Meadow Farm Community Primary School

Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Governors	**Date:**	September 2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2025		
Next review due by:	September 2027		

Introduction

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

At Meadow Farm Community School, we are committed to nurturing well-rounded future citizens of the world who excel academically and embody strong character and values. Our Attendance Policy is an integral part of promoting these values and our educational philosophy.

We expect all our children to attend school every day that school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting excellent attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

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

We adhere to National guidelines in relation to school attendance.

School Attendance

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. This attendance policy ensures that all staff, Governors, and parents in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance. Through this policy we aim to:

- Create the foundation for Lifelong Habits: Regular attendance instils discipline and the importance of commitment, laying the groundwork for lifelong habits of responsibility and punctuality.
- Provide consistent Learning: Excellent attendance ensures that children consistently engage with the curriculum, leading to a better understanding of concepts and continuous academic progress.
- Enable Social Development: Regular attendance helps children build and maintain friendships, develop social skills, and participate in group activities, which are crucial for emotional and social development.
- Reduce Learning Gaps: Consistent attendance minimizes the risk of falling behind, ensuring that children do not miss out on key lessons and activities that could lead to learning gaps.
- Increase Confidence: Being present and participating regularly in class boosts children's confidence in their abilities and encourages active participation in school life.
- Enable strong Child-Adult Relationships: Regular attendance allows children to develop stronger, more trusting relationships with their teachers and other school adults, which can positively impact their motivation and academic success.
- All stakeholders have a clear understanding of our school tiered approach; universal provision in place for promoting excellent attendance, support for families where a child is at risk of persistent absence and the targeted support in place for families where attendance is causing a concern.

Factors influencing attendance

There are many factors which can impact on a child attending school, if you have any concerns you should contact the school as soon as possible:

- Health Issues*:* Children may experience physical or mental health issues that lead to absences. Chronic illnesses, infections, and mental health conditions can impact a student's ability to attend school regularly.
- Family Circumstances: Family-related factors such as bereavement, family illness, or caring responsibilities can result in absences from school. In some cases, students may need to take time off to support their families.
- Bullying and Safety Concerns: Experiences of bullying, harassment, or safety concerns at school can deter students from attending. They may fear for their safety or well-being, leading to increased absenteeism.
- Transportation Issues: Difficulty in accessing transportation to school, can affect attendance. Lack of reliable transportation options can lead to sporadic attendance.
- Socioeconomic Factors: Families facing financial difficulties may struggle to provide necessary resources for their children to attend school regularly. Issues such as lack of appropriate clothing, food, or a stable home environment can contribute to absenteeism.
- Special Educational Needs (SEN): Students with special educational needs may require additional support and accommodations to attend school regularly.
- Engagement and Motivation: Lack of engagement with school activities and a perceived lack of relevance in the curriculum can lead to disinterest in attending. Children who are not motivated may avoid attending school.
- Cultural and Language Barriers*:* Children from diverse backgrounds may face challenges related to language barriers or cultural differences. These challenges can affect their attendance and engagement with school.
- Peer Pressure and Social Factors: Influence from peers can impact attendance. Children may avoid attending school to align with the behaviour of their peers or to engage in social activities outside of school.
- Parental Involvement: Parental support and involvement in a child's education can positively influence attendance. Lack of parental engagement may lead to increased absenteeism.

Definitions

In the context of school attendance and education in the UK, the terms "Persistent Absence," "Risk of Persistent Absence," and "Severe Absence" are used to describe different levels of irregular attendance by students. These terms are important for tracking and addressing attendance issues.

Persistent Absence (PA):

Definition: Persistent Absence is a term used to describe a level of student absence from school that is considered to be a significant cause for concern.
Threshold: In England, a student is considered to be persistently absent when they have an attendance rate of 90% or below. This means they have missed 10% or more of their school sessions.

Risk of Persistent Absence:

Definition: The term "Risk of Persistent Absence" refers to a situation in which a student's attendance is at a level that suggests they are at risk of becoming persistently absent.
Threshold: While there is no specific threshold for "Risk of Persistent Absence," it is typically used to describe students whose attendance is consistently low and becoming a concern, as the school communicates to parents in days, we identify 10 days or more as Risk of PA and we will follow internal school procedures.

Severe Absence (or Severe Persistent Absence):

Definition: The term "Severe Absence" or "Severe Persistent Absence" is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance.

Threshold: Particular focus and support will be provided to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of external agency partners.

Authorised absence

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

- if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. In line with ensuring the safeguarding of our children remains a priority at Meadow Farm Community Primary School for all authorised absences of 4 days or more a home visit will be conducted by two members of school staff. Alongside ensuring the safety of the child we will also offer support and connectivity for child and family. This is referred to as a Safe and Well check at Meadow Farm Community Primary School.
- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.

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

Unauthorised absence

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

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Attendance register

The school uses Arbor to keep electronic attendance registers which ensures they are as accurate as possible and can also be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

/	sent in the morning
\	sent in the afternoon
B	ucated Off-site (NOT dual registered)
C	ave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances

C1	ave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	ave of absence for part time pupils
D	al registration (attend elsewhere)
E	spended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
G	nily Holiday (NOT agreed)
H	mily Holiday (agreed)
I	ess
K	ending provision arranged by the LA
L	e arrival (before registers closed)
M	edical/Dental appointments
N	ason not yet provided
O	authorised absence
Q	sent due to a lack of access arrangements
R	igious observance
T	veller absence
U	e (after registers closed)
V	ucational visit or trip
W	ending work experience
X	t required to be in school
Y1	sent due to their regular transport not being available
Y2	sent due to travel disruption
Y3	sent due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	sent due to the school site being closed
Y5	sent due to being in criminal justice detention
Y6	sent due to public health guidance or law
Y7	sent due to any other unavoidable cause
Z	pil not on roll

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved whilst the pupil remains at school plus one year in line with our Data Retention Policy.

Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be processed by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in "exceptional circumstances". In order to have requests for

a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence using the Leave of Absence request form, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. Where parents are separated, if **either** parent requests a leave of absence, **both** parents will receive notification of the school's decision (see Separated Parents policy).

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10% for any reason

National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence

The National Framework aims to:

- Make penalty notices more effective by ensuring they are only used in cases where they are the most appropriate tool to change parental behaviour and improve attendance.
- Prioritise the "support first" approach by expecting support to be used in cases where it is appropriate and using penalty notices in cases where support is not appropriate (e.g., a term time holiday), has not worked or has not been engaged with.
- Improve consistency in the use of penalty notices across England by introducing a new national threshold at which they are considered.
- Improve the deterrent effect of a penalty notice by increasing the amount and introducing a new national limit of 2 penalty notices within a 3-year period to break cycles of repeat offending.
- Ensure a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period
- Ensure a requirement that when the national threshold is met, an assessment is made on a case-by-case basis whether a penalty notice can and should be issued
- Implement an increase to the rate of a penalty notice from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days, and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Create an additional rung to the ladder of escalation, with any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period being charged at a higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.
- Ensure a national limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another tool will need to be considered such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you may be liable for a fine of up to £2,500.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment as well as providing evidence of the appointment in the form of a letter or text/email reminder.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not,

which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 97%. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks advance by using the Leave of Absence request form.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion. The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance by using the Leave of Absence request form.

Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

SEND and health related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policies, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any Educational Health Care (EHC) plans or Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will be

followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8.55am and 1.15pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must be signed out by their parent or guardian at the school office and signed back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

- DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Our Procedures

To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance, at Meadow Farm Community Primary School we implement a Graduated Response to Attendance (see document). The four stages of this graduated response reflect the increasing level of risk associated with declining attendance and the corresponding level of support required. They have been developed in line with the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance and the expectation that schools adopt a proactive, support-first approach to improving attendance.

This approach is further supported by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), which identifies attendance as a multifaceted issue requiring schools to develop a holistic understanding of children and families, build a strong culture of belonging, communicate effectively with parents and provide targeted support that responds to individual barriers and needs. The EEF highlights that sustainable improvements in attendance are most likely to be achieved through whole school approaches that combine positive relationships, effective monitoring and tailored intervention rather than isolated actions or punitive measures alone.

Responsibilities

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

Name of Staff Member	Roles and Responsibilities
Bethany Dickson	Attendance Champion
Julie Wilton	Attendance Admin
Bethany Dickson	Safeguarding Leader (DSL)
David Allan	Governor for School Attendance.
Helen Smith	Deputy Head Teacher and DSL
Misba Imran	KS1 Lead and DSL

Class teacher

In the United Kingdom, teachers play a vital role in monitoring and promoting school attendance. Ensuring regular and punctual attendance is essential for the academic success and well-being of children.

Class teachers at Meadow Farm are responsible for:

- Creating a Welcoming Classroom Environment: Teachers should strive to create a positive and welcoming classroom environment where students feel motivated and engaged. A supportive atmosphere can encourage attendance.
- Providing academic and emotional support to children who may be experiencing attendance challenges and identifying the root causes and addressing them proactively, can help improve attendance.
- Setting Expectations: Teachers can set clear expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms. This includes communicating the importance of regular attendance for learning and academic progress.
- implementing planned sessions to support the positive promotion of attendance.
- Teachers should submit attendance data promptly to the school's administrative team. This information is used for reporting to local authorities and the Department for Education (DFE).
- Monitoring the daily attendance of their children. They should maintain accurate attendance records, noting both present and absent students.
- Promoting punctuality - children to arrive at school on time each day. Punctuality is essential for a smooth start to the school day and minimises disruptions in the classroom.
- Taking Immediate Action: When a child is absent without prior notification or a valid reason, teachers should take immediate action. This may involve contacting the school's attendance officer or designated staff member to report the absence.
- Identifying Barriers: Teachers should be alert to potential barriers to attendance, such as bullying, health issues, or family problems. Identifying these barriers and reporting them to school staff can lead to effective interventions.

- Implementing School Policies: Teachers should adhere to and implement the school's attendance policies and procedures.
- Collaboration: Collaborating with other school staff, such as attendance officers, the attendance champion and administrators, is essential for addressing attendance concerns effectively. Teamwork ensures a coordinated approach to supporting students.
- Safeguarding: Teachers should be aware of safeguarding protocols and report any concerns related to a child's safety or well-being promptly to the appropriate school staff.
- Liaising with families in the first instance of any attendance concerns.
- Ensuring that children are entered into the termly attendance raffle if they attend for a full weekend.
- Teachers should submit attendance data promptly to the school's administrative team. This information is used for reporting to local authorities and the Department for Education (DFE).
- Role Modelling: Teachers can serve as role models by demonstrating punctuality and a commitment to their own professional responsibilities.

Administration Staff:

Administration staff are responsible for:

- Data Analysis: collect and analyse attendance data to identify trends and patterns. They use this information to pinpoint areas of concern, such as high levels of persistent absence, frequent lateness, or particular year groups or demographic groups with attendance challenges.
- Developing and Implementing Attendance Policies: work closely with school leadership and staff to develop and implement effective attendance policies and procedures.
- Safeguarding: aware of safeguarding protocols and report any concerns related to a child's safety or well-being promptly to the appropriate school staff.
- Promoting punctuality - children to arrive at school on time each day. Punctuality is essential for a smooth start to the school day and minimises disruptions in the classroom.
- Taking Immediate Action: When a child is absent without prior notification or a valid reason, Administration Staff should take immediate action. This may involve contacting the school's attendance officer or designated staff member to report the absence.
- Implementing School Policies: Teachers should adhere to and implement the school's attendance policies and procedures, including sending attendance letters to families.

Attendance Champion

The role of the Attendance Champion in improving children's attendance in schools is critical in ensuring that students attend school regularly and achieve their educational potential. The Attendance Champion has a multifaceted role that encompasses various responsibilities and strategies aimed at enhancing attendance rates.

The Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Developing and Implementing Attendance Policies: Attendance Champions work closely with school leadership and staff to develop and implement effective attendance policies and procedures.
- Early Intervention: Recognising that early intervention is crucial, Attendance Champions identify children at risk of poor attendance. They collaborate with teachers, parents, and support staff to address attendance issues as soon as they arise.
- Supporting Families: Attendance Champions work closely with parents and guardians to build positive relationships and engage them in improving their child's attendance. They may conduct home visits, organise meetings, and provide guidance on strategies to promote regular attendance.
- Providing Resources: Attendance Champions may connect families with resources and services that can help alleviate attendance-related challenges, such as housing support, counselling, or healthcare services.
- Monitoring and Reporting: Attendance Champions continuously monitor attendance records and report attendance data to school leadership, governing bodies, and local authorities as required. They ensure that accurate records are maintained.
- Interventions and Incentives: Attendance Champions design and implement interventions and incentives to motivate children to attend school.
- Staff Training: Attendance Champions provide training to school staff on effective attendance

monitoring, reporting, and intervention strategies. They ensure that all staff members understand their roles in promoting attendance.

- Legal Compliance: Attendance Champions are knowledgeable about legal requirements related to attendance, including regulations governing authorised and unauthorised absences. They ensure the school complies with these regulations.
- Safeguarding: Attendance Champions are vigilant for safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They recognise signs of neglect or abuse and report them to designated safeguarding officers or authorities as necessary. Our Attendance Champion is also our Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Community Engagement: Attendance Champions may collaborate with community organisations, social services, and local authorities to address attendance issues within the broader community context.
- Continuous Improvement: Attendance Champions regularly evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions. They adapt their approaches based on data and feedback to achieve sustained improvements in attendance rates.
- Promoting a Positive School Culture: Attendance Champions contribute to creating a school culture where attendance is valued, and students feel motivated and supported to attend regularly.

Senior Leaders (including the Headteacher)

Senior Leaders at Rivendell play a critical role in supporting attendance for children. They provide leadership, set the tone for the school's attendance culture, and oversee the implementation of policies and strategies to promote regular attendance.

- Leadership: Senior staff, including the Headteacher, lead by example. They emphasise the importance of regular attendance and set high expectations for all staff and students.
- Policy Development: Senior staff are responsible for developing, reviewing, and implementing attendance policies in line with statutory requirements. They ensure that policies are clear, effective, and communicated to all stakeholders.
- Monitoring and Reporting: They monitor attendance data regularly, analysing trends and patterns. Senior leaders use this data to identify students at risk of poor attendance and to measure the impact of attendance improvement strategies.
- Setting Expectations: Senior leaders establish clear expectations for staff regarding attendance monitoring, recording, and intervention. They ensure that staff understand their roles in promoting regular attendance.
- Professional Development: They provide training and professional development opportunities for staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, and support staff, to enhance their knowledge and skills in attendance-related matters.
- Early Intervention: Senior leaders support early intervention efforts by identifying children with attendance issues and working with staff to implement targeted interventions. They ensure that appropriate support is provided to address attendance barriers.
- Parental Engagement: They promote parental engagement in attendance improvement initiatives. Senior Leaders encourage open communication with parents and guardians and may organise meetings or workshops to involve parents in addressing attendance challenges.
- Data Analysis: Senior Leaders use attendance data to inform decision-making. They set attendance targets and benchmarks for improvement and regularly review progress toward these goals.
- Supporting Vulnerable Students: They are attentive to the needs of vulnerable children, including those with medical conditions, special educational needs, or safeguarding concerns. Senior Leaders ensure that these children receive appropriate support to attend school regularly.
- Recognising Attendance: They may implement incentives and recognition programmes to recognise children and reinforcing a positive attendance culture.
- Enforcing Policies: Senior Leaders enforce attendance policies consistently and fairly, addressing unauthorised absences promptly. They communicate the consequences of poor attendance to students and parents.
- Safeguarding: Senior Leaders are alert to safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They collaborate with designated safeguarding leads to address any child protection issues arising from attendance concerns.
- Continuous Improvement: They continuously assess the effectiveness of attendance strategies and

interventions, adjusting as needed to achieve sustained improvements.
- Promoting a Positive Culture: Senior staff actively promote a positive school culture where regular attendance is recognised, and children feel motivated to attend school regularly.

Governing Body Responsibilities

The Governing Body recognises that improving attendance is a strategic priority and a key safeguarding responsibility. Governors will actively promote high levels of attendance through the school's ethos, policies and practices and will hold leaders to account for attendance outcomes.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure attendance is given a high profile within school improvement planning.
- Promote a culture which recognises the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure the school complies with all statutory attendance duties.
- Ensure a senior leader is designated to lead attendance improvement across the school.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.
- Review attendance data at least termly.
- Scrutinise attendance trends for different groups of pupils.
- Monitor levels of persistent absence and severe absence.
- Challenge school leaders where attendance outcomes are not improving.
- Ensure appropriate resources are allocated to attendance improvement.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate attendance training and support.
- Monitor the effectiveness of interventions and support strategies.
- Ensure vulnerable pupils are receiving appropriate attendance support.
- Ensure the school works effectively with Derby City Council and other agencies where attendance concerns arise.
- Receive regular reports regarding attendance, safeguarding and legal intervention activity.

Attendance Governor

A named Attendance Governor will be appointed by the Governing Body.

The Attendance Governor will:

- Meet termly with the Headteacher and Attendance Lead.
- Review attendance data and reports.
- Monitor attendance outcomes for vulnerable groups.
- Review persistent absence and severe absence cases at a strategic level.
- Support governors in understanding attendance expectations and statutory responsibilities.
- Report attendance matters to the Governing Body.

Parents

Parents play a crucial role in supporting attendance in at Meadow Farm. Their involvement and commitment to their child's education can have a significant impact on attendance rates.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Establish a Routine: Parents should establish a daily routine that includes regular school attendance. Consistency in waking up, getting ready for school, and arriving on time helps children develop good attendance habits.
- Communicate with our School: Establish open lines of communication with our school. Inform the school office promptly if your child is going to be absent due to illness or other reasons. This helps the school keep accurate attendance records.
- Ensure a Healthy Lifestyle: Promote good health practices, including proper nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep. A healthy child is less likely to miss school due to illness.
- Positive Attitude Towards Education: Encourage a positive attitude towards education. Discuss the value of school and the opportunities it provides for the child's future.
- Set Expectations: Clearly communicate your expectations about attendance to your child. Emphasise the importance of attending school regularly and on time.
- Be Involved in Homework: Support your child's learning by showing interest in their homework. Provide a quiet, conducive space for homework.
- Attend Parents Evening: Participate in parent-teacher meetings. These provide an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and address any attendance or academic concerns.
- Monitor Progress: Keep track of your child's progress and attendance. Be aware of any sudden changes in attendance patterns that may signal underlying issues.
- Address Bullying or Safety Concerns: If your child is experiencing bullying or safety concerns at school, take the issue seriously. Communicate with the school to ensure a safe and supportive environment.
- Promote a Love for Learning: Encourage curiosity and a love for learning. Explore educational activities and resources outside of school to spark your child's interest in different subjects.
- Lead by Example: Demonstrate the importance of commitment and responsibility by being punctual and dependable in your own daily activities.
- Stay Informed: Stay informed about school policies and attendance guidelines. Understand the consequences of excessive absenteeism.
- Seek Support if Needed: If your child is facing challenges that affect attendance, such as health issues or academic struggles, seek support from the school, healthcare professionals, or relevant agencies.
- Encourage Peer Relationships: Encourage your child to form positive relationships with peers. Friendships can make school a more enjoyable and supportive environment.
- Celebrate Achievements: Celebrate your child's achievements and milestones at school. Recognise their efforts and successes to boost their self-esteem and motivation.
- Collaborate with the School: Work collaboratively with the school to address any attendance issues. Explore support services or interventions if necessary.

Children

Children also play a significant role in attending school regularly and ensuring their educational success

Children are responsible for:

- Commitment to Learning: Children should recognise the value of education and commit to attending school regularly. They can understand that attending school is essential for gaining knowledge, skills, and opportunities for the future.
- Punctuality: Children should strive to arrive at school on time each day. Being punctual helps them settle into the daily routine and ensures they do not miss important instructions or activities.
- Positive Attitude: Maintaining a positive attitude towards school and learning can make attending school a more enjoyable experience. Children should be open to new experiences and willing to engage in classroom activities.
- Responsibility: Children can take responsibility for their own education by completing homework and assignments on time. They should also ensure they have the necessary materials and supplies for school.
- Peer Relationships: Building positive relationships with peers can make school a more welcoming

place. Children should be friendly, respectful, and inclusive in their interactions with classmates.

- Participation: Actively participating in classroom activities, discussions, and group projects can enhance a child's learning experience and motivation to attend school.
- Safety Awareness: Children should follow safety guidelines and rules at school to ensure their well-being. They should report any safety concerns to teachers or school staff.
- Respect for Teachers and Staff: Respecting teachers and school staff fosters a positive school environment. Children should follow instructions, be courteous, and seek help or clarification when needed.
- Problem-Solving: Encourage children to develop problem-solving skills to address any challenges they may encounter at school.
- Healthy Lifestyle: Maintaining a healthy lifestyle through proper nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep contributes to overall well-being and can reduce the risk of illness-related absences.
- Attendance Awareness: Children can develop awareness of the importance of attendance and its impact on their education. They should aim to achieve good attendance records and strive for excellent attendance.
- Ownership of Learning: Encourage children to take ownership of their learning by asking questions, seeking clarification when needed, and demonstrating curiosity about various subjects.
- Seeking Support: If a child is facing challenges that affect attendance, such as bullying or academic difficulties, they should seek support from teachers, school counsellors, or trusted adults.

Registration

The school doors open at **8.30am** and children are expected to be in school by **8.45am** this gives plenty of time for all pupils to come into their classroom and be ready to learn when lessons start. Each class teacher has the responsibility for marking the attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. All attendance records are documented using Arbor. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved in line with the relevant retention schedule.

Lateness

Children who are persistently late after close of register soon fall behind with their learning. Any pupil who comes into school after **8.45am** will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L). Any child who arrives for school later than **9.00am** will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). **This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.** Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than **9.00am** will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

As a school, our process for managing persistent late is supported in our universal offer and is managed and recorded by the Attendance Leadership Team.

Absences

Attendance Procedures

- At 8:45am, the registers will be taken.
- Children must be seated and beginning their morning starters by 8:50am.
- All class registers must be completed by 8:50am.
- Registers will be closed at 9am
- Pupils will be marked as late if they arrive after the class register is completed.
- Registers will be taken again in the afternoon at 1pm.

A full day counts as 2 attendances.

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any contact from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers each morning to identify those pupils who are absent without explanation and, as a safeguarding requirement, make contact with the parents of these children by telephone. Going to school regularly is important to your child's future.

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

Parents/carers must inform the school by 8:45am if their child is going to be absent through one of the following methods:

- Phoning school office and leaving a message on 01332 662 631
- Emailing the school office on admin@meadowfarm.derby.sch.uk

At 9am, the office staff will identify any children who we have no reason for their absence and a first text message will be sent to parents/carers to remind them they need to contact the school office. **For pupils who walk to school, a phone call will be made immediately to parents/carers.**

1st Text Message

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

If no contact is made by 10am as a result of the first text message, school will make a phone call to the parent/carer of the pupil. If contact cannot be made to the parent/carer, school will call all available contacts of the pupil.

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

2nd Text Message

"We have tried unsuccessfully today to contact you regarding your child's absence. If we do not hear from you before 1:30pm, we will conduct a safe and well home visit. Thank you"

If contact has still not been made by 1:30pm, the office will inform all DSL's and SLT. A home visit will be conducted.

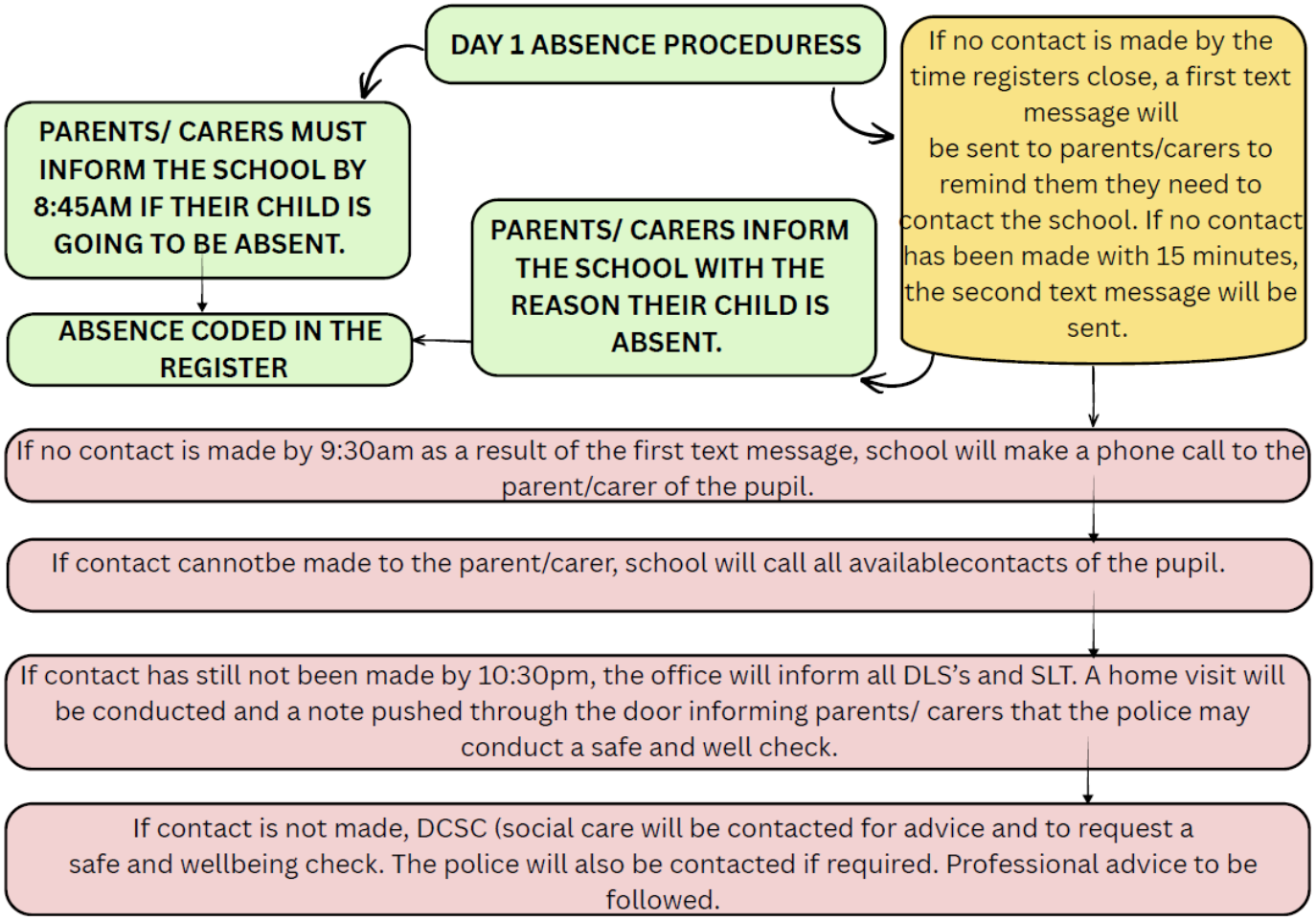
If no contact can be made from a home visit:

A home visit letter will be left at the house requesting contact by end of the school day.

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

If contact is not made by the end of the day, Social services will be contacted for advice and to request a safe and wellbeing check. The police will also be contacted if required. Professional advice to be followed.

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



Children Missing Education

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

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

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

Child / young person is on roll but not attending

School/Academy to attempt to make contact with parent/carers no later than **day 3**, best practice **day 1**. Follow your internal school attendance procedures.

Days 0-10, School/Academy should continue to make efforts to engage the family; recording their contact: telephone conversations, texts, e-mails, letters, home visits. Liaising with professionals who may be involved. School/Academy should consider what action to take if attendance is 10% unauthorised.

Whereabouts confirmed to be known but not attending education or engaging with School/Academy.

Child and family meet the threshold for Early Help through the Family Service (level 3 Pathway to Provision). Make a referral to the **Early Help Unit** via an EHAF evidencing the actions you have taken.

Absence meets the threshold for **enforcement** action as outlined in the Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct, make a referral to the **Early Help Unit** via an EHAF

Child stays on roll.

Whereabouts unknown evidencing reasonable efforts to locate/make contact with the family.

Referral is made to:
Children Missing Officer (CMO)
No later than day 10 when there is no explanation for absence and above checks have been completed.

Details of how to refer are on page 2, please clearly state any safeguarding concerns you may have.

DO NOT remove from your roll until CMO has completed initial checks and confirmed that they can be removed.

Parent/Carers indicate they wish to Home Educate (EHE)

Request must be made in writing, following a conversation between school and parent/carer's, with a copy of the letter placed in the pupil file and a copy of the letter forwarded securely to **EHE.**

School/Academy to return the EHE 1A and 1B forms to the EHE Administrator.

Remove the learner from your roll. **DO NOT** remove from your roll if statemented without confirmation from the LA. School file to be sent to **EHE** at County Hall via secure mail.

Child not in full receipt of education (25hrs)

Information should be shared with the **Fair Access Team.** Levels of provision will be closely monitored and scrutinised.

Child moving out of county

Request from the family their **new address** and details of new School/Academy.
If obtained please share with:
admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk

Hopefully the new school will make contact with you, if not, make contact with them to confirm on roll.

If without a new school within **10 days**, a referral should be made to:
Children Missing Officer (CMO)
providing the families new address, contact details and a summary of efforts made by school to engage the family.

Child is of statutory school age but not applied or on roll of a School/Academy

Direct referral to:

Children Missing Education (CMO)

Providing child's name / DOB / address and details of parent / carers.

Child permanently excluded

LA to be notified on the day of exclusion via e-mail.

The LA will respond and continue to work with you through the process.

DO NOT remove from your roll until advised.

Family indicate they are moving abroad

School must request and record details of the new **family address** and **school.** You can't remove from roll without this.
If obtained please share with:
admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk

http://www.languageshop.org/ (translation support)

If school does not receive the above a referral should be made to:

Children Missing Officer (CMO)

Looked After Children (LAC)

If a LAC is moving placement and no longer attending, school should liaise with the Virtual School and the child's Social Worker. **DO NOT** remove from roll.

Independent / Residential Schools

The same procedures should be followed as those in School's / Academies

Gypsy/Roma/Traveller

If a Traveller family indicate they are to travel for work purposes School/Academy should request details of where they will be travelling and when they aim to return.

If they do not return within 4 weeks of the expected return date please follow attendance procedures.

School Allocations

intake or in-year admissions rounds

If allocated and there is not an acceptance/agreed start date best practice is for school to make attempts to engage (telephone, text, e-mail, welcome letter, home visit (where appropriate).

If a child/young person has been allocated a place at your school/academy and they do not arrive you must inform the **CMO** within **10 days** evidencing efforts to engage.

If an application to transfer school during the year (outside of the normal intake process), the leaving school should keep them on roll until it has been confirmed by the new school that they have arrived and have been taken on roll.

Places must be taken up by the start of the next half term after the place has been allocated. For places allocated in the summer term 2018, the place must be taken up before the end of the summer term.
For children admitted through first admissions round please refer to your summer born guidance.

A child should be placed **on roll** at the point of acceptance by parent or arriving on the first day.

If allocated children do not arrive PLEASE FOLLOW UP, DO NOT ASSUME they will have gone elsewhere or remained at their previous School/Academy!!

Own admission authorities

must inform the admissions team of any **enquiry/application** and **outcome.** This helps identify any vulnerable child requiring a place and avoids a child being out of education for an undue length of time. All academies must notify the local authority via admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk **within five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admission register.

Family indicate they are returning home for family, cultural or health reasons

School/Academy need to consider the circumstances of the absence in deciding which code to use. Parents should provide school with a return date.
If the family do not return on this date attendance procedures should be followed.

Health Related Education

If a child has been out of school for 15 days or more due to illness please liaise with the School Nurse and then a referral can be made to:

Health Related Education Team (please contact the Health Related Education Team to discuss a request for their involvement)

Truancy – School/Academy to inform parent/carers that their child/young person is not in school. School/Academy risk assess before considering a Police response. (prior checks to be completed and evidenced upon calling the police, unless immediate risk evident). Please be mindful of missing and hidden missing where young people's whereabouts are not known to parent/carers. This can be discussed with the CMO.

SAFEGUARDING - Every child should be accounted for, their whereabouts should be known or a referral made to the appropriate service. Please be mindful that the **MASH** is for level 4 safeguarding concerns with children believed to be **at risk of or actual harm.** The Early Help Unit will support with early intervention/attendance. It is important that concerns are risk assessed by school. All referrals should indicate the level of concern and previous actions taken. A referral made to the correct service will help for support to be in place in a timely fashion. If unsure please seek guidance prior to referring.

Useful links: http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/schoolsportal/local-authority/attendance (Nottinghamshire Schools Portal)
http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-childrens-trust/pathway-to-provision (P2P)
http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/109754/factsheet-summer-born-final-2.pdf (Summer Born)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf (CME)
http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-childrens-trust/pathway-to-provision/early-help-assessment-form (EHAF

GUIDANCE FOR REMOVING A CHILD FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE A CHILD FROM YOUR ROLL UNLESS YOU HAVE RECORDED AND SHARED THE FOLLOWING WITH THE LA:

- the full name of the pupil,
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides,
- at least one telephone number of the parent,
- the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and
- **the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).** This will need to be clearly recorded when updating your systems as you will need to inform the LA.

All other deletions breach statutory guidance

Known Pupil Absence – Day 4 Procedure

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

Applications for Leave of Absence in Term Time

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

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

Addressing Attendance Concerns

Meadow Farm expects attendance of at least 97%. It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns.

If a child's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of parental responsibility measures which include the issue of penalty notice fines or other statutory action.

Please see below for our full Attendance Procedure:

National framework for penalty notices

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

The new costs and process is outlined below:

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

Term time holidays

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

Refusal to Attend

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

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

- Referral to the schools Attendance Team for home visits
- Nurture support
- Referral to outside agencies

Changing Schools

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

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

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

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

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

Review

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

and carers as necessary.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Meadow Farm Community Primary School recognises that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may face additional barriers to attending school regularly. In line with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE 2026)*, the school will work proactively with pupils, parents/carers and external professionals to identify and remove barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity.

Attendance concerns relating to pupils with SEND will always be considered in the context of their individual needs and circumstances. The school recognises that difficulties with attendance may arise from:

- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).
- Sensory processing difficulties.
- Medical needs and disabilities.
- Anxiety and emotional wellbeing concerns.
- Difficulties with transitions, routines or social interaction.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school will:

- Involve the SENDCo at the earliest opportunity.
- Work collaboratively with parents/carers and the pupil.
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments are required.
- Review support plans, provision maps and EHCP outcomes.
- Consider whether learning, environmental, social or sensory factors are contributing to attendance difficulties.
- Seek advice from external professionals where appropriate.
- Ensure attendance support remains child-centred and proportionate.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of interventions and support strategies.

The school recognises that attendance difficulties linked to SEND should not automatically result in statutory attendance intervention. Before legal action is considered, the school will be satisfied that:

- Appropriate support and reasonable adjustments have been implemented.
- The views of the pupil and family have been considered.
- Relevant external agencies have been involved where appropriate.
- Any SEND-related barriers have been fully explored.

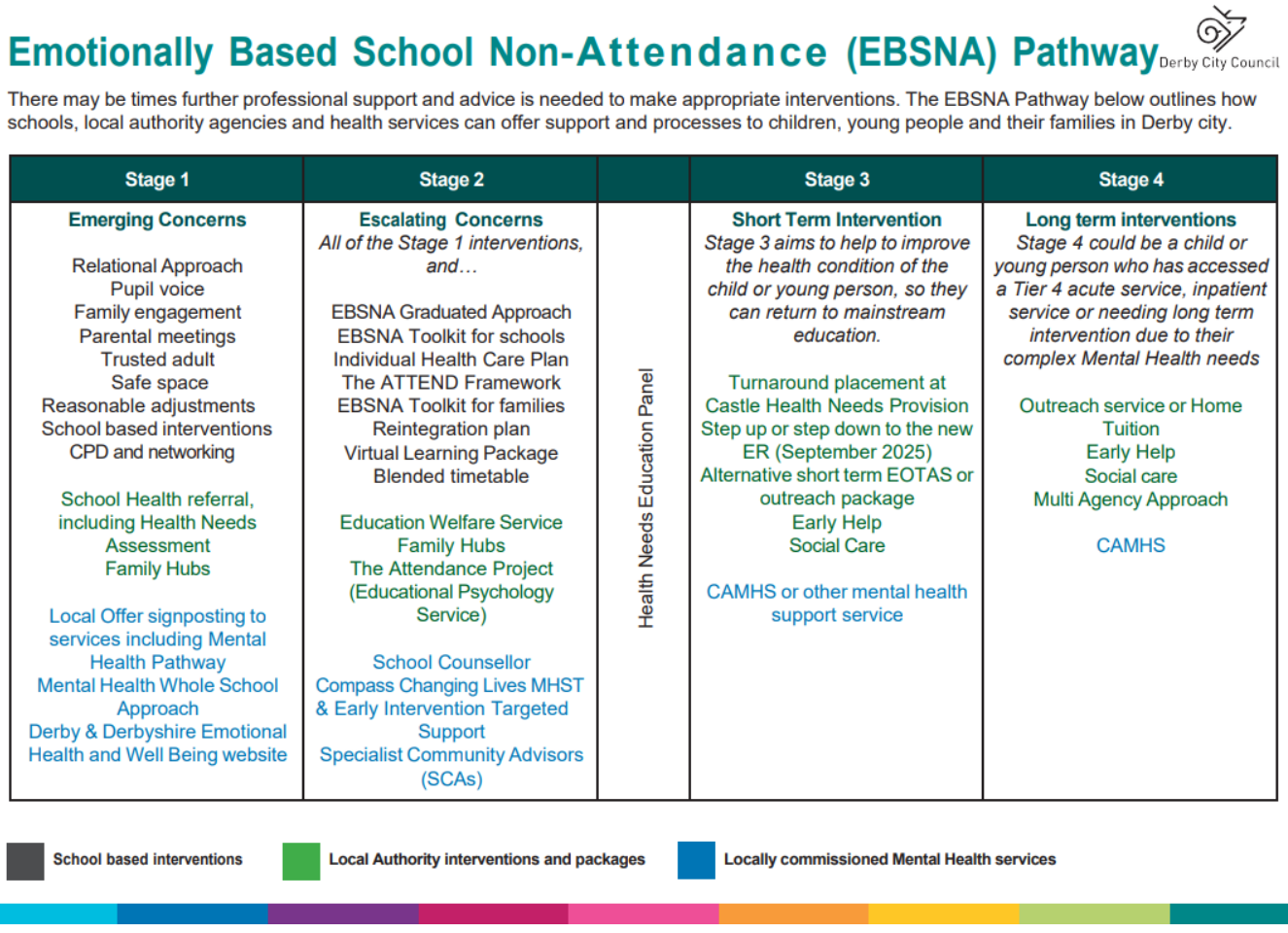
Attendance data for pupils with SEND will be monitored closely to identify patterns and ensure support is provided promptly. Particular attention will be given to pupils who are persistently absent or severely absent.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

The school recognises that some pupils experience significant difficulties attending school due to emotional factors such as anxiety, low mood, trauma, attachment difficulties or other mental health needs. This is commonly referred to as Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

The school adopts a supportive and graduated response to EBSA and recognises that attendance difficulties arising from emotional needs require understanding, partnership working and carefully planned intervention.

Meadow Farm Primary School follows the Derby City Emotionally Based School Non Attendance (ESSNA) Pathway.



Early Identification

Staff will remain alert to indicators that may suggest EBSA, including:

- Frequent reports of illness without identified medical causes.
- Difficulties attending at the start of the school day.
- Increasing lateness.
- Emotional distress linked to school attendance.
- Requests to leave lessons or school.
- Changes in behaviour or presentation.
- Withdrawal from peers or activities.

- Reduced attendance patterns over time.

Graduated Response

Where EBSA is identified, the school will:

Stage 1 – Explore and Understand

- Meet with parents/carers and the pupil.
- Gather the pupil voice.
- Identify specific barriers, triggers and worries.
- Complete appropriate wellbeing assessments.
- Consider SEND and safeguarding needs.

Stage 2 – Plan Support

Support may include:

- Access to pastoral support.
- Daily check-in and check-out arrangements.
- Safe spaces within school.
- Nurture provision.
- Mentoring support.
- Adjustments to routines, transitions or environments.
- Emotional wellbeing interventions.
- Referral to external agencies where appropriate.

Stage 3 – Review and Adapt

The Attendance Lead, SENDCo and pastoral staff will regularly review progress and adapt support as necessary.

Support plans should clearly identify:

- Attendance targets.
- Strategies to reduce anxiety.
- Responsibilities of school, family and pupil.
- Review dates.
- Success measures.

Reintegration Support

Where a pupil has experienced prolonged absence linked to anxiety or emotional wellbeing, a reintegration plan may be developed.

This may include:

- A phased return.
- Gradual increase in attendance.
- Support from trusted adults.
- Adjusted timetables for a short, time-limited period where appropriate.

- Multi-agency planning meetings.

Any reduced timetable will be:

- Approved by the Headteacher.
- Time-limited.
- Regularly reviewed.
- Implemented in accordance with DfE guidance.

Multi-Agency Working

The school may work with:

- Derby City Council Attendance Service.
- Educational Psychology.
- Health Services.
- Mental Health Support Teams.
- Early Help.
- Children's Services.
- Specialist SEND services.

The school will seek to understand and reduce barriers to attendance before considering enforcement measures. Formal attendance intervention will not replace appropriate support where attendance difficulties stem primarily from identified emotional or mental health needs.

Below are strengthened replacement sections that align much more closely with the expectations within *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026)* regarding governance, accountability and vulnerable pupils.

Vulnerable Pupils and Attendance

Meadow Farm Community Primary School recognises that some pupils face greater barriers to regular attendance than others. The school is committed to identifying these barriers early and working collaboratively with families, Derby City Council and partner agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Attendance data will be analysed regularly to identify vulnerable pupils and groups who may require additional support.

Particular attention will be given to:

- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Pupils experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).
- Pupils with mental health needs.
- Pupils with long-term medical conditions.
- Children in Need.
- Children subject to Child Protection Plans.
- Children looked after.
- Previously looked after children.

- Pupils with a social worker.
- Young carers.
- Pupils known to Youth Justice Services.
- Pupils receiving Early Help support.
- Pupils who have experienced trauma, bereavement or significant family change.
- Pupils from families experiencing housing, financial or social difficulties. [home.edurio.com]

Pupils with a Social Worker

Research shows that children with a social worker are at greater risk of poor attendance and lower educational outcomes. The school will work closely with social workers, safeguarding professionals and Derby City Council to support attendance and remove barriers to education.

The school will:

- Monitor attendance patterns carefully.
- Share concerns promptly with relevant professionals.
- Include attendance within safeguarding and multi-agency plans.
- Prioritise early intervention where attendance declines.
- Ensure attendance concerns are discussed during professional meetings and reviews.

Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

The school recognises the importance of maintaining high attendance for children looked after and previously looked after children.

The school will:

- Work closely with carers, social workers and Virtual School colleagues.
- Monitor attendance routinely.
- Provide early intervention where concerns arise.
- Ensure attendance forms part of Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviews where appropriate.

Young Carers

The school acknowledges that young carers may face additional responsibilities which can affect attendance.

The school will:

- Identify young carers early.
- Provide appropriate pastoral support.
- Consider flexible support arrangements where appropriate.
- Work with families and external agencies to minimise attendance barriers.

Medical Needs and Mental Health

Where attendance is impacted by physical or mental health needs, the school will work with families and professionals to develop appropriate support plans.

Support may include:

- Medical care plans.
- Reintegration plans.
- Graduated attendance plans.
- Pastoral support.
- Mental health support referrals.
- Multi-agency intervention where appropriate.

The school will avoid a punitive approach where attendance difficulties are linked to genuine health needs and will seek to understand and address barriers before considering legal intervention.

Monitoring Vulnerable Pupils

Attendance data for vulnerable pupils will be reviewed at least half-termly by the Attendance Lead, SENDCo, DSL and Senior Leadership Team.

Where concerns are identified:

- Attendance Support Plans may be implemented.
- Early Help may be considered.
- Multi-agency meetings may be convened.
- Attendance interventions will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective and proportionate.

The school will ensure attendance support remains individualised, inclusive and focused on securing sustained improvements in attendance and educational outcomes.

Attendance Contracts and Notices to Improve

Meadow Farm Community Primary School is committed to securing good attendance through support, partnership working and early intervention. In accordance with the DfE's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* guidance, attendance contracts and Notices to Improve may be used where attendance support has not led to sufficient improvement.

Attendance Contracts

An Attendance Contract is a formal written agreement between the school, parent/carer and, where appropriate, the pupil.

Attendance Contracts are intended to:

- Improve attendance through partnership working.
- Identify and address barriers to attendance.
- Clarify expectations and responsibilities.
- Formalise support arrangements.
- Reduce the need for legal intervention.

Attendance Contracts may be considered where:

- Attendance has become a significant concern.
- A pupil is persistently absent.
- Previous school-based interventions have not secured improvement.
- Parents/carers have engaged with support but attendance remains a concern.
- Derby City Council Attendance Service recommends a formal agreement.

Attendance Contract Content

Contracts will normally include:

- The pupil's current attendance information.
- Identified barriers to attendance.
- Actions to be completed by parents/carers.
- Actions to be completed by the school.
- Additional agency involvement where appropriate.
- Agreed attendance targets.
- Review arrangements and timescales.
- Expected outcomes.

Attendance Contract Review

Attendance Contracts will be reviewed regularly to evaluate progress and determine whether:

- Attendance has improved.
- Further support is required.
- Additional intervention is necessary.
- Referral to Derby City Council is appropriate.

Failure to comply with an Attendance Contract does not automatically result in legal action; however, it may be considered as part of the wider attendance history when determining future interventions.

Notice to Improve

A Notice to Improve is a formal attendance intervention that may be issued by Derby City Council when support has not secured sufficient improvement and the legal threshold for further attendance intervention may be approaching.

Prior to requesting a Notice to Improve, the school will normally be able to demonstrate that:

- Attendance concerns have been clearly communicated.
- Support has been offered and recorded.
- Attendance meetings have taken place.
- Barriers to attendance have been explored.
- Reasonable opportunities to improve attendance have been provided.
- Attendance Support Plans and other interventions have been considered where appropriate.

Contents of a Notice to Improve

A Notice to Improve will normally include:

- The attendance concerns identified.
- The attendance improvements required.
- The period during which attendance will be monitored.
- Support available to the family.
- The consequences of failing to improve attendance.

Failure to Improve

Where attendance does not improve following a Notice to Improve and unauthorised absence continues to meet the national threshold, Derby City Council may consider further action, including:

- Penalty Notices.
- Education Supervision Orders.
- Parenting Orders.
- Prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Graduated Attendance Intervention Process

The school's graduated approach to attendance intervention is:

1. Universal Attendance Support.
2. Attendance Monitoring and Early Intervention.
3. Attendance Support Meeting.
4. Attendance Support Plan.
5. Early Help and Multi-Agency Support.
6. Attendance Contract.
7. Derby City Attendance Service Referral.
8. Notice to Improve.
9. Penalty Notice or Alternative Legal Intervention.

10. Prosecution or Education Supervision Order (where appropriate).

The school will always seek to understand barriers, provide support and work collaboratively with families before pursuing formal attendance enforcement wherever this is appropriate and consistent with safeguarding responsibilities.

Attendance Support Plans

Meadow Farm Community Primary School is committed to working collaboratively with pupils, parents/carers and partner agencies to remove barriers to attendance. Where attendance concerns are identified, an Attendance Support Plan may be implemented to provide a structured and supportive framework for improving attendance. Attendance Support Plans form part of the graduated response outlined within the DfE's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* guidance.

The purpose of an Attendance Support Plan is to:

- Identify barriers preventing regular attendance.
- Understand the views of the pupil and parent/carer.
- Agree appropriate support and interventions.
- Clarify responsibilities and expectations.
- Monitor progress and attendance improvements.
- Prevent attendance concerns escalating to statutory intervention.

When an Attendance Support Plan May Be Used

An Attendance Support Plan may be considered where:

- Attendance is showing a declining trend.
- A pupil is at risk of becoming persistently absent.
- Attendance has fallen below 90%.
- There are recurring patterns of absence.
- Punctuality is becoming a concern.
- Medical, mental health or SEND-related barriers are affecting attendance.
- Previous attendance interventions have not secured sufficient improvement.
- A family would benefit from coordinated support.

Developing an Attendance Support Plan

The Attendance Lead will normally coordinate the plan in partnership with:

- The pupil.
- Parents/carers.
- Class teacher.
- SENDCo (where appropriate).
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (where appropriate).
- External professionals involved with the family.

Support plans should be developed through discussion with the family and should focus on understanding and addressing the underlying causes of absence.

Areas Considered

An Attendance Support Plan may explore:

School Factors

- Relationships with peers.
- Relationships with adults.
- Friendship difficulties.
- Bullying concerns.
- Curriculum engagement.
- Transition difficulties.

Family Factors

- Family illness.
- Housing difficulties.
- Financial hardship.
- Transport issues.
- Parenting support needs.
- Caring responsibilities.

Individual Factors

- Physical health needs.
- Mental health needs.
- Anxiety.
- SEND needs.
- EBSA concerns.
- Emotional wellbeing.

Environmental Factors

- Travel arrangements.
- Community safety concerns.
- External agency involvement.

Support Strategies

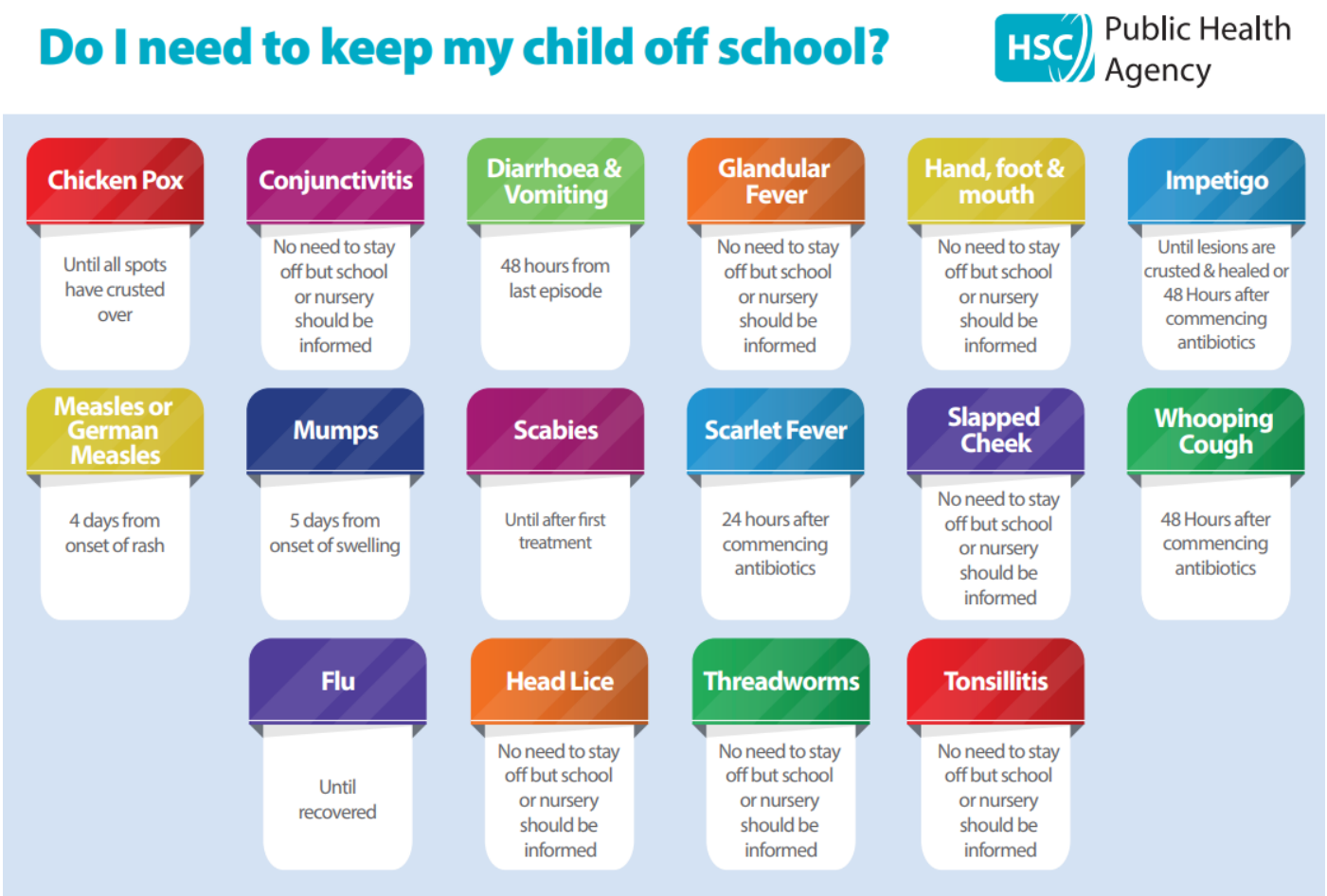
Support plans may include:

- Daily meet and greet arrangements.
- Attendance mentor support.
- Pastoral support.
- Nurture interventions.
- Emotional wellbeing support.
- Referral to Early Help.
- Family support services.
- SEND support.
- Mental health referrals.

- Reintegration planning.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Home visits.
- Multi-agency meetings.

Review Arrangements

Attendance Support Plans will normally:

- Be reviewed every 2 to 6 weeks.
- Include measurable attendance targets.
- Record progress and outcomes.
- Be amended where required.
- Be closed once attendance concerns have been resolved.

Where attendance does not improve despite support, further intervention may be considered, including Attendance