



**Astrea Academy Trust**

## **Primary Attendance Policy**

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## **1. Attendance Policy, Principles and Aims**

- 1.1. Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.
- 1.2. Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of all staff within Astrea Academy Trust. Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the academy gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.
- 1.3. The Hill Primary Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Responding to attendance concerns is a safeguarding matter and will be treated as such.
- 1.4. The Hill Primary Academy aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
  - Developing and maintaining a whole academy culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance;
  - Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
  - Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
  - Supporting parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly;
  - Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them;
  - Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence;
  - Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place;
  - Share information and work collaboratively with other academies in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
  - Building a culture of safeguarding: ensuring all students feel safe, protected and valued;
  - Having clear and swift responses to address concerns including patterns of absence;

## **2. The Law on School Attendance**

- 2.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at a school.

- 2.2 Where parents / carers decide to have their child registered at a school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.
- 2.3 By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.
- 2.4 Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
  - The amended entry
  - The reason for the amendment
  - The date on which the amendment was made
  - The name and position of the person who made the amendment
  - Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
- 2.5 The attendance register will mark whether every pupil is:
- Present
  - Attending an approved off-site educational activity
  - Absent
  - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

*See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.*

### **3. Key Attendance Academy Staff**

- 3.1. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, carers, pupils and all members of academy staff.
- 3.2. The strategic attendance lead for **The Hill Primary Academy** is Nicola Lawrence, who works with the whole academy team to monitor and improve attendance at individual and whole academy level.
- 3.3. The day to day contact for reporting attendance and attendance queries is Jacqui Gollick
- 3.4. The attendance pastoral support / family support are Sue Miller & Jack Kilner, who monitors attendance and works with parents/carers/ families and pupils to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and works with families to remove them.

### **4. Academy Expectations and Procedures**

#### **4.1. Daily Routines**

- Pupils must arrive at the academy by 09:00 on each day.
- Enter school grounds
- Breakfast club starts at 08:00 each day, booking and payment are required
- Gates open at 08:40 and are closed at 09:10 each morning. They reopen at 15:00 at the end of each day
- Every day, Senior Leaders are outside for meet & greet on the playground

#### **4.2. Attendance Register**

- Class teachers are required to take an electronic register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session using Bromcom.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 09:00 and will be kept open until 09.30
- Arrivals after 09:00 will be recorded as 'L'
- Arrivals after 09:30 will be recorded as 'U' – this will affect attendance percentage

- The register for the second session will be taken at 12.15 for EYFS, 12.45 for KS1, 13:00 for KS2.

#### 4.3. Lates & Punctuality

- It is an expectation of the Academy that pupils will arrive on time and be ready to learn. Lateness and punctuality will be monitored daily.
- A pupil who arrives late, after the register has closed, will be marked as 'U,' unless another code is more appropriate due to the reason for lateness after register (such as unplanned medical).
- We may send a letter to parents/carers, by way of notification of our concerns in relation to their child's punctuality and may request a meeting to discuss the concerns in order to work together to resolve any issues.
- Persistent lateness can result in a significant amount of learning time being lost, resulting in gaps in learning and can also indicate a safeguarding concern. All class teachers must be alert to emerging patterns or concerns in relation to punctuality and inform both the Attendance Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns. *(please refer to punctuality flowchart appendix 2)*

### 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

#### 5.1. Unplanned Absence

- It is an expectation of the academy that parents/ carers will notify the academy on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health by 10:00am.
- Parents/ carers must keep in touch every day that their child cannot return to the academy, unless the academy has agreed otherwise. Parents/ carers can contact school in the following ways:
  - My Child at School app
  - telephone 01709 892145, option 1
  - in person at the School Office
- The reported absence message may be an answering phone service and as such a message can be left at any time. If a message is left it should include: Pupil's name, reason for absence, anticipated return date
- Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- Only the Principal can authorise absence from the academy. Absence will not be authorised unless the reason you offer is accepted by the academy.
- Absences not reported will be followed up by the academy attendance / pastoral staff.

#### 5.2. Planned Absences- Medical and Leave of Absence

##### Medical or dental appointments

- We encourage parents/ carers to make medical and dental appointments out of academy hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of academy for the minimum amount of time necessary. It is expected that parents/carers inform the academy of the appointment as soon as possible; failure to do this may result in an unauthorised absence.

##### Leave of absence during term time

- By law, Principals cannot grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- **We define exceptional to mean very rare, unusual or unforeseeable circumstances.**
- The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal's discretion.
- All parents/carers must complete a leave of absence form at least two weeks in advance and may be invited in the academy to discuss with a member of the attendance team.
- Extended leave of absence is considered to be absences that extend beyond two weeks. Parents/ carers will be invited into the academy for a meeting to discuss these requests.
- Taking leave in term time will affect pupil's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to support the academy by not taking pupil's away in term time. Fixed Penalty notices may be issued for unauthorised leave of absence, such as holidays.

### 5.3. Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the academy, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

### 5.4. Re-integration following Long-term Absence

- Where a pupil has been absent for a prolonged period, due to illness, the academy will:
  - Welcome the pupil back to the academy and value their return
  - Provide support for the pupil in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the academy.
  - Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
  - Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.
  - Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate
  - Nominate a key member of staff to monitor and review the pupil's return.

## 6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

6.1. To promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high attendance or improvement, **The Hill Primary Academy** uses a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies.

6.2. These include:

- Weekly celebration assembly, winning class have VIP seating in weekly assembly
- Weekly Trophy for best attendance
- Drink and biscuits for best weekly attendance
- Display of tutor/class attendance
- Certificates
- Letters / Newsletters
- Celebration assemblies

- Reinforcement through prizes
- Inclusion in prize draws
- Special awards
- Postcards home
- Text messages home
- Termly class rewards
- End of year prize draw

The academy runs a breakfast club. This supports parents/ carers in ensuring good attendance and punctuality, by giving the opportunity to drop off pupils before the start of the academy day. Breakfast club operates from 08:00 to 08:40 and places must be booked and paid for in advance at the school office or via MCAS app.

6.3. The 'Astrea Attendance Tree' **Appendix 3** is used to illustrate our whole academy attendance target and levels/percentages of pupil's attendance. The tree is used and displayed across the academy, by all staff. Pupils should be able to articulate which color level/percentage they are currently at and have opportunities to talk to staff about their attendance.

## 7. Safeguarding procedures - Following up absence

- 7.1. The academy will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.
- 7.2. The academy operates a "first day call" system. This will mean that all parents/carers can expect to be contacted on the first day of any absence if the academy has not been previously informed, via text/ My Child at School APP / telephone message.
- 7.3. First day absence texts/App messages calls are made within an hour of the register closing. If a child/young person is absent and parents/carers/primary contacts are uncontactable, the 1st and 2nd emergency contacts will be used.
- 7.4. If we are unable to establish the reason for absence via MCAS app or telephone and by 09:30, we will follow the steps as set out within **Appendix 4** of this policy.
- 7.5. A Home-visit should always be considered on the first day of absence however if this has not been conducted, then on the second consecutive day of absence a home visit should be conducted (if a reason for absence has still not been established through both the primary and emergency contacts). At least two emergency contacts should be held for each child. The academy may also consult with the Police to request a 'Safe and Well' visit should contact not be made.
- 7.6. If through daily calls or home-visits, concerns arise regarding the need for Early Help support or a possible safeguarding concern is identified, the matter should be passed to the academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately (both verbally and recorded on CPOMS).
- 7.7. Any unexplained absences will be followed up on a weekly basis by way of a letter home.
- 7.8. If at any stage, further concerns are identified, and the attendance lead/DSL is unsure of what action to take, the Astrea Head of Safeguarding should be contacted for consultation.
- 7.9. If a pupil has a social worker or external family support worker that they should be contacted by the DSL on day of absence to inform and to agree actions to be taken to safeguard the pupil.

## **8. Children Missing in Education**

- 8.1. The academy will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers/emergency contacts. Parents should remember to update the academy as soon as possible if the numbers change.
- 8.2. All staff are informed of the Children Missing in Education Policy. This procedure is to be used for searching for, and if necessary, reporting, any pupil missing from the academy.
- 8.3. The academy recognises that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and will follow guidance from Annex B, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023 and 'Children Missing Education' 2016 to promote their safety and wellbeing. The procedures in this policy will be followed when dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help to identify the risk of abuse and neglect and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in the future.
- 8.4. The academy shall inform the applicable Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend the academy regularly, or has been absent without the academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the academy and the Local Authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State). *(Please refer to Appendix 5 of this policy and Appendix 4 of the Astrea Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)*

## **9. Pupils with Medical conditions or Special Educational needs and disabilities**

- 9.1. Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have educational needs and disabilities. At The Hill Primary Academy our ambition for good regular attendance applies to all pupils.
- 9.2. To support pupils with medical needs, the academy will:
  - Ensure the pupil has a comprehensive health care (or similar) plan which addresses medical, educational social, emotional and mental health needs, where needed.
  - Consider whether additional support from external agencies (including the Local Authority and health services) would be appropriate and work together with those services to deliver appropriate support.
  - Work with Local Authorities, families and pupils to develop support approaches and strategies for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities including access to provision outlined in the pupils education, health and care plan.
- 9.3. The academy will contact their Local Authority Barnsley Education Welfare Service when it is clear that the pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative due to health needs, to establish additional support which may be required in order for pupils to continue their education.



## 10. Part Time Timetables

- 10.1. All pupils, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
- 10.2. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.
- 10.3. A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution. Any individual support programme or other agreement will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time.
- 10.4. There will be an identified lead person with responsibility for monitoring the part-time timetable
- 10.5. Part-time timetables will last no longer than 6 weeks and formal written reviews will take place at least fortnightly and will include the pupil, parents/carers and other professionals as appropriate.
- 10.6. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, the academy has agreed to a pupil being absent from the academy for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

## 11. Nursery Education

- 11.1. Should a parent/carer choose to accept a nursery or reception place for their child, we strongly encourage good attendance. This ensures continuity of education and minimises disruption to learning.
- 11.2. If a child is under five and has been an allocated place in our academy, we expect parents to follow this attendance policy.

## 12. Monitoring Attendance

- 12.1. Senior Leaders and members of the attendance team regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils with good and improving attendance and to provide additional support to pupils and pupil cohorts where attendance is causing a concern.
- 12.2. **Daily Monitoring**
  - The attendance lead checks registers and contacts any family that has not informed school of their child's absence and follows set procedures. (*Appendix 3*)
- 12.3. **Weekly Monitoring**
  - Whole school attendance is monitored and analysed on a weekly basis.
  - Attendance patterns and trends are monitored through the 'Bromcom Dashboard' and 'Astrea Attendance Tracker' in order to provide intervention and support in a targeted way for individual pupils, families, cohorts and groups (including their punctuality) This data is analysed weekly by the attendance lead and as part of the academy 'Behaviour, Attendance, Safeguarding and Inclusion (BASI) meeting.
  - BASI meetings are used to monitor individual pupil attendance and identify pupils who need support and identify staff and targeted actions for those cases.
  - BASI meeting attendance data is shared weekly with class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils.
  - Individual pupil attendance is monitored to check on:

- Improvement in attendance.
- Patterns of non-attendance.
- Number of absences.
- Vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils with low attendance.

#### 12.4. Termly Monitoring

- Attendance Meetings are held each half term with Senior leaders, Attendance leads, Astrea Attendance Lead and Barnsley Education Welfare - Local Authority attendance school support to monitor data and trends. This includes analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of attendance codes, days of poor attendance and from this data analysis devise specific interventions to address areas of poor attendance for individual cases / cohorts of pupils.
- The impact of school wide attendance strategies are monitored termly, this analysis is then used to inform future strategies linked to the attendance action plan and Academy Improvement Plan
- Attendance data, patterns and trends are reported to Local Governance Committees and Transition Management boards half termly.

### 13. Reporting to Parents / Carers

- To support parents / carers in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual pupil attendance, The Hill Primary Academy seeks to keep parents informed of their child's attendance and to actively involve parents with any attendance issues.
- Methods include:
  - Weekly texts to celebrate good and improving attendance
  - Active involvement by teaching staff
  - Discussion at Parents' Meetings/Evenings.
  - Weekly newsletters
  - Attendance is reported on annual reports
  - Absence letters asking for reasons for unexplained/unaccounted absences
  - Parent letters where attendance is of concern
  - Home visits
  - Parent meetings
- All parents / carers are encouraged to download the My Child at School App. This enables parents to track their child's attendance daily. The platform also has functionality for parents to report a child's absence and the reason for absence.

## 14. Unauthorised Attendance Procedures and Intervention

- The Hill Primary Academy uses a range of positive strategies and interventions to ensure the highest levels of attendance. However, when normal academy procedures do not result in good attendance, a range of further measures, including legal action, must be considered.
- Where attendance concerns have been identified or pupils are at risk of becoming Persistent Absentees the attendance team will contact any parent whose child's attendance is of concern, particularly where reasons for absence are not clear or are unauthorised.
- Parents / carers will be invited into the academy to meet the attendance team to discuss any problems with getting pupils to school -whether any help or support is needed to improve attendance and whether any multi agency support is needed.
- Pupils with medical or additional needs may need to be discussed further to make sure that the correct support is in place.
- A signed attendance plan may be written with the attendance lead and parent and will be given a period of time for attendance to improve and, if successful, no further involvement is needed.
- If attendance does not improve during this period of time, despite help being offered the academy will escalate to the Local Authority who can decide to take further action against any parent/carer, including legal action which may result in fines or a summons to Magistrates' Court.

*(See appendix 6 for escalation procedures)*

## 15. Legal Sanctions

- The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from academy, where the child is of compulsory academy age.
- If issued with a penalty notice, parents / carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
- The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice rests with the Principal, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices **Appendix 5**. This may take into account:
  - A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
  - One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as Leave of Absence, for example holidays) taken in term time without permission
  - Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during academy hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent / carer or withdraw the notice (this is in consultation with the Academy)

## 16. Roles and Responsibilities

### 16.1. The Trust

- The Trust is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole academy on at least a half termly basis. It also holds the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Attendance data is presented at every Transition Management Board (TMB) or Local Governance Committee (LGC) meeting with Trust representatives and local committee members present.
- Trust Attendance Leads – work alongside academy attendance leaders to prioritise attendance improvement strategies and whole school cultures.

- Trust Attendance Leads ensure academy regular training on attendance is available for academy staff.

#### 16.2. **The Local Education and Consultative Committee**

- Identify a member to take responsibility for attendance
- Receive reports from the Principal and review the working of the policy
- Regularly review attendance data and help leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.
- Ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the academy and is known by the parents.

#### 16.3. **The Principal**

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the academy, and for monitoring school-level absence data, reporting it to the Trust and the LGC.
- The Principal will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the academy's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied.
- The Principal will develop and maintain and whole school culture that promotes the benefit of good attendance and maintains this ambition for all pupils.
- The Principal supports staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils, cohorts and vulnerable groups.
- The Principal will set attendance targets as part of the Academy Development Plan and target-setting process and monitor and evaluate progress towards these targets.
- The Principal will ensure that there is a dedicated senior leader in the academy with responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- The Principal will ensure that strategies are in place to promote attendance and implement the policy throughout the academy
- The Principal will determine (in collaboration with relevant senior staff) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested , or absences which have taken place for which no request was made
- The Principal will notify parents / carers as appropriate if a pupil fails to attend regularly
- The Principal will liaise (in collaboration with relevant staff) with the appropriate multi-agencies (including the Local Authority's agencies) where necessary in order to improve attendance or where support is not working follow the Local Authorities legal intervention procedures.

#### 16.4. **The Strategic Attendance Lead will:**

- Work with all attendance staff to ensure this policy is implemented consistently
- Develop and maintain and whole school culture that promotes the benefit of good attendance
- Ensure good attendance is promoted and rewarded
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure admission and attendance registers are accurately completed
- Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of low attendance and develop strategies to support them.
- Monitor and evaluate progress towards attendance targets as part of the Academy Development Plan and target-setting process

- Ensure that weekly attendance is tracked at BASI meetings and appropriate action is taken as a result
- Ensure additional support and adjustments are made where required for pupils with additional needs.
- Make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence
- Arrange appropriate training for staff
- Advise the Principal on any strategies that could be initiated or improved
- Ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up appropriately
- Work with staff, identified pupils and families at risk of poor attendance to understand and address reasons for absence, including any in school barriers to attendance.
- Hold formal meetings with parents / carers where attendance is not improving.
- Will liaise (in collaboration with relevant staff) with the appropriate bodies (including the Local Authority's agencies) where necessary in order to improve attendance

#### **16.5. The Attendance Lead / Pastoral Support will:**

- Monitor attendance data at academy and individual pupil level on a daily basis
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Report concerns regarding attendance and safeguarding to SLT/ Designated Safeguarding lead
- Ensure good attendance is promoted and rewarded
- Input / check daily attendance figures and follow robustly the daily procedures for following up attendance
- Ensure admission and attendance registers are accurately completed
- Ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up appropriately
- Work with staff, identified pupils and families at risk of poor attendance to understand and address reasons for absence, including any in school barriers to attendance.
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance concerns
- Inform parents/ carers of pupils if attendance is a concern
- Hold informal / formal meetings with parents/ carers where attendance is not improving.
- Monitor the attendance tracker on a weekly basis and input any actions taken
- Contact parents over pupil absence patterns where appropriate
- Liaise with the Attendance Lead over training needs
- Produce attendance data / statistics for the Attendance Lead and Principal
- Signpost and support access to multi agency services where attendance is a concern
- Work with Barnsley Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Work with pupils / parents on attendance plans, strategies and interventions to improve attendance.
- Act as lead practitioner in order to support families where school is best placed lead service
- Take an active part in multi-agency efforts with the Local Authority and other agencies as required.
- Contribute to the evaluation of academy strategies and interventions

#### **16.6. Office / Admin Staff**

- Take calls from parents / carers about absence and record it on Bromcom in a timely manner.
- Retrieve messages from the App and record on Bromcom in a timely manner.
- Inform attendance leads for reasons of pupil absence
- Follow first day absence procedures as outlined in the policy

- Report concerns regarding attendance and safeguarding to SLT/ Designated Safeguarding lead
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/ carers

#### 16.7. Class Teachers will:

- Record attendance daily in Bromcom, using the correct codes, and submit this information in a timely manner.
- Reward and promote attendance and maintain a positive culture towards attendance
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/ carers
- Hold regular conversations with pupils to promote attendance and identify any barriers to attendance
- Raise any concerns regarding absence and or punctuality with the attendance lead
- Have initial conversations with parents/pupils regarding attendance concerns
- Direct parents / carers to the school office / attendance lead to report absences
- Work with attendance / pastoral staff on interventions / adaptations for individual pupils to improve attendance.
- Liaise with attendance staff regarding information that may affect a pupils attendance and where the authenticity of an illness/ absence is in doubt.

#### 16.8. Parents / carers are required to:

- Ensure their child attends every day the academy is open unless they are too ill to do so or have an authorised absence
- To not arrange leave of absence during term time
- To immediately inform the academy if their child is unable to attend (by 9:30 where possible), including the reason for absence
- Continue to liaise with the academy on each day of absence unless agreed otherwise by the academy
- Wherever possible make medical appointments outside of school hours
- Ask the academy for support if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Attend and meet with academy staff with regards to attendance
- Inform the academy of any change in circumstance that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Ensure that all contact numbers held by the academy are up to date.
- Form a positive relationship with academy staff, recognising the importance of good attendance.

### 17. Statutory and Regulatory Framework

- This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
  - *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023*
  - [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2014](#)
  - [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
  - [School attendance Guidance: Working together to Improve School Attendance](#)
  - [School attendance parental responsibility measures Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police January 2015 \(update May 2020\)](#)

- [Children Missing Education 2016](#)
- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 18. Associated Policies

18.1. This policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the well-being of children including safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying and support for children with medical needs.

18.2. This Policy should be read alongside the Academy's:

- Astrea Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Astrea Inclusion Policy
- Astrea Exclusion Policy
- Academy Behaviour Policy
- Missing Pupils Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

### 18.3. Policy Monitoring arrangements

- This policy has been authorised by the Trustees of Astrea Academy Trust, is published on the Academy website and is available in hard copy to parents on request. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. This policy and its procedures apply to all Astrea Primary Academy Trust schools, whilst taking account of the local context and Local Authority procedures and code of conduct for attendance escalation such as the the issue of fixed penalties.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust and adapted by the Principal. At every review, the policy will be shared with the LGC.

<b>Authorised by</b>	E.Cadman
<b>Date</b>	01.09.23

<b>Effective date of the policy</b>	01.09.23
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## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded / Suspended	Pupil has been suspended/ excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness (not medical or dental appointment)

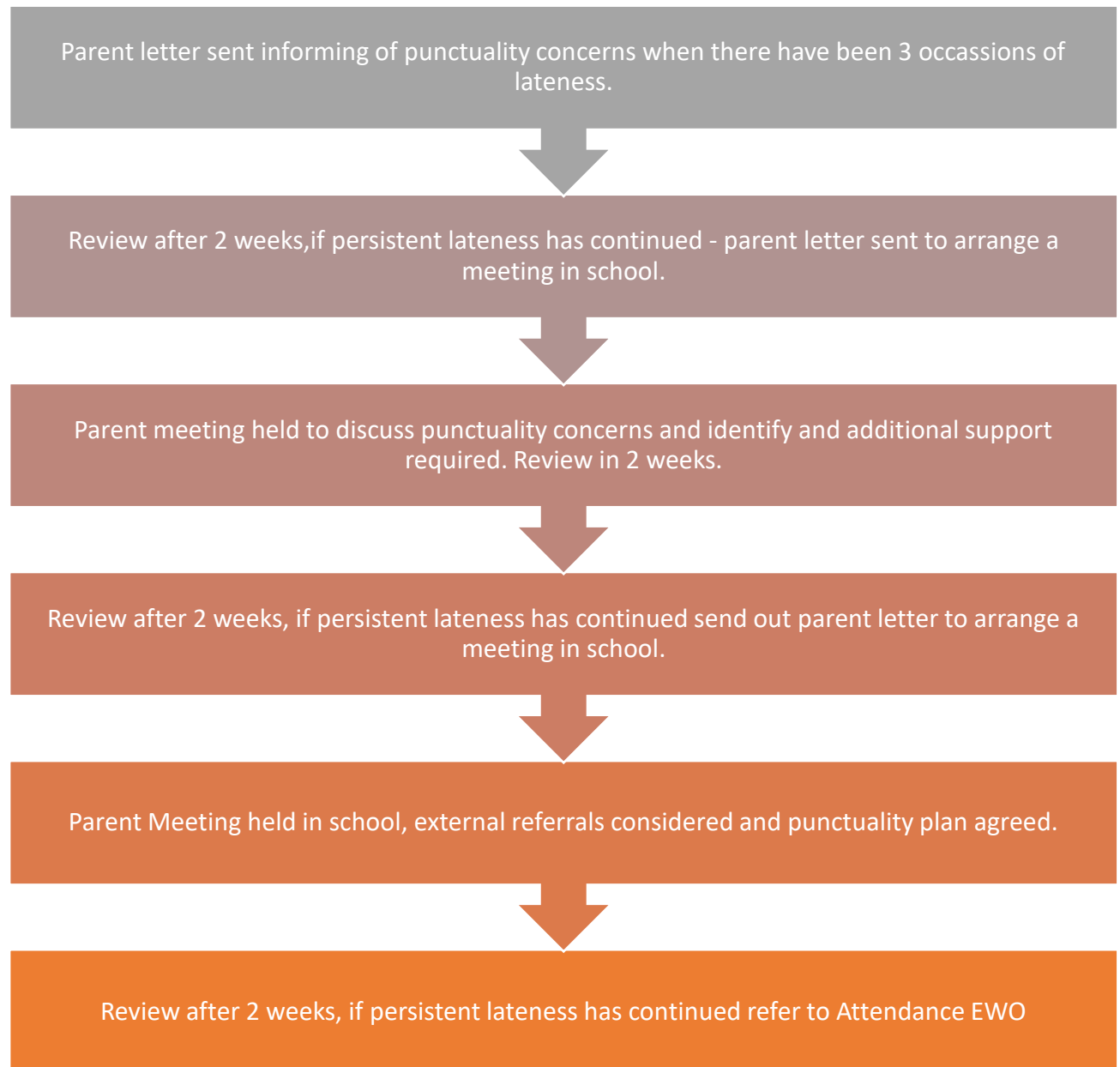


<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	No reason for absence established or the school is not satisfied that the reason is an authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



## Appendix 2 – Punctuality Flowchart



Did not attend the meeting / Refused Support or to engage / Failed to improve punctuality. If still no improvement after this process refer to LA. The LA would require a breakdown of 'U' codes, how much learning lost and how this is impacting on the child academically and socially. What is the number of 'O' and 'U' codes? Has a referral to Social Care been considered?

Appendix 3 – Astrea Attendance Tree

# Astrea Attendance Tree

Whole Academy Attendance   
From.....

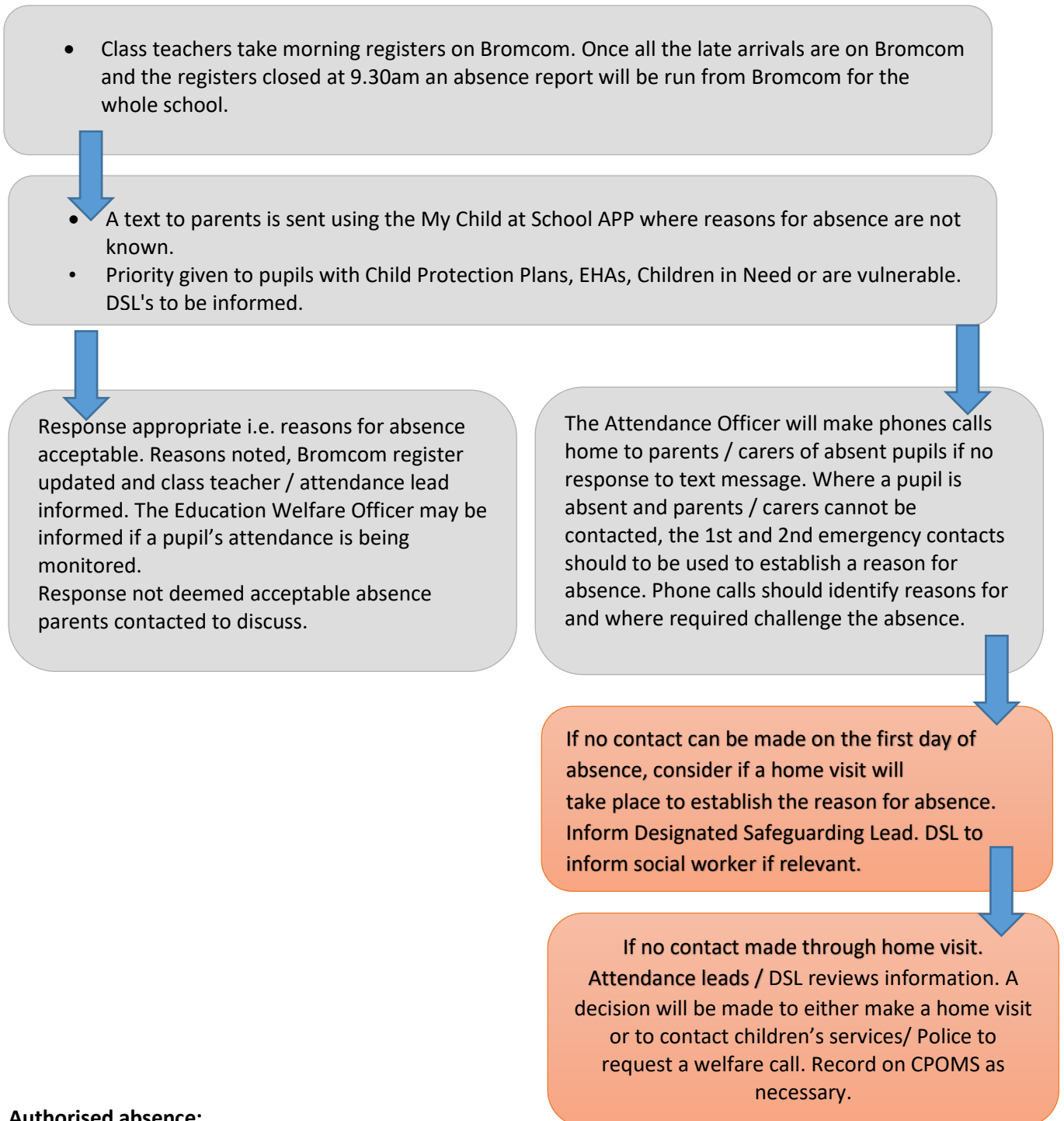
Equates to:



Class.....  
Whole Class Attendance

## Appendix 4 – First Day Calling Procedures

First Day Response: Persons Responsible: Jacqui Gollick



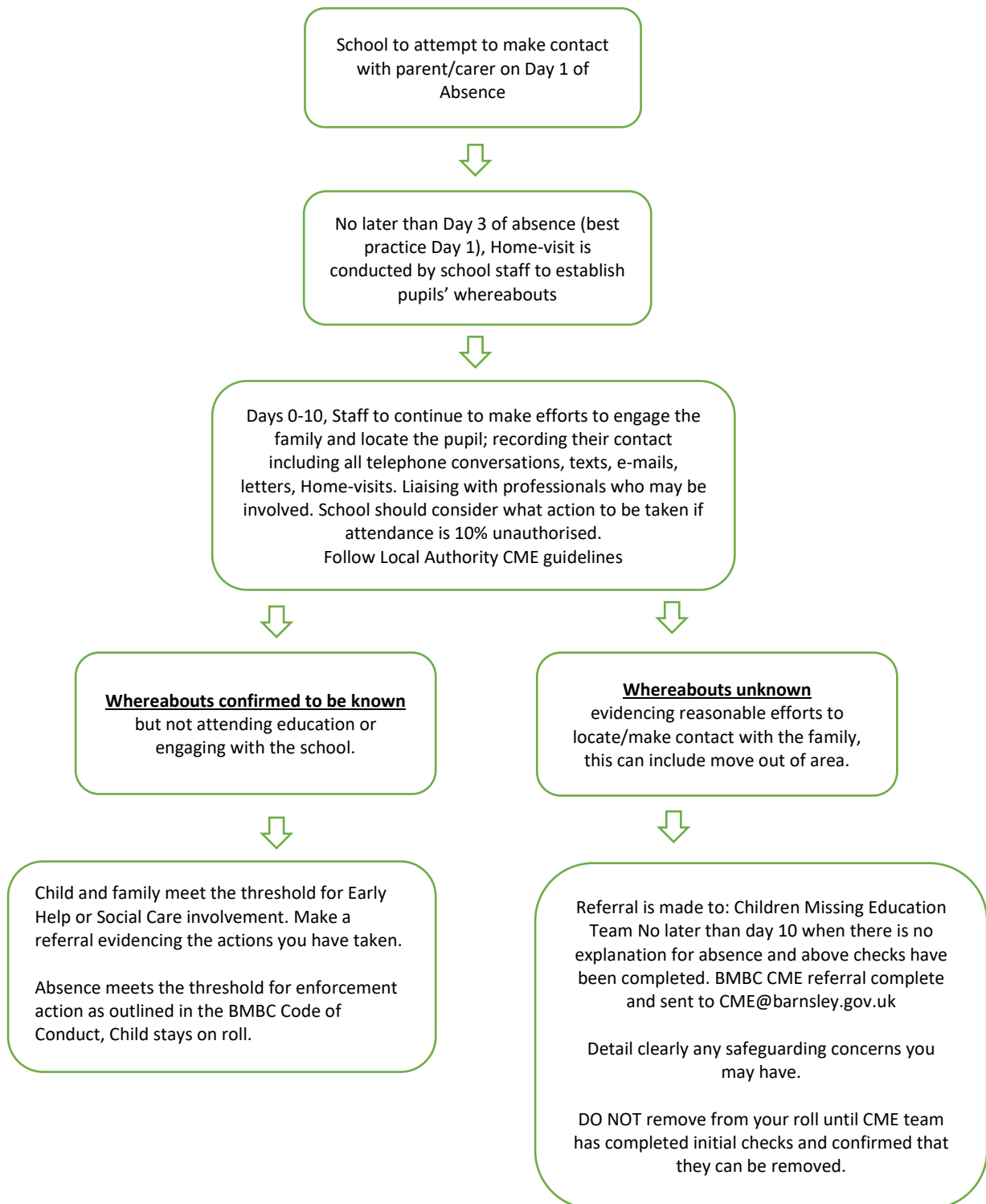
### Authorised absence:

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

### Unauthorised absence:

School have the right to record a child's absence as unauthorised if there has been no contact from the parent or carer or if the reason provided for the absence is not accepted by school. Parents are to be made aware that merely providing an explanation for their child's absence does not automatically constitute an 'authorisation' for this absence. This is the school's decision.

## Appendix 5 – Children Missing in Education Flowchart





## Appendix 6 – Attendance Monitoring and Intervention

Number of days absence (in full academic year)	Attendance at year end:	Responsible	Actions:
<b>0 days absence</b>	100% –	SLT Class teachers Pastoral Staff	Warm welcome Praise for good attendance Rewards – stickers, acknowledgement Positive text messages Attendance celebrations
<b>3 days absence</b> (6 sessions absent)	98.4%		Request reasons for absences from parents and update Bromcom
<b>4 days absence</b> (8 sessions absent)	97.8 %	Office/ attendance staff  Pastoral staff	4 days absence – Parents informed of pupil attendance (Letter 1) Expressing concerns about attendance in the academy. Informing the parent/carers of current attendance level. Reminding parents/carers of their legal responsibility & the nature of “persistent absence”. Welcoming the parents/carers to arrange contact with the academy if they wish to discuss attendance further. Attendance is monitored. Attendance monitoring Praise for good attendance Attendance rewards (No further day’s absence for rest of year = 98.4% attendance)
<b>7 days absence</b> (14 sessions absent)	96.3%	Attendance Lead	<b>12/14 sessions: 6/7 days absence:</b> Parents invited into the academy Letter 2 meeting to discuss attendance concerns and advise that no further absences to be authorised without medical proof. Additional support for attendance discussed and attendance action plan agreed for a specified time period (4 weeks) Individual attendance target set, praise and rewards for improving attendance. Attendance continues to be monitored. (No further day’s absence for rest of year = 96.8%/ 96.3%) <b>If attendance becomes a concern prior to the 4 week review, continue to the next stage immediately</b>
<b>8 days absence</b> (16 sessions absent)	95.7%	SLT Lead/ LA Representative	<b>18/20 sessions: 9/10 days absence:</b> After 4 week review ( <b>or shorter as appropriate</b> ) attendance remains a concern, parents invited to a formal attendance panel in school. Local Authority representative may be in attendance. Support and external agency support identified, Early Help support offered. Date for review of attendance contract to be agreed. (No further day’s absence for rest of year = 95.2%/ 94.7%) <b>If attendance becomes a concern prior to the 4 week review, continue to the next stage immediately</b>
<b>13 days absence</b> (26 sessions absent)	93.1%		
<b>14 days absence</b> (28 sessions absent)	92.6%		14 days absence Attendance remains a concern at the 4 week review Parents notified that the academy will be referring to the EWO services in the local authority and at risk of legal intervention procedures.
<b>20 days absence</b> (40 sessions absent)	89.4%		
<b>21+ days absence</b>	Under 89%		Consult with Local Authority - legal intervention procedures

## Appendix 6b - Attendance Monitoring and Intervention

### 4 days absence

- Parents are informed that pupil attendance has dropped and invitation to discuss any concerns with school.

### Attendance not improved - 7 days absence

- Parents/ Carers are now invited to a meeting in school with the Attendance Officer (Letter 2)

### Parent Meeting

- Parents invited into the academy Letter 2 meeting to discuss attendance concerns and advise that no further absences to be authorised without supporting evidence
- Additional support for attendance discussed and attendance action plan agreed for a specified time period (4 weeks)
- Individual attendance target set, praise and rewards for improving attendance.

### Attendance Improves

- Attendance has improved, pupils receive praise and rewards for improving attendance, parents notified of improving attendance, however child's attendance will still be monitored.

### Attendance not improved - 10 days absence

- Letter 3 Meeting. After 4 week review attendance remains a concern, parents invited to a formal attendance panel in school with Principal and Attendance Lead, Local Authority representative may be in attendance
- Support and external agency support identified, Early Help support offered. Date for review of attendance contract to be agreed.

### Attendance Improves

- Attendance has improved, pupils receive praise and rewards for improving attendance, parents notified of improving attendance, however child's attendance will still be monitored

### Attendance has Not Improved

- Attendance remains a concern at the 4 week review
- Parents notified that the academy will be referring to the Local Authority. Legal process is followed and Penalty Warnings and / or a summons to court may be required.

## Appendix 7 LA code of conduct for the use of Fixed penalties

### School attendance and absence from BMBC Code of Conduct:

#### Parents' responsibilities

As a parent, you're legally responsible for making sure that your child gets a full-time education, either in school or through other suitable arrangements.

Once your child starts school, you're responsible for making sure that they attend regularly and are not taken out of school unnecessarily.

We're responsible for making sure that you fulfil your responsibilities.

#### Make sure your child has good attendance

- From starting at nursery, teach your child the importance of good attendance and getting to school on time every day
- Show an interest and ask about what they're doing at school
- Encourage them to take part in school activities
- Encourage them to tell you about any problems they may have at school - let their teacher or headteacher know about anything serious
- Don't let them take time off school for minor ailments - particularly those which would not stop you from going to work
- Where possible, make appointments after school, at weekends, or during school holidays
- Try to take family holidays outside of term time

You can find more information at GOV.UK about your [responsibilities for improving your child's attendance](#).

#### What can happen if your child doesn't attend school regularly

##### Referral to education welfare service

If your child has an unacceptable level of attendance at school, which the school can't resolve, the school may refer your child to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

The EWO will provide support to you and your child, and to the school, to make sure that your child gets a full-time education appropriate to their needs, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

If you're worried about your child's attendance, contact the Education Welfare Officer through your child's school.

You could be fined up to a maximum of £1,000 (for each child) for failing to make sure that your child attends school regularly.

If you've already been found guilty of failing to make sure that your child attends school regularly, your fine could be increased to £2,500 or a three month prison sentence.

#### Legal action



## **Parenting orders**

If your child doesn't attend school regularly, the court could give you a parenting order to help you to correct your child's behaviour and failure to attend school. You may have to attend a parenting programme, counselling or guidance sessions for up to three months, where you'll get support and advice on making sure your child attends school regularly. Breach of the order is a criminal offence.

If your child has ten sessions or five full days of unauthorised absence in any one term, you may be issued with a penalty notice - a fine of £60 if you pay within 21 days, or £120 if you pay within 28 days.

## **School attendance order**

If your child isn't on roll at any school, the court may give you an order to send your child to a specified school. If you don't comply with the order, you may be fined.

## **Education supervision order (ESO)**

If your child continues to have poor attendance at school, they can be made the subject of an ESO. This means that an Education Welfare Officer will support you and your child to make sure that their attendance at school improves and that they're properly educated. The conditions of the ESO could mean that you'll have to attend meetings at the school, or parenting classes. You'll also have to keep us informed if you or your child change address.

ESOs usually last for a month. If your child's attendance doesn't improve in this time, or you don't co-operate, you'll be referred back to court, which could result in a fine of up to £2,500, or to social care, who will consider applying for a higher order, which could include care proceedings.

## **Fixed penalty notices**

### **Leave of absence - taking your child out of school in term time**

To take your child out of school in term time, you must apply to the school for leave of absence. Ask the school for their attendance policy for further guidance.

If you take your child on holiday in term-time without the school's consent, you'll receive a fine of £60 for each child. If you don't pay this within 21 days, it will be increased to £120. You'll need to pay the increased fine within 28 days or court action can be taken against you. Read our [Code of Conduct for Issuing Penalty Notices](#).

## **Unauthorised absence**

Penalty notices may be issued in the following circumstances: truancy, parentally-condoned absences, excluded pupils found in a public place during school hours, and persistent late arrival for school. As the liable parent, you'll receive a formal warning of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued and given 15 school days to improve your child's overall school attendance.

There is more information about your [responsibilities for improving your child's attendance](#) on GOV.UK.

BMBC Code of conduct: <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/16399/revised-code-of-conduct-on-the-issue-of-penalty-notices-sept-2020.pdf>

**Appendix 8 – Attendance Letters**

Letter 1

Dear <<Prefix>> <<Surname 2>>

**Re: Attendance <<PrefFirstName>> <<PrefLastName>> (Legal Name <<FirstName>> <<lastName>>) <<Reg>>**

Following the monitoring of registers, we are writing to let you know that your child's attendance has fallen below the school target. To date, <<PrefFirstName>> has missed <<SessionsAbsence>> **sessions** this academic year.

We realise that absences may be due to genuine reasons such as illness, however, it is important that we inform you and let you know we are able to support you, should you be having problems with your child's attendance. Good attendance at school ensures that your child makes progress across the curriculum and helps to develop your child's self-esteem and confidence.

We will continue to monitor attendance, and hope to see an improvement in the coming month. We may take the opportunity to speak with your child in school should we feel this is appropriate.

Please remember that we are here to support you and your child and therefore, if you are experiencing difficulties with getting your child to school, or you wish to discuss this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or the Academy office.

Yours sincerely



Principal  
Mrs E Cadman

Letter 2

Dear <<Prefix>> <<Surname 2>>

**Re: Attendance Support Meeting <<PrefFirstName>> <<PrefLastName>> (Legal Name <<FirstName>> <<LastName>>) <<Reg>>**

As you are aware, we have been closely monitoring <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance at The Hill Primary Academy. <<PrefFirstName>> has missed <<SessionsAbsence>> sessions to date this academic year. This attendance is below our expectations.

Due to the amount of learning that <<PrefFirstName>> has now missed, a meeting has been arranged to discuss the reasons for <<HisHer>> absence and how we can work together to improve <<HisHer>> attendance. A copy of <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance certificate is enclosed. This will form part of the discussion. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact the Academy office so that another mutually convenient time can be arranged.

The meeting is scheduled for: <<Staticvalue>>  
Meeting with: **Mrs Lawrence**

We must advise you that it is the decision of the Principal as to whether an absence is authorised, taking into account the reason provided. Due to <<PrefFirstName>>'s level of attendance, we now require supporting evidence (this can be in the form of an appointment card, prescription or letter from the hospital), for any future absences. This will enable us to make an informed decision as to whether we are able to authorise an absence.

**Following this meeting <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance will be closely monitored. If <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance does not improve, then further action may be taken which may include the issuing of a Penalty Notice and/or a referral to the Academy's Education Welfare Officer or the Local Authority.**

Yours sincerely

*N. Lawrence*

Nicola Lawrence  
Inclusion, Behaviour, Attendance & Safeguarding Lead

Enc. Registration Certificate Report

Letter 3 ISAP Meeting

Dear <<Prefix>> <<Surname 2>>

**Re: Internal School Attendance Panel <<PrefFirstName>> <<PrefLastName>> (Legal Name <<FirstName>> <<LastName>>) <<Reg>>**

As you are aware, we have been closely monitoring <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance at The Hill Primary Academy. <<PrefFirstName>> has missed <<SessionsAbsence>> **sessions** to date this academic year. This attendance is below our expectations.

<<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance has not improved and <<HeShe>> is continuing to miss a significant amount of learning, which will impact on <<HisHer>> academic progress. In view of this, we are writing to invite you to an Internal School Attendance Panel to discuss <<Firstname>>'s attendance. A copy of <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance certificate is enclosed. This will form part of the discussion. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact the Academy office so that another mutually convenient time can be arranged.

The meeting is scheduled for: <<Staticvalue>>

Meeting with: **Mrs Cadman, Mrs Lawrence & Education Welfare officer**

Following this meeting, we will continue to monitor <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance closely. If <<PrefFirstName>>'s attendance does not improve, further action could be taken. This may include issuing a Penalty Notice and/or a referral to the Academy's Education Welfare Officer or the Local Authority.

We must again advise you that it is the decision of the Principal as to whether an absence is authorised, taking into account the reason provided. Due to <<PrefFirstName>>'s level of attendance, we now require supporting evidence (this can be in the form of an appointment card, prescription or letter from the hospital), for any future absences. This will enable us to make an informed decision as to whether we are able to authorise an absence.

**May I remind you that, under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, it is a criminal offence to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at school. On conviction, the magistrates' court may impose a fine of up to £2,500 or imprisonment for up to 3 months, or both. In addition, you would obtain a criminal record.**

Yours sincerely

*N. L. Lawrence.*

Nicola Lawrence

Inclusion, Behaviour, Attendance & Safeguarding Lead

Unexplained absence letter:

**Re: Unexplained Absence: <<PrefFirstName>> <<PrefLastName>> <<Tutorgroup>>**

Dear <<Prefix>> <<LastName2>>,

According to our records <<PrefFirstName>> was absent from school on the date(s) shown below and we have not yet received a reason for the absence(s) from you.

Under government legislation we have to record the reasons why children are absent from school. Please write the reason for absence (e.g. sick, etc) below and return the tear off slip to the Academy office. Alternatively, you can contact us by phone or email.

If you wish to discuss <<PrefFirstName>>'s absence please feel free come into the Academy and speak to the class teacher or main office.

Yours sincerely

*N. Lawrence*

Nicola Lawrence

Inclusion, Behaviour, Attendance & Safeguarding Lead

-----  
-----**Reply Slip for Unexplained Absence** <<PrefFirstName>>

<<PrefLastName>> (<<Tutorgroup>>)

Dates and sessions of absence:<<@TableStart:Attendance>>

Date	Session (AM/PM)	Attendance Code
<<RegisterDate>>	<<sPeriodDisplayName>>	<<AttendanceCode>>

<<@TableEnd>>

The absences listed above were due to:

.....  
.....

.....  
.....

Signed: ..... Date:

.....