

PORCHESTER JUNIOR SCHOOL



Attendance Policy

*Adopted September 2024
Review September 2026*



Introduction

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

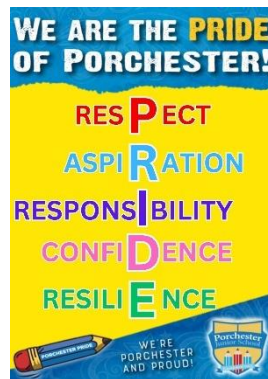
Porchester Junior School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all students. We believe that regular school attendance is so important and expect all our pupils to attend school, on time, every day that school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the pupils to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures and believe in building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all pupils. We will also make the best provision we can for those pupils who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

Regular school attendance is important for your child's future. Pupils who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams. Good attendance shows potential employers that your child is reliable. Research suggests that pupils who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of getting involved in antisocial behaviour or crime.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

We adhere to national guidelines in relation to school attendance (Please see the Department for Education's (DFE) Working Together to improve School Attendance statutory paper 2024).

At Porchester Junior School, our PRIDE vision and values underpin all that we do, putting the pupils at the heart of every decision.



School Attendance

Regular school attendance is crucial for educational success. Our attendance policy is designed to support pupils, parents, staff, and Governors in promoting and maintaining excellent attendance, which is vital for academic achievement and personal growth. Through this policy we aim to:

- **Create the Foundation for Lifelong Habits:** Regular attendance promotes discipline and commitment, establishing a foundation for lifelong habits of responsibility and punctuality.
- **Provide consistent Learning:** Excellent attendance allows pupils to fully engage with the curriculum, enhancing their understanding and academic progress.
- **Enable Social Development:** Regular school attendance supports the development of social skills and helps students build and maintain friendships, contributing to emotional growth.
- **Reduce Learning Gaps:** Regular school attendance reduces the risk of falling behind, ensuring that pupils do not miss out on key lessons and activities that could lead to learning gaps.
- **Increase Confidence:** Being present and participating regularly in class boosts pupil's confidence in their abilities and encourages active participation in school life.

- **Enable strong Child-Adult Relationships:** Regular attendance at school allows students to build strong, trusting relationships with all staff members, which can positively impact their motivation and academic success.
- **Ensure all stakeholders have a clear understanding of our school tiered approach;** universal provision in place for promoting excellent attendance, support for families where a pupil is at risk of persistent absence and the targeted support in place for families where attendance is causing a concern.

Definitions

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer.

Legitimate reasons include if a pupil has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence, religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave, and medical appointments (only where they cannot be made outside the school day).

Only the school can make an absence authorised.

The school may choose not to authorise in some of these circumstances where the pupil's education may be adversely affected by ongoing absenteeism

Only the Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Sometimes, even if absence is supported by parent, an absence will be unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the permission of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent.

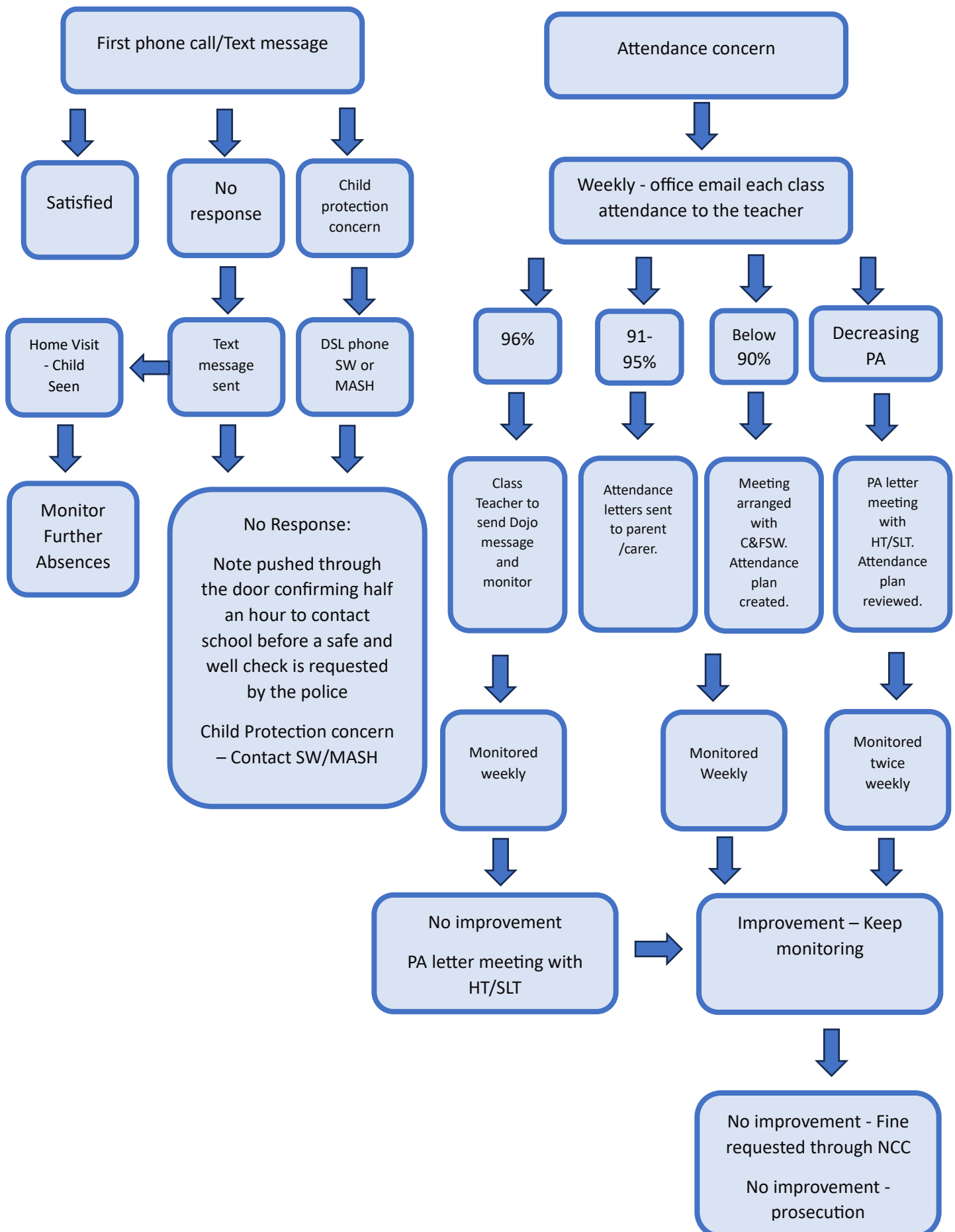
Our Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

Universal

- Half Termly excellent and most improved awards at celebration assembly
- Termly attendance raffle, for each full week of the term the pupil attends they will receive a raffle ticket to be entered into the termly attendance incentive.
- Raise the profile of attendance for all stakeholders across the school environment E.g. school banner on front gates.
- Staff on the school gate welcoming pupils in at the start of the day (This includes managing late gate).
- Our school promotes excellent attendance through a relational approach linked to our behaviour policy and developing positive relationships with pupils and families.
- We will provide opportunities for explicitly teaching the importance of attending school every day (curriculum and assemblies).
- We have a rigorous and robust system in place for first day absences of our pupils please see the first day contact section of this policy.

Porchester Attendance Procedures



Targeted Support

- We will use our first day absence procedures
- We will complete home visits.
- We will send letters home to inform parents of attendance concerns. These letters can be found in the appendix.
- We will support through informal and formal meetings (identifying push and pull factors with families and implementing Attendance Support plans).
- We will provide interventions to support the pupils and families, working with external agencies, e.g. Education Welfare Officer and specific work provided in school through intervention and support.
- Attendance is an integral part of weekly DSL supervision meetings for at risk of Persistent Absence (PA) or who are currently PA.
- We will assign the Child and Family Support worker to support families.
- Fines will be issued in line with the National Framework for penalty notices.

Our intention will be to work together to support families and prevent persistent absence

Specialist (Persistent Absence)

School will use formal approaches that support and challenge in line with the National Framework for penalty notices. Formal Attendance Support plans, Team Around the Family approach, external agency support, interventions to support the pupils and the family.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have:

Name of Staff Member	Roles and Responsibilities
Vicki Welsby/Natalia Thomas	Attendance Champions/DSL
Vicki Welsby	Safeguarding Leader (DSL)
Julie Barnard	Governor for School Attendance.
Lauren Mintey	Deputy Head Teacher, DSL
Natasha Green	Upper School Phase Leader, DSL
Katie McDonald	Lower School Phase Leader

Class teacher

Class teachers at Porchester are responsible for:

- The day to day attendance of pupils in their class.
- They will be the first port of call for issues arising from attendance
- Providing academic and emotional support to pupils who may be experiencing attendance challenges and identifying the root causes and addressing them proactively, can help improve attendance.
- Setting Expectations: Teachers can set clear expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms. This includes communicating the importance of regular attendance for learning and academic progress.
- Monitoring the daily attendance of their pupils. They should maintain accurate attendance records, noting both present and absent students.
- Identifying Barriers: Teachers should be alert to potential barriers to attendance, such as bullying, health issues, or family problems. Identifying these barriers and reporting them to school staff can lead to effective interventions.
- Implementing School Policies: Teachers should adhere to and implement the school's attendance policies and procedures.

Administration Staff

Administration staff are responsible for:

- **Data Analysis:** collect and analyse attendance data to identify trends and patterns. They use this information to pinpoint areas of concern, such as high levels of persistent absence, frequent lateness, or particular year groups or demographic groups with attendance challenges.
- **Safeguarding:** aware of safeguarding protocols and report any concerns related to a pupil's safety or well-being promptly to the appropriate school staff.
- **Taking Immediate Action:** When a pupil is absent without prior notification or a valid reason, Administration Staff should take immediate action. This may involve contacting the school's attendance lead or designated staff member to report the absence.
- **Implementing School Policies:** Administration staff should adhere to and implement the school's attendance policies and procedures, including sending attendance letters to families.

Headteacher

The Headteacher at Porchester is responsible for:

- **Promoting a Positive Culture:** Senior staff actively promote a positive school culture where regular attendance is recognised, and pupils feel motivated to attend school regularly.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** They monitor attendance data regularly, analysing trends and patterns. Senior leaders use this data to identify students at risk of poor attendance and to measure the impact of attendance improvement strategies.
- **Setting Expectations:** Senior leaders establish clear expectations for staff regarding attendance monitoring, recording, and intervention. They ensure that staff understand their roles in promoting regular attendance.
- **Recognising Attendance:** They may implement incentives and recognition programmes to recognise pupils and reinforcing a positive attendance culture.
- **Enforcing Policies:** Senior Leaders enforce attendance policies consistently and fairly, addressing unauthorised absences promptly. They communicate the consequences of poor attendance to students and parents.
- **Safeguarding:** The Headteacher is alert to safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They collaborate with designated safeguarding leads to address any child protection issues arising from attendance concerns.

Parents

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- **Ensuring excellent attendance** of their child at school.
- **Communicating with School:** Establish open lines of communication with our school. Inform the school office promptly if your child is going to be absent due to illness or other reasons. This helps the school keep accurate attendance records.
- **Setting Expectations:** Clearly communicate your expectations about attendance to your child. Emphasise the importance of attending school regularly and on time.
- **Monitor Progress:** Keep track of your child's progress and attendance. Be aware of any sudden changes in attendance patterns that may signal underlying issues.
- **Seek Support if Needed:** If your child is facing challenges that affect attendance, such as health issues or academic struggles, seek support from the school, healthcare professionals, or relevant agencies.
- **Collaborate with the School:** Work collaboratively with the school to address any attendance issues. Explore support services or interventions if necessary.

Registration

The school gates open at 8.45am. At 8:55am, the registers will be taken. Pupils must be seated by 8:55am, this gives plenty of time for all pupils to come into their classroom and be ready to learn when lessons start. All class registers must be completed by 9.05am. Registers will be taken again in the afternoon at 1.10pm. A full day counts as 2 sessions.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for marking the attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. All attendance records are documented using Scholarpack. Attendance registers are legal documents, and these must be kept secure and preserved in line with the relevant retention schedule.

Lateness

Pupils who are persistently late after the close of registers soon fall behind with their learning.

Any pupil who comes into school after **9.05am** will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L).

Any pupil who arrives for school later than **9.15am** will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). **This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.**

As a school, we regularly monitor persistent lateness and will support and communicate with parents/carers to address this.

Medical Absence

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a pupils to be out of school for this reason, the pupils should be returned to school directly after the appointment. For all appointments, a letter/appointment card or documentation should be provided to the school office of the appointment prior or straight after to ensure that it is marked as a medical absence.

First Day Contact

Where a pupil is absent from school and we have not received any contact from the parent/carer, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all the registers each morning to identify those pupils who are absent without explanation and, as a safeguarding requirement, make contact with the parents/carers of these pupils by telephone.

We have a rigorous and robust system in place for first day absences of our pupils:

Parents/carers must inform the school by 8:55am if their child is going to be absent through one of the following methods:

- Phoning the school office and leaving a message on 0115 9520920
- Emailing the school office on office@porchester.net

Once the register is closed at 9.15am, the office staff will identify any pupils who we have no reason for their absence and a first text message will be sent to parents/carers to remind them they need to contact the school office.

For pupils who walk to school, a phone call will be made immediately to parents/carers.

Where necessary, the Headteacher may use their discretion and advise that text messages be sent outside the allotted times.

1st Text Message

"Your pupils has been recorded as absent today. Please contact the school office to let us know why. Thank you."

If no contact is made by 9.30am as a result of the first text message, school will make a phone call to the parent/carer of the pupil. If contact cannot be made to the parent/carer, school will call all available contacts of the pupil.

If no contact can be made through calling the parent/carer and all other available contacts, a second text message will be sent out to inform parents/carers that if contact is not made by 11:30am, this will trigger a safe and well home visit.

2nd Text Message

"We have tried unsuccessfully today to contact you regarding your child's absence. If we do not hear from you before 11.30am, we will conduct a safe and well home visit. Thank you"

If contact has still not been made by 11:30am, the office will inform all DSL's and SLT, and a home visit will be conducted.

Where necessary, the Headteacher may use their discretion and advise that text messages be sent outside the allotted times.

If no contact can be made from a home visit:

A home visit letter will be left at the house requesting contact as soon as possible.

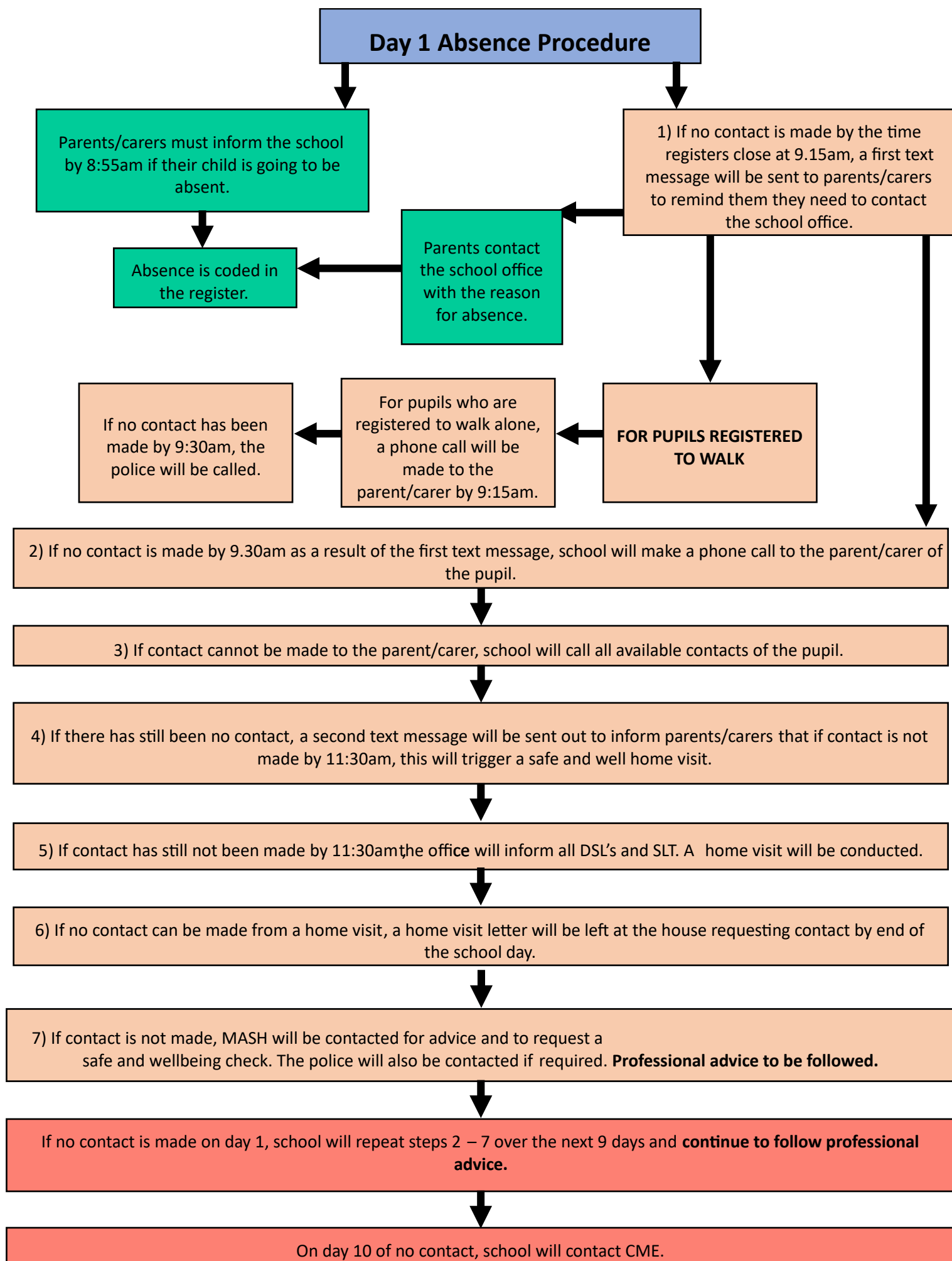
If the pupil has a social worker, they will be informed that the pupil has not been in school today and that they have not been seen when a home visit was carried out.

If contact is not made, Social Care will be contacted for advice and to request a safe and wellbeing check. The police will also be contacted if required. Professional advice to be followed.

School will do all it can to contact the pupil each day and continue to follow professional advice. On day 10 of no contact, school will contact Children Missing Education.

Known Pupil Absence – Day 4 Procedure

- Where there has been contact with the parent/carer, but a pupil has been absent for 4 days, a home visit will be undertaken on the 4th day to check on the wellbeing of the pupil and to see whether there is anything school needs to be aware of.
- If the pupil is not seen, the HT/SLT will undertake a risk assessment to decide on level of concern.
- School will contact social care or the police for advice and to request a safe and wellbeing check. Professional advice to be followed.



Children Missing Education

In order to safeguard pupils who may be at risk of missing education it remains important for all staff in school to take swift action. This will include the need to liaise with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Nottinghamshire County Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register and include circumstances where the pupil:

- Has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education – this will be communicated with the home elective education team.
- Does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts.
- Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the children missing officer (CMO) as they have not been registered at a new school.

GUIDANCE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND BUSINESS MANAGERS WHERE CHILDREN ARE AT RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION

<p>Child / young person is on roll but not attending</p>	<p>Child moving out of county</p>	<p>Family indicate they are moving abroad</p>	<p>School Allocations intake or in-year admissions rounds</p>
<p>School/Academy to attempt to make contact with parent/carers no later than day 3, best practice day 1. Follow your internal school attendance procedures.</p>	<p>Request from the family their new address and details of new School/Academy. If obtained please share with: admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk</p>	<p>School must request and record details of the new family address and school. You can't remove from roll without this. If obtained please share with: admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk http://www.languageshop.org/ (translation support)</p>	<p>If allocated and there is not an acceptance/agreed start date best practice is for school to make attempts to engage (telephone, text, e-mail, welcome letter, home visit (where appropriate)).</p>
<p>Days 0-10, School/Academy should continue to make efforts to engage the family, recording their contact: telephone conversations, texts, e-mails, letters, home visits. Liaising with professionals who may be involved. School/Academy should consider what action to take if attendance is 10% unauthorised.</p>	<p>Hopefully the new school will make contact with you, if not, make contact with them to confirm on roll.</p>	<p>If school does not receive the above a referral should be made to: Children Missing Officer (CMO)</p>	<p>If a child/young person has been allocated a place at your school/academy and they do not arrive you must inform the CMO within 10 days evidencing efforts to engage.</p>
<p>Whereabouts confirmed to be known but not attending education or engaging with School/Academy.</p>	<p>Whereabouts unknown evidencing reasonable efforts to locate/make contact with the family.</p>	<p>If without a new school within 10 days, a referral should be made to: Children Missing Officer (CMO) providing the families new address, contact details and a summary of efforts made by school to engage the family.</p>	<p>If an application to transfer school during the year (outside of the normal intake process), the leaving school should keep them on roll until it has been confirmed by the new school that they have arrived and have been taken on roll.</p>
<p>Child and family meet the threshold for Early Help through the Family Service (level 3 Pathway to Provision). Make a referral to the Early Help Unit via an EHAF evidencing the actions you have taken.</p> <p>Absence meets the threshold for enforcement action as outlined in the Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct, make a referral to the Early Help Unit via an EHAF <u>Child stays on roll.</u></p>	<p>Referral is made to: Children Missing Officer (CMO) No later than day 10 when there is no explanation for absence and above checks have been completed.</p> <p>Details of how to refer are on page 2, please clearly state any safeguarding concerns you may have.</p> <p>DO NOT remove from your roll until CMO has completed initial checks and confirmed that they can be removed.</p>	<p>Child is of statutory school age but not applied or on roll of a School/Academy</p>	<p>Places must be taken up by the start of the next half term after the place has been allocated. For places allocated in the summer term 2018, the place must be taken up before the end of the summer term.</p> <p>For children admitted through first admissions round please refer to your summer term guidance.</p> <p>A child should be placed on roll at the point of acceptance by parent or arriving on the first day.</p>
<p>Parent/Carers indicate they wish to Home Educate (EHE)</p>	<p>Direct referral to: Children Missing Education (CMO)</p> <p>Providing child's name / DOB / address and details of parent / carers.</p>	<p>Looked After Children (LAC)</p>	<p>If allocated children do not arrive PLEASE FOLLOW UP. DO NOT ASSUME they will have gone elsewhere or remained at their previous School/Academy!!</p>
<p>Request must be made in writing, following a conversation between school and parent/carers, with a copy of the letter placed in the pupil file and a copy of the letter forwarded securely to EHE.</p>	<p>Child permanently excluded</p>	<p>If a LAC is moving placement and no longer attending, school should liaise with the Virtual School and the child's Social Worker. DO NOT remove from roll.</p>	<p>Own admission authorities must inform the admissions team of any enquiry/application and outcome. This helps identify any vulnerable child requiring a place and avoids a child being out of education for an undue length of time. All academies must notify the local authority via admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register.</p>
<p>School/Academy to return the EHE 1A and 1B forms to the EHE Administrator.</p>	<p>LA to be notified on the day of exclusion via e-mail.</p>	<p>Independent / Residential Schools</p>	<p>Family indicate they are returning home for family, cultural or health reasons</p>
<p>Remove the learner from your roll. DO NOT remove from your roll if stated without confirmation from the LA. School file to be sent to EHE at County Hall via secure mail.</p>	<p>The LA will respond and continue to work with you through the process.</p>	<p>The same procedures should be followed as those in School's / Academies</p> <p>Gypsy/Roma/Traveller</p> <p>If a Traveller family indicate they are to travel for work purposes School/Academy should request details of where they will be travelling and when they aim to return.</p> <p>If they do not return within 4 weeks of the expected return date please follow attendance procedures.</p>	<p>School/Academy need to consider the circumstances of the absence in deciding which code to use. Parents should provide school with a return date.</p> <p>If the family do not return on this date attendance procedures should be followed.</p>
<p>Child not in full receipt of education (25hrs)</p>	<p>DO NOT remove from your roll until advised.</p>	<p>Truancy – School/Academy to inform parent/carers that their child/young person is not in school. School/Academy risk assess before considering a Police response. (prior checks to be completed and evidenced upon calling the police, unless immediate risk evident). Please be mindful of missing and hidden missing where young people's whereabouts are not known to parent/carers. This can be discussed with the CMO.</p>	<p>Health Related Education</p>
<p>Information should be shared with the Fair Access Team. Levels of provision will be closely monitored and scrutinised.</p>	<p>Child permanently excluded</p>	<p>Health Related Education</p>	<p>If a child has been out of school for 15 days or more due to illness please liaise with the School Nurse and then a referral can be made to:</p> <p>Health Related Education Team (please contact the Health Related Education Team to discuss a request for their involvement)</p>
<p>SAFEGUARDING - Every child should be accounted for, their whereabouts should be known or a referral made to the appropriate service. Please be mindful that the MASH is for level 4 safeguarding concerns with children believed to be <u>at risk of or actual harm</u>. The Early Help Unit will support with early intervention/attendance. It is important that concerns are risk assessed by school. All referrals should indicate the level of concern and previous actions taken. A referral made to the correct service will help for support to be in place in a timely fashion. If unsure please seek guidance prior to referring.</p>			
<p>Useful links: http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/schoolsportal/local-authority/attendance (Nottinghamshire Schools Portal) http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-childrens-trust/whatway-to-provision (P2P) http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/109754/factsheet-summer-born-final-2.pdf (Summer Born) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf (CME) http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-childrens-trust/whatway-to-provision/early-help-assessment-form (EHAF)</p>			
<p>GUIDANCE FOR REMOVING A CHILD FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL</p>			
<p>PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE A CHILD FROM YOUR ROLL UNLESS YOU HAVE RECORDED AND SHARED THE FOLLOWING WITH THE LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the full name of the pupil, the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, at least one telephone number of the parent, the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and <u>the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).</u> This will need to be clearly recorded when updating your systems as you will need to inform the LA. <p>All other deletions breach statutory guidance</p>			

Applications for Leave of Absence in Term Time

In September 2013 the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers must not give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any requests for term time leave should be made on a Request for Absence form available from the school office and handed in 2 school weeks before the first date of the requested absence whenever possible. You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. (Attendance code G).

Addressing Attendance Concerns

Porchester Junior School expects attendance of at least 97%.

It is important for pupils to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns.

At Porchester, we are relentless in our pursuit of excellence for pupils. A vital part of our role in ensuring we make every day count for the pupils of our school is the robust approach taken to breaking down barriers that may lead to poor attendance of our pupils.

Early Intervention

As outlined above in our universal offer we will offer a range of support e.g. pastoral support, parent workshops, ELSA support, Child and Family Support around strategies to support at home, signposting to agencies.

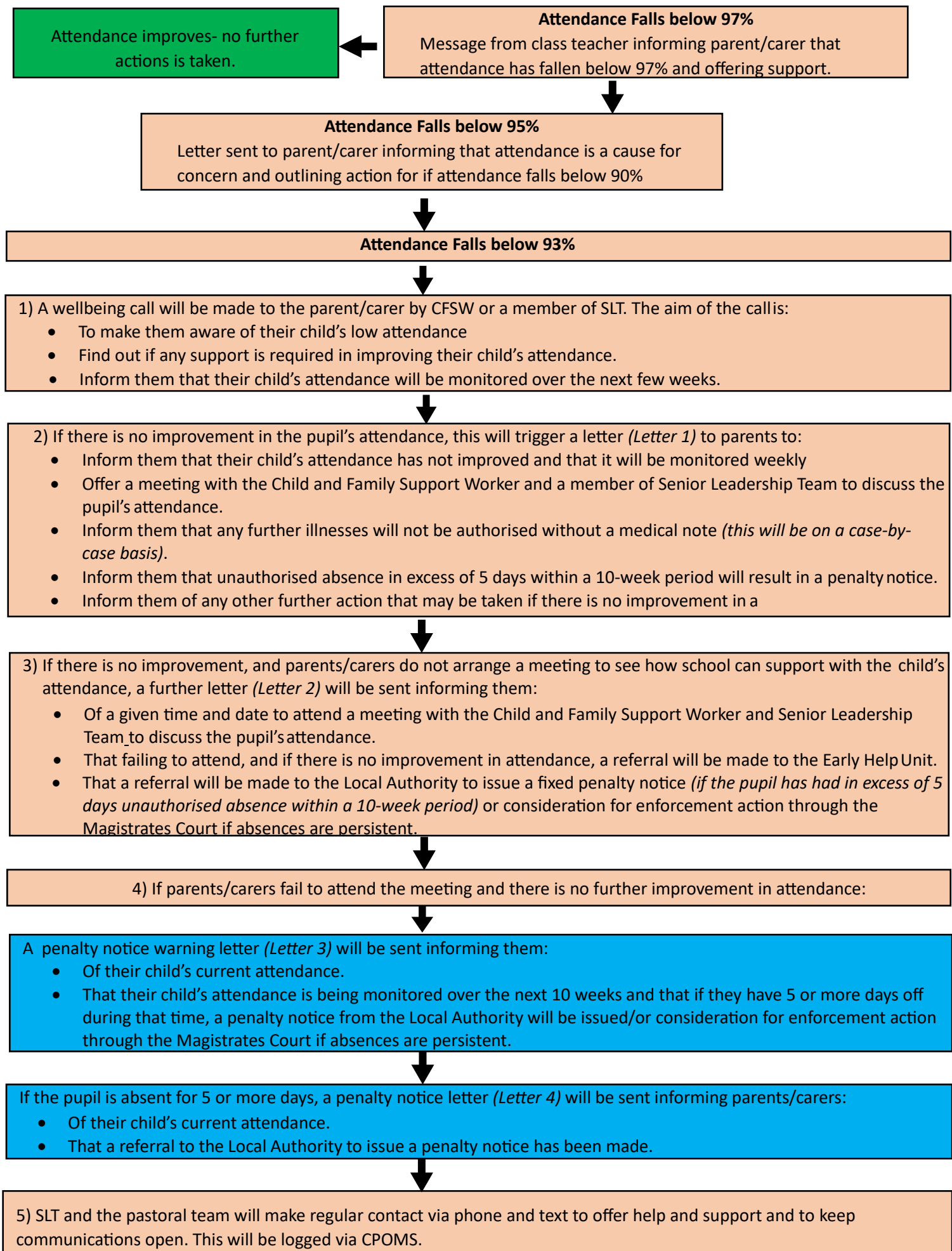
Our wider universal offer includes a further range of support, e.g. support from class teacher to provide support and to discuss concerns, appointment with the SENDCo if pupil has identified SEND needs, Behaviour Lead, interventions such as boosters, after school clubs (academic and non-academic), lunchtime clubs, etc.

We will include specific targeted support from your tiered approach – e.g. identifying push and pull factors, Attendance support plan written with parents and carers for a period of half term/ term. Where necessary we may refer to specialist support/ agencies

If a pupil's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of further action, which includes the issue of penalty notice fines, or other statutory action.

Please see below for our full Attendance Procedure:

Attendance Procedure



National framework for penalty notices

The new National threshold for consideration of legal action is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, including lates after close of register (Attendance code U) and unauthorised leave in term time (Attendance code G / O). If your child's absence falls into this category the school will decide if further offers of support is likely to improve the situation or if a request for legal action should be submitted to the Local Authority.

The new costs and process is outlined below:

- **First Offence** - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: **£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.**
- **Second Offence (within 3 years)** -The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: **£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.**
- **Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)** - The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented **straight to the Magistrates' Court.**

Term time holidays

Pupils should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable. Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time and should only approve the leave if there are exceptional circumstances. If a request for leave is denied and the pupil is absent for 5 days or more then the school is expected to refer the case to the LA. The LA will issue a penalty notice with no requirement for a formal warning to be issued. Penalty notices can also be issued where a pupil is absent for repeated incidents of unauthorised leave in term time that fall below the 5-day threshold. In every case, the request for the Penalty Notice comes in from the school to the LA for the process to be completed.

Refusal to Attend

Where a pupil refuses to attend school, parents must contact the school office to inform them on the first day of absence. Parents should explain that their child is refusing to attend; school will aim to work with parents to support their child in returning to school. In the first instance an appointment should be made with the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or our Child and Family Support Worker to see if reasons for the refusal to attend can be identified and addressed.

School will then work with parents to offer to support. This may include:

- Home visits
- Nurture support
- Referral to outside agencies

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Porchester Junior School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next.
- The address of the new school.
- A new home address if appropriate.

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school within 5 working days.

In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority.

Review

This Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually by the school's governing body to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with statutory requirements. Any amendments will be communicated to staff, parents, and carers as necessary.

Appendix 1 – Letter - Attendance under 95%

Dear _____

Re: _____ . DOB: _____ - Attendance - Your child is currently on Amber (See box below for details)

As you are aware, attendance is a very important part of your child's school career. At Porchester Junior School, we are passionate and committed to our aim of raising educational standards. A key factor influencing our achievement of this aim is ensuring that all children attend school regularly. Poor attendance has a detrimental effect on academic achievement. Attendance is monitored regularly, and we are writing to you due to _____ current level of attendance.

_____’s school attendance is currently _____%

Our current attendance target range for all pupils is 97%-100%, and unfortunately your child is not currently meeting this target. Therefore, we are sending out this letter to advise that if your child is further absent from school this could result in your child being within the lowest standard of attendance - as any child with below 90% attendance is considered by the Department for Education to be “persistently absent from school”.

For persistent absentees the school is expected to have plans in place to both support pupils and to improve their attendance.

We are aware that term time holidays can be the cause of this, however, as per the Department for Education’s (DFE) guidance, we do not support term time holidays and holidays on all occasions should be booked outside of term time, excluding extenuating circumstances.

We are obliged to inform you that as _____ parent/carer you are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance at school. 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, his/her parent/carer (s) are guilty of an offence. Please also note that if you have more than one child, each child’s irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

Continued absence from school could result in one of the following actions:

1) A Penalty Notice being issued. Each penalty notice is £80 if paid within the first 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22-28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.

_____’s attendance will be monitored, and we hope to see an improvement. If attendance continues to cause concern, then a meeting will be arranged to discuss together any concerns, and any support that can be put in place.

If you do have any concerns, or would like to discuss this letter further, please do not hesitate to contact school, to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely

Mrs V Welsby
Headteacher

Mrs N Thomas
Child and Family Support Worker

GREEN Pupils with attendance from 97% to 100%
Amber Pupils with attendance from 90% to 96.9%
RED Pupils with attendance below 90%

Appendix 2 – Letter 1 - Attendance under 90%

Dear _____

Re: _____ . DOB: _____ - Attendance - Your child is currently on Red (See box below for details)

As you are aware, attendance is a very important part of your child's school career. At Porchester Junior School, we are passionate and committed to our aim of raising educational standards. A key factor influencing our achievement of this aim is ensuring that all pupils attend school regularly. Poor attendance has a detrimental effect on academic achievement. Attendance is monitored regularly, and we are writing to you due to _____ current level of attendance.

Currently _____'s school attendance stands at _____%

Our current attendance target range for all pupils is 97%-100%, and unfortunately your child is not currently meeting this target. Therefore, we are sending you this letter to bring this to your attention, as any child with below 90% attendance is considered by the Department for Education to be "persistently absent from school".

For persistent absentees the school is expected to have plans in place to both support pupils and to improve their attendance.

We are aware that term time holidays can be the cause of this, however, as per the Department for Education's (DFE) guidance, we do not support term time holidays and holidays on all occasions should be booked outside of term time, excluding extenuating circumstances.

As your child's attendance has fallen below 90%, any further time off school due to illness may not be authorised without medical evidence.

We are obliged to inform you that as _____ parent/carer you are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance at school. 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, his/her parent/carer (s) are guilty of an offence. Please also note that if you have more than one child, each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The Local Authority may take formal action against you for failure to comply with the law. Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution but may not be issued if prosecution is a more appropriate response to the attendance issues.

Therefore, your child's irregular attendance could result in one of the following actions:

1) A Penalty Notice being issued. Each penalty notice is £80 if paid within the first 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22-28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.

2) Prosecution. This could lead to fines of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

We would like to work with you to offer any support in improving your child's attendance and punctuality. Therefore, we would like to offer you a meeting to discuss this further. To arrange a meeting, please contact the school office to discuss a convenient time to meet.

Yours sincerely

Mrs V Welsby
Headteacher

Mrs N Thomas
Child and Family Support Worker

GREEN Pupils with attendance from 97% to 100%
Amber Pupils with attendance from 90% to 96.9%
RED Pupils with attendance below 90%

Appendix 3 – Letter 2 - Penalty Notice Warning

PENALTY NOTICE WARNING

Dear _____

Re: _____ **DOB:** _____

Our registers at Porchester Junior School show that, to date, _____ has missed ____ days (____ sessions) of school due to unauthorised absences over the last ____ weeks.

As a parent/carer, you have a legal responsibility under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. As such, unless your child's attendance improves, you will be referred to the local authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child.

Should _____ have any further time off school which results in them having in excess of 5 days (10 sessions) unauthorised absence over a 10-week rolling period, the local authority will issue a penalty notice of up to £180. The notice can be issued to both parents/carers for each child whose absence meets the Penalty Notice threshold.

Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution but may not be issued if prosecution is a more appropriate response to the attendance issues.

Therefore, your child's irregular attendance could result in one of the following actions:

1) A Penalty Notice being issued. Each penalty notice is £80 if paid within the first 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22-28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.

2) Prosecution. This could lead to fines of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Please take immediate steps to ensure your child gets to school on time every day and obtain medical evidence if he/she is too ill to attend. Any other reason for absence should be discussed with the school and it is the school's decision whether to authorise any absence that is not covered by medical evidence.

Yours sincerely

Mrs V Welsby
Headteacher

Mrs N Thomas
Child and Family Support Worker

Appendix 4 – Letter 3 – Penalty Notice

Dear _____

Re: _____ **DOB:** _____

We wrote to you on _____, notifying you that your child had incurred unauthorised absence from school and that any further absence may result in a request to the Local authority to issue a Penalty Notice fine.

We are now writing to advise you that because _____ has had unauthorised absences of 5 days (10 sessions) or more over a 10 week period a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to you for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Mrs V Welsby
Headteacher

Mrs N Thomas
Child and Family Support Worker

Appendix 5 – Letter 4 - Late Letter

Dear _____

Re: _____ **DOB:** _____

At Porchester Junior School we regularly monitor attendance and punctuality and expect all pupils to arrive on time at the start of the school day.

Following routine register checks it has been noted that (child name) has been late on a number of occasions this (month/half term/term)

(Child name) has arrived late to school on xxx occasions.

As a school we understand that on rare occasions, due to unforeseen circumstances, being late is unavoidable, however we are concerned that (child name) has been late on numerous occasions this (month/half term/term).

Under the Education Act 1996 parents have a duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and punctuality.

If there are any reasons making it difficult for (child name) to get to school on time please do contact us on 0115 9520920, so we can discuss this and work together to best support (child name)

We will continue to monitor (child name)'s attendance and punctuality and will invite you to attend a meeting in school should this pattern of lateness continue. We hope to see an improvement in (child's name) punctuality.



Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Mrs V Welsby
Headteacher

Mrs N Thomas
Child and Family Support Worker



APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Overleaf is the required application form for requesting permission for your child to be absent from school during term time. Before completing the application form, please read these notes carefully.

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child attends school regularly. Holidays should only be taken during the school holiday period. As a rule, no requests for holidays will be granted. Please note that the school policy, in accordance with guidance from the Department for Education is that leave of absence requests may only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher will not, under any circumstances, authorise leave of absence of more than 10 days in one academic year.

Leave of absence requests must be made **12 days prior** to when the intended leave is due to commence. This must be in writing using the form overleaf. Permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The school may request further evidence to support any leave of absence application. Please note the school year is from 31st August to end of July.

- **Penalty notice referrals will be made if the absence is unauthorised and there are 5 consecutive days (10 sessions) of term time leave.**
- **Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.**
- **First offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave of irregular attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.**
- **Second offence (within 3 years) - The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.**
- **Third Offence or any further offences (within 3 years) - The third time an offence is committed for Term Time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines are per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may be shown on the parent's future DBS certificate.**

Payment of Penalty Notices:

It is important to note that these fines are paid directly to the council and not school.

- Failure to pay the fines may result in court action.
- The fine must be paid in full, there are no payment plans (paying in instalments),
- There is no process to appeal a fine it must be paid.

We appreciate that holidays are expensive out of term time but please note this guidance is national guidance and school has a legal responsibility to follow it.

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence for your child during term time then please complete the application form below.

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Please complete all sections below. Consent for term time leave of absence will not be granted without a full description of special circumstances. The school may request further evidence to support any leave of absence application. The school requests that parents use the allocated school holiday period for vacations.

Pupil's Name: _____ Class: _____ -

Home Address: _____

Email address: _____

Telephone number: _____

I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school during the following dates:

First Day of Absence: _____ Date of Return to School: _____

Total number of school days missed: _____

Could you please explain why you require a leave of absence during term time?

By completing this form, I acknowledge that I have made an application for my child, named above, to have authorised leave of absence from school for the reasons stated. I confirm that the reasons given are valid and legitimate. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences could lead to a formal referral to the Nottinghamshire County Council Family Service in respect of lack of attendance at school. Please be aware that this could result in the Local Authority taking legal action against you.

Name of Parent/Carer making application: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 12 DAYS NOTICE

Appendix 7 – Whole School Letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

Porchester Junior School is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority and following the recent Department for Education (DFE) guidance to improve school attendance. We would like to congratulate the many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly and are therefore benefiting fully from their educational opportunity.

The school's attendance target for this academic year is 97%. Should your child's attendance fall below this target we will contact you to discuss this further and we will look to offer appropriate support where we can.

You can support the school, and your child, to achieve this target by:

- Making sure your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Contacting school on the first day of any absence on 0115 9520290
- Informing school of any problems which may impact on your child's attendance, punctuality and learning.
- Arranging medical appointments outside school time where possible.

We do understand that some absence due to illness is unavoidable, however, it is important school is made aware of on-going health problems so we can put the correct support in place.

The government-set persistent absence level remains at 10%. In real terms this is equal to missing around 7 sessions per half term (3.5 days) or 38 sessions across the school year (19 days). This amount of absence from school will mean your child will be classed as a persistent absentee; in line with national guidelines, this is likely to result in further action being taken.

Absence from school disrupts the education of the individual student and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend school regularly:

- Are less likely to achieve their full potential.
- Are more likely to drop grades in examinations.



Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher and **will not be authorised during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.**

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their child/children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to ensure this may result in legal action being taken against you.

Legal action that may be taken includes:

- Issuing penalty notices: Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £80 or £160 depending on how soon payment is made. So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £640. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence: The Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) - Courts can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.
- Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence: The Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A) - court can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.
Being taken to court could result in you having a criminal record.

Frequent absence can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life.

If at any time you are experiencing difficulties and require any support or advice, please do not hesitate to contact School.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs V Welsby
Headteacher

Mrs N Thomas
Child and Family Support Worker

CHANGES TO PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOLS.

After 19th August 2024, the following changes will apply to Penalty Notice Fines issued under the new National Framework.

Per Parent, Per Child: There will now be penalty notices issued to parents for each child absent. E.G. If three siblings were absent for term time leave, each parent would receive a fine for each absence.

5 consecutive days of term time leave: When Term Time Leave exceeds 5 or more consecutive days, penalty notices will be issued. Inset Training Days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days, where there was intent to be absent for Term Time Leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period: When 10 unauthorised absences are recorded in ten weeks, fines will be considered.

First Offence: The first time a penalty notice is issued for term time Leave or Irregular Attendance Penalty Notices will be issued:

- £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years): After a second penalty notice for Irregular Attendance or Term Time Leave has been issued, the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years): An offence for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance will not result in a penalty notice, but instead will be dealt with by the Magistrates' Court. A magistrate can impose fines up to £2500 per parent, per child.

When parents are found guilty of failing to safeguard their child's education in Magistrates' Court, the conviction will appear on their future DBS certificates.