



CENTRAL PARK
PRIMARY SCHOOL
EAST HAM

Learning Now for Future Success

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Aims of this policy

- Explain why good attendance is important.
- Set out strategies used to promote attendance and punctuality.
- Explain roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Establish a set of procedures to be followed when managing issues of attendance so ensuring consistency of practice.
- Enable the school to effectively monitor, evaluate and review its practice to ensure it is striving to improve attendance.
- Meet the Education laws and guidance produced by the DfE for school attendance

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show that pupils with good attendance have better achievement in school.
- Children with attendance above 96% make better progress socially and academically.
- Children who attend regularly find their learning more satisfying and have fewer gaps in their knowledge.

At Central Park the following attendance benchmarks are used: 98% and above outstanding attendance, 97% good attendance, 96% satisfactory attendance and below 95% unsatisfactory attendance

Roles and responsibilities

Governors

- Monitor attendance usually through termly reports at Governors meetings
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

Agree annual targets to ensure the school is in line with National measures for overall attendance and persistent absence levels.

Headteacher (Attendance Lead)

- Ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately monitor and reflect individual, group and whole school attendance patterns.
- Provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of the policy and practice.
- Meet with parents and carers to discuss applications for leave or attendance concerns.
- Write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- Work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue.
- A summary of each child's attendance record is reported to parents in the child's summer report.

Teaching Staff and Support Staff

- Acknowledge good attendance and explain to children the benefits of good attendance.
- Provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Where irregular attendance and/or punctuality is a concern refer the matter to the attendance lead who will then pass the information on to the Education Welfare Officer.

Office Staff

- Attendance registers must show whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Morning registration starts at 9.00am and registers remain open for 30 minutes.
- Any child arriving late after 9.30am will be marked as unauthorised absence for the morning.
- Record the reasons for absence using the correct code.
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of a child's unexplained absence to establish the reason and record in registers.
- Ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- Unauthorised absences should be calculated for each week. The number of sessions should be counted and the total recorded. A session is a morning or an afternoon and, therefore, the day comprises of two sessions.
- Make a judgement in conjunction with the attendance lead whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- A late register is kept in the office providing information about the time of arrival and reason for lateness.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

- Enforces the law regarding school attendance.
- Support the school through meetings and monitoring children's attendance.
- Home visits to engage hard to reach families.
- Where irregular attendance and/or punctuality causes concern, SLT will refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer.
- Providing direct intervention with pupils who fall below target levels of attendance and devising strategies to improve their attendance in partnership with the school.
- Ensuring that borough and school policies on attendance are implemented appropriately in each individual case including the use of legal action against parents where they are failing to fulfil their child's regular school attendance.
- Working closely with schools at transition stages to ensure that identified vulnerable children are provided with all possible support to reduce the likelihood of increased non-attendance, where necessary working and liaising with partner agencies.

Parents:

- Ensure their child arrives at school on time to be ready for registration.
- Contact the school on the first morning of all absences; giving a reason and explaining when the child will return.
- Keep the school updated and after 5 days of absence providing medical evidence.
- Not book routine medical or dental appointments during school time. Medical appointments are counted as absence on a child's record.
- Fulfil their legal duty to ensure their child attends school every day.

Completion of the register

All registers are completed in the morning and in the afternoon using Groupcall Emerge on School I-pads.

See Appendix 1 for details

Lateness Procedures

- Registers should be marked as soon as the child has arrived in the classroom. Mark “/” for each child present and “N” for each child absent. If a child arrives in class after the rest of the class, whether or not the register has been completed, ensure both the “N” and “L” boxes are marked as this indicates lateness.
- Children who arrive after 8.55 a.m. or 1.00 p.m. (KS1 and years 3 and 4)/ 1.30p.m. (Years 5 and 6) should report to the school office so that their lateness can be recorded in the late book by the Learning Mentor as well as in the register. A letter will be sent to the parent/carer of any child who is recorded in the late book 3 times. The sending of this letter should be recorded on the lateness record, which is kept by the administration staff.
- Children who arrive after 9.30 a.m. or 1.15p.m. (KS1 and years 3 and 4)/ 1.45p.m. (Years 5 and 6) will be left as absent on the register. However, in the event of an emergency evacuation of the school the late book must be brought out of the building along with the registers so that the presence of such pupils may be checked.
- Continued patterns of lateness affects a child’s full school attendance. Any child who has a continued pattern of lateness should be brought to the attention of the attendance admin officer who will send a letter of warning to the parent/carer. If there is no improvement, after two weeks the parent/carer will be asked to come into school to discuss the issue with the attendance officer. If there is still no improvement, the parents may be referred to the LA to advise issuing a fixed penalty notice.

Absence Procedures

- Parents/carers must provide a reason for a child’s absence. This may be in the form of a letter, a phone call or oral explanation to the school office. Phone or oral explanations should be recorded on an absence notification slip, dated and initialled, and placed in the register. Explanations by the child are not acceptable. Parents are asked to inform the school office on the first day of the child’s absence.
- The only acceptable reasons for absence are illness, attendance at a medical appointment, exclusion, religious holiday; family bereavement for which the DHT has given permission. Absence to go shopping, to visit relatives, to go on a holiday or because a parent is unwell are not acceptable. Any staff who is unsure about how to mark an absence should seek the advice of the attendance officer or write the reason as given by the parent on the absence report and leave it for the school attendance officer to code. *See Appendix 2 for guidance on codes.*
- Any absence relating to illness of 5 days or more should be supported by medical evidence. Prescriptions will not be accepted for medication of paracetamol or calpol, as these can be self-administered within the school environment.
- Once the school office receives an acceptable reason for absence, the absence should be marked as *authorised*. If after a period of time of 5 days, no explanation has been received, or if the explanation received is judged to be unacceptable, the absence will be marked as *unauthorised*.
- If no explanation is received for a child’s absence the school attendance officer sends a letter asking why the child was absent (if the child was sick a letter is sent asking for medical evidence.). SIMS automatically generates these letters on the Fridays of each week after absences have been collated from the week through the ipads.
- SIMS provides a record of such letters sent on each child’s record. 5 days are allowed for the parent/carer to reply. The absence is marked as unauthorised until a satisfactory reply is received. If no reply is received the absence is marked as *unauthorised* and the matter referred to the attendance officer.
- Class teachers, pastoral workers and administration staff should be alert for patterns of absence, e.g. mostly Mondays or Fridays. If such a pattern is spotted, it should be brought to the attention of the attendance lead immediately.

- Taking into account the age of our pupils, in most cases of poor patterns of attendance or persistent lateness it is the fault of the parent/carer and not the child. All staff should be aware of this fact when dealing with the child.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

The school will not grant any leave of absence during school time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Holidays are not regarded as exceptional circumstances. All requests for leave must be made in writing in advance by the parent to the DHT, both departure and return dates are clearly stated. *See Appendix 5 for Request for leave request form.* The parent needs to be aware that absence beyond the agreed date will be marked as unauthorised and will result in a fixed penalty notice being issued. Leave will only be considered if the child's attendance is above 97%. Absence during Year 2 and Year 6 is not usually authorised between 1st September and 31st May. For leave to be authorised there must be exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances and Special Considerations

- Funeral of parent, grandparent and sibling. Subject to a maximum of 5 days. Death of a relative outside of the UK, subject to a maximum number of 5 days.
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Religious observance subject to a maximum number of 3 days.

Specific circumstances not included on the list

- Serious illness of a close relative. In principle leave should not be granted for the illness of a relative unless the attendance lead is convinced that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Pilgrimages. These are rare but can result in children being away from school for significant periods of time and we would not regard them as unavoidable absences.
- Weddings can be arranged at weekends or during holidays and are not included on the list of exceptions. If however the attendance lead is convinced that there is a persuasive reason as to why a wedding cannot be held out of school time it is recommended to allow 1 day's leave.

The length of time authorised for leave will be determined by the DHT but must be kept to a minimum number in all cases. A maximum of 3 days will be authorised for any leave requests. Failure to return from leave on the agreed day will be referred for further investigation to the EWO. With LA agreement schools may remove a pupil from the school roll a pupil who fails to return within 20 school days of the agreed return date.

Request for leave request forms will be annotated and kept on file with a copy of the permission or refusal letter whether leave was granted or denied. Copies will be kept in the pupil's file, and sent to the parents. If leave has been granted a copy of the permission letter is also given to the class teacher. The admin staff will code the absence as authorised for the agreed period. Absence after the agreed return date should be marked as *unauthorised* until the child is taken off roll.

The Importance of Accurate Information

The education welfare officer works in school half a day each week. She/he will contact the parent/carer of any child about whom there are concerns with regard to attendance or punctuality, so it is of the utmost importance that the information we have available is up to date and accurate. School attendance information can ultimately provide evidence in court proceedings and therefore accuracy is essential.

It is a legal responsibility to include information regarding attendance in the child's annual report. This information includes the numbers of authorised and unauthorised absences out of the maximum number of possible attendances, together with the number of latenesses. It is of vital importance that this information is accurate.

Data

The attendance lead will monitor trends and patterns of attendance across the school. This will be for individuals, classes, year groups and other groups including SEND, ethnicity, gender and pupil premium. Where there is a pattern then action will be taken to address this. Targets are set at the start of the year for attendance and this will be monitored to ensure the school is doing all it can to achieve this target. The attendance lead will ensure that pupils whose names appear on the Persistent Absence list are monitored and action taken to ensure attendance improves. Governors will be provided with termly reports on attendance and actions being taken to improve attendance across the school.

Information

Parents are informed of current issues in relation to attendance and reminded of school policy through regular newsletters and information on the school website. Posters are displayed around school to promote key attendance messages.

Strategies to improve attendance

At Central Park we work with parents to ensure to improve their child's attendance. Parental engagement is key to successfully improving attendance. Class teachers and pastoral workers have daily contact with parents and are key to having early conversations with parents to ensure their children attend school on time each day. We would much rather work to improve attendance at this early stage however there may be times when the process needs to be formalised to ensure advice is acted upon and attendance improves. We invite parents in for Attendance Surgery meetings to look at how attendance can be improved this is with the attendance officer or attendance lead. If necessary, an Attendance Agreement may be suggested - this is a voluntary offer to the parent to work together with the school to improve attendance (see Appendix 4). At times Fixed Penalty notices (FPN) may be requested from the Attendance Management Service in cases that are appropriate such as unauthorised holiday or persistent lateness. If these fail to have any impact, then the school will refer to the Attendance Management Service for a Borough Attendance Panel Hearing which could lead to a referral to the Magistrates Court and possible prosecution.

See Appendix 3 for a Flow Chart on process.

Children Missing Education (CME)

If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer to another school, the school must be informed in writing. Children cannot be taken off roll until the school has received notification from another school that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending school and who cannot be traced must not be removed from the school roll. These children are reported to Newham's Schools Attendance Management Service using the CME form. Where a child is missing from education LA guidance will be followed. **Children on the at risk register may not be taken off roll without permission from social services.**

Safeguarding

There may be times that due to family issues e.g. domestic violence that children are unable to attend school for safety reasons. This will be marked as a Code C. Children of families who are unable to attend due to the safety of the family e.g. police protection then this will be marked as Code C. Children will not be removed from the register without the agreement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and only if the child has a place in another school.

Where there is suspicion of a family going missing because of leaving to go to a country linked to terrorism then it must be reported in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and reported under the Prevent Agenda in consultation with the DSL.

Where there is a suspicion that a child (girl) is being taken away to a country linked to FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) then it must be investigated sensitively. If there is a suspicion that a child is at risk of FGM then it must be immediately reported in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Countries that pose a high risk of exposure to FGM are Burkino Faso, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan. If a child returns from these countries and

there is suspicion or confirmation that FGM has taken place, then it must be reported as a safeguarding issue.

Sanctions

A Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued for unauthorised leave of absence (holiday) taken without permission after the first day of absence. It will be issued by the Attendance Management Service following discussions with the school's attendance lead. The fine £60.00 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days. Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the penalty notice.

This rises to £120.00 per child, per parent if paid within 28 days. If the fine is not paid in full by the end of the 28 days, the Local Authority must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice. This prosecution is for the offence of failing to secure attendance at school **not** for non-payment of the fine. Prosecutions are brought under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Where unauthorised leave of absence has been taken without permission which exceeds 20 days or more, the school should advise LBN pupil services in order that steps can be implemented with a view to removing the child from roll.

Recognition of Achievement

Our Behaviour Policy describes a comprehensive system for the recognition and reward of children's achievements. Attendance and punctuality are included in the system as follows:

- At the end of each week the attendance for each class is worked out. The class with the best attendance in each phase receives the Attendance cup and certificate.
- Classes are awarded certificates for attendance over 98%. If a class receives a certificate for 10 weeks, then the class have earned a reward. This can be an afternoon in the park or a DVD afternoon to celebrate good attendance.
- Individual attendance is celebrated each term. Each term pupils can earn a certificate. If they have 100% attendance they are awarded a Gold Award, 98% to 99.9% a Silver Award and 96% to 97.9% a Bronze Award. If a child achieves 100% attendance for all 3 terms, then they will receive a Platinum Award. These are celebrated in a special attendance assembly at the end of each term.
- Personal targets for improvement in attendance and/or punctuality may be agreed between the child, the attendance officer, the pastoral workers and the education welfare officer. Achievement of these targets will be recognised with a certificate.

This policy will be reviewed and revised as indicated in the School Improvement Plan.

Next review date: February 2019

Appendix 1

Welcome to groupcall Emerge at Central Park Primary School- Faster ways of registering children and accessing data.

It is a legal requirement by that all children **MUST** be registered in the morning and afternoon. Failure in not taking a register may result in disciplinary action.

The office will require for you as staff to take your class registers promptly on your iPad device as soon as you have settled your class.

Morning registers need to be taken by 9.10am and afternoon registers need to be taken by 1.15pm (Years 1-4) and 1.45pm (Years 5 & 6)

Dinner registers also need to be taken in the morning session
(This is done at the same time when you take the morning registration)

We remind you that you **MUST NOT** leave a child's name blank on the register. You **MUST** mark the child absent if the child is not present during registration- the office will pick up and mark all the late children in.

In case of fire evacuation you must leave to the nearest exit (*which will be stated on your map in your class*) and take your iPad device with you. Once you have reached a safe area you will use your iPad to count your children in your class by going onto your class registration page for that day,

Absence Letters & messages taken by telephone or callers to the office

When a message is taken regarding a child's absence, that absence is coded on the system on a daily basis. Please note that you shall be able to view the reason as to why a child may not be in for a particular day against their name.

Please leave any letters or notes about absences that you receive from a child in the Attendance pigeon whole (*which is located in the staffroom*)

If you have any worries or queries about children not being in school, please do come and see us in the office and we will be able to provide reason for the child's absence.

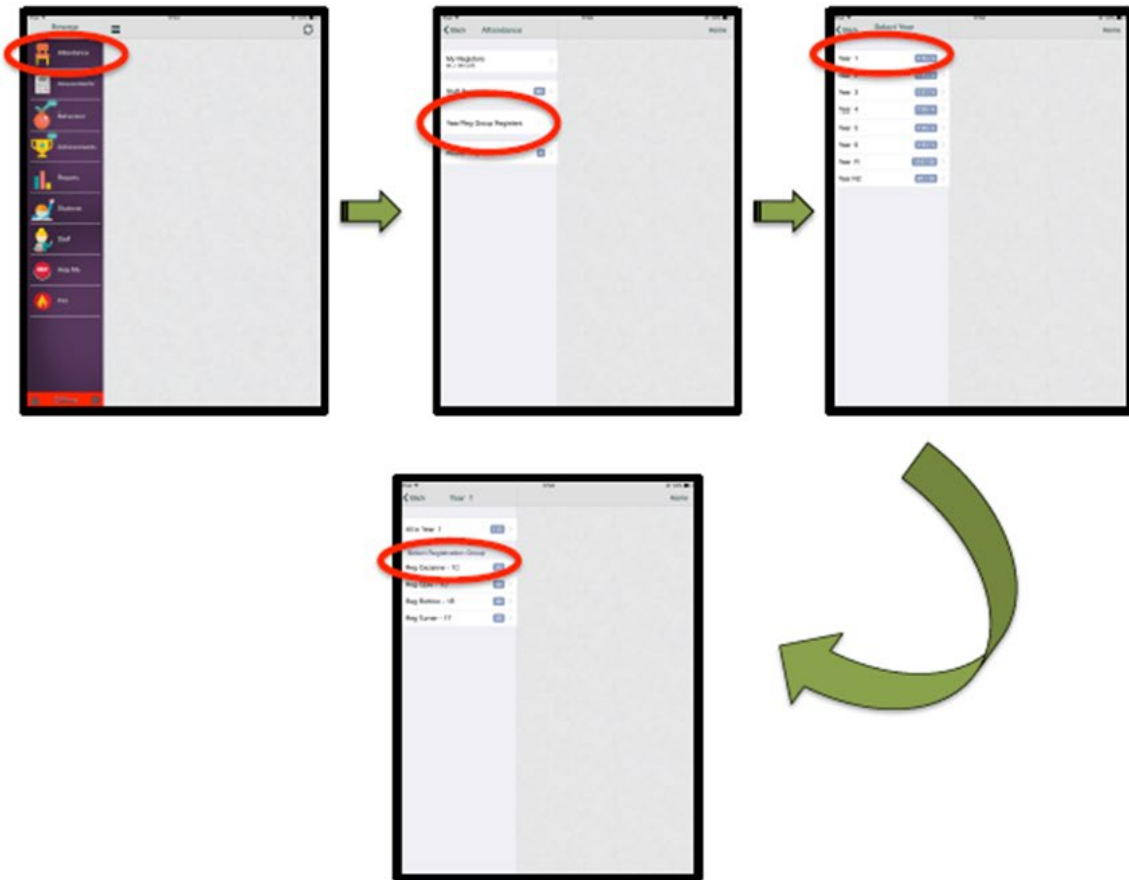
Please do not hesitate to also send notes through the pigeonholes.

Please also note that the office will make calls to parents where we have not been informed of their child's absence, on occasions a member of the admin team may pop into your class to ask if you may know why a child is absent just incase the parent has informed you and not the office- this may also be asked for your absence report from time to time.



Here is a step-by-step guide to help you register your children.

Click on the application called Emerge



Go to: Attendance > Year group registers (choose your year) > Tap on your class.

Your class register will now appear. It is now important that you enter marks correctly for the correct session & day.

The morning attendance register is taken through the dinner register. To do this you need to tap in the middle of the child's name. Here you can now choose the child's meal type to SM, PL, HO or AB

If the meal has not changed from what the default is, just tap on that meal again and it shall take you onto the next child and follow the same steps. By doing this you have now take two registers at once. (Morning attendance as well as dinner registers.)

If the child is not present at the time of registration instead of tapping on a meal type press the option AB, this will make them absent for the morning session and the dinner register.

Remember to press SAVE once you have taken the register.



Tap in the middle here to mark/amend a child's meal option

Make sure you choose the correct day and session (Morning)

Here you can now amend a child's meal option & mark them present or absent. If the meal is the same for the child just tap on that meal again and it will take you to the next child, and repeat the process again.

REMEMBER! To mark the child late or absent here at this stage if they are not present at this time. And press **SAVE** once you have taking the register- after the last child.

To take an afternoon the process is a little different, you need to tap on either the right of the child to make them present and a tap on the left will mark them absent.

Make sure you choose the correct day and session (Afternoon)

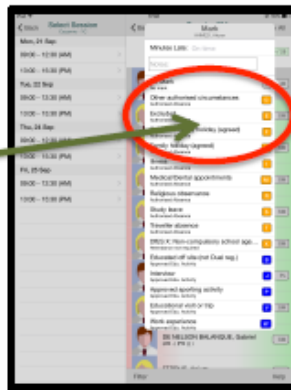
Tap on the right to mark the child present

Tap on the left if the child is absent

AFTER TAKING THE REGISTER YOU MUST PRESS **SAVE TO STORE ALL INFORMATION**

To mark a child late in the afternoon session again tap in the center and choose the L code- ONLY SHOULD YOU NEED TO.

You can mark a child late by tapping in the middle of the child's name and scrolling down and choosing the "L" code



After you have finished marking the children in after each session (*morning and afternoon*) it is vital that you press SAVE to store all information- this includes after amending marks and meal option.

Attendance Codes

Here are some codes you may have to use from time- the office will notify you when you do.

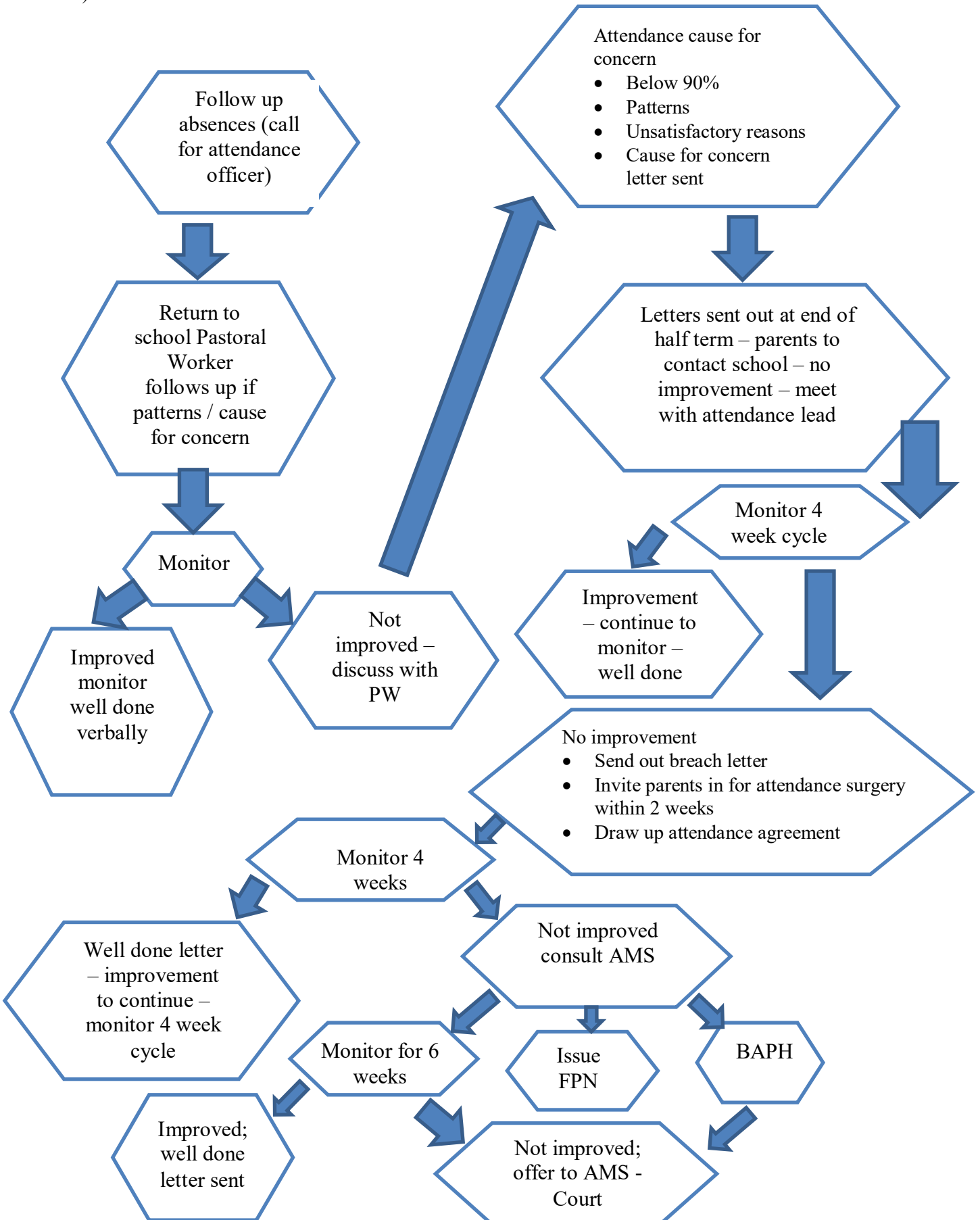
Attendance codes most likely to be used by teachers & TA's	
/or \	Present AM or PM
I	Illness
J	Interview. To be used of any group year who attend an interview at a new school
L	Late before the register closes (9.20am)

Attendance codes most likely to be used by the office	
B	Educated off site. Please include a note stating where the child is. Not to be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work
C	Other authorised circumstances. Please contact the office before you using this code
E	Excluded. Only to be used when agreed by a senior member of SLT
G	Family holiday which has <u>NOT</u> been agreed by the school
H	Family holiday which has been agreed by the school <u>Only use when DHT has agreed it</u>
O	Unauthorised absence. Please contact the office before you using this code
P	Approved sporting activities
R	Religious observance. <u>Only to be used when authorised to do so by Head Teacher or SLT</u>
U	Late after the register has closed. (After 9.20am). If a child is extremely late and they should be in the late book at the office.
V	Educational Visit e.g. Fairplay house

Appendix 3

Attendance flowchart

Monitor attendance weekly – flag up student with cause for concern and log all --- (phone, email, face to face)





Attendance and Punctuality Agreement

Pupil's name	
DOB	
Address	
Date and time of meeting	
Venue	
Present at meeting	
Reason for meeting	

Aims

- To improve attendance and/or punctuality for the child named above.
- To ensure information is shared to improve attendance and punctuality.
- To avoid referrals to the attendance management service.

Parents: I/we agree to

- Ensure that my child always arrives on time (before 8.50)
- Ensure my child attends school every day.
- Ensure my child has no unauthorised absence.
- Provide medical evidence for any absences.
- Inform the school on the first day of any absence.
- Not make any request for leave for any reason.
- Attend any further meetings

Attendance/punctuality will be reviewed for a period of 6 weeks after the date of this meeting during which time we would expect to see a significant improvement. There will be a review meeting at the end of this period. If there is no improvement then the issue will progress to the next level which could include a Fixed Penalty Notice or a referral to court.

I have read and understand the Attendance/Punctuality Agreement.

Signed (parent/guardian): _____ Date: _____

Signed (school): _____ Date: _____

Comments recorded during meeting:

Appendix 5

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Pupils attend school for a maximum 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The school regards absences as a very serious concern and there is an overwhelming connection between those students who are frequently absent and those who go on to underachieve in examinations. The school will only grant leave in term time in the most exceptional circumstances for a maximum of 3 days. Leave taken without permission of the Head Teacher will be recorded as unauthorised and you may be liable to a Penalty Notice resulting in a £60 fine per parent, per child, increasing to £120 per parent, per child if not paid within 21 days. Extended leave may result in your child being removed from the school roll.

Name of child	
Class	
DOB	
Name of parent/carer	
Address including postcode	
Reason for absence	
Dates of absence	From To
I have read and understood the above information	Parent/carer signature Date

TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL

Leave - Authorised / Unauthorised
 Penalty Notice to be issued – YES / NO
 Copy sent to Parent / Carer – YES / NO
 Child to be removed from school roll – YES / NO

Signature of Attendance Lead