



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Applies to:	Fortis Academy
Staff member responsible:	Assistant Headteacher-Attendance
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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims and Objectives
3. Expected Levels of Attendance
4. Attendance Partnership Expectations
5. Roles and Responsibilities in Managing Attendance
6. Academy Day/Punctuality
7. Reporting an Absence/First day Absence
8. Illness
9. Medical Evidence and Supporting evidence
10. Other Reasons for Absence
11. Authorising Absences
12. Requests for Leave of Absence During Term Time
13. Reintegration of Long-Term Absentees
14. Monitoring Attendance
15. Attendance Rewards
16. Truancy within school
17. Alternative Education Providers
18. Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing or Absent in Education
19. Statutory Duty
20. Local Authority
21. Deletion from Register
22. Monitoring and Review
23. Relationships to Other Policies

1. Introduction

At Fortis Academy we recognise that regular school attendance is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the academy seeking to work actively with parents and carers to ensure a regular pattern of attendance is maintained. We expect every student on roll to attend every day when the academy is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We will endeavour to offer support when barriers to learning have been identified and aim to safeguard your child in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

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 students, and we use a variety of rewards to promote good attendance and punctuality. We encourage children to attend and put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of a positive attitude towards school and learning. Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:

- Attainment in school
- Relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- Confidence to attempt new work and to work alongside others

The Academy Council and Headteacher, in partnership with parents and carers have a duty to promote full attendance at school under **legislation** and '**safeguarding**'.

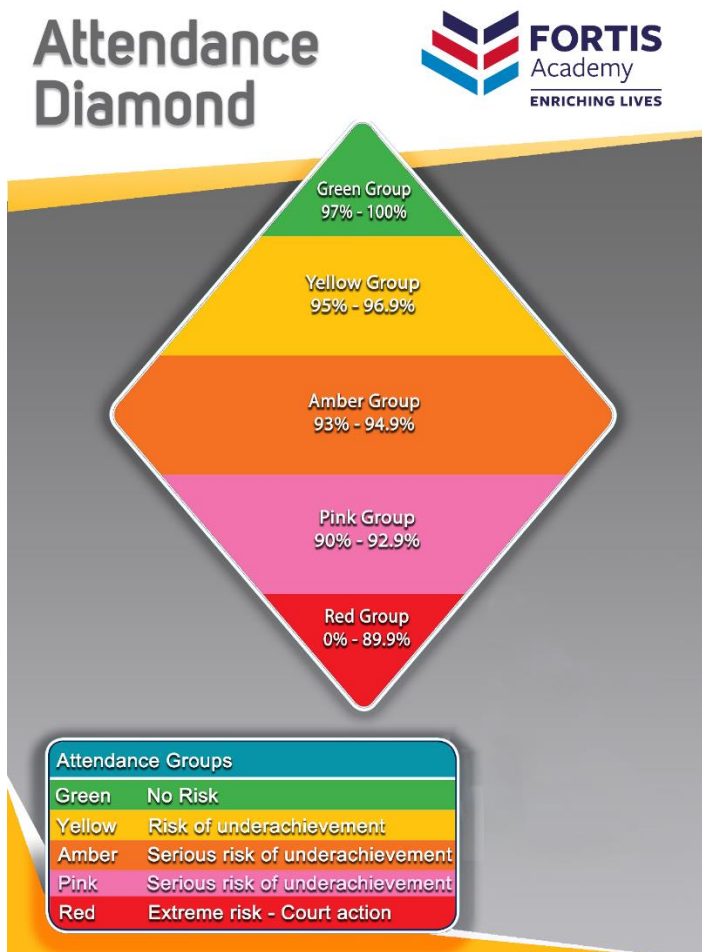
2. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives are:

- To emphasise the importance of and encourage students' maximum attendance and promote punctuality to enable them to take full advantage of their education opportunities.
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance;
- To communicate to all relevant parties (teachers, parents/carers) the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed "authorised";
- To stress the need for home and the academy to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance and punctuality.
- Record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism;

3. Expected levels of attendance

Attending school regularly and on time has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for students. Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success. At Fortis Academy we use an attendance diamond to monitor attendance levels.



4. Attendance Partnership Expectations

Students

We expect that all students will:

- Attend the Academy regularly
- Attend the Academy punctually
- Attend the Academy appropriately prepared for the day.

Parents

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time.

The Education Act 1996 section 7 defines the Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age.

(7) The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
(b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The Education Act 1996 section 576 defines the meaning of “parent”.

- (1) In this Act, unless the context of otherwise requires, “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person-
- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or
(b) who has care of him, except that in section 499(8) it only includes such a person if he is an individual.

Definition of a parent

A parent means:

All natural parents, whether they are married or not.

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and

Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

The local authority and Academy will need to decide who comes within the definition of parent in respect of a particular student when using the legal measures, but generally parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

We expect that all parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for the children will:

- Ensure regular attendance.
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at the Academy punctually and prepared for the school day.
- Contact the Academy on the first day of the child’s absence and keep in regular contact with the Academy.
- Contact the Academy promptly whenever a problem occurs that may keep the child away from the Academy.

The Academy

Parents and students can expect the following from school:

- Early contact from school when a student fails to attend without providing a reason
- Regular and accurate recording of attendance
- Informing parents if a student’s attendance falls below expected levels
- To listen and understand to the barriers to school attendance and offer advice and support to improve attendance.
- To agree action plans to improve attendance.

5. Roles and Responsibilities in managing attendance and punctuality

At Fortis Academy we have a whole school approach to attendance whereby attendance is everyone’s responsibility. We expect staff to be positive role models who follow our policy and procedures consistently.

Attendance Champion- is a named Senior Member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues. This is currently Mrs S Williams.

If you have a concern about your child’s attendance your first point of contact is a member of staff from your child’s Year Team.

Multi-Tiered System of Support:

Our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) ensures comprehensive attendance intervention for all children. The system comprises three Tiers:

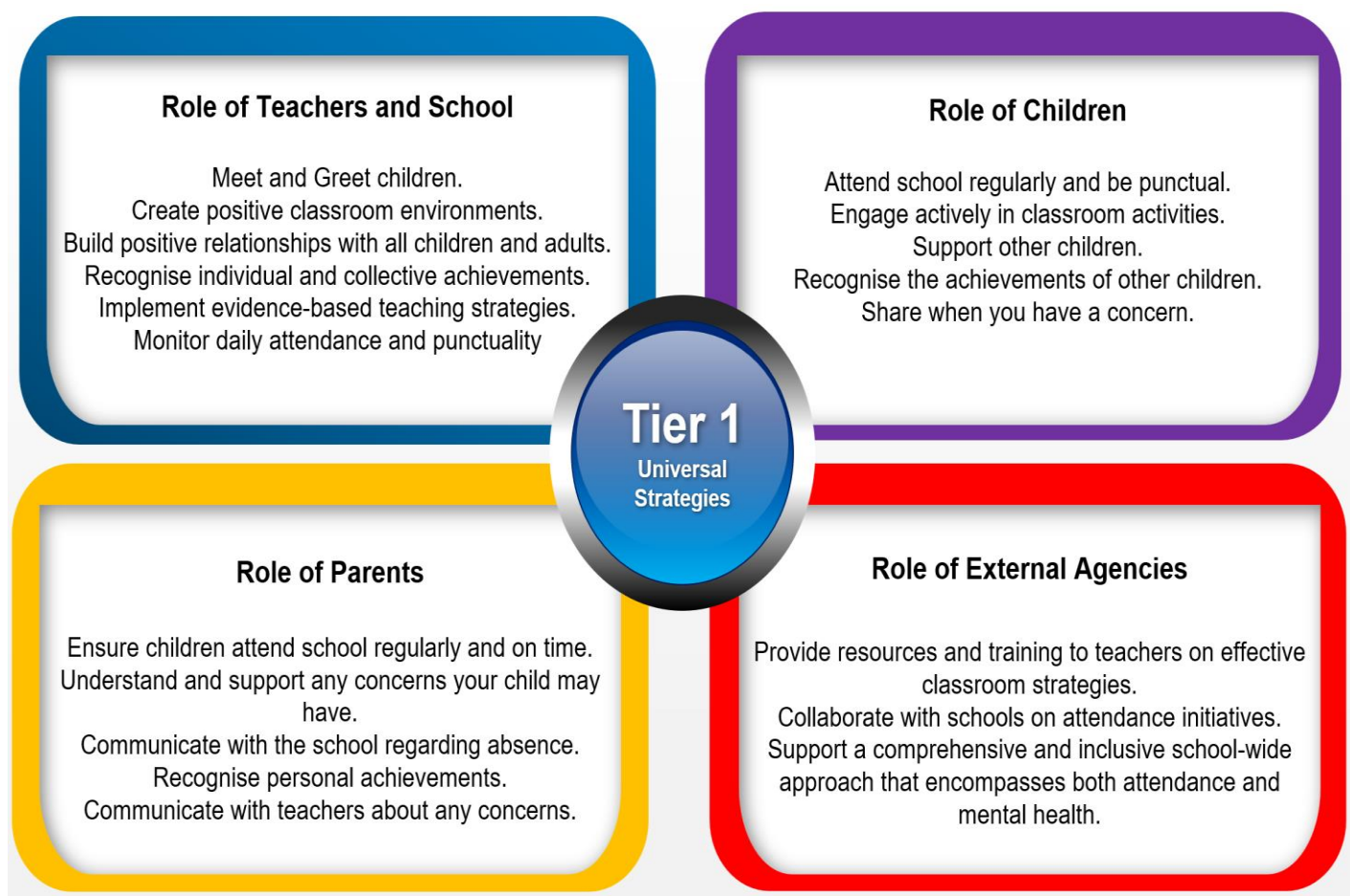
Tier 1 provides a universal offering to all children.

Tier 2 involves early internal support and intervention.

Tier 3 is higher levels of support for children, young people and families who require access to external agency support.

- The system incorporates staff, children, parents, and external agencies.
- The process is completely aligned with Department for Education (DFE) guidelines.

The diagram below shows the Inclusive attendance approach Fortis Academy uses to show Tier 1 responsibilities:



Role	Responsibilities
Accountable Officer	The Chief Executive, as Accountable Officer, has overall responsibility for ensuring that the SET academies adhere to their legal obligations around the completion of attendance registers.
The Director of Education	Will ensure that the policy is maintained and processes are quality assured through visits and scrutiny of attendance records.
Academy Council	Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (e.g., pupil registration, attendance registers).
Headteacher	Will ensure that statutory responsibilities are met by all staff when completing attendance registers and that local policy regarding follow-up to non-attendance is maintained and regularly reviewed. They are responsible for ensuring that consideration is given to any training and resource implications that are defined through their local policy. Responsible for authorising any requests for leave of absence in term time.
Deputy Headteacher (Lead DSL)	-Oversee all safeguarding concerns related to attendance. -Support the attendance team/year team and get involved with parent/student meetings when all other avenues have been exhausted. -Liaise with outside agencies as and when necessary
Assistant Headteacher	-Develop and implement a strategic plan to improve whole school attendance. -Analyse data and develop strategies to improve attendance within different cohorts of students. -Implement the policy and drive attendance as a whole school priority with all staff, students, parents and additional stakeholders. --Use data to oversee and implement the Birmingham Fast Track approach to attendance. Co-ordinate the implementation of this approach with the team. -Have an overview of all interventions and the FAST TRACK process. -Provide CPD for staff to ensure consistency across all areas involved in attendance. -Line manage the attendance team. -Embed consistent attendance practices and procedures within the attendance team, year teams and admin staff. -Promote attendance by providing attendance inputs in assemblies, staff briefings and for Tracker Tuesday sessions. -Provide regular updates to staff/parents/students about current attendance picture and patterns -Embed whole school rewards for improvement in attendance/excellent attendance.

	-Support the attendance team/year team and get involved with parent/student meetings when all other avenues have been exhausted. -Liaise with outside agencies as and when necessary. -Oversee daily absence procedures.
Year Team Staff and SENDCO	-Have an oversight of year group/SEND attendance. -Make attendance a high priority for the year group/SEND cohort and share messages/inputs about attendance in assemblies/edge time activities. -Use data to select students for targeted attendance intervention. -Run targeted attendance intervention and measure the impact of this intervention. -Liaise with the attendance team about the vulnerable student list to prioritise for daily calls/visits -Hold meetings with parents and students around attendance (can be part of the informal stages of the FAST Track Process) and provide appropriate support. -Reward students for excellent/improved attendance.
Edge Tutors	-Provide a welcoming atmosphere for all students and a safe learning environment -Deliver a weekly Tracker Tuesday session. -Have conversations with all students about their attendance but prioritise those with a downward trend in attendance and offer support and advice to help improve attendance. -Liaise with parents as and when necessary. -Share/flag any attendance concerns with relevant staff/teams (Year/Attendance/Safeguarding). -Encourage good attendance and reward excellent and improved attendance.
Teaching Staff	-Provide a welcoming atmosphere for all students and a safe learning environment -Input registers correctly every lesson -Flag any attendance concerns to the year team/attendance team/safeguarding team as necessary -Encourage good attendance and reward excellent and improved attendance.

Wider Attendance team including Attendance Administrators, Home Visit staff and support staff from Attendance.	-Receive any absence calls/emails and update registers. -Daily calls to identified vulnerable students -Daily register checks AM/PM -Contact parents/carers as soon as possible when a student fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence. Make first day absence calls/send texts. -Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes which provide a reason for the absence. -Share daily absences with pastoral and attendance team. -Share any attendance concerns with relevant staff -Provide admin support with regards to the Fast Track procedures. -Meet with students and families in the informal stages of the Fast Track approach. -Process any leave in Term Time requests, following the Birmingham guidance. -Oversee attendance for students on a managed move and students on alternative provision. -Make necessary referrals to the Children Missing in Education and Elective Home Education Teams. -Obtain evidence for student leavers (including CME, EHE, oversees moves and in year transfers). -Run and update the tracker every week for tracker Tuesday and send to all staff. -Collate feedback from Edge Tutors with regards to tracker Tuesday conversations -Identifying students who need a safe and well visit (3-5 days) and carry out the visits -Follow up on any necessary actions after a home visit (e.g, any safeguarding concerns. -Implement the Birmingham FAST TRACK approach to attendance. -Meet with students and families as part of the above approach. -Monitor the data of students on the FAST Track process and decide on next steps needed.
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- Attendance matters are reviewed by the Headteacher and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Attendance issues are reported, on a minimum Half termly basis, to the Academy Council.
- The Academy liaises closely with the Attendance Education Legal Team (ELIT).
- The Academy uses Attendance staff to support the school with the processes associated with children's attendance at school.

6. Academy day and Punctuality

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



School is open for pupils at 8.45am. All Students in Fortis Academy are expected to arrive at the academy to attend Edge at 8.45am. Our morning register is open at 8.55am and taken during our Edge session for all Academy students and ends at 9.25am. Students arriving after 8.45am will report to the school Reception to sign in. All pupils will receive a same-day lunchtime detention for being late to school. Where a student arrives after the register closes, this will be classed an unauthorised late absence (code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes). The school will monitor students who are arriving late and regular late arrival will be challenged as not acceptable. The following procedure will be put into place to resolve the problem:

- 5 U codes = a letter sent home.
- 10 U codes = Meeting/telephone call/home visit to discuss the reasons for lateness and to offer support/Early Help.
- 20 U codes = The school will instigate legal proceedings where appropriate using FastTrack process

Afternoon Registers are taken at the start of afternoon sessions which occur after students’ longest break in the day.

The Academy Day ends at 3.10pm for all Academy students.

7. Reporting absences/First day absence

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform the Academy by **9.00am** on the first day of their child’s absence. Parents/carers are expected to maintain contact with the Academy throughout the absence. After Edge time and during period 1 school registers are checked for any absences where there has been no contact by parents and reason given. An Academy administrator will then send a text message to parents to ascertain a reason for the child’s absence from school, this will be sent between 10am-10.15am. If staff are concerned about a child’s absence or there is no response to text messages, they will follow the process detailed in Appendix 2. This includes telephone calls to parents, other emergency contacts, home visits, referrals to the Academy’s police link officer for a visit to see the child.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual student to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

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 2025). Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.

8. 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.

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

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 problem and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support

9. Medical Evidence and Supporting Evidence

We ask that parents/carers making medical appointments for their child, book them early or late in the day, so students can be in school for the maximum amount of time possible for that day. Where medical 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. Parents are required to provide a copy of the appointment letter, card or text.

The Academy fully supports students' welfare and medical conditions and if your child has a chronic, persistent or recurrent health issue, we can arrange for a meeting with parents/carers to discuss what additional support can be offered to help your child to access school however we cannot simply accept parental information without the appropriate medical evidence. Students with medical conditions should attend the academy as per normal unless the absence is supported by medical opinion.

- An appointment card or verification by the Doctor/Dentist/Hospital is required
- If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for any of these reasons, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment or register prior to the appointment.
- Medical certificates are required for absence greater than 5 days
- Parents/carers must obtain a 'student pass' for their child if leaving school early to attend a planned appointment. This will provide parents/carers with evidence that the Academy are aware of the absence in the event of being challenged.

10. 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:

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 may be contacted to verify these occasions.

11. Authorising Absences

There are two categories of absence:-

- (i) Authorised (approved)
- (ii) Unauthorised (not approved)

Only the Headteacher can approve absence. Parents/carers do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents/carers will be classified as authorised.

(i) Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from the Academy for a legitimate reason and the Academy has received notification from a parent/carer. For example, if the child has been unwell and the parent/carer writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

(ii) Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from the Academy without the permission of the Academy. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from the Academy without good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer.

12. Requests for Leave of Absence during Term Time

The Government issued new regulations in August 2024 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents/carers 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 Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

- All requests for leave of absence need to be made in writing and a copy of the application form can be requested via email or phone.
- When completing the application parents should provide any evidence of the exceptional circumstances.
- Headteachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from the Academy if the leave is granted.
- The Academy can only consider applications for Leave in term time which are made by the resident parent/carer. i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent/carer, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave in term time 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/carer, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued in accordance Birmingham City Councils Code of Conduct. Each application for a Leave in term time will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

For further information, please refer to the link below:

[School attendance and absence: Legal action to enforce school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-attendance-and-absence-legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance)

3. Reintegration of Long-Term Absentees

At times a long term absence cannot be prevented but nevertheless lessons missed cannot be repeated, absence can significantly interrupt the continuity of students learning and “catching up” is never as good as the original learning experience.

Positive strategies should be employed to minimise such effects and the Academy recognises the need to support students during and after long term absence of any kind and will:

- i. Endeavour to provide work for students to be completed off-site where appropriate and medical evidence has been received.
- ii. We should always keep in touch with a student/and his/her family during a long absence.
- iii. Consider all strategies including liaising with other agencies to encourage the return of students to the Academy. This may include negotiated timetables and/or gradual reintegration.
- iv. Ensure that there is a positive atmosphere within the Academy in which students are welcomed back.
- v. Liaise with the local authority to maintain extra support and guidance for our students.
- vi. Encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in re-integration back into school.

Head Teacher and SENCO to consider a phased return where appropriate. This needs to be considered in line with the LA process and procedure, which includes seeking expert advice from relevant professionals and co-ordinating a multi-agency meeting. Consideration needs to be given to any special needs the pupil may

have and appropriate support identified. Consideration must be given to a package of support which may include providing a mentor (staff member/student).

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

14. Monitoring attendance

Our school procedures follow the expectations set out by the Department for Education in the guidance Working Together to improve school attendance (August 2024).

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.

Student's attendance will be monitored weekly by their Edge Tutor using our Attendance Tracker and Attendance Diamond. The tracker is colour coded with the diamond in order for students and staff to set targets based on improving attendance where appropriate (i.e. less than 100%). During one Edge session every week (Tracker Tuesday) students will be informed of their current attendance figure and will know where they are on the attendance diamond. Students will have the opportunity to discuss any concerns with their Edge tutor. The Edge tutor will then relay these concerns back to the attendance team and any necessary support will be put in place.

Edge tutors and students will refer to the Attendance Diamond in order to monitor and improve attendance for all students. This tool will be displayed in Edge rooms and across the academy in order to support students in understanding how attendance impacts on learning and progress.

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance falls below 90% and a 'severe absentee' (SA) when their attendance falls below 50%. All students whose attendance have fallen below 90% or are at risk of reaching this level will be closely monitored through the Academy tracking procedure on a weekly basis, and regular contact made with their parents/carers. The persistent absence tracker is shared with Year Group Heads of Year, The Attendance Officer and SLT and will be monitored by either SSO, AAHT or Attendance Team depending on level of absence.

Parents/carers will be given opportunities to work with school in improving their child's attendance.

The Ofsted Framework now requires students within the bottom 10% attendance to be monitored and for the academy to be aware of the reasons for their absence.

There are several sanctions that the academy can take to address the issue of non-attendance. In order to try and identify the reason for absence we will always talk to you first to identify the reason for absence.

Education Penalty Notices (England) Regulations 2024 will be considered when:

- A student is absent from the academy for the purpose of a Leave of Absence in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the academy.
- A student has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further absence has occurred following written warning to improve. Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Birmingham City Council Code of Conduct.

Through the use of our tracking procedure we will highlight those students whose attendance becomes a concern and the Academy will begin the FAST TRACK approach to attendance. (Please see Appendix 1 for our Attendance Escalation Chart which includes the Fast Track Process). This approach to attendance allows the Academy to offer support through Early Help in the early stages of attendance dropping and parents/carers will be given opportunities to work with the academy in improving their child's attendance. When families engage in this process appropriate support will be put in place and attendance will be monitored. When there is no engagement from the family and when attendance continues to drop we will go through the next appropriate step on the FAST TRACK approach.

In addition, we offer a range of in school based intervention, such as year group intervention groups, attendance workshops, Individual Attendance Plans and coffee mornings with parents and students.

There are a number of sanctions that school can take to address the issue of non-attendance. In order to try and identify the reason for absence we will always talk to you first to identify the reason for absence. Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) will be considered when:

- A student is absent from school for the purpose of a Leave of Absence in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A student has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further absence has occurred following written warning to improve Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Birmingham City Council Code of Conduct.

Where intervention through the 'Fast track' process fails to bring about an improvement in attendance the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates Court may be taken. The academy will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under section 444/4441 (a) of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents/guardians realise their own responsibilities in ensuring their child's attendance at school.

15. Attendance Rewards

Fortis Academy actively promotes and rewards students who achieve good attendance and punctuality.

There are a variety of rewards for excellent and improved attendance. For example, every week a student in each form that has improved their attendance the most is rewarded in assembly with a 'jump to the front of the queue' voucher. Students with 100% attendance are also put into a year group raffle each week and two students are rewarded with a 'jump to the front of the queue' voucher for that week.

Additional rewards include edge group rewards and year team prizes which are celebrated at a year group assemblies at the end of each term.

16. Truancy within school

At Fortis Academy we monitor attendance to each lesson of the school day using the registers, in order to ensure all students are safe in school and whereabouts known. If a student does not present to scheduled lessons/activities, teaching staff inform relevant teams via email. If students cannot be located and are suspected of leaving school premises, parents will be informed and the police notified of a missing child.

17. Alternative Education Providers

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

18. Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing and Absent from Education

A child missing or absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The Academy follows the our procedures for dealing with children that go missing 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 student 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 August 2024, the Department for Education updated the [statutory guidance](#) to reflect the 2024 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 2024 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).

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

19. Statutory Duty

Schools are responsible for recording students' attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all students of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll. The schools utilises a central administrative system – Go4Schools for this purpose.

The information below is an extract from the DfE attendance guidance and is adhered to by our academy:

‘Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;

- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- The school should follow up any absences to:
- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census'.

Students at our academy move between subjects, rooms and teachers throughout the day and therefore a register is taken at the start of every lesson on our Management Information System. This is vital to ensuring rigorous safeguarding and intervention in the case of non-attendance to lessons.

20. Local Authority Responsibility

If a child of compulsory school age fails to regularly attend the school which he/she is registered at, then the parent/guardian is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at schools, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend can be prosecuted under Education Act 1996, section 444 1A (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000).

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced new powers in relation to issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024 came into force on 19th August 2024. Penalty notices must be issued in a manner which conforms to all requirements of the Human Rights Act and all relevant Equal Opportunities Legislation. To this aim each Local Authority has a Code of Conduct in relation to issuing Penalty Notices.

Fortis Academy recognises Birmingham City Council's 'Fast track Intervention Process' and will implement prosecution where it is fair and equitable to do so.

'FAST-Track Intervention Process' to Attendance is an Early Help approach to improving student attendance which also seeks to act quickly where there is unauthorised absence. It is for all schools, academies and alternative providers.

There are no specific timelines to follow, the process can be used at a time which is right for the individual student and schools have only one formal letter they will need to send to each parent/carers.

The process aligns the thresholds for taking legal action for ongoing unauthorised absence with the Local Authority Education Penalty Notice 'Code of Conduct' and the Leave in Term Time (Penalty Notice) process. We know from Department for Education studies into the effects of absence on student progress and attainment levels that absence has a statistically significant negative link to attainment – i.e., every extra day missed was associated with a lower attainment outcome. It's clear from the data that being absent from school for any reason has an impact on a student's progress in school.

Where schools are concerned about a child/young person's absence levels, whether absence is authorised or unauthorised, it is important that the school act to improve attendance levels. In terms of legal action, the

Local Authority can only prosecute where there is unauthorised absence. In Birmingham this duty is delegated to the Education Legal Intervention Team (ELIT).

The Birmingham Penalty Notice Code of Conduct states that there must be at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 12-month calendar period for legal action to be taken. Because schools were closed for a prolonged period at the end of the 2019/20 academic year, and due to the rate of Covid infection during the Autumn term of the 2020/21 academic year, only unauthorised absence from the 19th April 2021 can be used for the purpose of calling a School Attendance Review.

Where intervention through the 'FAST-track' process fails to bring about an improvement in attendance the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under section 444/4441 (a) of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring their child's attendance at school.

21. Deletion from Register

Students will only be deleted from the register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended in the 2024 Pupil registration regulations.

Fortis Academy will follow Birmingham City Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a student's whereabouts is unknown.

It is important that if families decide to send their child/children to a different school that they inform our Academy staff as soon as possible. A student will not be removed from our Academy roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the student will be leaving our Academy and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if it is known

The student's Academy records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. Failing to notify Fortis Academy will result in a referral to Birmingham City Council's Children Missing Education Service.

If a family decides to move abroad we also need specific information before we can take a child off our school roll. This information is as follows:

- Evidence of travel, for example a flight ticket
- The new home overseas address
- The name, contact and address of the new school

The student's Academy records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. Failing to notify Fortis Academy will result in a referral to Birmingham City Council's Children Missing Education Service.

22. Use of attendance data-monitoring and Review

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 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.

Achievement against Fortis Academy's attendance targets will be reported upon to the Interim Executive Board. The Headteacher together with the Strategic Lead will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and procedures and where necessary make recommendations to the Academy Council for improvement.

The Academy will keep accurate records on file for a minimum period of 6 years.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years and as additional updates are issued by the DfE.

23. Relationship to other Policies

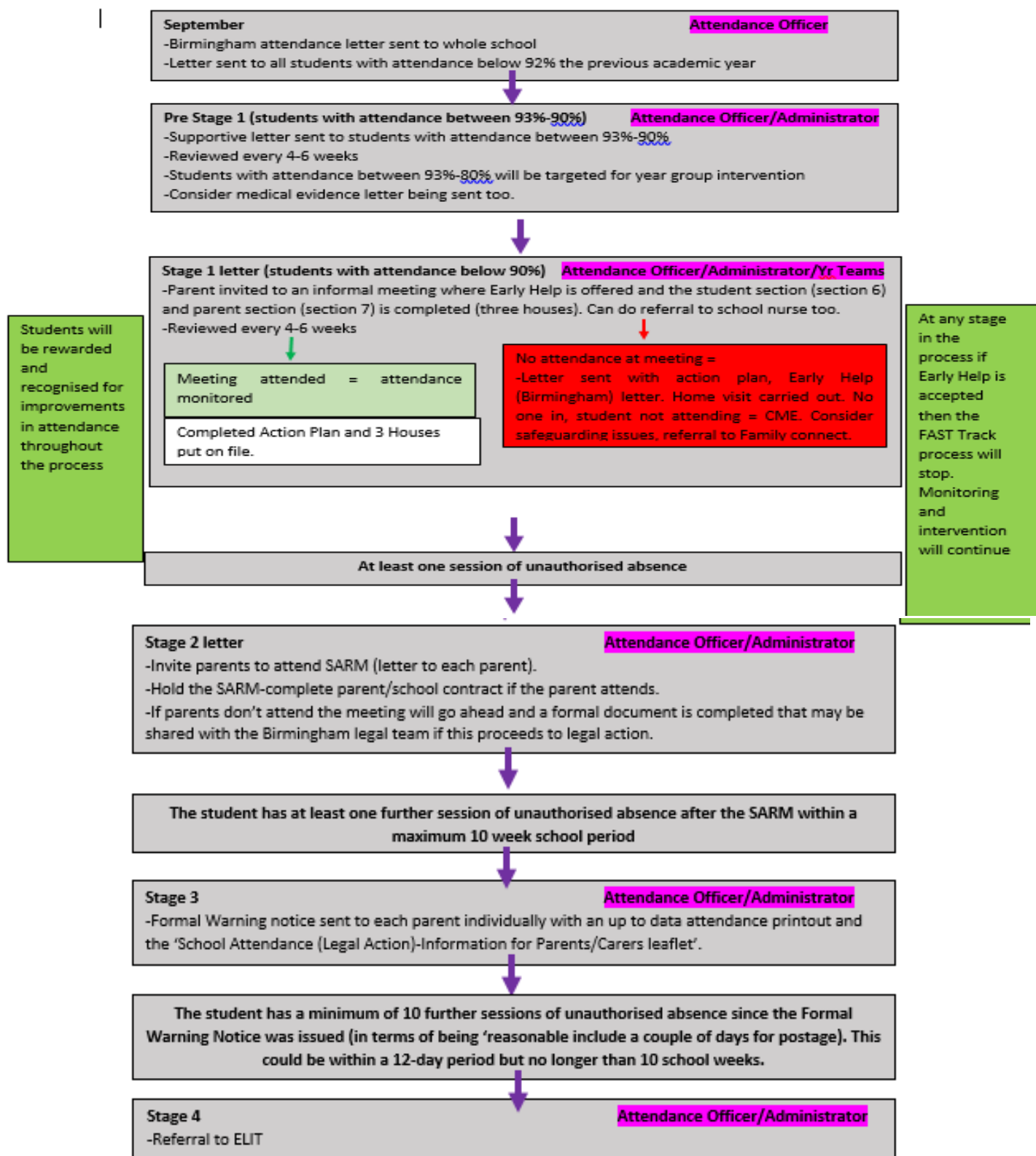
The Attendance policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Guidance on admissions (section on website)
- Equality Objectives Policy
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- The Behaviour Policy

At Fortis Academy we welcome the support from parents/carers and families. We provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child to learn and make friends and parents/carers are welcomed in the Academy for a variety of events including celebration evenings. In order for our children to feel safe and secure it is important that when visiting the Academy, parents/carers and family members remain calm when speaking to staff and refrain from confrontational or aggressive behaviour as this can be unsettling. Appointments can be made with the Leadership team to discuss any concerns, any adults displaying behaviour which is deemed to be unacceptable will be asked to leave the Academy site.

Appendix 1

Fortis Academy Attendance Escalation Process (Including FAST Track)



This process runs alongside the school's daily absence procedure, frequent absences from school or unexplained absences may be followed up by a home visit or an escalation through our safeguarding procedures.

Appendix 2

Absence Process

