FARRINGTONS
SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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Regulatory References	**Education Act 1996, School Attendance Regulations 2024, Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024, Children Act 1989, Equality Act 2010, Children and Families Act 2014**
Links to other policies	**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, SEND Policy, Admissions Policy**
Date of next review	**September 2027**

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Farringtons follows the DfE guidance for independent schools in *Working together to improve school attendance* (2024) and the statutory guidance for School in 'Children Missing Education(2025) and the DfE summary of responsibilities.

1. Introduction

1.1.1 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 to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at Farringtons School are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

1.1.2 The School, including Board of Governors, recognises that punctual and regular attendance alongside high standards of behaviour is an essential prerequisite to effective learning and is therefore committed to improving levels of attendance, punctuality and positive behaviour. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance at Farringtons.

1.1.3 The School actively promotes a teaching and learning ethos which encourages all students to attend whatever their level of ability or need.

1.1.4 This is built on clear values, principles and beliefs as stated in the School mission statement.

1.1.5 In accordance with other school policies, members of the School community should be able to thrive and feel respected, safe and secure.

1.1.6 We aim to work in partnership with parents and:

• Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

• Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.

• Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, 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.

If students have low attendance, then they **may not be allowed to attend trips**. This will be examined and judged on a case-by-case basis.

• Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.

• Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

1.2 Summary of the Law taken from the guidelines for ISI inspection

1.2.1 All Independent schools - Regulation 3 (Paragraph 15) "The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006".

1.2.2 Boarding pupils are covered by the Boarding Standards: National Minimum Standards (2022). Standard 20.5 places a legal requirement upon staff who have boarders in their charge to know their whereabouts at all times (or to know how to find their whereabouts 20.6), e.g. by operating a signing in and signing out system when boarders leave the School and by registering attendance in the boarding house.

1.2.3 Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the "School Roll" and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met.

1.2.4 The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

1.3 <u>Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities</u>

1.3.1 Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil. That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, Farringtons is mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This might include:

• Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.

• Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, Farringtons will work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day.

• Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.

• Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance. This may include implementing a reduced timetable to facilitate improved attendance.

• Ensure data is regularly monitored for all groups including governing body meetings so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary

2. Senior School Procedures

Farringtons treats all pupils and parents with dignity and staff should model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, the best placed person in Farringtons will work with and support the family and wherever possible this person will be kept consistent.

2.1 Heads of Key Stage including Head of Year 7

Heads of Key Stage are responsible for monitoring the attendance of their year groups. They should:

- induct new tutors in the year team on attendance procedures
- monitor attendance provided by the Data Manager on a regular basis
- review registers and attendance and punctuality figures on a half termly basis and regularly put attendance onto the agenda of year meetings
- follow the Farringtons School Attendance Thresholds (**Appendix 1**)
- Information regarding the importance of attending school, the thresholds of attendance and the effect of poor attendance on academic progress has been discussed with students via assemblies and has been sent to parents.
- The HOY sends attendance and punctuality figures to form tutors every two weeks. These are recorded in student planners. Green stickers are awarded for 95%+ attendance, orange for 90- 94.9% and red for below 90%. Students take ownership of their attendance figures and are aware when interventions take place and what the government target is for attendance.

90% and below	90.1%-94.4%	95% and above

- The Form Tutor/ Head of Key Stage has discussions with any students who have low attendance. Interventions take place e.g. inviting parents to school to discuss.
- The Deputy Head (currently KJO as Interim Assistant Head of People and Operations) monitors attendance and punctuality and deals with any serious incidences, for example- school refusers, very low attendance that would normally be dealt with by the EWO, home visits etc.
- At every Assessment Point attendance is sent out via reports.
- At the end of every term, letters are sent out by DH (KJO currently) to those students whose attendance is below 95% with support offered to try and improve attendance for the coming term.
- ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attendees
- setting strategies where necessary to support pupils with attendance issues

2.2 Form Tutor

At Farringtons School, the Form Tutor is seen as the key figure in promoting regular punctual attendance. The tutor should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual for registration

- carry out electronic registration in the prescribed manner
- ensure that students who are late report to East House Reception to ensure that they are recorded on the school system
- ensure that all notes from parents regarding absences are scrutinised and passed on to the School Office
- monitor patterns of absence for individuals within their tutor group
- alert the Head of Key Stage when there is an attendance problem
- offer praise to individual students whose attendance and / or punctuality is good or improves. Certificates are awarded termly for 100% attendance in End of Term Assembly

2.3 Head of Department

The Head of Department should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual
- ensure that members of their department take their register at the beginning of P1 and P5
- communicate attendance issues from teachers within their department to the relevant Form Tutor and Head of Key Stage in order that any anomalies or patterns in students' attendance can be identified and resolved.

2.4 Subject Teachers

Subject teachers should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual
- take a register at the beginning of every lesson (and ensure that the students know that the register is being taken)
- follow up any suspected internal truancy by informing the Head of Department
- should monitor progress of students with poor / good attendance and how it relates to their attainment

2.5 Senior School Office

School Office staff will:

- produce a list of pupil absentees for every morning session, distribute to teaching staff and follow up any unexplained absence with parents.

3 Prep School Procedures

3.1 Class Teachers

Class Teachers should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual
- ensure that the electronic register is taken at the beginning of every morning and afternoon session
- monitor attendance of pupils within their class

- ensure that all notes from parents regarding absence are scrutinised and sent to the School Office
- monitor patterns of absence from individuals within their class
- alert the Head of the Prep School when there is an attendance problem
- ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attendees

3.2 Specialist Teachers / Set Teachers

Specialist Teachers should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual
- take a register at the beginning of every lesson to monitor any absence (including absence due to school fixtures or trips)
- liaise with class teachers about concerns regarding frequent absence
- monitor progress of pupils with poor / good attendance and how this relates to their attainment
- where pupils are having specialist teaching immediately after lunch, the specialist teacher will complete the register or inform the School Office of the attendance.

3.3 Prep School Office

School Office staff will:

- produce a list of pupil absentees for every morning session, distribute to teaching staff and follow up any unexplained absence with parents.
- Liaise on a monthly basis with the Head of the Prep School with a report on attendance, highlighting those pupils where attendance has dropped below 95% and 90%.

4. Whole School Procedures

Farringtons treats all pupils and parents with dignity and staff should model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, the best placed person in Farringtons will work with and support the family and wherever possible this person will be kept consistent.

4.1 Parents/Guardians

Parents / guardians should:

- ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually
- inform the School as soon as possible if their child is not coming into school
- **Provide evidence of scanned appointment cards etc to show the reason for the child's absence PRIOR to the appointment taking place.**
- **Details of who will be collecting the child should also be provided for safeguarding purposes.**

4.2 East House Reception / School Office

The East House Reception Office in the Senior School and the School Office in the Prep

School will:

- process registers / absence forms and process signing in and out
- record telephone absences onto the system
- initiate first day response calls home
- ensure that all letters and information are recorded on the system

4.3 Data Manager

The Data Manager will

- induct new staff on the use of ISAMs
- forward registration lists on a weekly basis to Heads of Key Stage to disseminate to tutors

4.4 Procedures

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the School of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible. If a child is not coming into school, parents / guardians should call the School on the first morning they are absent and each subsequent day. This should be followed up by a letter when the child returns to school. If a child has a doctor or dentist appointment at the beginning of the School day, parents should send in a letter or call the School the day before.

4.5 Registration

4.5.1 It is of vital importance that all registers are completed punctually and accurately. In the Senior School, tutors should complete and submit the morning register by 8.45am. Subject teachers should complete their register at the start of Period 1 and the afternoon register by 1.55pm before Period 5. In the Prep School, class teachers should complete and submit the morning register by 8.45am and the afternoon register by 1.30pm. Particular attention to accuracy is vital.

4.5.2 All registration by tutors, class teachers, specialist teachers and subject teachers will be completed electronically whenever possible. It will be entered onto ISAMs and collated by the School Office.

4.5.3 In the Senior School, a list is compiled of all absent students and cross-referenced with advance requests for absences and any messages left at the Reception Office overnight. If there are any unexplained absences at this stage, the School will follow 'first day calling' (Appendix 2) where by an email and / or text message is sent to the mobile telephone of the parents or the student to ascertain their whereabouts.

4.5.4 When a student arrives late to school they should sign in at the Reception Office / School Office. **If they arrive between 8:30 and 8:45, they need to sign in with a member of staff in the Dining Hall.**

4.5.5 In the Senior School, serious or persistent lateness will be dealt with by detentions held after school. 3 lates per half term initiate a Friday evening detention. 6 lates lead to a Saturday morning detention.

4.5.6 In the Prep School, lateness is recognised as being the fault of the parent or guardian and therefore, there are no sanctions for pupils. Instead, serious or persistent lateness will result in a letter being sent home from the Head of the Prep School which will be kept on file.

4.5.7 The Heads of Key Stage will review the attendance of their year group/s on a termly basis. Students with attendance concerns are highlighted and intervention put in place.

5. Family holidays and extended trips during term time

5.1 The DfE recommends that no term time holidays are granted and therefore as a rule requests for term time leave will not be approved. All students, including boarders, are expected to be in school from the first day of term until the last day of term. Student absences affect not just the individual but may affect the whole teaching group and the teachers' programmes of work and their marking. In exceptional circumstances, permission for absence may be granted if a letter or message is received from parents, in advance. Students' attendance is included on all school references and is requested by prospective colleges and employers and used as part of their admissions and interview procedure.

5.2 The DfE has produced guidance[1] to parents to highlight the importance of attendance within school.

The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of KS2 and KS4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%). At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%)

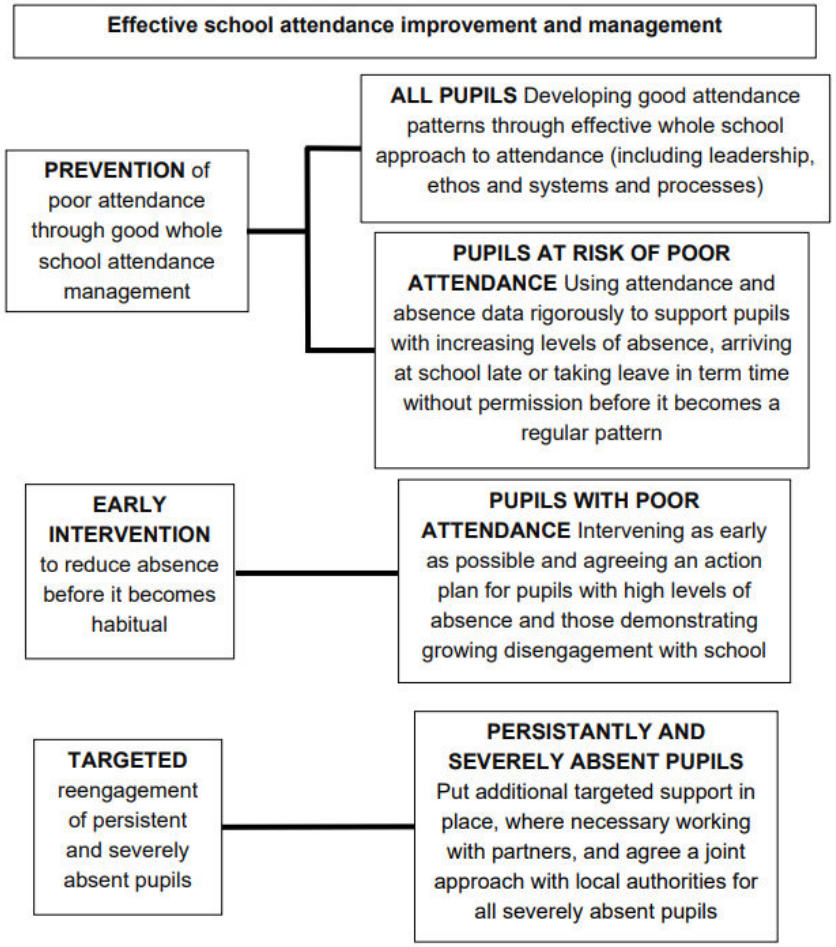
5.3 Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head of Senior or Head of Prep School to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

6. Child missing in education (C.M.E)

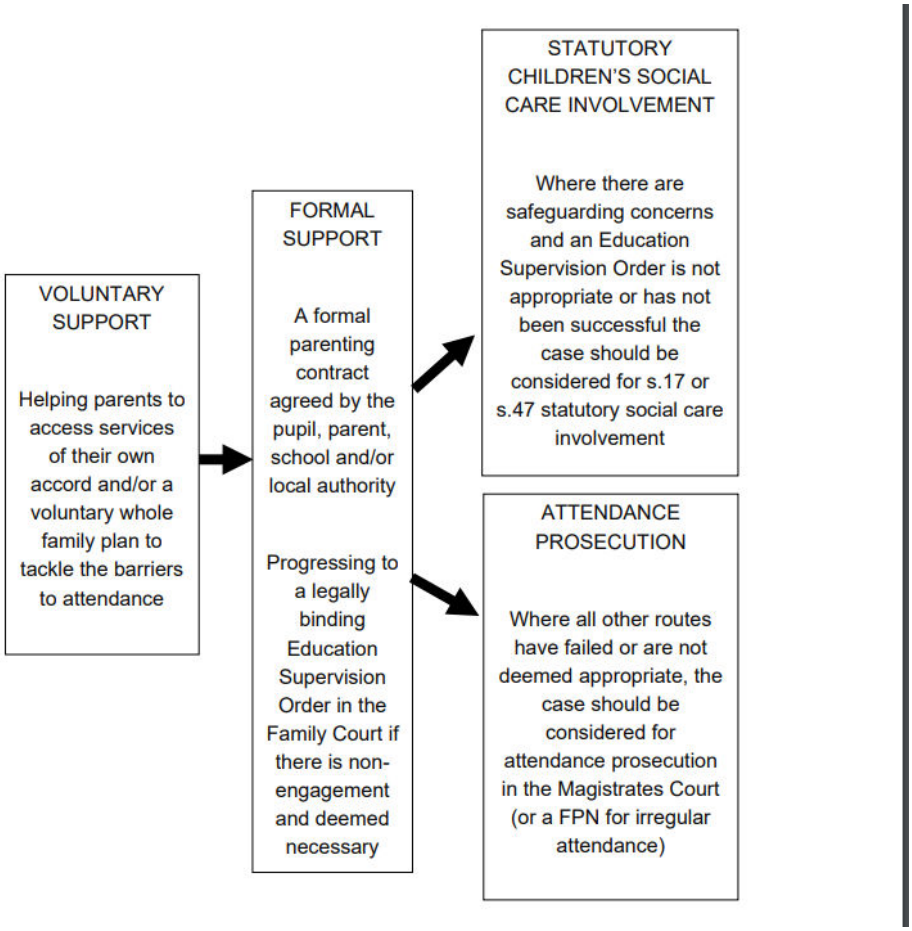
6.1 A child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Staff should treat prolonged or repeated absence, or patterns of absence, with no satisfactory explanation, as a potential safeguarding issue and take action accordingly.

6.2 Farringtons School will engage and communicate with the family of any child that is identified as missing in education starting with informing the family of our concerns through the process detailed in the appendices to ensure the child is supported back in to consistent education.

[1] Working together to improve school attendance May 2022
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073616/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf



6.3 If initial communication with the family does not result in an improvement in a child's attendance, the school will review the unique circumstances around the difficulties the family are trying to address and seek support from relevant external agencies as required.



In the first instance of "Formal Support" this will involve an email from the Assistant Head (Pastoral) to the Bromley Education Welfare Office:

Amanda Reynolds

Education Welfare Officer

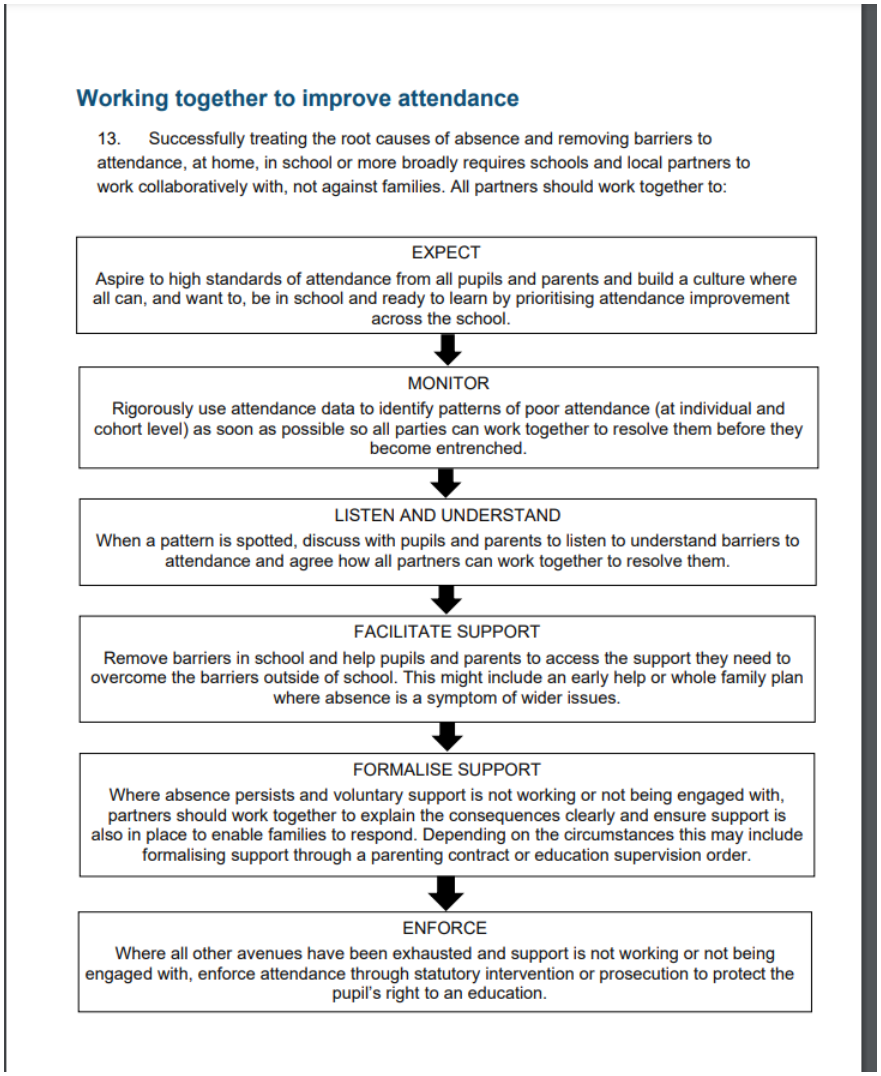
London Borough Bromley Education Welfare Service

People Department, Children, Education & Families

Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley BR1 3UH

Tel No : 0208-313-4827

Amanda. Reynolds@bromley.gov.uk



Working together to improve attendance

13. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

↓

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

↓

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

↓

FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

↓

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

↓

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

The codes recommended by DfE are used at Farringtons School:

<u>Various procedures:</u>

- If a child is put into private fostering, this needs to be logged with the local LEA.
- If a child with a social worker is excluded, then the social worker should be notified.

Attendance Codes:

Codes	DFE Descriptions
/	Present at the school morning session
\	Present at the school afternoon session
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school-age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered at another school
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
G	Holiday not granted by the school
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to an educational institution
L	Late arrival before the register closed
M	Attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
P	Participating in a sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Z	Pupil's name entered in advance of start date
#	Planned whole school closure-no session to take place

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Appendix 1

Any authorised or unauthorised absence or lateness at school will affect your child's education. The percentage figures for attendance take into consideration all authorised and unauthorised absences and lateness at school.

A term is reference to Autumn, Spring and Summer. Monitoring will take place on a termly

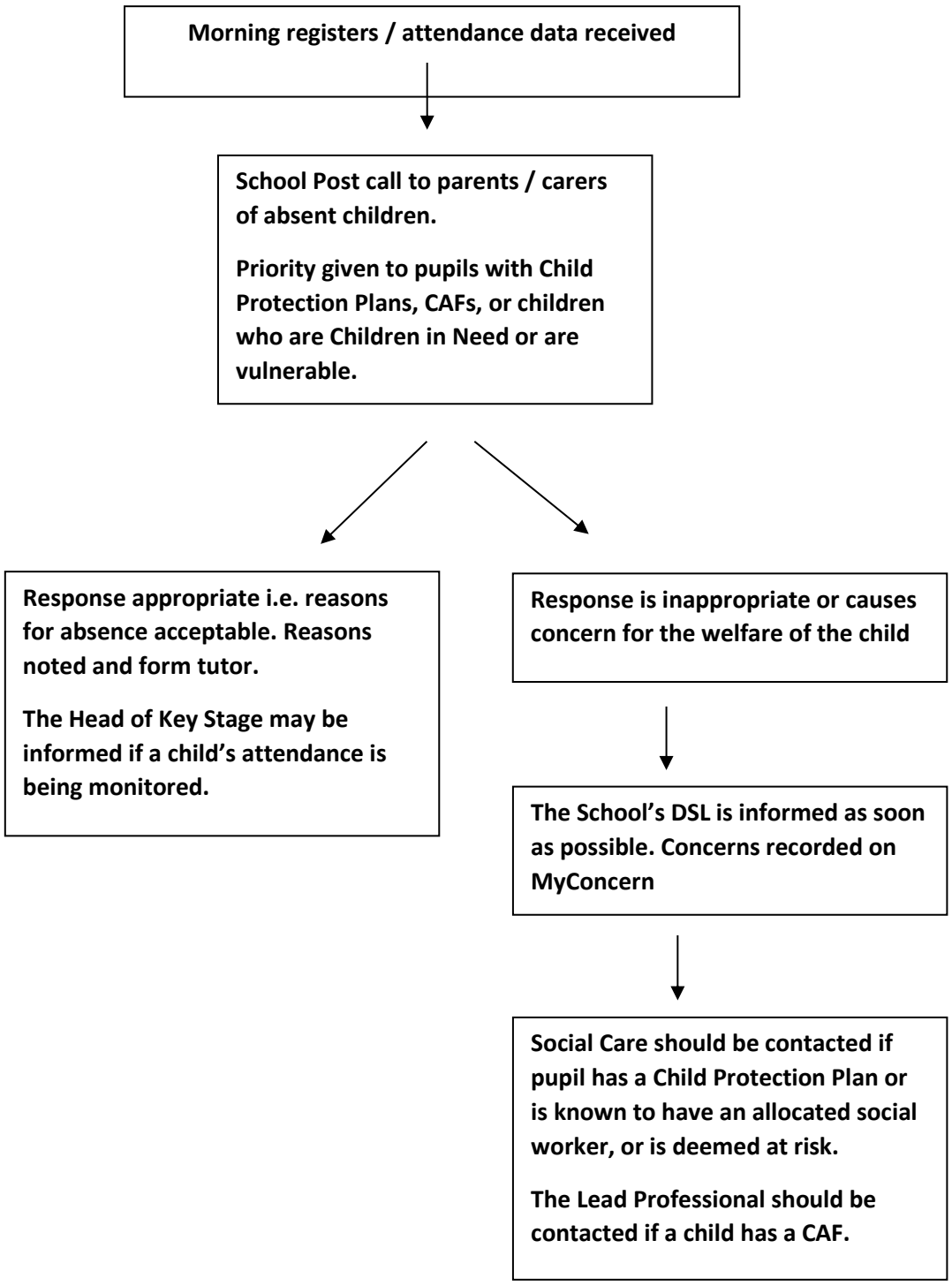
basis.

95% + attendance	Good Attendance in line with Government target. Our aspirational target is 97%
90-94.9% attendance	This level of attendance will be dealt with primarily by the form tutor in consultation with the Head of Key Stage
90% attendance and below	A letter (Appendix 4) will be sent by the Head of Key Stage. This will be sent at the end of each term.
85% attendance and below	A letter (Appendix 5) will be sent to parents inviting them to attend a meeting with the Head of Key Stage. A Pastoral Support Plan will be completed with a 4 week review period. (In some cases a CAFF referral to Social Services will be completed).
80% attendance	Final warning letter (Appendix 6) from Assistant Head Pastoral and Boarding will be sent to parents to inform them that a referral has been made to the Education Welfare Officer
75% attendance	A letter will be sent to parents from the Head.

Appendix 2 – First Day Calling

FIRST DAY CALLING

This is intended as helpful guidance for schools in terms of protecting children. 'First Day Calling' is important because school absence and safeguarding are closely linked. This practice not only encourages good attendance; it also helps to monitor a pupil's wellbeing and is an alert to their safety.



Appendix 3 – Excessive Late Letter 'L'

Dear «Name»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «Name» has been late to school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days «Name» was late.

At Farringtons School the register is taken at 8.30am. A pupil's lateness will seriously disrupt their learning and can be embarrassing for the child. I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the School to improve punctuality. If we can help in any way please do not hesitate to contact us. Should «Name»'s punctuality however continue to be a cause for concern I will need to inform the Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding).

Yours sincerely,

<<Name>>
Head of Key Stage

Appendix 4 – Letter from Head of Prep School regarding attendance

Dear «Name»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «Name» has been absent from school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days «Name» was absent.

A pupil's absence can seriously disrupt their learning; not only do they miss out on teaching while they are away but they are less prepared for future lessons when they return.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the School to improve «Name»'s attendance. If we can help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 5 – Meeting Letter

Dear (Name)

Re: (Pupil's Name)

Despite previous attempts to advise you, I note with concern that your child's attendance at school has made no significant improvement. (Pupil's name)'s attendance at school is currently %. This will have an impact on your child's education which we cannot ignore.

As there has been no improvement in (pupil's name)'s attendance, I must advise you that further absences from school as a result of illness will require medical evidence. If medical evidence is not provided, further absences will be marked as unauthorised.

I am inviting you to attend a School Attendance Meeting. The time and date have been set for …….. at …… It is imperative that you and ……. attend this meeting for us to explore the issues around poor attendance. The meeting will be attended by

…… If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact me as soon as possible so that a mutually convenient time can be arranged.

If you do not attend this meeting and ……'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Bromley Welfare Officer

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

<<Name>>

<<Title>>

Appendix 6 – Final Warning Letter from Assistant Head (Pastoral)

Dear

Re (Child's Name)

At …….. School we consider attendance of utmost importance and I am therefore bringing this information to your attention.

Our monitoring process has shown that (Child's name) has been absent from school for a total of ( ) unauthorised sessions (days). In this regard I refer you to legislation regarding non-compliance as per the DfE Guidance "Working together to improve school attendance" 2022

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073616/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact

…….. on ……..

Yours sincerely