

Sandylands
Community
Primary School

Attendance Policy



Sept 25
Sandylands

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1.1 Introduction

Sandylands Community Primary School is a successful school and children, staff and parents and carers play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and they should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. This policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

1.2 Importance of Regular Attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others. Ensuring regular attendance at school is the parent's or carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Each full day of school is two 'marks' or sessions, morning registration and afternoon registration.

At Sandylands 'Attendance Matters', we aim for 95% attendance or above. Our target is always to aim high. For our children to be the best they can be, it is vital that they attend regularly. We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the area.

Government research shows a direct link between attendance and attainment and good attenders also make better progress socially, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for the transition to secondary school and, eventually, higher education, training and employment.

Through the school year we regularly monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in newsletter or website.

1.3 Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents or carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Have an Senior Attendance Champion (Liz Wildon) who will support school staff and liaise with the Inclusion Team within school and external agencies where necessary

- Have support from the Inclusion Team with attendance (Nicola Miller, Rachel Whitehead, Lee Roberts and Tom Woods)
- Promote a culture across the school with both children, staff and governors which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance where this is a priority
- Report to parents and carers termly on children's attendance, punctuality and attainment
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school through our parent leaflet, regular updates on the newsletter and thank you letters/postcards when attendance has improved
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events and celebrate both class and individual achievements
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school
- Carry out transition targets with pupils in key transition years e.g. between Nursery and Reception, and before leaving for high school
- Promote a creative curriculum which engages pupil interest
- Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole-school attendance.
- Include attendance in Pupil Parliament priorities and ask ministers to assume some responsibility for promoting attendance

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Head teacher | Allison Hickson |
| Senior Attendance Champion | Liz Wildon |
| Attendance Inclusion Workers | Nicola Miller |
| Attendance Data Support | Tiff Case |
| Phase Leaders | EYFS - Jen McLaren Key Stage 1 - Penny Lupton Lower Key Stage 2 - Gavin Goulds Upper Key Stage 2 - Angela Cokell |

To get in touch to make an appointment:

- Pop into the school office on Hampton Road
- Call the school: 01524 410286
- Email: inclusionteam@sandylands.lancs.sch.uk

Responsibilities

Parents and carers:

- Ensure children attend regularly and punctually
- Contact school on first day of absence with explanation for absence
- Avoid holidays in term time
- Where unavoidable, request absence in advance using Request for Leave of Absence form ([appendix 5](#))
- Provide an appointment card or letter when an appointment is not a 'one-off'
- Attend and engage with meetings in school
- Participation in Attendance Agreements ([appendix 2](#)), Action Plans ([appendix 3](#)) and Early Help processes where necessary, and cooperate in support and interventions offered by school or other agencies
- Make sure that school has up to date contact information including telephone numbers and address

Pupils:

- Acknowledge behaviour needed out of school, e.g. early bedtime
- Attend school/registration punctually
- Speak to parents, carers or members of school staff if issues arise that may have an effect on school attendance
- Cooperate and participate in interventions and support offered by school or other agencies

Head teacher or Chair of Governors:

- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities.
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school confirms to statutory requirements regarding attendance.
- Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision.
- Initially, the head teacher will sanction or deny requests. The Chair of Governors will be consulted if there is no clear definition of 'exceptions' beyond 10 sessions
- Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process.
- Provide regular reports to the governing body on school attendance, including persistent absence and vulnerable groups.

Senior Attendance Champion (Miss Wildon):

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school confirms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- Ensure records of every child who falls below 90% are kept, i.e. persistent absence and monitor that these are updated weekly
- Ensure teachers are fulfilling their role in following up absence within their classes
- Ensure phase leaders are aware of supporting teachers and pupils in following up absence in their phase
- Monitoring referral forms ([appendix 1](#)) for absence referrals by teachers
- Liaise with Health and Safety lead (Geraldine Dixon) for updates that might affect attendance e.g. illness outbreak, isolation guidance etc.
- Provide information regarding class monitoring e.g. for raffle tickets

Senior Leaders:

- Key role in improving attendance
- Monitor attendance weekly in phase
- Have meetings with parents and children to support improvement in attendance
- Report and feedback attendance of children in phase to Senior Attendance Champion and Head Teacher
- Prepare reports for attendance

Office Team:

- First absence day response: contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided and log this information accordingly
- Input and update the attendance registers (Sims) daily for absence
- Maintain a high profile of attendance to families as the office being the first point of contact
- Monitor Xpressions (app) for absence information provided by parents
- Process exception leave requests quickly and prepare paperwork

Inclusion Team:

- Regularly (weekly) monitor persistent absence
- Support families in implementing Attendance Agreements ([appendix 2](#)), Action Plans ([appendix 3](#)) and interventions

- Regularly (6 weekly) identify and monitor pupil, class and whole school attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups
- Regularly (termly) communicate pupil attendance and punctuality levels to parents
- Work with children and parents to remove barriers to regular and punctual attendance, following Absence Flowchart (see [appendix 4](#))
- Involve external agencies where appropriate including referrals to Pupil Attendance Support Team (PAST) (referral form is to be completed electronically through the portal)
- Give weekly updated attendance information to head teacher and SLT

School Staff:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure an appropriate and curriculum that children can access
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- To see pupils' attendance as the responsibility of all school staff
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures
- Use an Inclusion Team referral form ([appendix 1](#)) if any concerns are raised regarding attendance
- Making arrangements and adjustments for those pupils with medical conditions to access a full school timetable
- To monitor attendance of pupils, follow up on an 'nagging doubts'
- Know why pupils are absent
- Look for patterns in absence

Governors:

- Ensure compliance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Agree an attendance policy and review it annually or more frequently if required.
- Agree targets for attendance at Sandylands Primary School
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance targets, or when the governors believe there is cause for concern, instigate a review of school's attendance procedures.
- Authorise the head teacher and Chair of Governors to make decisions regarding leave of absence requests.
- Work with the head teacher and Chair of Governors in establishing equitable and consistent criteria against which leave requests will be considered.

Schools are bound by a range of attendance legislation, regulations and guidance; please see the [Appendix 6](#) for further details.

2.1 Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers. As a school, we will always work with parents (and other agencies, as appropriate) to understand the reasons underlying absence.

Sometimes children can be reluctant to attend school and school can help with supporting families to improve attendance. It is best to speak to school to support families with not giving in to pressure for children to stay at home. If parents or carers are worried about attendance or reasons for absence, they can contact school directly or ask for an appointment to discuss with Miss Wildon or a member of the Inclusion Team.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reasonable explanation. These can include but are not limited to:

- illness
- medical appointments which unavoidably fall or cannot be arranged out of school time (please provide an appointment card or letter)
- Children will not be expected to be absent for a day and are expected to be in school prior and after the appointment
- If children are absent until/after the appointment, the absence will be unauthorised
- emergencies
- other unavoidable causes
- School will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, e.g. Eid, and this will be marked as code R in the register. Please complete a Request for Leave of Absence form ([appendix 5](#)) The day authorised will be that set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions, fines and/or legal proceedings. Absences that can be classed as unauthorised can include but are not limited to:

- Parents/carers keeping their child off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which are not explained satisfactorily.
- Pupils who arrive at school after the register has closed and without a legitimate reason
- Days off for shopping, birthdays or looking after other children.

- Day trips and other leave in term time which have not been agreed by the head teacher.
- Days that exceed an amount of leave agreed by the head teacher.
- Unnecessary absence for appointments e.g. whole day for regular dentists appointments etc.

It is the head teacher's (Allison Hickson) and/or Chair of Governors' (Kirstie Banks-Lyon) responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised and, if there is any uncertainty relating to an absence, school may request further confirmation from parents before an absence is authorised. For absence due to illness, this may be in the form of:

- Sight of an appointment for your GP or for the hospital, clinic, etc.
- Sight of prescribed medication or prescription for medication.
- Sight of medical notes/records.
- A letter from a medical professional such as a specialist or consultant.

The Chair of Governors may request a meeting to determine:

1. Why the leave would be classed as exceptional
2. Why it is necessary to take the leave during term time
3. Evaluate prior attendance of the child

Parents should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for other reasons. If your child is reluctant to attend it is better to speak to school as soon as possible to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. As a school, we will always work with parents (and external agencies as appropriate) to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

For more information on school attendance and the law, see [Appendix 6](#).

2.2 Leave in Term Time

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and it is expected parents help school by not taking children away in school time.

By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their education and progress as much as any other absence. If leave is being requested that

involves arranging travel or accommodation, approval must be obtained from the head teacher before making any bookings.

Leave of absence in term time **will not** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made well in advance by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides Request for Leave of Absence form ([appendix 5](#)), and
- the head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the request.

Due to the need to evidence exceptional circumstances, parents are advised to provide school with any relevant information regarding their request at the point of application if they believe the circumstances are exceptional.

In considering the request school will also consider other factors such as:

- The timing of the requested leave, e.g. when a pupil is just starting at school or during assessment periods, such as SATs.
- A pupil's attendance record already includes unauthorised absence.
- Attendance is already a concern, or could become a concern, as a result of taking leave.
- Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year up to 3 years according to the DfE guidance.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract legal sanctions such as a penalty notice.

In certain circumstances, as outlined in regulation, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if leave is taken and the criteria governing removal from roll are met (see appendix).

For more information on school attendance and the law, see [Appendix 6](#).

2.3 Participation in sporting events

Parents can request leave of absence for their child to take part in regional, national and international sporting events. However, as always, granting leave is at the head teacher's discretion and she/he will need to discuss with you the length and frequency of the absence(s) requested and how learning will continue if absence occurs, e.g. the sports club or association providing an approved education tutor.

Leave for a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school can be marked in the register as code P.

Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late in order to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the head teacher and is unlikely to be approved if it would occur regularly.

2.4 Participation in performances (e.g. theatre, television, modelling)

Parents of a child performer can request leave from school for their child to take part in a performance. A local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Before a licence is granted, school will be consulted and head teachers must be satisfied that the leave will not have a negative effect on the child's education.

Where the licence specifies the dates that the child is to be away from school, the head teacher should authorise those days. However, where the licence does not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise the leave request. Any absence authorised for the child to take part in a performance will be recorded as code C1.

Parents wishing to apply for a performance licence should go the Lancashire County Council [Child performance licences webpage](#).

2.5 Medical Conditions

Government guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions emphasises the role of governing bodies in ensuring that pupils with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other pupils. A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these pupils, whether their condition is short or long term.

School will work with parents and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be in the form of reasonable adjustments, specific support or resources used within school, or by sourcing appropriate provision at another establishment. When education is to be provided at an alternative location, this should always be done via the use of a direction (please see section 2.6, below).

When a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period, pastoral staff and other support services will work with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

The school will work with parents and other relevant professionals, including school nurse, to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This could include but is not limited to:

- specific practices

- offsite resources
- individual or small group intervention
- accessing provision at another establishment
- attendance at professional's meetings to share next steps
- Medical or Care Plan in place
- Inclusion Team involvement to support transition between home and school
- In extreme cases, additional care plan support to support a medical condition e.g. diabetes

If parents or carers have any concerns or questions regarding medical conditions, absence and attainment in school, please call school and request an appointment with Health and Safety Lead, Geraldine Dixon.

2.6 Alternative provision and use of directions

There is a range of circumstances when pupils might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are:

- Pupils who have been permanently excluded or suspended for a period of more than 5 days.
- Pupils unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons.
- Pupils required to attend another venue for the purpose of improving behaviour, either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (via a managed move).

When a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written direction or notice informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend. Where a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for other reasons, the issuing of a written direction is considered best practice.

2.7 Pupils refusing to attend school

At Sandylands we believe that every child has a right to a full-time education, and we would not accept "school refusal" as a reason for non-attendance. In such cases, we will work with parents to identify the reasons why a child may be reluctant to attend school. We may request advice from the School Attendance Support Team and, with consent, make referrals to other external partners such as the Children and Family Wellbeing Service or Primary Mental Health Workers, as appropriate, to try to ensure the correct support is secured for the child and their family.

3.1 Absence Procedures

- Contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence, either by phone (01524 410286) or Xpressions (app) message or you can call into school and report to the office. If needed, a member of the Inclusion Team will be available to talk to in confidence
- Parents or carers are required to request any known absence through the Request for Leave of Absence form ([appendix 5](#))
- School will contact any families where children are absent, and an explanation has not been given
- If a child has an allocated social worker, the social worker will be informed of absence
- School will conduct a home visit if three days of absence have passed with no explanation or there are immediate concerns for a child. Please note that home visits may be unannounced.
- School will invite parents or carers in to discuss attendance with the Senior Attendance Champion, Inclusion Team or head teacher where necessary

Where children are regularly absent, at Sandylands, we use a three-stage procedure to support pupils and families with improving attendance.

Stage 1

- The teacher is to speak to the family and gather the views of the children to find out why attendance has been declining. The teacher will monitor this day to day and speak to the children and families where needed

Stage 2

- If the attendance does not improve following these conversations, the teacher will speak to the phase leader. The phase leader will then speak to the children and families to challenge the declining attendance

Stage 3

- If attendance does not improve, school will then allocate an inclusion worker to support the family and children in improving attendance.
- This may mean we refer to the Local Authority School Attendance Team, as per Local Authority protocol
- Other signposts or support can be put in place to alleviate pressures or barriers that are contributing to poor attendance

- We will listen and support concerns raised by children and families, but will maintain an improvement in attendance is needed

At any stage that a child falls into the persistent absence category, then a meeting will be called by the phase leader. This can also be if the child's records indicate poor attendance over time (up to three years).

3.2 Persistent Absence

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year. This means that their attendance has dropped below 90% of sessions expected. This level of absence causes considerable gaps in learning and therefore greatly disadvantages a pupil and reduces their educational prospects. School staff, parents or carers and the pupil need to work together to improve the child's attendance. Persistent absence concerns will be made known to the Local Authority School Attendance Team which could result in penalty fines if absence doesn't improve, or parents or carers don't engage with an Action Plan.

Children who become a persistent absentee will be at Stage 3 of our attendance procedures.

They will be assigned to a member of the Inclusion Team where support can be put in place through an Attendance Agreement and Action Plan. Support in this plan could include but are not limited to:

For the child:

- allocation of additional support for the child through a mentor
- use of circle time or PSHE activities to discuss strengths in school with the child, barriers to attainment or attendance and identify next steps for attendance with the child's involvement
- develop extra-curricular activities to promote child's strengths or interests
- individual incentive programmes to reward the child's involvement with improving their attendance

For the parents or carers:

- be assigned a key worker from the Inclusion Team
- attend a meeting to discuss reasons for poor attendance of the child/children
- written agreements, Attendance Agreements, for next steps and how to follow these through
- parental participation in group activities around raising attendance'

- The Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and/or referral to other agencies and services, including School Nurses and Primary Mental Health Workers, if appropriate.
- further support signposted for any barriers or concerns brought up
- For unauthorised absences, request legal interventions by the local authority, such as penalty notices, prosecution or other attendance-related court orders.

At any stage, we may seek advice from the local authority School Attendance Support Team.

3.3 Use of penalty notices and other attendance legal interventions

Legal interventions may be sought if providing support to improve attendance is not appropriate (e.g. for an unauthorised holiday in term time), or has not been successful or engaged with. In accordance with the Lancashire code of conduct, we may request that the local authority issue penalty notices for unauthorised absences that include:

- Leave of absence which is taken without a prior request being made.
- Leave taken after a request has been declined.
- Days taken in excess of an agreed period of leave, without good reason.
- Other unauthorised absence that meets the required threshold, including sessions marked as late after the register has closed (code U).

On 19 August 2024 new penalty notice arrangements came into force, with changes to the cost of a penalty notice and to the thresholds at which penalty notices may be requested by school. The DfE now requires that schools **must** consider if a penalty notice is appropriate when the thresholds are met. The changes to be aware of are:

- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be charged at £160 per parent per child. This will reduce to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.
- The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or consecutive school years.
- A maximum of two penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another

course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).

- If a school requests a penalty notice for absences other than unauthorised holidays, including being late after the register has closed, the local authority School Attendance Legal Team may issue a Notice to Improve to parents. A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and offers of support have not been engaged with by parents or have not worked, a Notice to Improve may be issued to give parents a final chance to engage with support and improve their child's attendance.

The code of conduct for penalty notices and information and FAQs for parents can be found on the Lancashire County Council [education penalty notice webpage](#).

3.3 The Local Authority

If difficulties cannot be sorted out using in-school strategies, the school may refer to support from the Local Authority. The referral form is to be completed electronically through the portal. They will try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, and unauthorised absences persist the case may be referred to the Court Officers, who can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority.

School Attendance Support Team

Each school has a named contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can advise schools on attendance related matters, and with whom Targeting Support Meetings will be held. For mainstream nursery, primary and secondary schools this will be a School Attendance Support Worker (SASW); for special schools, short stay schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) this will be a School Attendance Consultant (SAC).

School Attendance Legal Team (SALT)

Following requests from schools for legal interventions when parents fail to ensure their children attend regularly, the School Attendance Legal Team undertakes enforcement processes, including penalty notices, prosecutions, parenting orders, education supervision orders and school attendance orders.

Children Missing Education (CME) Team

The Children Missing Education Team ensures the local authority fulfils its statutory duty to identify children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. For further information see section 7, below, regarding notifications schools must submit.

Notifications school must submit to the local authority

Admissions

All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided (currently Lancashire does not).

Leavers

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided (Lancashire currently does not).

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the required information as laid out in the regulation.

In addition to submitting a notification about removal from roll, some circumstances also require school to make referral to other local authority teams such as the Elective Home Education team or the Children Missing Education team. Schools may also contact the School Attendance Support Team for advice on removing children from roll. For pupils with an EHCP on roll at a special school, the school must have the agreement of the Lancashire Inclusion Service (SEND) before removing from roll.

Pupils who fail to attend

All schools (including academies) must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. In Lancashire schools, this can be done via a

variety of means and school can contact the School Attendance Support Team for further advice.

Pupils on a part-time timetable

Schools must also inform the local authority when a pupil is placed on a part-time timetable. In Lancashire, this should be done via the appropriate form available to schools.

Children absent from education

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not on roll at a school or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure they receive a full-time education.

If a pupil has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. In such cases, school should undertake a home visit, prior to a referral being made to the local authority Children Missing Education team.

4.1 Punctuality

Children who miss the beginning of the day often miss vital information and learning time. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence.

Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

School is open from 8.45am and the school day starts at 8.55am and we expect children to be in class at this time. Any child not in class by 9.05am will be marked late. At 9.30am the registers will be closed. If children arrive after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If punctuality is regularly an issue, this will follow the same three stages of procedure outlined in this policy. If punctuality gets to be a consistent concern, stage 3 will be met where a meeting with the Senior Attendance Champion, Inclusion Team or head teacher may be held to put an Action Plan in place to support the family with improving punctuality. If the family does not engage with process or punctuality doesn't improve, this may mean the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

Records (up to three years) will be used to determine whether punctuality is poor over time. Targets will be set to allow for improvements in the action plan.

5.1 Monitoring of Data

It is important that we track the attendance data for pupils, to ensure that children are safeguarded and are attending school to reach their potential. As outlined in this policy, attendance is a priority for Sandylands, to ensure that all children attend school regularly and punctually.

Daily:

- Monitoring of registers twice a day for both sessions (morning and afternoon)
- Teachers to inform allocated workers where targeted or vulnerable children are not in
- Office staff to input any absence and call families for any absences with no reason
- Home visits to be conducted on third day of absence where no reason given
- Teachers to speak with families and children where there are concerns for declining attendance

Weekly:

- Monitoring of class attendance %
- Monitoring of punctuality for the class
- Celebration of attendance above 95% and punctual classes
- Monitoring of children who have attendance below 90% and are persistently absent with monitoring the trajectory of improvement of decline in attendance
- Phase leaders to speak with families and children where there are concerns for declining attendance

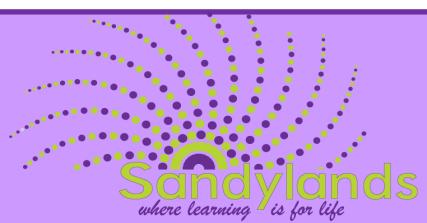
Termly:

- Phase leaders and teachers informed of overall % for class and all individual children
- Inclusion workers meet with targeted parents to inform parents
- Review of steps in place for targeted families e.g. phone calls, meetings, action plans, attendance agreements
- Inform families of attendance data for their child

6.1 Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils, as this is the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Sandylands Community Primary School



Request for Support

Referral for additional support for inclusion

Please make sure all relevant fields are completed and send to Pastoral Lead - Liz Wildon.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Name of child: | Class: | Date: | | | | | | | | | |
| Referred by: | | Attendance: | | | | | | | | | |
| Attainment: | <input type="checkbox"/> GD | <input type="checkbox"/> ARE | <input type="checkbox"/> BELOW | | | | | | | | |
| Progress: | <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> AVG | <input type="checkbox"/> BELOW AVG | | | | | | | | |
| Support previous or current: (e.g. CP plan, CIN, TAF, CAF, PEIS, EP, Family Team, TA Support, BP, TLP, SEN) <i>Tick all that apply</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safeguarding Involvement <input type="checkbox"/> External Agencies: <input type="checkbox"/> SEND/TLP <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Support - TA/Family Worker:..... <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> EP <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutic Support | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Summary of request: <table> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour at school or home</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Food Bank</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> SEND needs</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Relationship breakdown</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Financial support</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other – please detail below</td> </tr> </table> | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour at school or home | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Bank | <input type="checkbox"/> SEND needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship breakdown | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial support | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please detail below |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour at school or home | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Bank | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SEND needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship breakdown | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial support | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please detail below | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>To be completed by Inclusion Team</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Support offered: Views gained: <input type="checkbox"/> child's view <input type="checkbox"/> teacher's view <input type="checkbox"/> parent's view <input type="checkbox"/> external agency's view assigned family worker | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Actions: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Triaged by: | Date triaged: | | | | | | | | | | |

Review after weeks:

Attendance:

RAG

Date reviewed:

Appendix 2

Attendance Agreement

PERSONAL DETAILS:

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|--------|--|
| Name of Young Person | | D.O.B. | |
| School | | | |
| Year Group/Class | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|
| Name of Parent 1 | | | |
| Address of Parent 1 | | | |
| Parent 1 Contact Number | | | |
| Emergency Contact Number | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------|--|
| Name of Parent 2 | | D.O.B. | |
| Address of Parent 2 | | | |
| Parent 2 Contact Number | | | |
| Emergency Contact Number | | | |

THE REASONS FOR THE ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT

PARENTING CONTRACT AGREEMENT

The following has been agreed between the school, Sandylands Community Primary, and the parent or carer _____.

(a) The school, Sandylands Community Primary will:

- Make sure that a member of staff contacts _____ immediately if he/she is not at school when the register is taken if school hasn't been contacted;
- Be available after school if there is anything the parent wishes to discuss in person;
- Offer the services of the school nurse if required;
- School will no longer authorise days off due to illness or medical appointments unless medical evidence is provided;
- Work alongside PAST to help support and improve attendance

(b) The parent, has agreed to:

- Let school know if there are any problems that might affect attendance;
- Continue to contact school ASAP if _____ is to be absent that day;
- If _____ is going to be off school for an appointment or illness then medical evidence will be provided. e.g. Doctors appointment card
- Work alongside PAST to help support and improve attendance
-

TARGET:

REVIEW DATE:

NB: A meeting can be requested, at any time, by any of the people concerned to discuss the agreement.

An earlier review *should* be arranged if further difficulties or problems arise, or if it becomes clear that the target set above will not be met in the given timeframe. Consideration should then be given to the drawing up of a new agreement or the implementation of additional strategies e.g. CAF process, referral to PAST, legal process etc.

FURTHER REVIEW DATES:

CONTRACT AGREEMENT

We agree to work together to meet the agreements set out in this parenting contract to help _____ attend school regularly for the period of this contract _____ to _____.

| | Signature | Date |
|--------|-----------|------|
| Parent | | |
| School | | |

If there is no improvement in attendance, then school may have to consider a referral to external agencies. This will involve the sharing of information which may have been discussed in this meeting/agreement.

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS:

| | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| School Office | 01524 410286 | Attendance mobile |
| | | 07342 888443 |

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Teacher/Headteacher | Allison Hickson | 01524 410286 |
| Other Services | | |
| School Nurse | Wendy Rosling | 0300 247 0040 |
| | | |
| | | |
| Parenting Advice | www.parentscentre.gov.uk | |
| | www.parentlineplus.org.uk | 0808 800 222 |

PUPIL'S AGREEMENT

(c) The pupil, _____ has agreed to:

- Let a teacher/member of school staff know if there are any problems that might affect her attendance
- Allow her/his parent to make the decision as to whether she is well enough to come to school

I agree to work with school and my parent to meet the agreements set out in this attendance agreement contract to help me attend school regularly and punctually and to behave well for the period of this agreement _____ to _____.

| | Signature | Date |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|
| Pupil | | |

Appendix 3

Action Plan

| | | |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| Staff Member responsible for the plan | | |
| Date | Name | Class |
| Area of Concern | | |

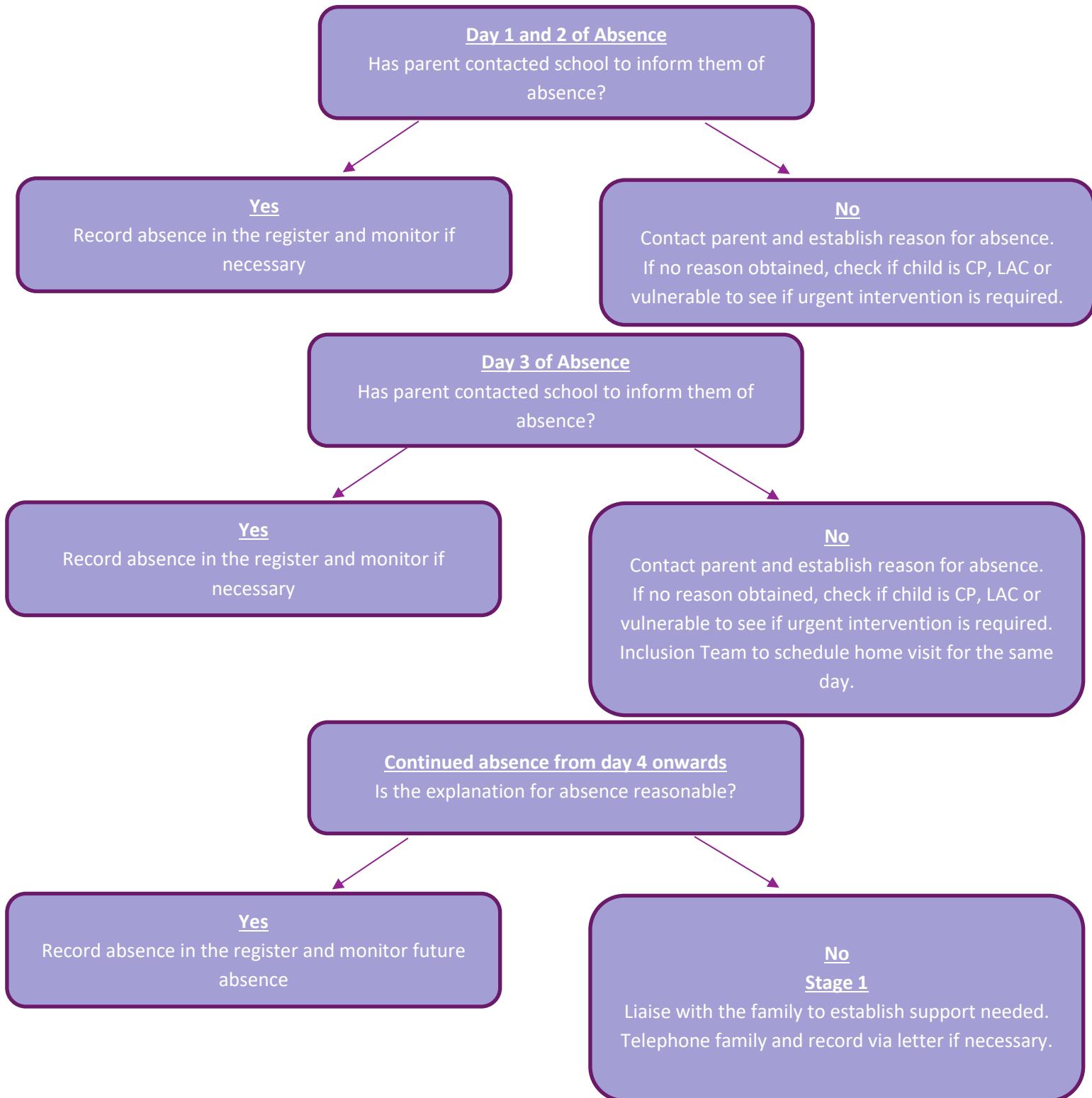
Follow up

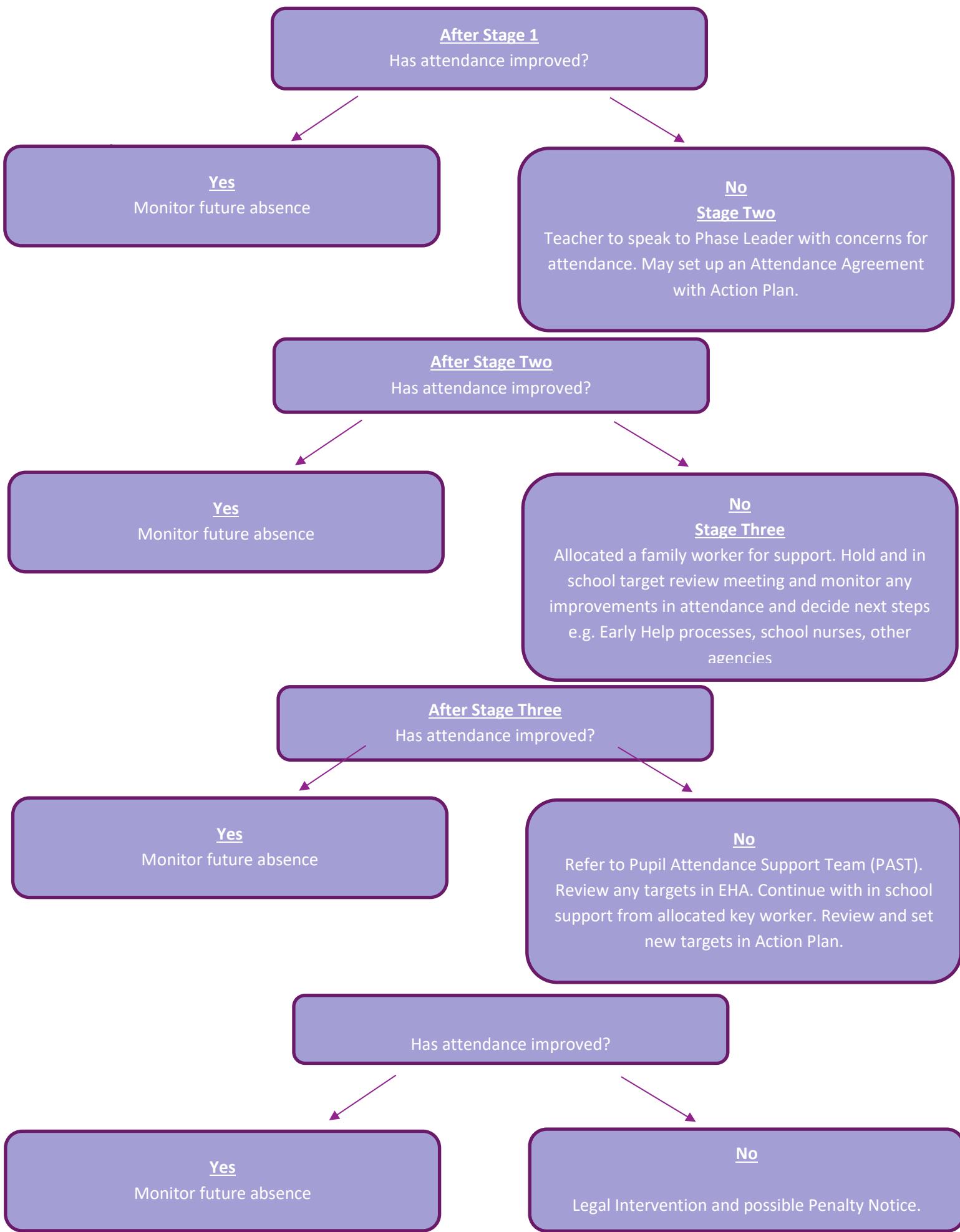
| Actions | Name | Timescale |
|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Signed by the person responsible for plan | |
| Signed by parent | |
| Signed by child | |

Appendix 4

Attendance Flowchart





Appendix 5

Request for Leave of Absence

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Missing school can disrupt a child's learning progression, as well as their ability to engage with peers and participate in ongoing projects. Parental support in maintaining regular school attendance is highly appreciated and can make a significant difference in a pupil's educational journey.

Parents/carers should obtain permission from the headteacher **before** taking a child out of school for leave during term time for **any reason**.

Absences taken without permission may be unauthorised by the school. Parents do not have the automatic right to insist that school absences are authorised, only the school may decide how to mark the register. Schools must take into account the statutory Department for Education (DfE) guidance when deciding whether to authorise a leave request. Schools can grant a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances at their discretion.

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

Where absences are not authorised and meet the qualifying trigger (10 sessions (equivalent of 5 days) in a rolling 10 school-week period), schools **must** consider applying to the Local Authority (LA) for a penalty notice. Upon receipt of such an application, the LA may decide to either issue a penalty notice or institute other legal action (eg prosecution).

This form should be fully completed **by the parent with whom the child normally resides** and returned to school for consideration well in advance of the proposed leave and before committing to any expense. Once received the headteacher (or delegated person) will decide whether to approve the request, bearing in mind the current regulations and government guidance.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| First name of child | | Surname of child | |
| Date of birth | | Year group | |
| First name of parent/carer | | Surname of parent/carer | |
| Relationship to child | | | |
| Home address | | | |
| Postcode | | Telephone number | |

Provide details of any siblings at the school who you also wish to apply for leave for

| First name of child | Surname of child | Date of Birth | Year Group |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------|
|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------|

| | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

Length of absence
(number of school

Destination
(if applicable)

Date of departure

Date due back
in school

UK emergency contact and
telephone number

Other emergency contact
details

Provide information regarding the exceptional circumstances for leave.
(additional documents may be attached)

I confirm I am the parent with whom the child normally resides (tick)

I confirm I have included any relevant information for consideration
(tick)

Parent/carer signature

Date

SCHOOL SECTION

Date Received

Pupil
Attendance %

Date discussed with
parents (if applicable)

The headteacher/authorised person has considered this leave request.

The outcome of the request is: (circle)

Not Approved

Permission not granted

Approved

Permission granted

Partially Approved

Some days to be authorised

If only some of the leave is to be approved, number of days which will be
authorised

Reason(s) for decision

Headteacher/appropriate person signature

A copy of this form should be provided to the parent(s).

All parents should be individually notified in writing of the outcome of this request and must be notified in circumstances where a penalty notice will be requested.

Lancashire County Council August 2024



Appendix 6

School Attendance and the Law

Appendix: School attendance and the law

There are many pieces of legislation and government regulations and guidance that are relevant to school attendance and to children and their parents and carers. The list below relates to this attendance policy but is not exhaustive. Some elements of government regulations and DfE guidance do not apply to academies and independent schools (but may apply to independent special schools).

Parents and carers

Duty to ensure children receive education

[Section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#) covers the duty of parents to secure the education of children in their care who are of compulsory school age and states:

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.*

Offence if a child does not attend regularly

Under [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#), if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, their parent is guilty of an offence.

The offence is absolute as the only defences available to the parent are those statutory defences listed within that section of the Act, i.e.:

- the child was absent with leave granted by the school;
- the child was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;
- absence was on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs;
- that the school is not within statutory walking distance and that the local education authority has made no suitable transport arrangements or enabled the pupil to become registered at an alternative nearer school.

Compulsory school age

[Section 8 of the Education Act 1996](#) establishes that a child becomes of compulsory school age on the start date of the term following her/his fifth birthday, or that day if her/his fifth birthday falls on the day term starts.

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of 16 or if he/she reaches 16 after the last Friday in June but before the start of the new school year.

Legal definition of "parent" in relation to attendance

The law requires that all “parents” are held responsible for their child’s attendance. This definition can include any person who has care of the child. [Section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#) states:

Meaning of “parent”.

(1) In this Act, unless the context 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.*

Thus, the definition of “parent” means all natural parents, whether they are married or not, and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

Schools

Attendance and absence registration codes

[Working together to improve school attendance](#), DfE statutory guidance 2024, explains which codes schools should use to record attendance and absence in their registers, and specifies the DfE's expectations of schools and local authorities with respect to school attendance.

Data protection

Schools must ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#). See Sandylands Primary Schools's Privacy Notice for information about how personal data will be used.

Duty for schools to include attendance information in reports for parents

[The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)

Duty for schools to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave school

[Regulation 13 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

Duty for schools to report attendance concerns about individual pupils to the local authority

[Regulation 13 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

Duty for schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

[Keeping children safe in education](#), DfE statutory guidance, regularly updated

Duty for schools to share attendance data with the Government

[Section 537A of the Education Act 1996](#) and

[Share your daily school attendance](#), DfE guidance 2024

Leave of absence

[Regulation 11 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

Legal interventions

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child who is on a school roll fails to attend regularly and those absences are recorded by the school as unauthorised.

Legal interventions are available under the following acts, guidance and regulations:

- [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- [Section 36 of the Children Act 1989](#)
- [Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#), DfE guidance 2015

Pupils experiencing social, emotional or mental health issues

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#), DfE 2023

Pupils with health needs who cannot attend school

[Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#), DfE statutory guidance 2023

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#), DfE statutory guidance 2015

Pupils with individual needs and specific barriers to attendance

When considering the individual needs of pupils and families who have specific barriers to attendance, schools should be mindful of their obligations under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). The [Technical Guidance for Schools in England](#), published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, outlines the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for schools.

Regulations regarding participation in performances

[The Children \(Performances and Activities\) \(England\) Regulations 2014](#)

Regulations regarding removal from roll

[Regulation 9 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

Regulations regarding the school day and number of sessions

[The Education \(School Day and School Year\) \(England\) Regulations 1999](#)

Requirement for mainstream, state-funded schools to deliver a school week of at least 32.5 hours

[Length of the school week](#), DfE guidance 2023

Specialist and alternative provision settings are also encouraged to consider extending their core week where appropriate.