


# WOODSIDE C.E (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2023-24

Please note that this is a model policy.

- DFE guidance Working Together to Improve Attendance (Sept 2022) requires all schools to have an Attendance Policy that is published on their website and is accessible.
- It is essential that school policy reflects your processes, procedure and expectations - this is a model format to support you in writing a clear and effective policy.
- The individual school's expectations, processes, and procedures.
- The relevant Local Authority Code of Conduct/ thresholds for legal action.

 21/9/23  
K King 21/9/23

# Woodside Primary School Pupil Attendance Policy

## Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to enjoy their education and make good progress.

At Woodside Primary School, we believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. This policy sets out how school staff will work with pupils, parents, and partners to promote, encourage and support regular attendance at school and remove any barriers to attendance.

## Aims

- To set clear expectations and aspirations that all pupils have a high standard of school attendance and punctuality.
- To improve children's attainment through good attendance.
- To make attendance a priority for everyone.
- To ensure there is a clear process to identify and address emerging attendance concerns
- To work effectively with parents, pupils, and partners through building trusted relationships to work together to remove barriers to attendance.

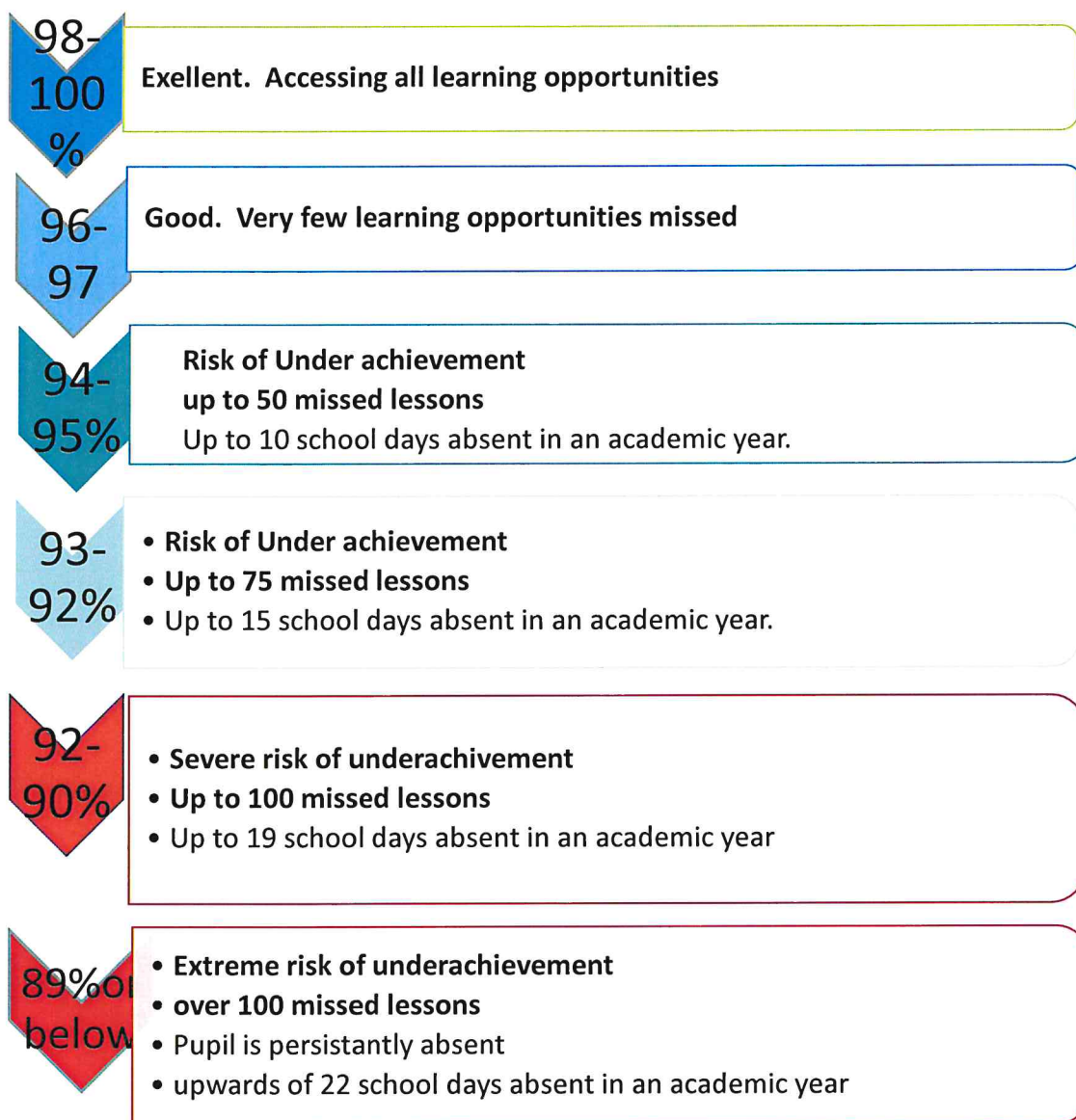
To achieve these aims for our pupils, we are committed to the following:

- a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment;
- for all staff to feel happy to come to school to work with pupils, developing them to their full potential;
- listen to parents and pupils to understand barriers to attendance
- build trusted relationships with parents and pupils where attendance concerns can be discussed, understood.
- high expectations of our pupils and all staff;
- a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum;
- recognise and celebrate achievements in all areas of school life;
- equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life;
- high quality teaching using a variety of teaching strategies;
- a range of resources that are effectively used to support and challenge learning;
- provide experiences, which will develop our pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding;
- support, guidance and training for all those who teach and work with our children;
- foster and maintain links with our wider community



## Expected Levels of Attendance

Attending school regularly and on time has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for pupils. Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success.



## Attendance Partnership Expectations

We expect the following from all of our pupils:

- To attend school regularly.
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day, having eaten breakfast or attend breakfast club;
- To talk to a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

**We expect the following from parents and carers:**

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually;
- To ensure contact is made with school, as soon as is reasonably practical, whenever their child is unable to attend;
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day, having eaten breakfast.
- To talk to a member of school staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attend of school.

**Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:**

- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason;
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- To inform parents if a pupil’s attendance falls below expected levels
- To listen and understand the barriers to school attendance and offer appropriate support and agree appropriate plans to improve attendance.
- Follow up support if needed.

**Roles and Responsibilities for Attendance**

- Woodside school has an Attendance Champion, a named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues.
- Members of school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have responsibility for attendance issues in school.
- **If you have a concern about your child’s attendance your first point of contact is Mrs King**

Role	Responsibilities
Schools Governors Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (eg pupil registration, attendance registers)</li><li>• Reviewing school attendance</li><li>• Agreeing and Reviewing School Policy</li></ul>
Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compliance with relevant legislation</li><li>• Data analysis and Strategic Plan for attendance.</li><li>• Implementing school policy and leading on whole school approach.</li><li>• Authorising/authorising absences</li><li>• Leave of absence request</li><li>• Line management</li><li>• Contact with parents</li><li>• Overview of clear and escalating interventions</li><li>• Evaluation of interventions.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting school attendance.</li> <li>• Responsibility for links with CSAWS and the LA Statutory Team.</li> <li>• Attendance at attendance panels</li> </ul>
Class Teachers /Form Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marking registers</li> <li>• Promoting importance of regular school's attendance</li> <li>• Providing early warning of attendance concerns</li> <li>• Positive role modelling</li> <li>• Following policy and procedures consistently.</li> <li>• Point of contact for parents to discuss concerns</li> </ul>
Attendance Officer  Mrs King	
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Johnson Mrs Bruntlett Miss Smallwood
School Office  Mrs King	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining registers</li> <li>• First day calling/text messages</li> <li>• Identifying children whose absence needs further follow up action in line with the school absence procedure.</li> <li>• Late arrivals</li> <li>• Process for clearing registers</li> <li>• Administration of school attendance letters, leave of absence letters etc.</li> <li>• Producing attendance reports</li> <li>• Communication with CSAWS.</li> </ul>

- Attendance matters are reviewed by the head and members of the senior management team.
- Attendance issues are reported, on a minimum termly basis, to the Governing Body.
- School will liaise with the Local Authority Attendance Support Team at a minimum, termly
- School uses Central School Attendance and Welfare Service Ltd (CSAWS) to support the school with the processes associated with children's attendance at school. School employ CSAWS to provide the legal monitoring services and support that will help reduce the number of persistent absent pupils and improve whole school attendance.

## **Procedures**

**Our school procedures follow the expectations set out by the Department for Education in the guidance Working Together to improve school attendance (September 2022).**

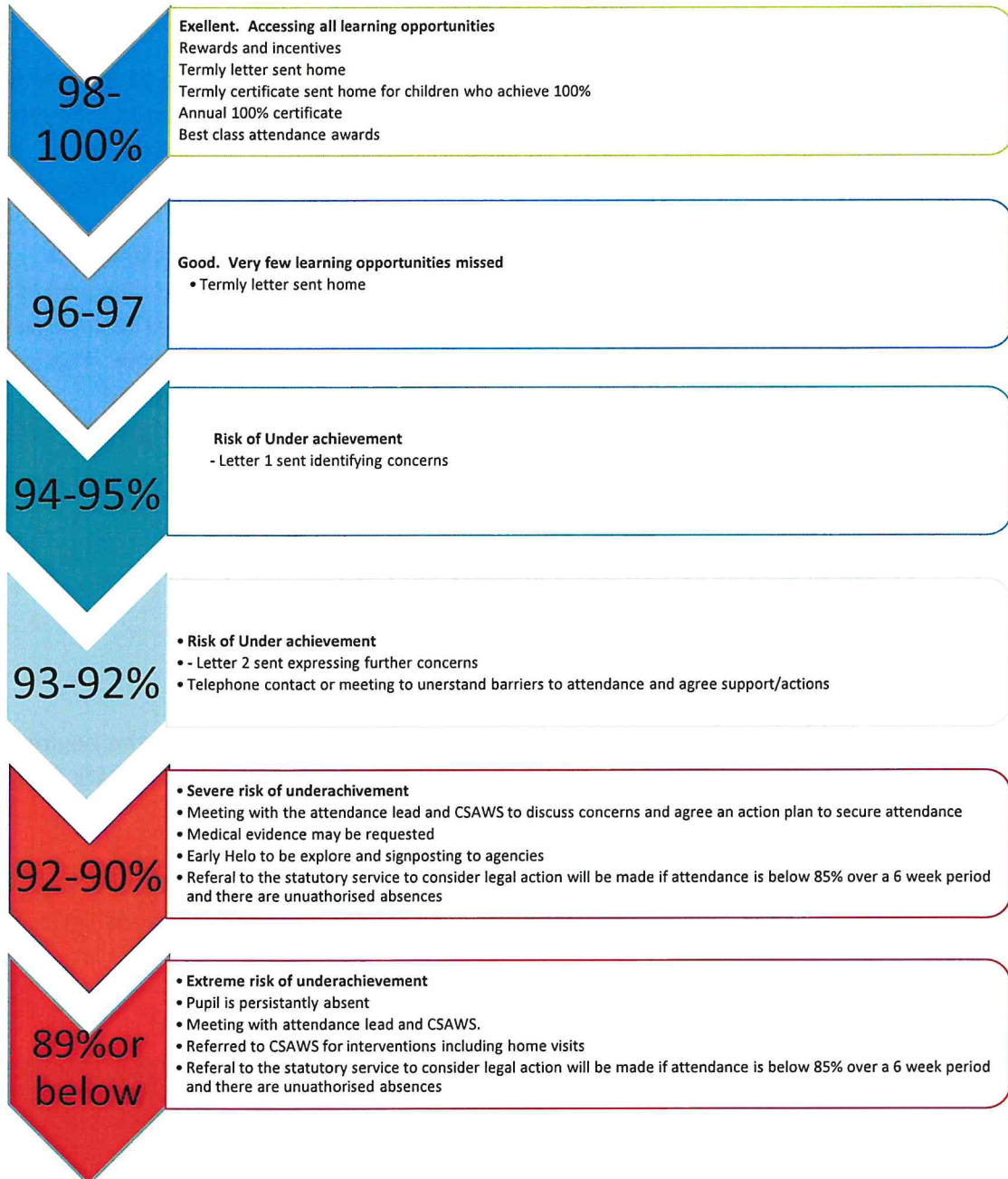
Our procedures are based around the principles and stages of:

- Preventing poor attendance
- Early intervention and Early Help to address early patterns of poor attendance and agree ways to improve
- Targeted interventions (including Early Help and Formal interventions) for those children who are persistently absent or severely absent
- Understanding barriers to individuals' attendance and agree individual plans for children with specific needs.
- Formal Statutory Interventions where support has not been effective or engaged with.



## Procedures

We will follow the following process for rewarding attendance and addressing attendance concerns of all pupils.



Where attendance has deteriorated rapidly, there are concerning patterns of absence, a number of unauthorised absences, or parents have not responded to concerns raised a referral may be made straight to CSAWS. Referrals will be made to Warwickshire LA Statutory Service for consideration of Legal Action where pupils have unauthorised absences.

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (sec 444) to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children receive education. Estranged parents with whom the child has had regular contact may be prosecuted as well as the day-to-day carer. Each situation must be dealt with on an individual basis, always remembering the welfare and safety of the child is the paramount concern. The term 'parent' also includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child as defined by the Children Act 1989 or who have care of the child as defined by the Education Act 199

### **Promoting Attendance and Preventing Absence**

#### **School Day and Punctuality**

It is important that pupils are punctual so that they do not miss out on the beginning of each school day. Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session.

If a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every-day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



(Over one academic year)

To access the most from the school day we ask parents to ensure that their children are in school for 8.30am



Children arriving after 8.30am will be late for school and have to report to the school office.

Where a pupil arrives after the register closes, this will be classed as an unauthorised late absence (code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes).

School registration will close at 8.40am

The registers are monitored daily and identify pupils who are arriving late. Regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable. Pupils with U codes may be referred to the Local Authority Statutory Team for consideration of Legal Action

### **Absence**

If a child is absent from school parents should contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.30am to inform the school of the reason for absence. Parents are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

At 9.30am school registers are checked for any absences where there has been no contact by parents and reason given.

School staff will send an email to parents to ascertain a reason for the child absence from school.

If staff are concerned about a child's absence or there is no response to text messages, they will follow the process in detailed in Appendix 1. This includes telephone calls to parents, telephone calls to other emergency contacts, home visits, referrals to the CSAWS Attendance and Welfare Officer and to the police for a safe and well check.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated (DFE Attendance guidance 2022)

**It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school.**

**Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child ( KCSIE 2023~~2~~) Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.**

## Illness:

Not all illness requires an absence from school. For minor childhood ailments such as coughs, colds, ear aches we would not expect children to be absent. However, when a parent makes the assessment that their child is unfit for school they should follow the above absence process.

~~If your child has symptoms of a respiratory infections such as Covid 19 and has a temperature or is too unwell to attend school, they should stay at home and avoid contact with others until they no longer have a temperature and are well enough to attend school.~~

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes.

If you are unsure if your child should attend school please contact the school who will offer advice and guidance or signpost you to the relevant service.

~~Where children are absent from school because their travel to or presence at school would conflict with guidance on self-isolating (issued by Public Health England or the department for education) or legislation related to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) they will be marked in the register as a X code this is not counted as an absence in school census (with the exception of absence due to diagnosed Covid 19 which is absence due to illness) See appendix 5 for further information.~~

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases, a parent's explanation of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance or reason for absence, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested

School will challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing addition services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

### **The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:**

- Child is absent and there are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness
- Child is absent and the same reasons for absence are frequently repeated

- Child is absent and attendance is below expected levels and there is a concerning pattern of absence/reasons for absence.
- Where there is a medical problems and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support

### **Medical appointments**

Parents should avoid making routine medical appointments and dental appointments during the school day. In the majority of cases, appointments can be made outside of the school day/during the school holidays.

Where appointments have to be taken during the school day, only the time for the appointment and travel to and from will be classed as an authorised absence. Pupils are expected to return to school for the remainder of the day/attend school prior to the appointment.

Parents are required to provide a copy of the appointment letter or card prior to the day of the appointment. Absences will only be authorised when this information has been received.

### **Reintegration of Long Term Absentees**

Absence can significantly interrupt the continuity of students learning, and positive strategies should be employed to minimise such effects.

#### **Key Principles**

- We should always keep in touch with a student/and his/her family during a long absence.
- We should always make sure he/she is welcomed back
- We should never make sarcastic comments about an absence – a thoughtless word can destroy hours of work by staff.

Head Teacher and SENDCo to consider a phased return where appropriate. Consideration needs to be given to any special needs the pupil may have and appropriate support identified. Consideration must be given to providing a mentor (staff member/student)

Class Teachers should ensure that the pupil feels welcomed back to school in an appropriate way and take any necessary steps to support their re-integration.

### **Other reasons for absences:**

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on each occasion. Notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays or child minding.



## Religious Observance

Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. However, parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. Religious bodies maybe contacted to verify these occasions.

## Traveller Absence

The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

School can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must advise school of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and inform the school regarding proposed return dates

School will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return.

Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

## Requests for Leave of Absence (exceptional circumstances)

The regulations regarding Leave of Absence (The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.) advise:

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.

### Expectations

- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence in advance parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify parents of their decision. It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- Where a leave of absence is requested, but additional days taken either prior to or after the request may be considered as part of the leave of absence and could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).
- Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as ‘unauthorised’. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council’s Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- **It is important to note**, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 each child if paid within 21 days).

- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits.**

### **Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing from and absent from Education**

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education or are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

All schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12).

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll on the limited grounds set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm. Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties.

In September 2016, the Department for Education updated the [statutory guidance](#) to reflect the 2016 amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006 Regulations.

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the 2006 regulations (as amended).

Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the CME officer, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii).

Appendix 3 details the local Procedures that School follows



This attendance policy is part of a broader suite of safeguarding policies including the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

### **Alternative Education Providers**

On rare occasions, a small number of pupils may be accessing an alternative education provider agreed by the school for all or part of their timetable. In this instance the pupil remains on roll at School. Attendance to approved alternative providers is monitored and reflected on school registers. The responsibility of ensuring pupils are safeguarded and receiving appropriate education remains with School.

### **Registers**

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations

Every half day of absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence can be given only when the head teacher has either approved in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the head teacher [see The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI No.2006/1751) – reg 7(1)].

There are procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks. School complies with and uses the DFE Compulsory National Attendance Codes to categorise absence (Appendix 5).

### **Use of Attendance Data**

All schools must provide their attendance data to the DFE, most schools use their management information systems to send their data via school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

We collect, use and store attendance information about our pupils and may receive information about you from your previous school. The information we keep regarding attendance includes name, contact details, attendance records, late records and any relevant medical information.

Attendance is reviewed at a minimum half termly, where there is cause for concern, this information is shared with CSAWS during regular attendance meetings held at school. CSAWS then follow up attendance concerns with parents and carers on school's behalf.

Information regarding attendance concerns may also be shared with the Local Authority as part of statutory processes.

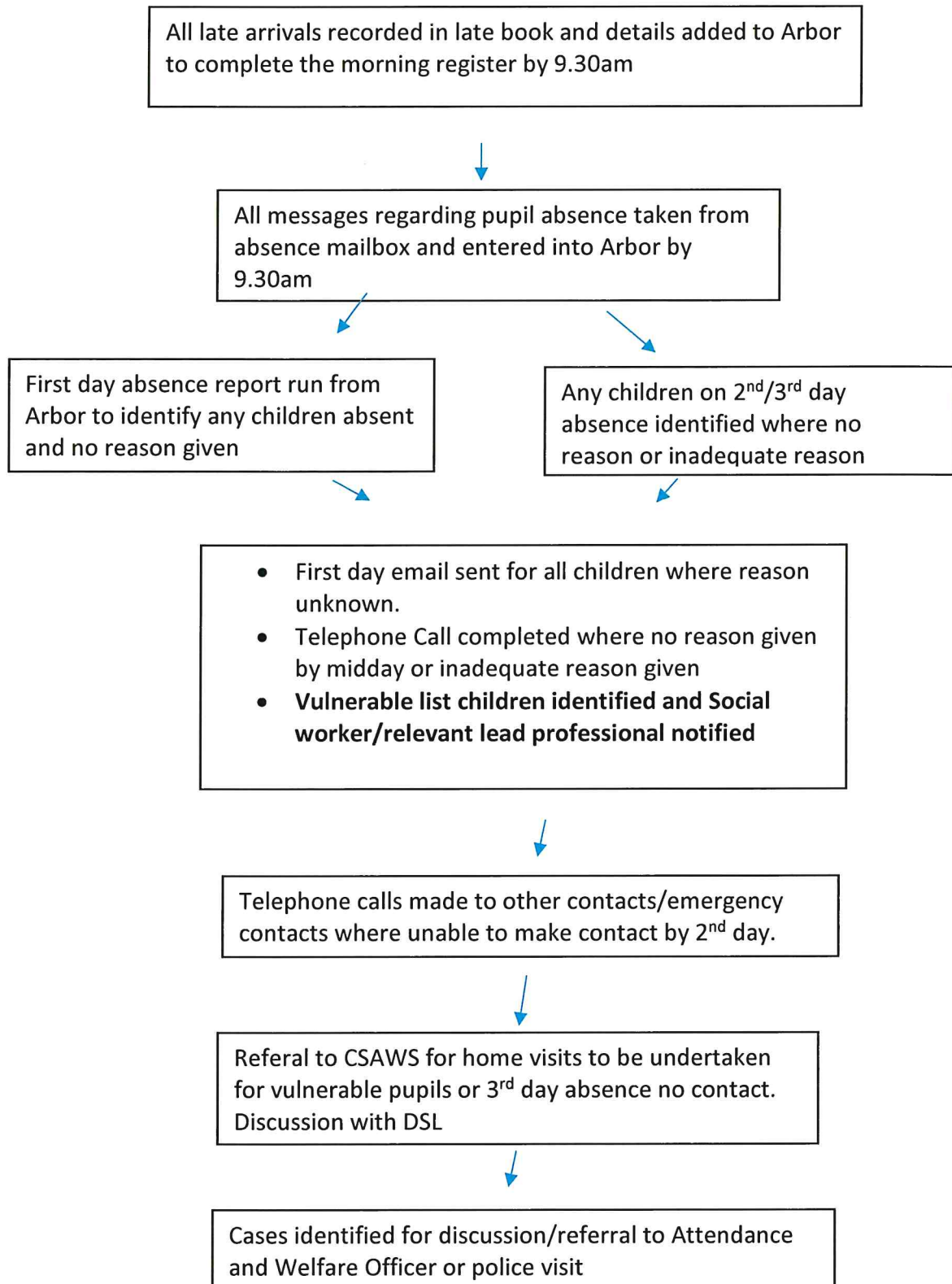
The Head teacher will analyse attendance data half termly for whole school and groups of pupils. This will be shared with governors and used to inform the strategic plan to improve school attendance.

Attendance Data will be shared with class teachers in preparation for Pupil progress reviews and parents' evenings and to target interventions.

Attendance Data will be produced and used to promote attendance through the school newsletter, website and rewards and incentives.

## Appendix 1

### School Absence Procedure





## Appendix 2

### ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence DELETED X CODE COVID	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

## Appendix 3

### Children Missing Education

Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps\* have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school should make an immediate referral to Warwickshire County Council's Children Missing Education (CME) Service.

The Children Missing Education Service can be contacted on 01926 742036

\*Reasonable steps include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visits where safe to do so
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other service known to be involved with the pupil/family
- All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the pupil's yellow file

Upon receipt of a referral from the school, the CME Service will then continue to attempt to track the child, for at least a further 10 school days, using access to additional contacts/services, e.g. housing. If this also fails to establish the pupil's whereabouts, the school will be informed by email and may then, but not before, remove the pupil from roll and report to the LA.School to School database, entering Curdworth Primary School in the box for destination. This will place the pupil on the list of Children Missing from Education.

Deletions from roll agreed with the CME Service will normally be backdated to the first day of absence.

If the CME Service is able to contact the pupil and her/his parents, arrangements will be made with the school and family for a return to education, including a re-integration programme where necessary. Where pupils continue to be absent the non school attendance procedures detailed in the school policy will be followed.

If the pupil has registered at another school, the school will delete the child's name from our roll and transfer the child's educational records to the new school in the normal way. Any child protection records will be transferred separately and securely for the attention of the DSL in the new school and a receipt secured.

Pupils leaving the school for known destinations outside the maintained sector in England and Wales will be updated to the School to School database. This includes private/independent schools, schools in other countries (including Scotland and Northern Ireland) and pupils moving into home education. The latter will be formally

notified to the ESWs Home Education Officer by the school as soon as written confirmation is received from the parent(s). If no confirmation is received the above Missing Children procedures will apply.