



Harrietsham Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy

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Responsibility:	Pastoral Lead
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Harrietsham Church of England Primary School Attendance Policy

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School Context:

Harrietsham CEP Vision Statement

We are a warm, welcoming, and inclusive school rooted in our rural community. Like the mustard seed we grew from tiny beginnings and our branches are now spread wide –providing support and taking our values beyond the school gates. All those in our community feel safe and nurtured - able to flourish and grow academically, spiritually, emotionally and physically to achieve their full God-given potential.

“Nurtured we flourish”

We are a nurturing school. As such we believe in, and follow, **The Six Principles of Nurture** in all of our practice.

1. Children’s learning is understood developmentally.
2. The classroom offers a safe base.
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing.
4. Language is a vital means of communication.
5. All behaviour is communication.
6. The importance of transition in children’s lives.

Our Values

The roots of our vision are in the parable of the Mustard Seed.

‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches’.
Matthew 13 31-32

In order to grow and reach our potential, everything that we do in school is driven by our vision and underpinned by our core Christian values of:

Love, Fellowship and Forgiveness

Statement of Intent

Harrietsham Church of England Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils.

The Governors, Head Teacher and Staff, in partnership with parents, have a duty to promote full attendance at Harrietsham Church of England Primary School.

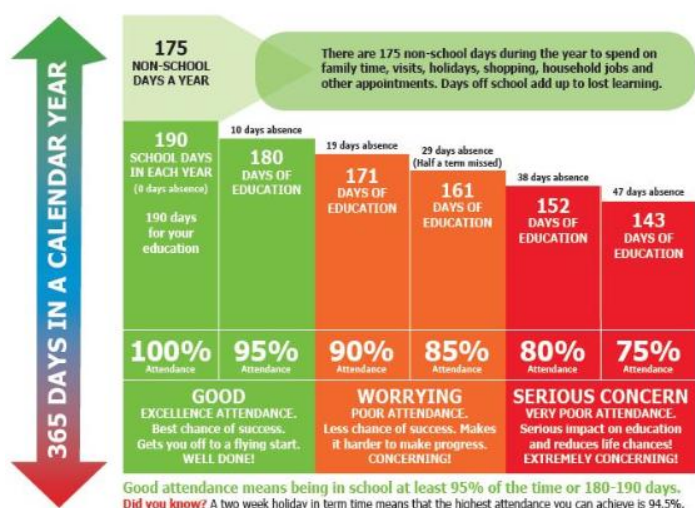
1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

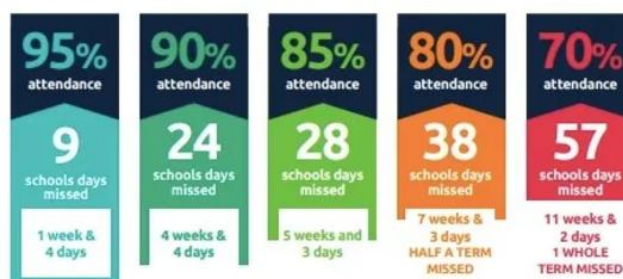
- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- We also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Don't miss out on the education you deserve.



Every day in school counts...



and every minute counts...



2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#).
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#).
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#).
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#).
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#).
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made> It also refers to:

- [School census guidance.](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education.](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools.](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance.
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues.
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers.
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so.
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader (Pastoral Leader) responsible for attendance

The Pastoral Leader (also known as the 'Senior Attendance Champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents / carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance is Jo Griffin - she can be contacted via email: Jo.griffin@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk or via phone: 01622 859261.

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Pastoral Leader), and the Headteacher.
- Working with KPAS Attendance Officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The Attendance Officer is Kathy Roberts - She can be contacted via email: Kathy.roberts@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk or via phone: 01622 859261.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis. The correct codes (see Appendix 1) are checked and submitted by the Attendance Officer on a daily basis.

3.6 School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Attendance Officer or Pastoral Leader where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents / Carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them).

Parents / Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day, on time (between 8:30am and 8:50am).
- Call (01622 859261) or email (office@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk) the school to report their child's absence before 8:50am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Kathy Roberts (Attendance and Admissions Officer - Kathy.roberts@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk) or Jo Griffin (Pastoral Leader - Jo.griffin@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk) or by calling the school office on 01622 859261.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day (8:50am) and once during the second session (after the children's lunch break at 1pm). It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not (for pupils of compulsory school age).
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:50am and ends at 3:20pm.

The school gates open at 8:30am and children are able to enter their classrooms from this time.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am.

The register for the second session will be taken after the children's lunch break at 1pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:50am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via: office@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk or 01622 859261.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised. Evidence of absence may be requested at this stage (e.g. a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence). We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Requests for a leave of absence must be sent to the school at least two weeks before the planned absence. If permission is not given, or is sought after the event, then the absence will be unauthorised. We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

See Section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (between 8:50am and 9:20am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed (after 9:20am) will be marked as an unauthorised absence, using the appropriate code.

All pupils who arrive late must report, with their parent, to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school would try to contact on one further occasion. If no response is received, a home visit will be made
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent.
- Call the parent on the second day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken. If absence continues, the school will consider involving a KPAS Attendance Officer or, under individual case circumstances, police support may be requested.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's Youth Offending Team Officer.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance.
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents / carers

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in Section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via written reports every seasonal term. Parents/carers may also request a copy of their child's attendance data by contacting the school office. Parents may also refer to Arbor to check their child's attendance.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

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The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#).

These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad.
- Attending an interview.
- Study leave.
- A temporary, time-limited, part-time timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define '**exceptional circumstances**' as one-off events which are unavoidable. Examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral of a close relative, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are **rare, significant, unavoidable and short**. By 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

The following reasons are examples of absence that will **not** be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g., poorly/ unwell.
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill.
- Oversleeping.
- Inadequate clothing / uniform.
- Confusion over school dates.
- Medical / dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons.
- Child's / family birthday.
- Shopping trip.
- Family holidays.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in writing, through an email to the office with details of the request and full reasons.

The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical / dental appointments (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a

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traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority.
- Attending work experience.
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

If we have reason to believe that a child is absent from school for any reason other than that provided to us, the procedures in point 4.5 will be followed and we will treat the absence as an 'unexplained absence'. This will include making contact with the child's emergency contacts and following out a home visit. In these circumstances, we may ask for proof of the reason given for the child's absence.

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance.

Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send them a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil.
- Whether further support, a notice to improve, or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution.
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s), including all of those with parental responsibility, can be issued with a penalty notice.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 if they do not pay within this time.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.


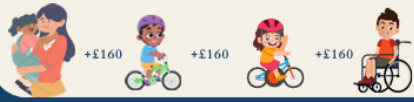
Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#).
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

Attendance

What the new rules mean for me

- 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 because your child will miss 5 school days you may be given a penalty notice fine by the Local Authority. The fine is £160 but if you pay it in 21 days it will be reduced to £80.
- 2** For every child a penalty is given

+£160 + £160 + £160 +£160
4 children & 1 adult = £640
Reduced to £320 if paid in 21 days
- 3** Regular Attendance
10 in **10**
If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks and their absences are unauthorised the school will consider prosecution.
1 DAY = **2** Sessions
- 4** For a family of two parents

+£160 +£160 +£160 +£160
4 children & 2 parents =£1280
Reduced to £640 if paid in 21 days
- 5** If in any period of no more than 3 years, your child has a 2nd and 3rd leave of absence or pattern of irregular attendance...

	2ND TIME	3RD TIME
1 child	=£320	A penalty notice fine will not be given. Your case will be taken to court.
2 children	= £640	A magistrate can fine each parent £2500 for each child.
3 children	=£960	
4 children	= £1280	

1 parent & 4 children	= £10,000
2 parents & 4 children	= £20,000

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Harrietsham Church of England Primary School, we promote attendance with the school by sharing the whole school attendance percentage in weekly newsletters. We celebrate the top class each week in Key Stage One and Key Stage 2. We also celebrate 100% punctuality each week. This promotes discussion around the importance of attending and encourages children to be in school every day.

We also promote attendance by:

- Analysing attendance data.
- Discussing any attendance concerns weekly in DSL meetings – and supporting parents quickly where concerns are raised.
- Giving parents / carers written details of their child's attendance on seasonal achievement reports (including end of year report) and raising any emerging concerns at parents evenings.
- Contacting parents / carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's 96% target for attendance or if they move in to a lower monitoring group.
- Celebrating good attendance by sending praise messages home for consistently good attendance and for children who have made significant improvements.
- Conducting home visits, including going to the house to collect children, if possible and where needed.
- Sharing attendance data split into vulnerable groups with Governors.
- Termly monitoring by SLT.
- Year Group attendance shared on weekly newsletter: Attendance Matters.

The Senior Attendance Champion (Pastoral Leader) will ensure that families requiring high levels of support will be provided with this using a range of strategies, including support from the Pastoral Team and the Local Authority. Regular analysis of data will be carried out to inform next steps.

Class teachers will be involved and have knowledge of this on an on-going basis, so that they can support the child and the family on a daily basis as the person with most contact with the child in school.

See 'Appendix 2 – process for improving and supporting attendance,' for the specific schedule in place for improving and supporting attendance.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Where a child has complex barriers that impact on attendance, the school may put in place the following support:

- A reintegration plan co-produced with parents and any other agencies involved to support attendance.
- An Inclusion Support Programme which is reviewed regularly with parents / carers and any other involved agencies.
- Consulting with an Educational Psychologist at the local Emotionally Based School Avoiders consultation forum.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

If a child is absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND, the school works closely with the family and any other agencies to make adjustments to support attendance. This may be with meetings outside of school hours with the child on the school site, Microsoft Teams contact, home visits and provision of learning for the child. The school will liaise with the local authority for more complex cases.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

When a child has had a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, the school may put support in place to support reintegration if needed. This may be in the form of informal catch-ups with the PSO in advance of a return to school and when the child has returned to school.

If a phased return is appropriate and supportive this could be put in place.

Regular reviews of the child's success upon return to school will be carried out between the parents / carers and the Class Teacher. These may be informal.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

The school will identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance.
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis.
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see Section 8.4 below).
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

Data returns

(See 'Working together' guidance, chapter 2, page 21 and regulation 13 of the School Attendance Regulations 2024).

Harrietsham Church of England Primary School follows our statutory duty to share specific information from our registers with Kent County Council at particular points in accordance with Regulation 13 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2024, including:

- When any pupil's name is added or deleted from the admission register outside of standard transition times. (The latter is also known as a deletion return).
- Names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who have 10 continuous school days of unauthorised absence (codes N, O, G, U) recorded on their register (known as an attendance return).

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- Names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who have accumulated 15 school days of absence (code I) either consecutively and / or intermittently, as well as any pupil the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 continuous school days because of illness (known as a sickness return).
- Deletion, attendance and sickness returns must be made via the Digital Front Door on the Kelsi website.

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence (focus from Ofsted)

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school.
 - Listen and understand barriers to attendance.
 - Explain the help that is available.
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence.
 - Review any existing actions or interventions.
- Where necessary introduce an 'attendance contract' (Appendix 20) whereby school and parents agree to supportive actions and review the implementation of these at regular intervals.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see Section 5.2, above).
- Send early communication to target unauthorised absence through letters, phone calls and meetings. Class teachers will communicate early concerns and interventions strategies as soon as attendance becomes a concern (see Appendix 2).

If a child's attendance drops to 96%, their attendance will be monitored on a weekly basis and a Medical Evidence letter (Appendix 9) may be sent from the Headteacher. This letter will state that medical evidence will be required for all periods of absence.

If a child misses 50% or more of school sessions they will be classed as 'severely absent'.

If medical evidence is not provided, a penalty warning letter may be actioned. A penalty fine will follow if the parents / carers continue to not provide medical evidence. Once a child's attendance drops to 90% or below, the parents / carers will be invited to a meeting with the Pastoral Leader / Attendance Officer and Headteacher to discuss the matter and find a way to resolve the issue. Failure to attend the meeting or continued absence, will result in a referral to the School Liaison Officer or a Penalty Notice raised.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by Pastoral Leader.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

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Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes

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O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: Process for Improving and Supporting Attendance

Date	Support	Staff Member	Description
All terms: Monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly monitoring of pupils with less than 96% attendance. • Contacting parents / carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's 96% target for attendance or if they move in to a lower monitoring group. • Persistence Absence / Severe Absence / Attendance concerns discussed weekly in DSL meetings – presented by Attendance Officer. • Monitoring of attendance data by Safeguarding Governor. • Meetings with Parents / Carers and Attendance Officer and Headteacher where attendance falls below 90% or improvement not seen. Rewards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise emails sent home to any families of chn with 96%+ attendance each half term. • Improved attendance emails sent home each long term. • Class attendance and punctuality shared on weekly newsletter: Attendance Matters. • Sharing of weekly attendance in Worship with chn and highest KS1 and KS2 class. • Sharing of 100% punctuality each week on worship. 			
Term 1	On-going observation	Class Teacher	Class teachers will keep an eye on attendance / punctuality and have quick catch-ups with parents and their children where there is an immediate concern.
	Parent Consultations	Class Teacher	Class teachers will share the attendance figure for the year so far with parents and discuss any concerns.
	96%+ Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
Term 2	Detailed SLT Data Analysis	Senior Attendance Champion	SLT will analyse data and share the names and details of those pupils with attendance concerns with class teachers, highlighting those accessing PP.*
	Interim Reports	Class Teacher	Attendance figure for the year to date will be shared with parents on the Interim Report.
	96%+ Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
	Improved Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
Term 3	Individual Teacher Attendance Meetings	Class Teacher	Class teachers will arrange to meet with parents of those pupils identified as a concern to discuss the issues. (See agenda, script and strategies sections below)
	Parent Consultations	Class Teacher	Class teachers will share the attendance figure for the year so far with parents and discuss any concerns.
	96%+ Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
Term 4	Detailed SLT Data Analysis	Senior Attendance Champion	SLT will repeat the analysis process above, highlighting improvements / new pupils of concern.
	Interim Reports	Class Teacher	Attendance figure for the year to date will be shared with parents on the Interim Report.
	96%+ Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
	Improved Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
Term 5	Individual Teacher Attendance Meetings	Class Teacher	Class teachers will arrange to meet with parents of those pupils identified as a concern to discuss the issues. (See agenda, script and strategies sections below)
	Parent consultations	Class Teacher	Low level concerns will be discussed at these meetings. Higher level concerns will be discussed at separate meetings after Easter.
	Detailed SLT Data Analysis	Senior Attendance Champion	SLT to analyse data and ascertain impact of support and actions. To be shared with class teachers.
	96%+ Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
Term 6	Transition Meetings	Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants	Attendance / punctuality concerns to be shared as part of transition discussions.
	96%+ Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.
	Improved Attendance	Attendance Officer	Thank you message home.

Appendix 3: Improving Attendance Flow Diagram

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE – Possible Escalating Actions

Attendance expectations shared with pupils, parents and staff in a range of ways

Contact 1:

95% or 90% - Telephone call from Attendance Officer, follow up email.

When at 90% 4 week monitoring period set.

If no improvement

Contact 2:

Letter/Email sent to parents requesting a meeting with Headteacher and Attendance Officer. Parent contract agreed to monitor over a set period. AS1 Referral to Early Help offered when **necessary**.

Contact 3:

Parent contract broken – Notice to improve issued.

Contact 4:

Penalty notice warning sent to Parents.

Contact 5:

Letter to Parents – Penalty notice issued.

STRATEGIES

Intervention strategies should be explored at all stages when attendance is declining

Examples

Rewards: short and long term

Adjusted entry routine

Discussion with trusted adult

School dog support

Buddy

Attendance report

Group change

Peer support

SEND support

Other additional needs support

Adjusted curriculum

Parenting Contract

Governors Attendance Panel

Appendix 4: Attendance Monitoring Groups

Green Group 96% - 100% (No risk)	• 100% = Attended school every day. Outstanding!!!
	• 99.5% = 1 day absent (6 lessons missed)
	• 99.0% = 2 days absent (12 lessons missed)
	• 94.4% = 3 days absent (18 lessons missed)
	• 97.9% = 4 days absent (24 lessons missed)
	• 97.4% = 1 week of school missed
	• 96.8% = 6 days absent (36 lessons missed)
	• 96.3% = 7 days absent (42 lessons missed)
Yellow Group 93% - 95.9% (Risk of underachievement)	• 95.8% = 8 days absent (48 lessons missed)
	• 95.3% = 9 days absent (54 lessons missed)
	• 94.7% = 2 weeks of school missed
	• 94.2% = 11 days absent (66 lessons missed)
	• 93.7% = 12 days absent (72 lessons missed)
	• 93.2% = 13 days absent (78 lessons missed)
Amber Group 90% - 92.9% (Serious risk of underachievement)	• 92.6% = 14 days absent (84 lessons missed)
	• 92.1% = 3 weeks of school missed
	• 91.6% = 16 days absent (96 lessons missed)
	• 91.1% = 17 days absent (102 lessons missed)
	• 90.5% = 18 days absent (108 lessons missed)
	• 90.0% = 19 days absent (114 lessons missed)
<p>From September 2015 any student whose attendance is 90% or less will be deemed to be "Persistently Absent (PA)", this is the equivalent of 19 or more missed school days over a full academic year.</p> <p>Over a five year period a child whose attendance is at 90%, will miss a half of a school year; that's a lot of lost education</p>	
Pink Group 85% - 89.9% (Severe risk of underachievement) "PERSISTENTLY ABSENT"	• 89.5% = 4 weeks of school missed (120 lessons missed)
	• 88.4% = 22 days absent (132 lessons missed)
	• 87.4 % = 24 days absent (144 lessons missed)
	• 86.3% = 26 days absent (156 lessons missed)
	• 85.3% = 28 days absent (168 lessons missed)
Red Group 0% - 84.9% (Extreme risk) "PERSISTENTLY ABSENT"	• 84.2% = 6 weeks of school missed (180 lessons missed)
	• 80.0% = 38 days absent (228 lessons missed)
	• 70.0% = 57 days absent (342 lessons missed)
	• 60.0% = 76 days absent (456 lessons missed)
	• 50.0% = 95 days absent (570 lessons missed)
	• 40.0% = 114 days absent (684 lessons missed)

Appendix 5: Rewards and Recognition

Weekly

Sharing of Class Attendance and Punctuality in newsletter (Attendance Matters Section).

During Worship:

- Sharing of School Attendance Level.
- Recognition of best classes attendance in KS1 and KS2.
- Recognition of 100% punctuality.

Termly (Terms 1 – 6)

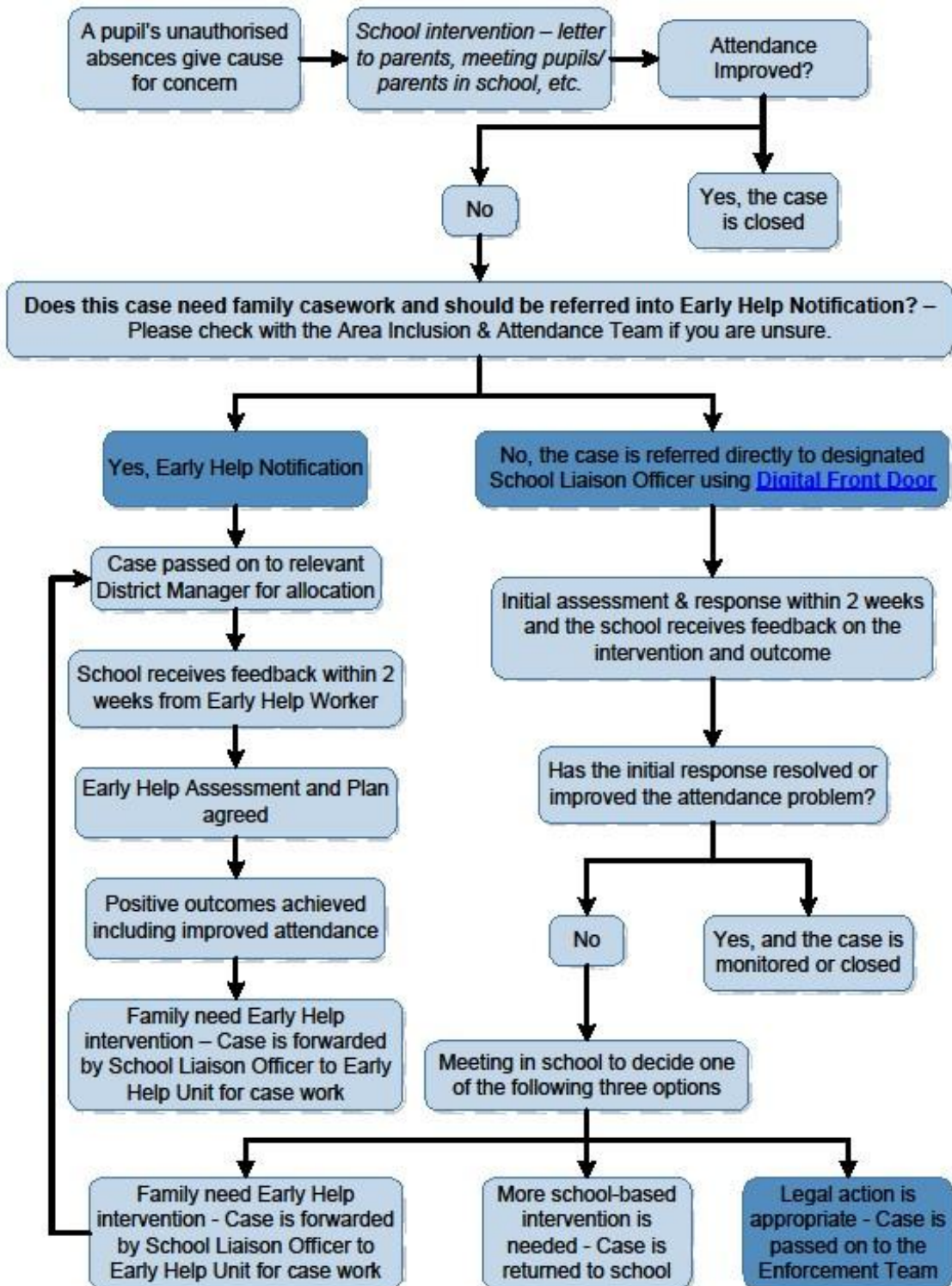
Recognition for all children with 96%+ attendance via 'thank you' message home to parents.

Seasonally (Term 2, 4 & 6)

Recognition for all children with improved attendance via 'thank you' message home to parents.

Appendix 6: Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance

Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance



Appendix 7: Parent Contract - Attendance

Attendance Support Plan (Initial meeting)					
Date of meeting:		Time of meeting:		Face to face or virtual:	
Chair of meeting:		Role of Chair:		Lead professional for parenting contract:	
Pupil name:		Pupil DoB:	Year Group:	School:	
Pupil address:					
Pupil's attendance % (Sep to present):		Authorised absence % (Sep to present):		Unauthorised absence % (Sep to present):	
Parent / carer (1) full name:			Parent / carer (2) full name:		
Parent / carer (1) address (if different from pupil):			Parent / carer (2) address (if different from pupil):		
Parent / carer (1) Date of birth:			Parent / carer (1) Date of birth:		
MEETING PARTICIPANTS					
Full name		Role (School, Parent etc)	Present (Y / N)	Contact number and email address	

BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE: What are the reasons for the pupil's absences?

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REQUIREMENTS FOR PARENT(S): What do/does parent(s) need to do to help unblock the barriers to the pupil's attendance?

Action point	Action to be taken	Who may be able to help with this?	When will this need to be done by?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

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VOICE OF THE PUPIL: What does the pupil feel they can do to help? *(If the pupil attended the meeting and they are age and ability appropriate to be able to participate).*

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SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL

Action point	Support to be provided and for whom is it?	Which action in the requirements for parent(s) section does this relate to?	When will this be put in place or completed?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

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SUPPORT FROM SERVICES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL (I.e., multi-agency teams such as Early Help)			
Action point	Support to be provided and for whom is it	Which action in the requirements for parent(s) section does this relate to?	When will this be put in place or completed?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

ANY OTHER COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS PRESENT:

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Parental consent to information sharing: I/we understand that information about me/us has been and will continue to be collected by schools and local authority services (where relevant) to assess and provide appropriate support. I understand the school and/or local authority may also use this information for monitoring and safeguarding purposes and information could be shared with external agencies and service providers, without parental consent.

A copy of this parenting contract will be circulated to all participants present as well as any relevant professionals unable to attend the meeting. As stated in part (7), section 19 of the [Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 a parenting contract](#) must be signed by parent(s) and signed on behalf of the governing body, therefore this contract may be viewed by the chair of governors.

Additional information for schools parents and local authorities about parenting contracts can be found in Department for Education guidance, including [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

<p>PARENT DECLARATION</p> <p>By signing this contract, I agree to comply with the requirements for parent(s) specified within it for the duration the contract runs.</p> <p>I am aware that refusal to commit to meeting the expectations set out in this contract may result in its termination and other routes being pursued by the school, including a referral to the local authority which could subsequently lead to prosecution in accordance with the Education Act 1996 444(1), 444(1A); or 444(ZA) in the case of an alternative curriculum provision.</p>	<p>PARENT (1)</p>	<p>PARENT (2)</p>
	<p>SIGNATURE:</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>SIGNATURE:</p> <p>.....</p>
	<p>PRINT NAME:</p>	<p>PRINT NAME:</p>
	<p>RELATIONSHIP TO PUPIL:</p>	<p>RELATIONSHIP TO PUPIL:</p>
	<p>DATE:</p>	<p>DATE:</p>

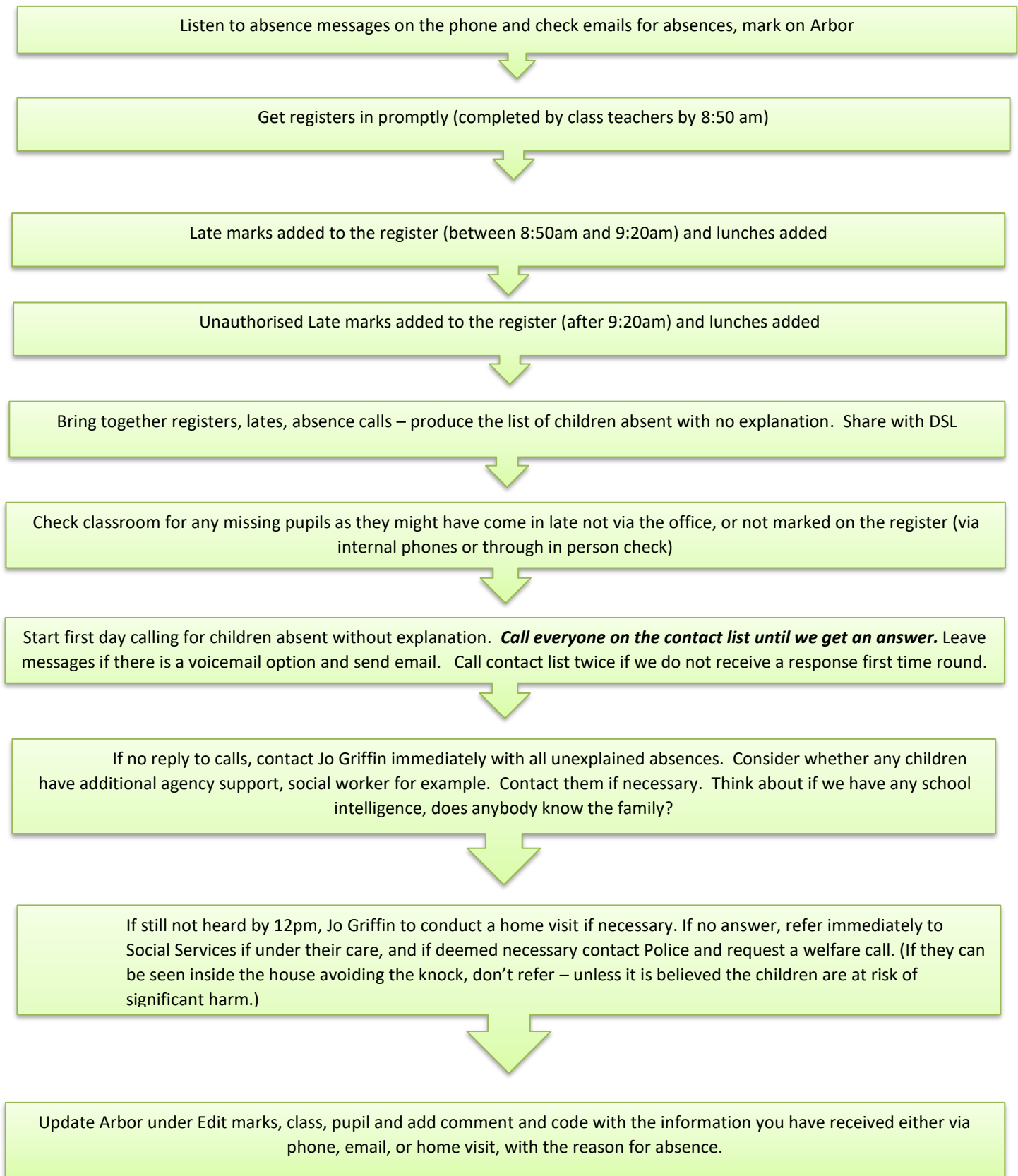
SCHOOL DECLARATION
 By signing this contract, I agree to provide support to the parent(s) to help achieve the requirements as outlined above and that a signature by a member of school staff is made on behalf of the governing body as set out in section 19 of the [Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 part \(7\)](#).

NAME	JOB TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE

Date of next meeting:	Time of next meeting:	Location of next meeting:
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Appendix 8: First day of absence flow chart

Morning Absence Process



Appendix 9: Attendance Management Persistent Absentee (below 90%) flow chart

