Whingate Primary School

Attendance Procedures and Guidelines

November 2026

This policy is in place to safeguard all children from Nursery to Year 6.

Ratified by the Governing Body on: _____

Governors Signature: _____

Contents

1. CONTACT DETAILS
2. POLICY STATEMENT
3. AIMS OF THE POLICY
4. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE
5. PARTNERSHIP EXPECTATIONS
6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
7. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES
8. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE
9. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)
10. APPENDICES (LETTERS)

This Attendance Policy is available on the school website and is reviewed and ratified annually by the governing body/board of trustees or as events or legislation requires. Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified will be remedied without delay.

Academic year	Co-Headteachers	Senior Attendance Champion (SLT)	Nominated Governor Attendance	Chair of Governors
2026-27	Claire Beswick and Karen Loney	Claire Beswick and Karen Loney	Emma Rushton	Ellis Lewis

Policy Review date	Date Ratified by governors	Date Shared with staff
November 2026	November 2026	November 2026

School Name	Whingate Primary School
Attendance Target	96%
School opens at	8:30am (morning work) registration 8:55am
Registers close at	9:05am

Whingate Primary School

Attendance Policy

1. Contact List – November 2026

Role / Agency	Name and role	Contact Details
Co-Headteachers	Claire Beswick and Karen Loney	Admin@whingate.com 0113 2638910
Senior Attendance Champion SLT	Claire Beswick and Karen Loney	Admin@whingate.com 0113 2638910
Attendance Officer	Helen Woods	Admin@whingate.com 0113 2638910
Governor with responsibility for Attendance	Ellis Lewis	Admin@whingate.com 0113 2638910
Chair Of Governors	Ellis Lewis	Admin@whingate.com 0113 2638910
School Office	Christine Dent (Business manager) Bev Atkins (Office manager) Jo Griffin (Admin officer)	Admin@whingate.com 0113 2638910
DSL	Mellanie Rose	Admin@whingate.com 0113 2638910
Attendance Support – BCL	Ben Lewis	ben.lewis@bcl-consultancy.co.uk
School Attendance Service (SAS)	Queries relating to attendance	0113 3785994 Schoolattendanceservice@leeds.gov.uk
Elective Home Education (EHE)	Queries around Elective Home Education	EHE@leeds.gov.uk
Children Missing Education (CME)	Referrals for children missing education	0113 378 9686 CME@leeds.gov.uk
Education Safeguarding Team	Advice / Training / Safeguarding Audit	0113 3789685 estconsultation@leeds.gov.uk

2.Policy Statement

Whingate Primary seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to reach their full potential. There is a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups.

Whingate Primary aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure that every child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, we ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance for all students at Whingate Primary.

We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parents and carers.

This attendance policy is part of broader suite of safeguarding policies and should not be viewed in isolation. Safeguarding policies include the Child Protection Policy, Anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy.

3. Aims

3.1 The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to Attendance and understand the correlation with safeguarding.
- Parents, carers, and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year are recognised and rewarded.

3.2 The responsibilities set out in this policy apply (as appropriate) to all members of the school community including pupils, parents, staff, and governors. It is fully incorporated into the whole school ethos and culture.

4. Legislation and guidance

4.1 This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4f9ec6a6586e258d371bd0/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_2026.pdf

4.2 The Education Act 1996 states that:

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.

- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who are absent for more than **ten** days without explanation.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk) - Part 6
Education Act 2002 (legislation.gov.uk) - Part 3

5 Partnership Expectations –

What the school expects of our pupils
That pupils attend every day on time and ready to learn
Pupils are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment (uniform, PE kit, pumps, reading packet)
Pupils who arrive after registration time report to the office
Pupils tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school
What the school expects of parents/carers
Ensure that their children attend school every day and on time to fulfil their legal responsibility
Notify school on the first day of absence and provide reason for absence
Complete a request form for absence in term time for **exceptional** circumstances
Supply medical evidence when required
Ensure all parental and child contact details are up to date
Provide school with two emergency contact details
Speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child/ren from attending
What the parents/carers can expect from the school
A broad, balanced education
Encouragement and rewards for good attendance and punctuality at school
Prompt action when a problem has been identified
Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
Contact with parents and carers on the first day when absence is unexplained
Liaison with officers from the Local Authority from a variety of teams to assist and support families where needed
Regular communication with parents and carers

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 **Co-Headteachers**

The Co-Heads are responsible for:

- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping children Safe in Education 2026.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

- Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and whole school attendance.
- Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Ensuring all staff are aware of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, Children's Social Work Services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.
- Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Monitoring and analysing data and trends.
- Reporting to the Governing Body the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Open and honest communication with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area/cluster, LAs, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
- Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6.2 **The School Senior Attendance Champions SLT and Attendance Officer**

The School Senior Attendance Champion's and Attendance Officer are responsible for:

- Implementing the policy.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Championing and improving attendance.
- Ensuring the practice that is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Oversight of data analysis – weekly, half termly, termly and yearly.

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes, raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
- Robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group, and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
    - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
    - young carers
    - children who are eligible for free school meals
    - children who speak English as a second language
    - children who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Keeping the Co-Heads and all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.
- Compiling attendance data for the Co-Heads, the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- Ensuring a positive working relationship with the School Attendance Service is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings.
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents.
- If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Undertaking home visits in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.
- Working closely with BCL (attendance support)

6.3 **Teaching staff**

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date.
- Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns.
- Informing the school attendance champion/Attendance Officer of any concerns.
- Emphasizing with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or who are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.

- Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture.

All staff members should:

  - treat pupils with dignity
  - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
  - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence
  - handle confidential information sensitively
  - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
  - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually.
- Emphasize the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom.
- Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions.
- Apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence.
- Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality.
- Review class attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early, and help set targets.
- By-weekly review practice and consistency both across and between departments.
- Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction.
- Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils.

6.4 **Attendance Officer and pastoral staff**

Attendance and pastoral staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate.
- Ensuring robust day-to-day processes are in place.
- Tracking and following up absence and poor punctuality (implement punctuality routines such as late gate or sign in procedures).
- Providing appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice.
- Carrying out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable children including children with a social worker. If absence continues without explanation, further contact should be made to ensure safeguarding.
- Identifying any absences that are not explained for each session and contacting parents to understand why, and when the pupil will return to school.
- Where absences are recorded as unexplained in the attendance inputting the correct code as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 school days after the session.
- Keeping parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning).
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.

- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and making the necessary referrals.
- Undertaking home visits in line with safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying and, where possible, mitigating potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies.
- Implementing children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate.
- Where pupils have additional vulnerabilities, which may require multi-agency meetings trying to arrange those meetings outside of lesson time, where possible.

For pupils at risk of persistent absence

- Providing regular attendance reports to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- Initiating and overseeing the administration of absence procedures.
  This should include:
  - letters home
  - attendance clinics
  - engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners
  - working with families and the community to identify which methods of communication work best, recognising potential barriers in hard-to-reach families and finding methods that work and are understood
  - consideration as to whether further interventions are required in line with the statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures
  - providing regular reports to leaders on the at-risk cohort
  - providing regular reports/caseloads to local authority attendance team or independent attendance organisations to raise awareness of emerging at-risk pupils

For pupils who are persistently absent

- Developing and implementing persistent absence action plans with pupils and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines.
- Identifying tailored intervention which meets the needs of the pupil.
- Leading daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and impact of support, make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Liaising with school leaders (designated safeguarding, SENDcos and pastoral leads) on referrals to external agencies and multi-agency assessments.
- Coordinating and contributing to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions.
- Working in partnership with School Attendance Service and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures.
- Providing regular reports to leaders on the impact of action plans and interventions.

7 Attendance procedures

7.1 Registration

- Registration takes place each morning at 8.55 am and each afternoon at 12:30 pm (Reception and Year 1) 12:50pm (Year 2 and 3) 1:10pm (Year 4, 5, 6).
- Class teachers will enter a present mark on the register for each pupil present and an absent mark for any pupil that is absent.

7.2 Responding to lateness

- Pupils arriving in the classroom after 9.05am when the register has been taken are deemed to be late and will be marked as L code.

- After 9.30am and 1pm (Reception, Year 1), 1:20pm (Year 2 and 3) 1:40pm (Year 4, 5, 6) the pupil is deemed to be Late/absent. Any pupil arriving in school after these times will be marked U. In case of emergency the register shows the pupil is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late.

7.3 **Responding to absence**

- Repeated absences will lead to detailed monitoring by the school attendance staff and BCL (Attendance company who support Whingate Primary).
- Targets for improvement will be clear and communicated to pupil and parent or carer.
- School will organise support to remove barriers to regular attendance.
- School will organise meetings with parents or carers to review and improve attendance.
- If attendance does not improve, school will refer to the local authority for legal action.

7.4 **Working with the Local Authority School Attendance Service**

- School works in partnership with the statutory School Attendance Service to devise a strategic approach to attendance through Register Checks and Targeted Support Meetings.
- The Co-Headteachers/Senior Attendance Champion (SLT) and the Attendance school staff will meet with an Attendance Improvement Officer from the School Attendance Service when required, to discuss and improve attendance for persistently absent or severely absent pupils.
- Action plans will be developed for persistently and severely absent pupils.
- If parents/carers do not proactively engage with support offered through the action plan, then formal legal intervention may be requested from the School Attendance Service.
  Statutory intervention can include

- Penalty Notices
- Parenting Order
- Education Supervision Order
- Prosecution

8 **Authorised and unauthorised and absence**

8.1 Authorised absence

Authorised absence is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (where possible routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – (Co-Headteachers discretion)
- Religious observance (The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong)
- Approved leave in term time where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Co-Headteachers.
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence

8.2 Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is defined as:

- Being late after the registers have closed - ‘U’ code
- Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping or having a haircut
- Where no explanation is offered by the parent or carer
- Where the school is not satisfied with an explanation offered
- Special occasions e.g. birthdays/weddings
- Holidays/leave in term time
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment
- Translating for family members
- Visiting sick relatives
- Exceptional term time leave longer than agreed by the Co-Headteachers

9 **Children Missing Education (CME)**

A child who is absent as well as missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Where a child is reported to be missing education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68a860aebceafd8d0d96a10e/Summary_of_responsibilities_CME_guidance_2025.pdf and follow the Leeds Children’s Services LA procedure and contact: cme@leeds.gov.uk. Tel: 0113 3789686.

Appendix A- Unauthorised school absence

PENALTY NOTICE FRAMEWORK

Leeds CITY COUNCIL

The changes came in to force on 19th August 2024 for Penalty Notice Fines across the whole of England

- **Schools MUST consider a penalty notice for 10 unauthorised sessions (usually 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period of time (these sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of any unauthorised absences and can span different terms and school years).**

- **Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child (For example, if there are 3 children in a family, each parent may receive 3 separate penalty notices).**

National Penalty Notice Framework (offences in a three year rolling period)

First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence (or any further offences within 3 years)
The first penalty notice will be issued at £160 per parent if paid within 28 days (this will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days)	The second penalty notice will be issued at £160 per parent if paid within 28 days (this will not be reduced)	A penalty notice will not be issued, and the case will be considered for potential legal action. This can result in a criminal record and fines of up to £1,000 plus costs.

Appendix B - Attendance Tier Model

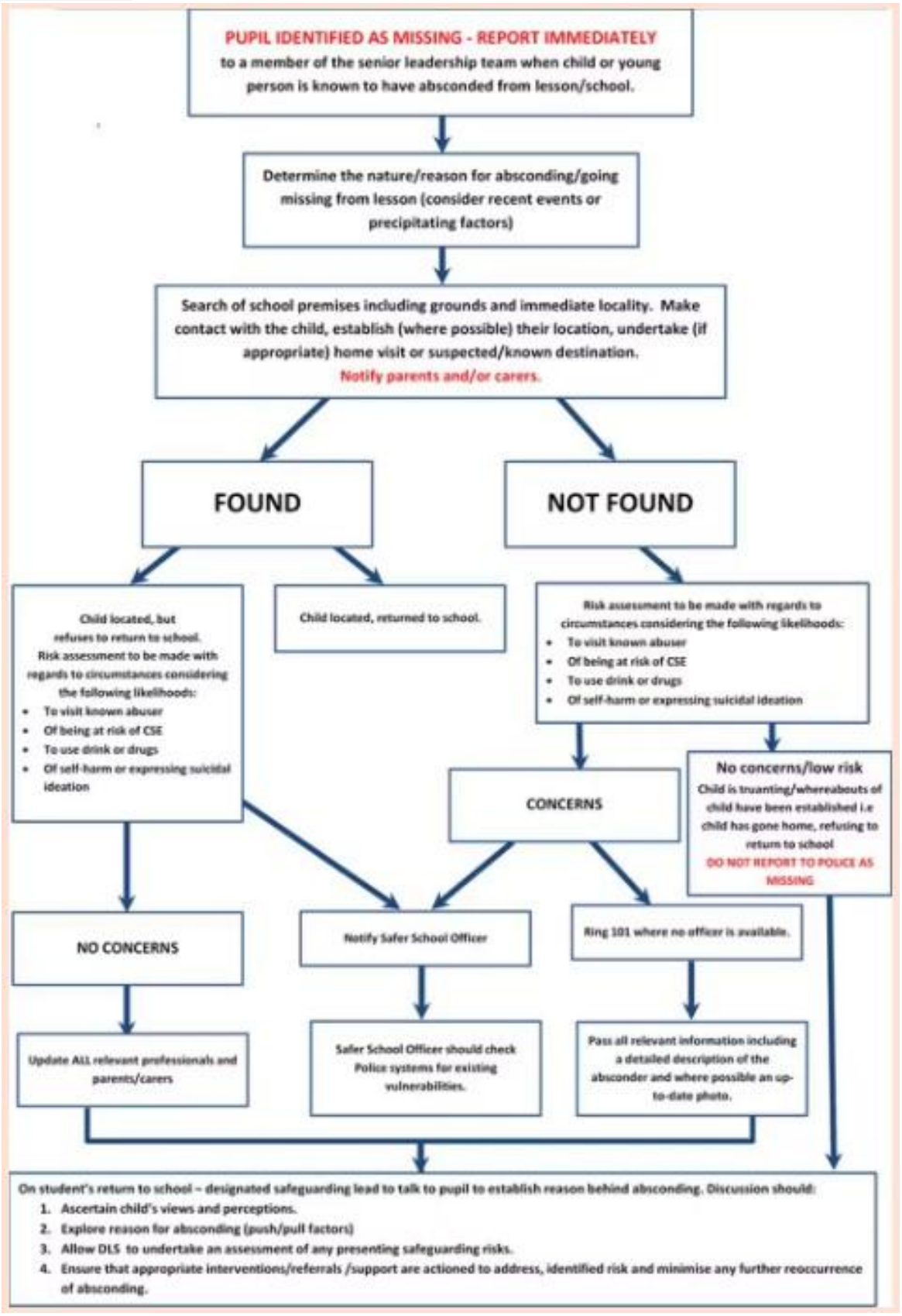
Tier	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 6
% Attendance	**97% or Above**	**96%**	**95%**	**94%**	**90%**	**< 90%**
Rating	**Impressive**	**Good.** Just below 97% Challenge	**Nearly There**	**Needs to Improve** (At risk of becoming a Persistent Absentee)	**Danger Zone** Persistent Absentee	**Danger Zone** At risk of becoming severely absent
Parent / Carer Contact	**Class Dojos**	**Informal Discussion**	**Letter 1**	**Letter 2**	**Letter 3**	**Letter 4**
Frequency of monitoring and intervention	**Half Termly Tracker**	**Half Termly Tracker**	**Half Termly Tracker**	**Regular Individual Monitoring**	**Regular Individual Monitoring**	**Regular Individual Monitoring**
Contact	**Class Teacher**	**Class Teacher**	**Attendance Team**	**Attendance Team**	**Attendance Team & DSL or SLT**	**Headteacher and Governor**
Action Intervention	**Half Termly Rewards – Class Dojos, Classopoly rewards.** **End of year award for 100% - voucher.** **Recognition of excellent attendance.**	**Incentives discussed with pupil.** **Motivation and encouragement from staff to maintain or improve attendance to meet 97% expectation.** **Support for Parent/Carer offered.**	**Informal discussion with pupil.** **Parent/carer contacted to discuss concerns at a meeting.** **20 days monitoring of attendance to see improvement.**	**Action Plan created with parent/carer.** **Possible Actions: Early Help Referral Referral to the local authority attendance team Attendance plan**	**Action Plan requiring medical evidence of absence.** **School panel meeting if no improvement.** **Referral to local authority attendance team**	**Referral to Local Authority School Attendance Panel for PN/panel meeting** **Case created for prosecution in the courts**

C Appendix – half termly tracker



Appendix D

Missing from School Response Checklist



Appendix E **Improving Attendance Action Plan**

Date of Meeting:	
Present:	

Name of Pupil:	**Class/Year:**
Name of Parent(s):	**Contact Details of Parent (s)**
Current Address	**DOB:**
	Age: y m
	Current Attendance:

Tick	Reasons for Absence
	Illness
	Friends/Peers
	Teachers
	Lessons
	Getting to School
	Family
	Other

Strategies to improve attendance (See over)	

Target Attendance for Period Ending:		
Target Attendance for Period Ending:		
Target Attendance for Period Ending:		
Review Dates:		

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

Strategy		Comments on Strategy	Dates (from/to)
Pupil/Parents			
1	Change morning routine		
2	Change bedtime routine		
3	Do not book holiday in term time		
4	Provide rewards/privileges for good attendance		
5	Young person to visit GP		
6	Make more time to talk to young person		
7	Provide assistance with getting to school		
8	Bring into school and ensure meets member of staff		
9	Phone school if absent – safeguarding concern		
10	Other		
School			
11	Attendance reward card		
12	Mentor/Link person		
13	Buddy		
14	Place of safety		
15	Special responsibility		
16	Discussion with class teacher		
17	Modification of timetable		
18	Modification of social time		
19	Targeted first day response		
20	Medical support		
21	External services input		
22	Other		
Pupil			
26	Make sure you are ready for school		
27	Complete own attendance chart		
28	Discuss any problems as soon as possible with member of school staff		
29	Keep diary – bullying, difficulty with lessons etc.		
30	Other		

Signature **Parent** _____

School _____