



# Swanshurst School

## Attendance POLICY

<b>Implementation date:</b>		September 2023	
<b>Last review date:</b>		July 2023	
<b>Next Review date:</b>		September 2024	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>	<b>Source</b>
10.07.2023	V1.2	Updates	Mrs S. Fletcher (Deputy Headteacher)

At Swanshurst School we follow: Birmingham City Council's Guidelines on attendance.  
[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50157/education\\_legal\\_intervention\\_referral/690/pupil\\_attendance\\_advice\\_for\\_schools\\_and\\_professionals](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50157/education_legal_intervention_referral/690/pupil_attendance_advice_for_schools_and_professionals)

## 1. Rationale

- 1.1 Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to achieve their full potential. Swanshurst School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become resilient, confident, and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.
- 1.2 Swanshurst School values all pupils and we will work with families to identify the reasons for unsatisfactory attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.
- 1.3 Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, antibullying, behaviour and SEN.

## 2. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- 2.1 Promoting outstanding attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence and severe absence which is vital to educational achievement.
- 2.2 Ensuring attendance and punctuality is a priority to school and lessons for all those associated with the school.
- 2.3 Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- 2.4 Acting early to address patterns of absence. Unauthorised absence and persistent lateness are not acceptable; parental condoned, unjustifiable absence will be investigated and may be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- 2.5 Providing support and guidance to parents and pupils, building strong relationships to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- 2.6 Promoting and rewarding regular school attendance at whole school, class, and individual level.
- 2.7 Acting to safeguard pupils when they are absent from school.

## 3. Legislation and guidance

- 3.1 This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [Summary table of responsibilities for school Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
  - a. Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
  - b. Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
  - c. Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
  - d. [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
  - e. [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
  - f. This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.1 Governors**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Along with the Headteacher set a target at the beginning of the year. Our target for 2023/2024 is 95% whole school with Persistent Absence of less than 10%.
- Are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. Will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance
- Ensure that pupil's names are recorded on the school admissions and daily register.

### **4.2 The Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **4.3 Deputy Head Teacher – Mrs Sharon Fletcher**

The deputy head teacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Ensure pastoral staff receive specific training for attendance guidance and legalities to support whole school attendance approach
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Ensure that the daily register of pupils attending the school is taken and delegates the monitoring and reporting on attendance to the Pastoral Year Team.

### **4.4 Pastoral Year Team**

The pastoral year team are responsible for:

- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the deputy head teacher
- Works with mental health learning mentor, social worker, learning mentors and fast track to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher / deputy head teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Takes calls and messages from parents about absence and record it on the school system.
- Ensure form tutors receive attendance training needed to support pupils
- Operate the systems and structures for monitoring, rewarding, and intervening with attendance matters to improve the attendance of all pupils, and rapidly improving the attending of those targeted for intervention.

- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.
- Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.
- Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.
- Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.
- Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.
- Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.

#### 4.5 Form Tutor / Class Teacher

Form tutor and class teacher are responsible for:

- Responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the pastoral year team.
- Operating the relevant rewards and intervention layers of the attendance strategy.
- Ensuring pupils complete a "catch-up" form and complete missed work if 3 days or more have been missed. (appendix 3)

#### 4.6 Parents / Carers

Parents / carers are expected to:

- Ensure your child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school through the appropriate year team office as soon as possible when your child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g., sickness)
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Work with the school and local authority to help you to understand your child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

#### 4.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time
- Sixth form pupils call the school to report their absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence

## 5 Recording attendance

### 5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the day during tutor time and during period 3. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The Year Admin has initial responsibility for processing explanations (notes), amending registers and entering these codes. This will be done as the pupil returns or daily once attendance reason is known.
- There is a staged approach for pupils of concern (**appendix 2**)
- The Year Admin is responsible for identifying and recording unauthorised attendance.

**See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.**

**5.2** In accordance with 'Working together to improve school attendance' section 27 page 13. We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 8:40am and will be kept open until 9:05am The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12pm and will be kept open until 12:30pm.

## 6 Absence

- Parents are requested to telephone school on the 1st day of a pupil's absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- Parents will be contacted by the Year Team on the first day where this has not taken place.
- absent between 4 to 9 days will be on an attendance monitoring card reporting to their Form Tutor. Stage 1 letter will be sent. (Stage 1). This will be reviewed weekly up to 4 weeks of 100% per week attendance
- Pupils absent between 10 and 14 days will be on an attendance contract reporting to a deputy head of year and stage 2 letter will be sent out to parents / carers (stage 2). This will be reviewed weekly up to 4 weeks of 100% per week attendance. Parents will be invited for an informal meeting to discuss support and Early Help will be offered as well as a referral to the school nurse team if applicable. Deputy head of year will complete 3 houses with the pupil. Where a pupil improves over a 4 week period the pupil will then be monitored by the form tutor moving back to stage 1.

- Pupils absent between 15 and 18 days should be on to an attendance contract as part of the Early Help support-reporting to a Deputy Head of Year. All avenues of support need to be exhausted (stage 3)
- Pupils not improving following on from stage 3, parents will be invited for a formal meeting (SARM) (stage 4)
- Pupils not improving following a SARM will receive a formal notice for legal action. Pupils will still be on an attendance contract and will be supported by either the learning mentor for attendance or SEND team.<sup>1</sup>

## 7 Unplanned absence

**7.1** At Swanshurst School we have an expectation that parents will telephone the school to inform us of their child/ren's absence. We may not accept a parent's / carer's reason for absence especially if they have had 3 separate individual absences for any reason. Regular unauthorised absences where a parent /carer has not provided a reason for absence mean that a parent(s) or carer(s) may be breaking the law and could be:

- issued with an education penalty charge notice of £60 - £120 by the Local Authority
- found guilty in a magistrate's court and fined up to £2,500

**7.2** If a pupil is regularly absent due to sickness (3 times in a half term and 5 in a term) a parent / carer will be invited to school to discuss their child/ren's absences, this discussion will seek for consent to the school nursing team. When consent is not given a LGP1 will be sent to the pupil's GP. Until medical issues have been confirmed the school will class all absents as unauthorised.

**7.3** Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will complete a safe and well visit between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> day of absence. If there is no answer at the property a call to 101 will be made to conduct a safe and well check through the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will involve the learning mentor for attendance and the safeguarding team.

## 8 Planned absence

**8.2** All effort should be made for appointments to be scheduled outside of school time. Parents/ carers will be required to provide reassurance that they have made every attempt to do so. We understand that in exceptional circumstances this may not be possible.

**8.3** Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Notifying the school is either by calling the year group office or in writing. The school would need to see evidence of the appointment.

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- 8.4** For unavoidable appointments of short duration during the day, pupils are required to attend school before the appointment and return to school afterwards. The school reserves the right to determine whether attendance either side of the appointment is possible. If it is, and the child does not attend as required, we may mark the absence as unauthorised.
- 8.5** Swanshurst school actively discourages parents / carers making requests to take their child/ren out of school during term time. The school is closed for 14 weeks of the year and parents / carers are expected to use this time for taking holidays and visiting family abroad.
- 8.6** We have a request form that a parent / carer in **exceptional circumstances** may complete and return to the Head Teacher for consideration. Families, who take their child/ren out of school for unauthorised leave during term time, risk receiving a Formal Warning, or Education Penalty Notice. Swanshurst School has the full support of our Governors and the Local Authority in this matter.

## 9 Alternative provision

- 9.1** Any child receiving education at an alternative provider will be closely monitored.
- 9.2** The provider is required to register the pupil each day and inform Swanshurst School of any absence.
- 9.3** Quality assurance visits will be conducted on a regular basis to all providers.

## 10 Religious observance / holidays

- 10.1** Parents/ carers may request an absence from school for their child/ren on the day of a religious observance, so that families can enjoy celebrations together.
- 10.2** The school is unable to sanction leave of absence for longer than is required as we follow the advice of the Local Authority.
- 10.3** Parents/ carers taking their child/ren out for more than one day will have the absence recorded as unauthorised.

## 11 Punctuality

- 11.3** Statutory registers are taken at the beginning of the day during tutor time and period 3 using Edulink or SIMs.
- 11.4** Pupils arriving after 8:45am are marked as late. Pupils arriving after 8:45am sign in the Hub and given a late mark up to 9:05am
- 11.5** Following the school's behaviour policy, if a pupil is late once in a week, they are will-be in a lunchtime detention for 20 minutes on the same day.
- 11.6** The second time in a week or not completed the 20 minutes lunchtime detention it is 1 hour after school Where a pupil has not turned up for their 1-hour detention they may receive a day in isolation.
- 11.7** Parents/carers will be informed that their child/ren has 20-minute lunchtime detention or 1-hour detention after school via Edulink.

**Please note registration will close at 9:05am and 12:30pm after this time students will receive a U Code if there is no reason given. This will affect their attendance and can be used for grounds for prosecution. Pupils will be automatically kept back at the end of the day for 1 hour.**

## 12.Safeguarding Children

- 12.1** Our school must be able to demonstrate that it knows the whereabouts of each pupil and the reason for their absence.
- 12.2** It is very important for the Local Authority to be able to track pupils if they are attending school and in some cases for schools to make a referral to Social Care.
- 12.3** If a parent carer is moving house and the new address is not within a reasonable distance of the school (7km), or if parents/ carers choose to move their child's school

following a change in address, we need to be informed that a school place will no longer be required, with the date the pupil will be leaving. We will also need the name of the new school that the pupil will be attending or, if moving abroad, we require evidence of flight tickets/new school name and address and the new family address. If this information is not known at the time the pupil leaves school, a forwarding address and telephone number **MUST** be left so that we can contact you.

**12.4** Pupils who leave the school and their whereabouts are unknown will have their details forwarded to the Birmingham Leave Without Trace Team after we have made every responsible effort to find out where the pupil gone.

### 13. Reporting to parents

**13.1** Pupils' attendance percentage will be stated on all academic reports.

**13.2** Pupils attendance will be available through Edulink

**13.3** Pupils will receive 100% attendance certificates

**13.4** Pupils will receive regular communications if being monitored as per our staged protocols.

### 14. Reducing persistent and severe absence

**See appendix 2 Attendance Protocols**

**14.1** Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Hold a team around the child meeting to ensure all avenues of support have been exhausted.
- Set up focus groups for monitoring with additional appropriate incentives.

**14.2** Frequent absence and lateness can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage a pupil.

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	36 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	76 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	116 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	152 lessons

**14.3** We have adopted the FASTRACK ON ATTENDANCE programme to rigorously promote excellent attendance and punctuality and support families who may be struggling. Parents carers are informed of our commitment to excellent attendance and punctuality via a termly letter and weekly updates on the website. The Spotlight campaign continues throughout our academic year.

### 15 Monitoring attendance



The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data, weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

### 15.1 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 15.2 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

## 16 Strategies for promoting attendance

- Push notifications are sent to pupils for 100% attendance in previous week
- Praise postcards are sent to pupils who have improved their attendance
- Certificates are given for full attendance in years 7-11 each term.
- Awards given by Head of Year each term for best Form
- Weekly year and tutor group figures are shared in assembly and on displays around school
- Pupils' attendance figures are clearly reported on in all report to parents / carers.
- End of year reward for all pupils' whose attendance is above 95%97%.
- In our responsive approach to a whole school culture further incentives and specific awards/ rewards for pupils will be added as required

### Relevant government guidance:

- Children missing in education
- Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour
- Children missing education
- Keeping children safe in education
- Working together to safeguard children
- Elective home education
- Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities
- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges
- Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying

**Links to Swanshurst school policies:**

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

**Appendix 1: attendance codes**

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

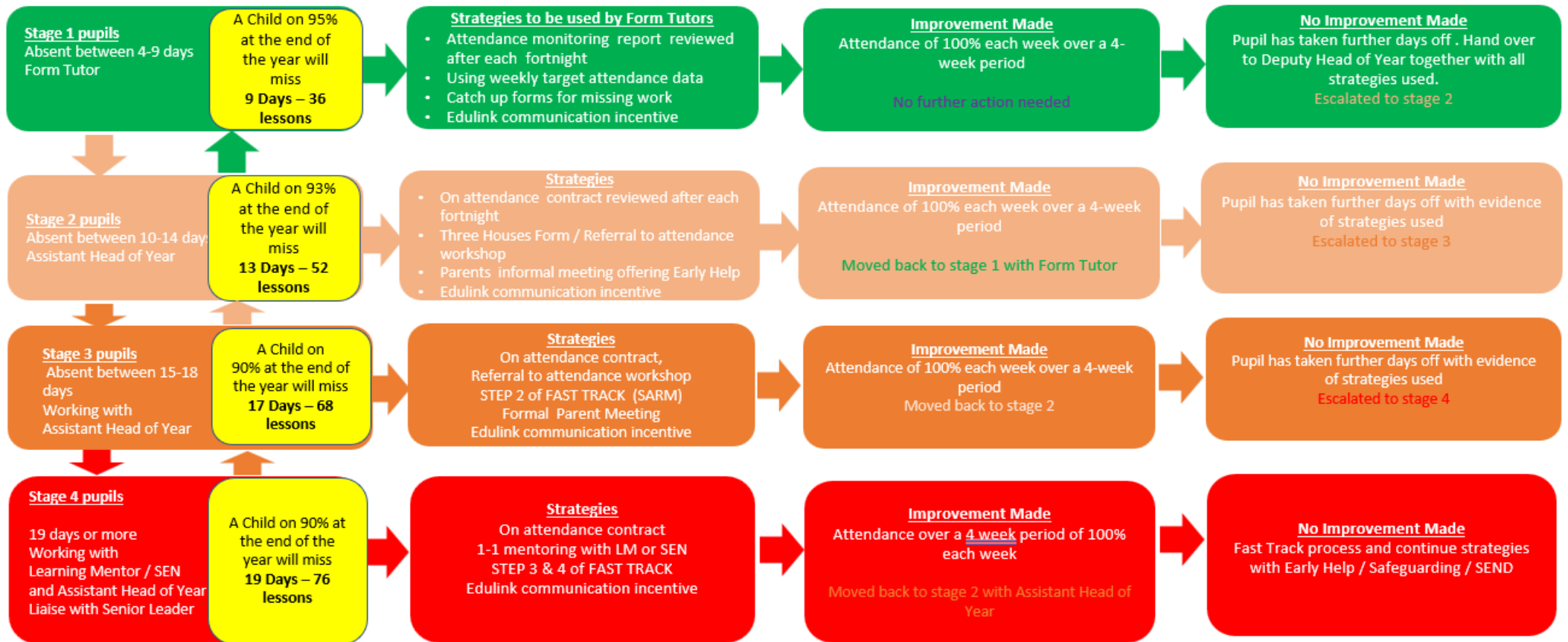
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided, no later than 5 days after)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed <sup>23</sup>

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

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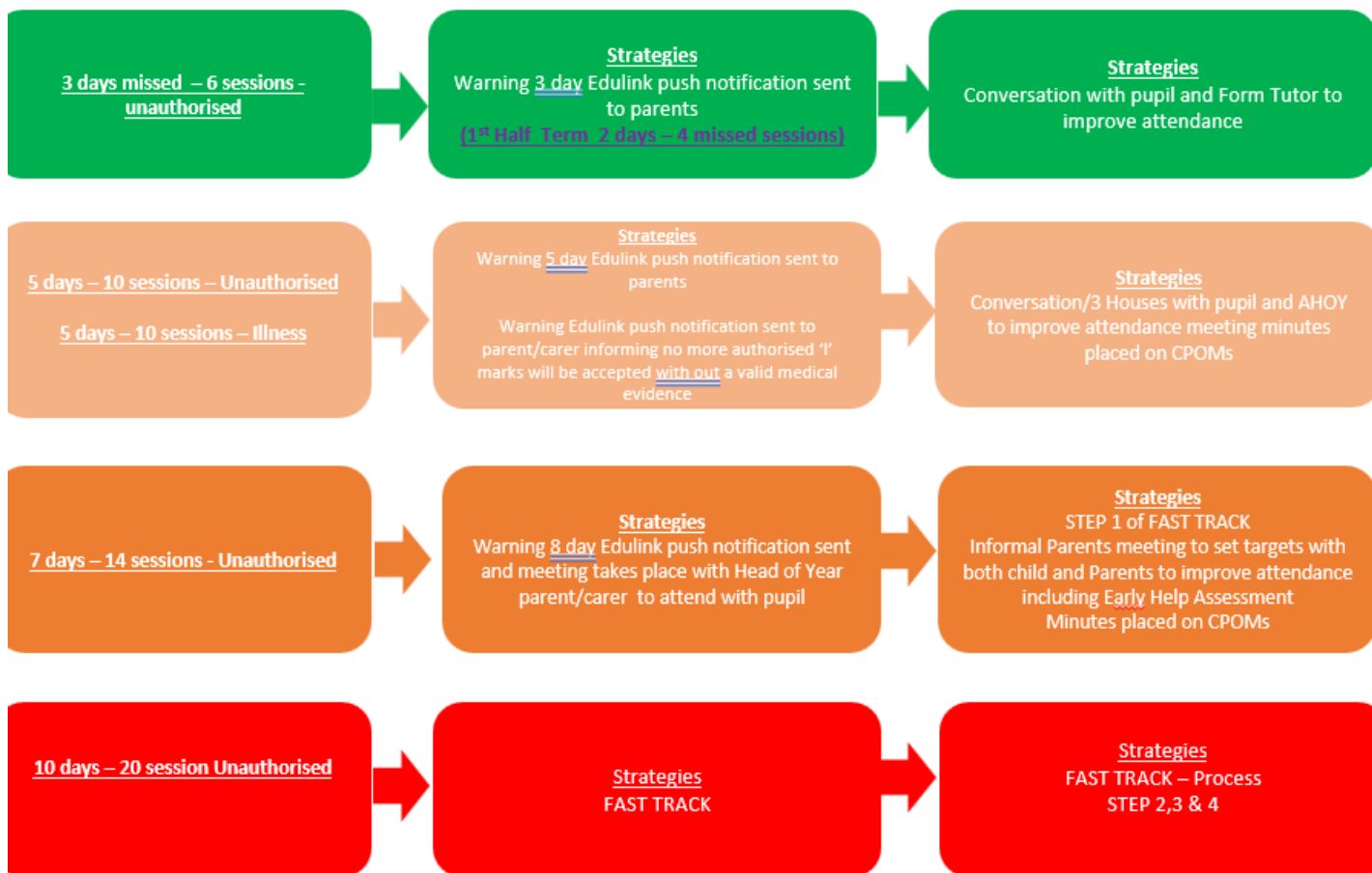
# Attendance protocols 2023 - 2024

Unauthorised absence – Each individual student is reviewed on a case by case basis – Students will be coded as unauthorised if there are 3 separate illnesses in a half term or 5 in a term until guidance has been received through the school nurse team or GP.



# Attendance protocols 2023 – 2024

Unauthorised absence – The first 3 illnesses may be authorised and then absence will be marked unauthorised until guidance is received from the school nurse team or GP.  
Each individual student is reviewed on a case by case basis (e.g. Medical or G code)



## Daily Protocols

Admin to email absent pupil information to the Pastoral Team

Debrief each day to identify in teams who will make the evening calls or texts for return to school as well as check thresholds

If no contact is made through absence call then the Child Missing in Education protocols will commence through home visits and logged on CPOMs

Catch up form issued by Form tutors after each period of absence and checked for completion.

## Weekly Protocols

Admin to send out weekly push notifications to all pupils who are on 100% attendance on a Friday.

## Half Termly and Termly

Admin to send out half termly push notifications to all pupils who are on 95% for that half term (reset each term)

End of term celebration for pupils who are 95% or above – film and popcorn

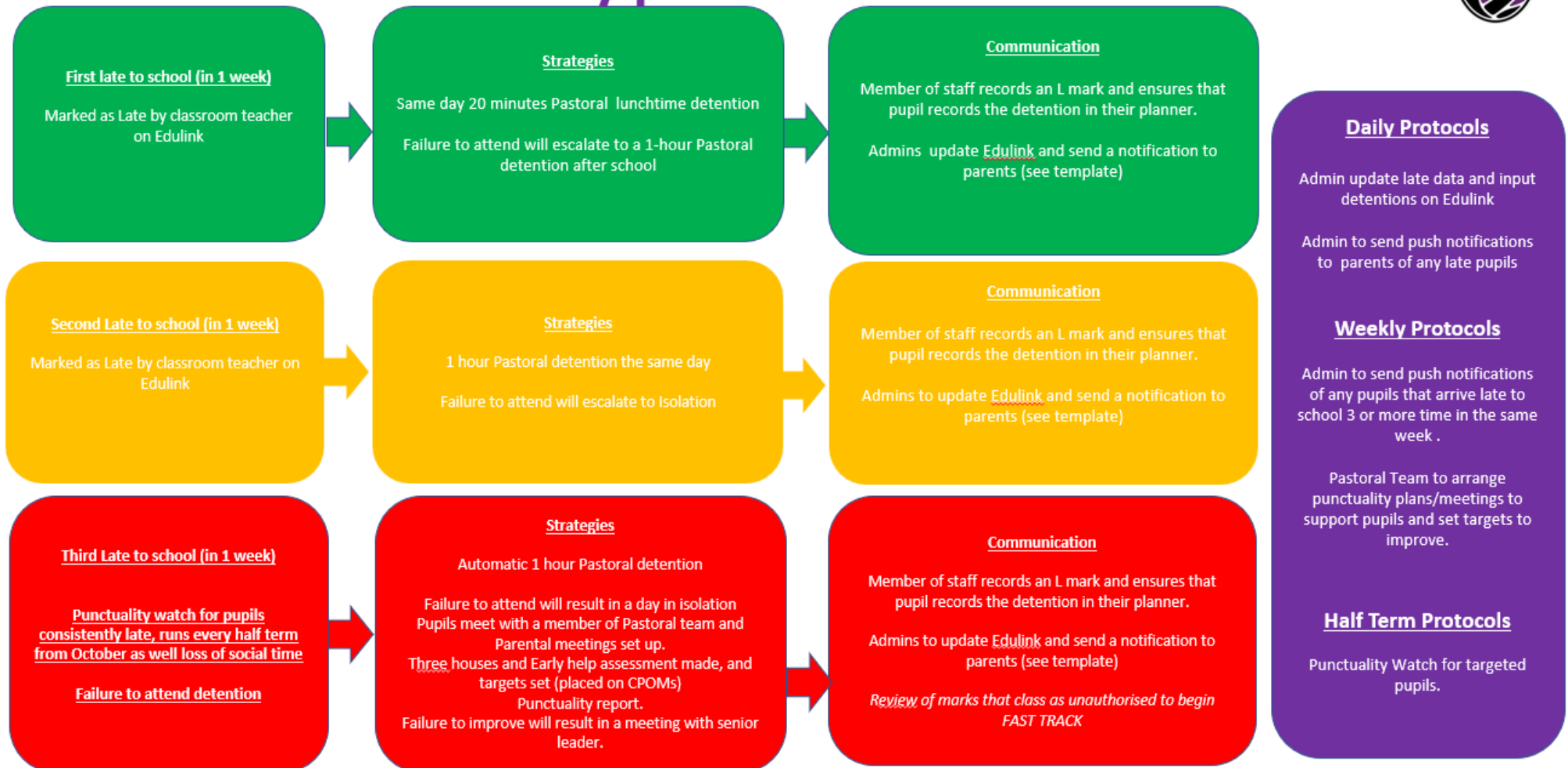
End of term pizza party for highest attending form in each year (each pupil needing to be above 95% in that form to take part)

End of year Activities trip with reduction in cost of trip for pupils who are 95% or above

Assistant Heads of Year to apply for funds to support targeted pupils for them to achieve their target.



# Punctuality protocols 2023 – 2024



Appendix 3 – Catch up Forms

## CATCH UP FORM – 3+ DAYS ABSENCE

There's no time like the present, and no substitute for being present.

Subjects missed	What do I need to do?	Completed? Signed by my subject teacher

I have completed all the work I missed.

Signed pupil ..... Date .....

Signed form tutor ..... Date .....

Signed and returned to Year team .....