed sessions are tracked so that patterns that might indicate a lower than expected overall attendance rate might be reached. The following numbers of and rate of absent sessions might indicate trends:

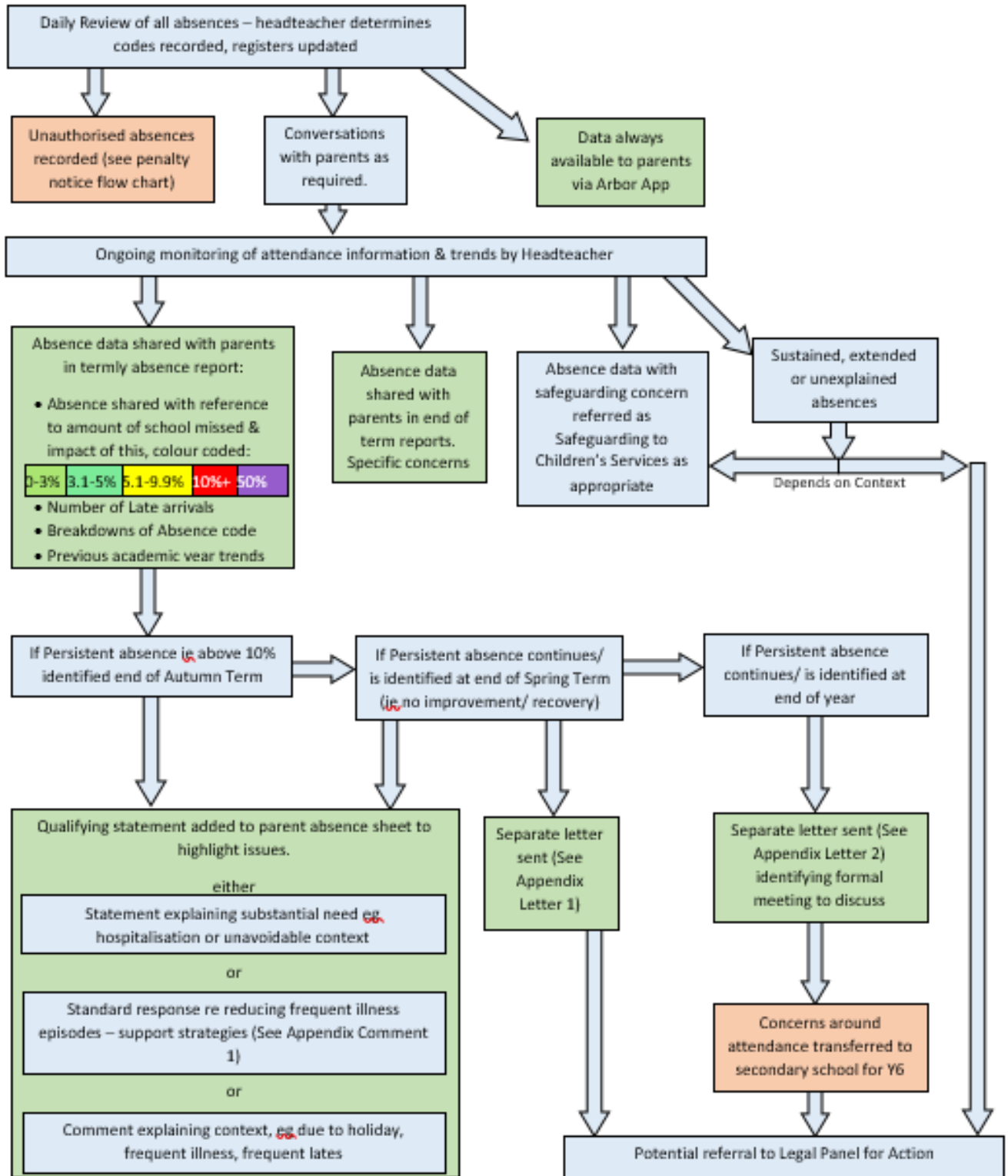
Total Number of sessions in school year = 380 (38 weeks)				
By End of Year	Number of present sessions	Total number of <u>sessions</u> which would be absences	Number of <u>sessions</u> absent per term at this 'rate'	Number of <u>sessions</u> absent per week at this 'rate'
90%	342/380	38 (19 days)	12 or 13 (6 or 6½ days)	1 session per week
95%	361/380	19 (9½ days)	6 or 7 (3 or 3½ days)	1 session per fortnight
97%	369/380	11 (5½ days)	3 or 4 (1½ or 2 days)	1 session per 3½ weeks

It is however important to recognise the particular circumstances which may have lead to high absence. This may be unavoidable, such as serious illness or a period of hospitalisation or frequent medical procedures related to a specific need/ situation. In this situation the headteacher would be in discussion with the parent how best to support the child or their return to school. Those children with SEND needs where attendance is a component of the need might also have attendance support strategies detailed in written personal learning plans.

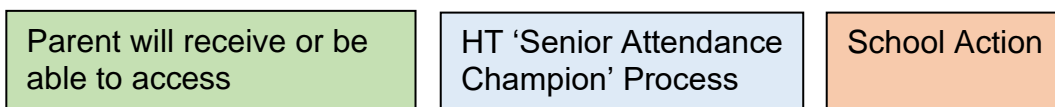
3.5 How Parents are included in identifying Absence Trends or Concerns

Parents are able to access attendance information whenever they want to for their child using the Arbor App they will have already have installed. Information is shared three times during the year, at the end of the Autumn Term, end of Spring Terms and end of the Academic year. Information will be presented as absence, rather than attendance, to raise the significance of the impact of time lost rather than complacency with attendance. Absence percentages will be mapped against positive expectations so that parents can reflect on if this is due to 'one off' issues in the term, such as a serious illness, or other trends. Information about the number of 'lates' and the different codes used will also be shared. A comparison against the previous two academic years will also be provided so parents can easily determine if there is a trend or improvement. A summary comment will be added by the headteacher wherever attendance looks like a trend is forming and when levels are consistent with 'persistent absentee' levels and higher. If this situation does not improve in subsequent terms, more formal letters will be sent and meetings between parents and the headteacher arranged to discuss how to address the situation.

Here is a flow chart overview to illustrate the process:



Colour coding of boxes:



Where more concerning trends become apparent, the headteacher will communicate with parents whenever required. This communication could take different forms, depending on the circumstances and the nature of the 'trend' but could include:

- Absence is a safeguarding concern and particular contexts would require referral to Children's Services for Action
- More generalised guidance shared with parents, such as via the newsletter or letters
- An informal conversation with the parent
- A more formal conversation detailing concerns, perhaps at parents evenings
- A written letter sent to parents pointing out the concern and/ or growing trend
- Subsequent letters outlining particular actions that may need to be taken if improvement is not secured.
- Additional comments added to end of year reports.
- Implementation of an attendance contract before moving forward to an education supervision order or prosecution

Where a child/ family has persistent absence (above 10%) or severe absence (above 50%), school staff (headteacher, SENCO, teachers) will be communicating with the family. There might be behavioural or emotional supports that could be provided to help ease a child through the transition from parent to school. There may be approaches related to a SEND need that might be additionally documented in personal learning plans. A particular incentive might be possible. The school might also try to refer the family for additional support from other agencies, such as through the Early Help Hub. Other agencies such as Children's Services or The Virtual Schools might also be involved.

Section 4: Request for Leave of Absence

Request for leave of absence

The DfE state in the publication 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' August 2024 that:

38. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

37 Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised. Parents/carers wishing to apply for

leave of absence need to fill in an application form available from the School Office, in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire County Council's Code of conduct, parents/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine (one per child and per each parent) or other legal action in accordance with the code (see Section 6 for detail).

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

Section 5: Types of Absence

Understanding types of absence

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
- **Unauthorised absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:
 - parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
 - truancy before or during the school day
 - absences which have not been explained

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

Section 6: Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices for non-attendance and other legal measures

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness

Hampshire schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and:

- 1** the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
- 2** the child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.

The following legal measures will be used for children of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- parenting orders

- Penalty Notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- prosecution

Where a child has unauthorised absence, the school must enforce Hampshire County Council's Code of conduct: issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools or follow its guidance on other legal measures for non-attendance. The Code of conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents#step-6> (Link accessed July 2025)

The Code of conduct states that schools or Hampshire County Council will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive
- persistently late (coded *U*) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded *L*), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code *O*), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance
- absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

If a child's unauthorised absence meets any of the above criteria and the family or child do not require any agency support to improve the attendance then a Penalty Notice is issued for either:

- 1 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 10 week school period
- 2 One or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal school assessments or testing where dates are published in advance. Parents and carers should be aware that the schools publish dates of statutory assessments or tests via newsletters and the school website. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to carefully check all such dates.

This includes where a pupil has unauthorised absence due to either:

- non-approval of a parent/carer's request for leave of absence, or
- a holiday that has been taken without permission.

Parents and carers will be warned of the likelihood of a Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absence via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the school's attendance policy and website. The Penalty Notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence, the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued to **one or more parents/carers** for each child. **NB:** This could mean four Penalty Notices for a family with two siblings, both with unauthorised absence for holiday, ie one Penalty Notice for each child to each parent.

Each Penalty Notice carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days of the Penalty Notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the penalty is automatically increased to £160 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing Penalty Notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay – it does not come to the school.

Repeated Occasions

In accordance with Hampshire County Council current policy, a repeated occasion that triggers a fixed penalty notice within three years of the first (from September 2024 when this updated regulation was initiated) will be fined at the higher rate of £160 per parent and per child. A further third occasion within this three-year period will automatically be referred to the Legal Intervention Panel for prosecution. (See Quick Access Flow Chart page 3) For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from their school and should visit Hampshire County Council's website at:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents#step-1>

Section 7: Further Information

7.1 What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

Be interested in what your child is doing in school, chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch.

For many parents, your child attending school may be your first experience of being separated from them. This can seem daunting at first for both of you, but consistency and a caring, supportive home and school life will make the transition a quick and easy experience for you both.

7.2 Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than when transferring to the secondary School) parents are asked to give the School Office comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing

If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

7.3 Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and

frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the Headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

7.4 Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the Headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

7.5 Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families

Absence of a child from a Traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away, the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.

Section 8: Records

Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least three years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups.

9. Consulting with and Communicating the Policy to Parents

Parents attending Parent Panel meeting in June 2025 were invited to offer feedback regarding this policy as a draft.

Parents commented that this policy rightly places attendance as a serious matter to be considered. They thought the flow charts were a good idea and made the procedures easier to understand. They also felt the termly emails parents had all received regarding absence levels during 2024/25 were a good thing and really helped parents understand how attendance has progressed and what it looks for your child.

A copy of this Policy (paper or electronic) will be provided to new parents when their child has started school and to new Year R parents within their welcome pack at the start of June/ July transitional visits. All parents will be reminded of the contents with a copy at the beginning of the new academic year in September and following a review of this policy.

10. Reference Documents:

'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (DfE, Aug 2024)

Appendix – Communication for Parents to Address High Absence

1. Comments for End of Autumn Term:

1.1 Where Absence has been high (10%+) due to frequent separate illness

[Child name] has had quite high absence due to many cases of illness. You can see from the average numbers how these quickly mount up. It will be important to try to minimise further absences as the year progresses, particularly if they are feeling a bit off-colour rather than severely ill (such as vomiting, diarrhoea, chicken-pox). It might be helpful to think about:

- Trying to avoid absence due to minor illness
- If you feel like you have 'made the wrong call' and they perk up having been kept home, you can always drop them in during the day
- Sometimes children feel ill as they get up or if rushing the morning routine but once they have had breakfast they might be OK to come in
- Check NHS guidance <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
- If you are worried how they might be getting on in school whilst feeling 'a bit under the weather', you can always give us a call
- Reassure them we will give them a little extra TLC when they feel unwell

1.2 Where Absence has been high (10%+) and where there is a prior pattern of concern from the previous year

[Child Name]'s absence is at quite a high level in the Autumn Term and this was a pattern from the last academic year [insert academic year]. I am concerned how much of an impact this will be having on their learning, the gaps and missed practice. If there is anything you feel you need support with or perhaps would like to discuss further please contact me for a confidential conversation. To avoid [name] continuing to be 'persistently absent' by the end of the year it will be important to try to minimise any absences for the rest of this academic year. It might be helpful to think about:

- Trying to avoid absence due to minor illness
- If you feel like you have 'made the wrong call' and they perk up having been kept home, you can always drop them in during the day
- Sometimes children feel ill as they get up or if rushing the morning routine but once they have had breakfast they might be OK to come in
- Check NHS guidance <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
- If you are worried how they might be getting on in school whilst feeling 'a bit under the weather', you can always give us a call
- Reassure them we will give them a little extra TLC when they feel unwell

Please note that due to this category I am unable to authorise any absences, such as family leave.

2.1 Letter to Accompany Information Report at the End of Spring Term where absence is/ continues to be high (10%+)

Dear

We need your help, please.

As you will be able to see from the information report which accompanies this letter, [Pupil Name] has been absent for {#} days of school, which is equal to {#} lessons missed so far this school year.

We know that sometimes our pupils cannot come to school because they are really unwell - and that's the right thing to do for them and other students. Medical advice is clear however that children with mild illness will often be well enough to attend - for example if they have a cough, or cold, without a temperature. The NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) is designed to support parents in their decision making about mild illness.

[Add bespoke paragraph here if there is mitigating context.]

We also know that pupils fall behind their friends and classmates when they miss school. We believe that our community is stronger together, with all of our pupils in school, on time, every day. We are building life skills, life-long friendships and preparing your child for future success.

We also know that you can have a significant effect on [Name] absences this academic year and we would really appreciate your help and support ensuring that [Name] comes to school every day so that they can get the best possible outcomes. We want to work with you to achieve this – if you would like to discuss this further, particularly if there are barriers to (child's name) attendance that we can plan to overcome together, please come in and meet with their class teacher or myself.

We will be in touch again to request a meeting with you if we have ongoing concerns about your child's attendance.

3.1 Letter to Accompany Information Report at the End of Spring Term where absence is/ continues to be high (10%+)

Dear

We need your help, please.

As you will be able to see from the information report which accompanies this letter, [Pupil Name] has been absent for {#} days of school, which is equal to {#} lessons missed so far this school year.

We know that sometimes our pupils cannot come to school because they are really unwell - and that's the right thing to do for them and other students. Medical advice is clear however that children with mild illness will often be well enough to attend - for example if they have a cough, or cold, without a temperature. The NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) is designed to support parents in their decision making about mild illness.

[Add bespoke paragraph here if there is mitigating context.]

We also know that pupils fall behind their friends and classmates when they miss school.. We believe that our community is stronger together, with all of our pupils in school, on time, every day. We are building life skills, life-long friendships and preparing your child for future success.

We also know that you can have a significant effect on [Pupil Name] absences this academic year and we would really appreciate your help and support ensuring that [Name] comes to school every day so that they can get the best possible outcomes. We want to work with you to achieve this – if you would like to discuss this further, particularly if there are barriers to [name]’s attendance that we can plan to overcome together, please come in and meet with their class teacher or myself.

We will be in touch again to request a meeting with you if we have ongoing concerns about your child’s attendance.

Letter to Accompany Information Report at the End of Summer Term (ie end of year) where absence is/ continues to be high (10%+) at Persistent Absentee level

Dear

As you will be able to see from the information report which accompanies this letter, [Pupil Name] has been absent for {#} days of school, which is equal to {#} lessons missed so far this school year.

This level is categorised by the DfE as a ‘Persistent Absentee’. Missing this much school will have had a negative impact on [name]’s learning, wellbeing and their confidence towards learning. Please can we meet to discuss this further and plan for how we can change this situation for the next academic year.

[Insert details of offered times and dates to meet]