



Singleton Church of England Primary School Attendance Policy



“Passion for learningPassion for life”

Vision

“With God all things are possible” Matthew 19:26

“I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full” John 10:10

To provide the children with a variety of challenging and enriching opportunities, enabling them to live life to the full. Developing a growth mind-set, believing that with God everything is possible. To show, love, trust, wisdom and respect, becoming exemplary role models in our community and the wider world.

School lead for this policy:	Amanda Clayton
Committee with oversight for this policy -	Governance Committee
Policy to be approved by the Governance Committee	Spring 2022
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Ratified at the Governance Meeting Chair: Laura Walker	



Our Christian Vision and Values



Our Christian Values

- Respect
- Friendship
- Endurance
- Wisdom
- Love
- Trust

At Singleton School, we strive to provide a well-rounded education for our children within a stimulating, fun learning environment. We believe that all children who become pupils at our school deserve the best 'Christian Education', and as such, we have the highest expectations of pupil attainment, teacher performance, governor performance, support staff performance and parental involvement. We believe that every child should be given opportunities to thrive socially, emotionally, academically and physically. We encourage everyone to strive for excellence and to achieve the highest possible standards. The sky is the limit for our children. We seek to inspire each other to learn to value difference, greatness, ambition and achievement of all kinds. To belong to the Singleton School Family is an honour. Each of us aspires to reach a potential, which is not limited, but supported through our ambitious curriculum, our Christian Values and which will truly enable us to embrace living our lives without limits. Our Vision and Values are threaded through our curriculum.

As a school community, we are working together to:

- To promote and secure limitless potential, through a commitment to high standards and expectations.
- Enable every child to succeed as an independent, confident and enthusiastic learner.
- Provide active, co-operative and independent learning through dynamic and high quality teaching
- Create an atmosphere where each child is valued as an individual, enabling them to develop a positive self-image, self-discipline and respect for others.
- Ensure equality of opportunity at all times, so that each child is given support and enrichment
- Create an inclusive learning community, which challenges every learner and enables every learner to flourish, prosper and develop aspirations for a successful future.
- Provide a welcoming, secure, stimulating and enriched learning environment.
- Provide an innovative, creative and integrated curriculum which inspires and motivates children to learn and which takes account of different learning styles.
- Celebrate our rich diversity and work in partnership with parents, children and the wider community.
- Provide the highest quality 'Christ' centered education for our pupils

Introduction and Scope:

This document forms part of Singleton's Primary School's whole school attendance policy. It sets out the rights, roles and responsibilities for parents/carers, pupils, school staff and governors; and the systems and procedures in place to identify how the school will deliver its aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance. It will be reviewed annually

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that all schools should have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance which should be set out in the policy. These systems should be reviewed regularly and modified where necessary to reflect the circumstance of the school.

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Support pupils and their parents / carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning.
- Enable pupil to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school.
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence also disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance;
- Give you details on attendance in our regular newsletter;
- Report to you termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events;
- Carry out transition work with pupils moving between nursery and reception, and before leaving for high school;
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school;
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school;

- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for everyone associated with school, including parents, pupils, staff and governors;
- Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole-school attendance.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absences include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- Days that exceed the amount of leave agreed by the Headteacher

Parents should be aware that the decision whether to authorise an absence or not rests with the school. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents before an absence is authorised. This may be in the form of a prescription, appointment card or similar.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend school it is better to speak to school to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

From September 2015 a pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly, therefore any pupil whose attendance indicates they are likely to reach the PA threshold will be prioritised and parents will be informed of this promptly.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an action plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a mentor, use of circle time, individual incentive

programmes, parenting contracts and participation in group activities around raising attendance. Due to the serious nature of persistent absence, school will always consider requesting support from the local authority attendance team in order to address the matter. School will also consider requesting that the local authority **issue penalty notices**, or use other sanctions, as a means of improving attendance.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, either by phone or you can call into school and report to reception by 9:20am.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our attendance lead and/or head teacher if absences persist;
- Consider using parenting contracts or panel meetings in order to identify barriers to regular attendance and agree targets for improvement;
- Refer the matter to the local authority school attendance team, where appropriate;
- Consider requesting that the local authority issue penalty notices in accordance with LCC's Code of Conduct, or use other legal sanctions, as appropriate, in order to improve attendance.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

In - School Strategies to Improve Attendance/Punctuality (see appendix 1):

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. School may consider using the following strategies to help support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality:

- Meetings in school between parents, pupils, pastoral staff and the head teacher
- Home visits
- Use of parenting contracts
- Use of the common assessment framework (CAF) and/ or referral to outside agencies (including the local authority school attendance team)
- Use of attendance panels
- Use of penalty notices may be applied
- Referrals for legal action

The Local Authority School Attendance Service:

If difficulties cannot be sorted out using in-school strategies, the school may refer the child to the Pupil Attendance Support Team (PAST). PAST will also support school in trying to resolve the situation by agreement and will work to support school and parents in achieving improved levels of attendance.

Use of Legal Measures:

Singleton C of E School defines irregular attendance in line with the thresholds set out for the use of penalty notices within the Local Authorities Code of Conduct.

If other ways of trying to improve the attendance of an individual pupil fail, and we consider attendance to be irregular, where absences are unauthorised the case may be referred to the School Attendance Legal Team (SALT), who can use sanctions such as penalty notices or prosecutions in the magistrates' court.

Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the local authority.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

Procedures for punctuality

How we manage lateness:

School Times

- The school day starts at **8.55am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.
- However, children are welcome to come into school from **8.45a.m** and must be in their classrooms ready for the register by **8:55am** and not just coming through the school door.
- The afternoon session starts at **1.00pm** and again, prompt attendance is expected School finishes at 3:00pm.
- Morning Registration is between 08.55am and 9.00am
- Afternoon Registration is between 1.00pm and 1.05pm
- Registers are marked by **9.00am/1.05pm** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
- At **9.30am/1.15pm** the registers will be closed. In accordance with regulation, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a penalty notice if the problem persists.

The school office is responsible for entering attendance on the electronic register and for inputting absence codes on a daily/weekly basis.

- If the child arrives after 8:55am they will have to enter school via the front entrance as playground gates are locked at 8:55am.
- On arrival at school they must be accompanied to the school office by a **parent / guardian**. For health and safety reasons parents **MUST** accompany late arriving pupils into the building in order to sign their children into school.
- The **parent / guardian** must sign in the school **Late Book** with an explanation as to why they are late.
- This is monitored by the Family Learning Mentor, she then reports directly to the Head

and the Governing Body.

- If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher and/or a member of the pastoral support team (Miss Ashworth) to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.
- When persistent lateness is an issue and/or parents fail to follow procedures by not accompanying late arriving pupils into school to sign them in, this will be communicated to parents via letter or a meeting in school as appropriate
- If lateness/absence persists, and school procedures fail to promote the required level of improvement, the head teacher will contact the Pupil Attendance Support Team who will attend meetings with the family and head teacher as appropriate and help school determine whether any further interventions are required. These interventions will include consideration of the use of legal measures (penalty notices and prosecution)
- Incentive and reward schemes will be used for individual pupils, as appropriate.

Leave in Term Time:

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time.

All applications for leave must be made, 6 weeks in advance, by the parent of residence using the 'Request for leave of absence' form, available from the school website. These will be discussed in the Monthly Governors SHE meeting.

It is important that parents understand that leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be exceptional. Therefore, parents are advised to provide school with any relevant information regarding their request at the point of application if they believe the circumstances are exceptional. Information provided after a decision has been made may not be considered.

In considering the request, we will also look at various factors such as:

- The timing of the request –
- When a pupil is just starting the school, absences should be avoided as this is a very important transition period as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible;
- Pupils should not be absent where possible both immediately before and during assessment periods;
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence;
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already a cause for concern, or could become concerning, as a result of taking leave;
- Other periods of leave, which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice.

In certain circumstances, where leave has been agreed, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date and readmission cannot be guaranteed.

The specific criteria which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll in these circumstances are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended.

Additional information – used by the governing body when considering applications

The Government has amended key legislation relating specifically to the authorisation of leave in term time which comes into force on 1st September 2013. This decision has been made to encourage schools to take a firmer stance on unnecessary absence and to dispel the myth held by many parents that there is an entitlement to time off school for holidays in term time.

The new legislation means that as of 1st September 2013 Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence during term time unless they are satisfied that there are “exceptional” circumstances to warrant the granting of leave. In our school the Chair of Governors monitors absences and he considers applications for holidays in term time

Lancashire County Council attendance department explained the following examples are classed as exceptional circumstances:-

- Parents in Afghanistan – who miss school holidays
- Police – who annual leave can be dictated by certain, circumstances i.e. Riots/ critical incident or Olympics last year where annual leave holidays were all cancelled.
- Parents whose holidays are inflexible – in this circumstance parents would have to give schools the contact names of their employers to clarify this. (e.g. where a factory closes down for a set date a year and holidays cannot be taken out of this time)

As a result of these changes the Governing Body has no choice but to make the following changes to our school attendance policy:-

- Holidays will not be authorised in term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance.
- The new County recommended up dated “request for leave” forms will be used and these can be obtained from the school office.
- All applications for “exceptional circumstance” leave must be made 6 weeks prior to the requested leave. All requests are considered by the SHE committee which meet monthly and school also needs time to carry out the administration related to verifying the “exceptional circumstance.” (e.g. contacting employers for information)
- The decision will be made by a representative of governing body in consultant with the head teacher but the more stringent requirements shall be enforced.
- Parents may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the application for exceptional leave.
- Parents will be informed by letter as to the outcome.

At Singleton School the Chair of the governing Body Mrs Laura Walker of the SHE committee in consultation with the Head teacher Amanda Clayton are the persons authorised by the 'proprietor' i.e. the governing body, to make this decision. If the leave is being requested for a holiday, approval should be obtained prior to making any bookings

Leave of absence SHALL NOT be granted unless:

- A request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and
- The Chair of Governors / Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** relating to the request. Additional information regarding leave of absence is included with the procedural framework.

Religious Absence:

The school will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, e.g. Eid, (i.e. the day set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member) and this will be marked as 'R' in the register.

Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if it is felt that exceptional circumstances apply; this would be marked in the register as 'C'.

Alternative provision and use of directions:

There are a range of reasons why pupils might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are:

- Pupils who have been excluded, either for a fixed period of more than 5 days or permanently;
- When a pupil is unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons;
- When a pupil is required to attend another venue, for the purpose of improving behaviour; either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (managed move).

When a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written 'direction' informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend. Where a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for all other reasons, the issuing of a written direction is considered best practice.

Pupils who are unable to attend school for medical reasons:

The introduction of new statutory guidance on 1st September 2014 places much more emphasis on the role of governing bodies in ensuring that pupils with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other pupils. A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these pupils; whether their condition is short or long term. The school will work with parents and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be as a result of specific practices or resources used within school or by sourcing more appropriate provision at another establishment. When education is to be provided at an alternative location, this should always be done via the use of a direction (please see the relevant section of this policy).

Roles and responsibilities for attendance matters in this school:

School education lays the vital foundations of child's life. It has been proved that regular non-attendance can severely impede academic and social development. Parents / carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making educational success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all the school has to offer. This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so.

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Singleton Primary School believes that it is important that parents and carers, pupils, school staff and governors all work in partnership to encourage good attendance for all pupils. The following is a summary of the rights, roles and responsibilities for individual groups of stakeholders.

- We will develop a procedural framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities

for Parents and carers , pupils and school staff

- Governors to complement this policy, and identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance.

Parents:

- Ensure the child(ren) in their care attend school regularly and punctually
- If the child(ren) is/are absent to inform the school office or class teacher on the first day of absence before 9.20am and provide a reason for the absence
- If the child(ren) is/are absent for more than 1 day, to inform the school office of the continued absence and update as to the reason for the absence regularly
- Avoid any leave in term time, but apply in advance using form if the reason for leave is unavoidable/exceptional
- To co-operate with the school in promoting and improving attendance e.g. attending meetings, participation in parenting contracts and supporting the school in agreed intervention/action plans
- Adhere to systems for late registration, signing out and signing in

Pupils:

- Acknowledge behaviour needed out of school, e.g. early bedtime
- Attend school/registration punctually
- Speak to parents/teacher if issues arise that may have an effect on school attendance
- Cooperate and participate in interventions and support offered by school or other agencies

Headteacher / Family Learning Mentor:

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some or all of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision
- Where there is ambiguity regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process

Designated Admin Staff:

- First day response: Contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided and log this information accordingly. Contact emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached
- Input and update the attendance registers
- Regularly identify and monitor pupil, class and whole school attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups
- Regularly communicate pupil attendance and punctuality levels to parents
- Work with children and parents to remove barriers to regular and punctual attendance, following Absence Flowcharts 1, 2 and 3 (see appendix), and using parenting contracts where appropriate

All School Staff:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance

- To see pupils' attendance as the responsibility of **all** school staff
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures

Governors:

- Ensure compliance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended
- Adopt the whole-school policy and review regularly
- Monitor the consistent implementation of the attendance policy
- Set aspirational targets for improving the school's attendance figures
- Authorise the head teacher (or other designated person) to consider and make decisions regarding leave of absence requests
- Work with the head teacher in establishing criteria against which leave requests will be considered. This is important to ensure the process is equitable and consistent

Partnership Working

Singleton C of E Primary School will work with the Pupil Attendance Support Team, the School Attendance Consultant and other support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school. The criteria for referral and areas of responsibility for staff will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning

Singleton C of E Primary School will use electronic systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level, and will analyse patterns and trends of nonattendance to inform future action planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters. Mrs. Reeves inputs the data and each week discusses absence and punctuality with Miss Ashworth the 'Family Learning Mentor'

In our school we have procedures set out that Miss Ashworth and Mrs. Reeves follow to ensure that we work with parents on attendance concerns.

Expectations regarding regular attendance:

As a school, we aim to have all of our pupils in school every day. Whilst we recognise that pupils may have unavoidable absences at times due to illness and other unavoidable cause, we aim to reduce unauthorised absence and to work with parents and pupils to minimise absence where possible.

Our minimum expected level of attendance is 96%. We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the area.

Through the school year, we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. As stated previously, Singleton school defines irregular attendance in line with the thresholds set out for the use of penalty notices within the Local Authorities Code of Conduct and may choose to implement penalty notices

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in newsletters and we ask for your full support.

Monitoring, Analysis and Action Planning

The governors have determined that the head teacher has overall responsibility for the monitoring, analysis and action planning of school attendance. The head teacher is also responsible for ensuring that data is returned promptly to the local authority and DfE within deadlines. However, it is expected that the day to day implementation of this will largely rest with:-

- The class teachers who take the register and highlight causes of concern
- The school office who are responsible for maintaining the school records on attendance
- The Learning Mentor who analyses the data highlighting causes for concern.

The Family Learning Mentor will review the attendance records weekly and where appropriate discuss concerns with the Head or seek advice from the Attendance Officer. She will also check that there are no outstanding causes for concern and that codes are being used consistently. In addition, the head teacher/attendance lead/ family learning Mentor will address specific concerns as they arise. In our school we have procedures set out that Miss Ashworth and Mrs. Reeves follow to ensure that we work with parents on attendance concerns.

See Appendix 1 for flow charts of action

The head teacher is required to review this whole school attendance policy and procedural framework annually and to report on attendance matters to the governors termly. The governors will also review the attendance policy at least annually to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the school.

If there is a trend of worsening attendance in a particular group of pupils, including pupils who belong to any vulnerable group, discussions should be held between the head teacher and appropriate staff to agree action plans to reverse the trend. It should also be reported to the governors at the next full governor's meeting.

Singleton Primary School also uses whole school incentive and reward schemes in order to raise the profile of; and promote good levels of attendance. These schemes will be reviewed and changed regularly in order to ensure that children remain interested and motivated.

Monitoring the attendance of pupils who are educated off site

When pupils are **dual registered**, their registration status will acknowledge this. For sessions when a dual registered pupil is expected to attend Singleton Primary School the usual attendance procedures will be followed. When this pupil is expected to attend the other establishment our registers will display the D code (Dual Registration). As the **Main School** we retain responsibility for dual registered pupils. Therefore, the other establishment will be contacted regularly in order to ensure that this placement continues to be successful. When this is not the case, appropriate action will be taken. In cases where we are the **Subsidiary School** our normal first day absence procedures will be used and any concerns regarding attendance will be reported to the **Main School**. In addition, we will provide other information regarding attendance to the **Main School** on request.

When pupils are **Present at an Approved Off-Site Educationally Activity** school will decide which of the following codes is most suitable:

- Code B – Educated off site
- Code P – Supervised sporting activity
- Code V – Educational visit or trip

The head teacher is responsible for the pupil's education and wellbeing during these sessions. Therefore, before any of these codes are used school must ensure that the following criteria are met:

- ✓ The activity is broadly educational in nature
- ✓ it is suitable for the pupil's age and ability
- ✓ it will complement the pupil's curriculum
- ✓ it is taking place during the session for which the approved off-site educational activity

- ✓ code is being used and suitable supervision arrangements are in place

Criteria and Systems for referral to and working with the School Attendance Consultant and the Pupil Attendance Support Team

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring consistent referral of regular or unjustified absence. The criteria for referral are outlined in the systems below:

A request for support will be made to the local authority attendance team (Pupil Attendance Support Team) when:

- School have informed parents of their concerns regarding attendance
 - School have attempted to employ appropriate strategies in order to improve attendance
 - School strategies have failed to prompt the required amount of improvement in attendance OR parents refuse to engage with school support
- In addition to the above, the head teacher (or designated person) can discuss general attendance matters where attendance drops below 93% with the School Attendance Consultant. The purpose of such discussions would be to:
- Monitor progress towards targets, highlighting any concerns and identifying any action required
 - To receive guidance on latest best practice
 - To receive information about local and national trends and benchmarking
 - To discuss whether current attendance policy and procedures are effective

School System for dealing with concerns about Absence

The school office is responsible for advising the Learning Mentor of pupils who are persistently late or absent as issues arise.

The class teacher is also responsible for raising concerns about lateness or absence of class members to the head teacher as issues arise.

In addition, the Learning Mentor will use electronic systems to monitor the attendance of individual pupils at least once per half term.

Once concerns have been raised and attendance in the half-termly review drops below **93%** the following procedure will take place:

1. A letter will be sent home to parents **LETTER 1**
 - a. There are 2 options for letter 1 (see appendix 1)
 - b. The first option is for children where attendance is a cause for concern but is linked to genuine illness.
 - c. The second option is for children where there is also unauthorized absence
 - d. Support is offered at this stage to all families and the Family Learning Mentor may implement reward strategies if appropriate to encourage more regular attendance.
 - e. The Family Learning Mentor and the Attendance Officer will offer the families the opportunity to discuss the matter informally - this meeting with the family may include the pupil
 - f. Depending upon the circumstances school may contact the Local Authority Attendance officer for support and advice.
2. If attendance continues to drop or remains less than **91%** within the next half term and there are concerns that the improvements are inconsistent then the next letter will be sent out
 - a. **LETTER 2** – this letter invites parents to a more formal meeting to implement supportive strategies for the individual child. (See Appendix 2)

- b. At this stage school will contact the Local Authority for advice as in house strategies will be deemed as not effective
- c. The Family Learning Mentor and the Attendance Officer will discuss the matter formally with the family (including the pupil)
- d. A range of strategies may be implemented on the recommendation of the Local authority such as:-
 - i. Parenting contract
 - ii. Setting of targets
 - iii. Evidence from Doctor / Pharmacist of illness
 - iv. Attendance panels

The Local Authority Attendance Officer:

If difficulties cannot be sorted out using in-school strategies, the school may refer the child to the Attendance Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority.

School System for reintegrating pupils who have had long term absence

When a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period, the head teacher, the class teacher and other support services will liaise with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

Communication of Attendance Policy and Procedure

It is important that the school's policy on attendance is communicated to all the stakeholders and that parents, pupils and staff know the procedures and systems that are in place to implement it.

The governors have determined that:

- The attendance policy will be placed on the school website
- Details of the policy and the procedure for requesting absence in term time, and signing in and out of school will be disseminated as part of the new parent induction process e.g. induction package, talks to new parents
- Reference to the school attendance policy regarding leave during term time is to be made clear when the school calendar of dates is sent out each year
- Summary of responsibilities under the attendance policy will be contained in the home/school agreement
- Staff responsibilities will be contained in the staff handbook
- The head teacher will ensure that staff receive training regarding their responsibilities in relation to the attendance policy and procedures
- The head teacher will provide a summary of attendance and causes for concern to the governors during termly meetings
- Details of the absence record of the school will be communicated as part of the school profile/prospectus
- Attendance and punctuality will be included in newsletters on a regular basis
- Attendance will be reported to parents termly via pupil reports (3 times a year) and if concerns are highlighted specific letters will be sent out as stated earlier

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils, as this is the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Updated Jan 2021 - Due to new Learning Mentor – but will have a full review for Jan 2022



Appendix 1

Singleton Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Singleton, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 8LN
Telephone (01253) 882226 Email: head@singleton.lancs.sch.uk

<http://www.singleton.lancs.sch.uk/>

Head teacher: Mrs. Amanda Clayton

Dear _____

ATTENDANCE BELOW TARGET

You may be aware that the minimum attendance level, which is expected for all primary aged children nationally, is 95%. You may also be aware that individual schools are required to set an annual target for attendance. Our target for this year is 96%. In order for us to meet this target, we need to ask that all pupils aim for this level of attendance. A good attendance record is vital because even short periods of absence can mean that a child's ability to keep up with school work may be significantly reduced. Friendship groups can also be affected by time away from school and this can be upsetting for children.

In order to assess our progress in meeting this challenging target we review the attendance of individual pupils at least every week. Our latest register check revealed that _____'s attendance is currently ____%. Whilst we appreciate that these absences may be due to illness, or other reasons authorised by school, we are also aware that some of these absences are unauthorised due to taking holidays in term time. We ask that you consider _____'s current attendance level before further school days are missed.

The happiness and educational progress of all our children at Singleton Primary School are our priorities and we believe that good attendance is a major way in which these priorities can be achieved. It is for this reason that we ask for your support in this matter. If you would like any advice or support in relation to attendance please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards,

Miss Ashworth

(Family Learning Mentor).



Appendix 2



Singleton Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Singleton, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 8LN
Telephone (01253) 882226 Email: head@singleton.lancs.sch.uk

<http://www.singleton.lancs.sch.uk/>

Head teacher: Mrs. Amanda Clayton

Dear

ATTENDANCE BELOW TARGET

Within our School our Governors have to monitor the attendance of the children. The minimum attendance level which is expected for all primary aged children nationally is **95%**. Individual schools are required to set an annual target for attendance. The Governing Body of Singleton School set our target for this year at **96%**.

Attendance is monitored on a weekly basis throughout the year at Singleton School. In order for us to meet the target set by our Governors we need to ask that all pupils aim for the 96% level of attendance. A good attendance record is vital because even short periods of absence can mean that a child's ability to keep up with school work may be significantly reduced. Friendship groups can also be affected by time away from school and this can be upsetting for children.

In order to assess our progress in meeting this challenging target we review the attendance of individual pupils on a weekly basis. Our latest register check revealed that _____'s attendance is currently ____%. We appreciate and understand that these absences may be due to illness, or other reasons authorised by school. However, as part of our policy we have to ensure that we inform you of your child's attendance once it drops to 93% and ask that you consider current attendance levels before further school days are missed.

The happiness and educational progress of all our children at Singleton Primary School are our priorities and we believe that good attendance is a major way in which these priorities can be achieved. It is for this reason that we ask for your support in this matter. If you would like any advice or support in relation to attendance please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards,

Miss Ashworth (Family Learning Mentor)

Singleton Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Singleton, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 8LN
Telephone (01253) 882226 Email: head@singleton.lancs.sch.uk
<http://www.singleton.lancs.sch.uk/>
Head teacher: Mrs. Amanda Clayton

Dear ,

During a routine register check, it was noted that your child's attendance currently stands at%. This is below the level considered good by the Government (95%). Schools are open to pupils 190 days each academic year, and if your child misses 10 or more days during the year, for any reason, they will not achieve 95% attendance.

Research shows that pupils who are often absent often fail to meet their full potential academically. In fact, DSCF research showed that a 1% rise in attendance could improve attainment by up to 5%.

Statutorily, from September 2015, pupils whose attendance falls below 80% are categorised as being Persistently Absent and in danger of significantly underachieving.

In order to avoid your child falling into this category, it is important that there is an improvement in the attendance levels. We have already alerted you to our concerns in terms of attendance this year and offered support and advice from the Family Learning Mentor. We are now at the stage where there has been little or no improvement in attendance levels. Whilst we can appreciate that many of (name of child)'s absences this year have been due to illness/holidays/unavoidable circumstances (delete as appropriate), we would appreciate your cooperation in making an improvement.

We have been in contact with the Local Authority, via the Early Intervention Team, who requested that we arrange a meeting with you in school. This meeting will focus on ways that we can support you and your child and explore how we can work together to improve overall attendance. The Local Authority has made recommendations that they feel we need to implement at this stage and these will be explained to you at the meeting.

Therefore, we would ask that you contact Miss Ashworth to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet to discuss the content of this letter

Yours sincerely



Amanda Clayton

Head teacher

Appendix 3 - Example letter regarding concern over persistent lateness

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Punctuality

I am writing to remind you of Singletons C E School's policy about lateness.

The law requires pupils to attend school regularly and this includes arriving on time each day; the school day begins at 08:55am.

When a pupil arrives late to school, there are many consequences:

He or she misses out on essential instructions given at the beginning of lessons – in fact, arriving 5 minutes late each day adds up to missing 3 whole days of school by the end of the year

Children might feel awkward and embarrassed going into the classroom when everyone else is already settled.

When one person arrives late everyone loses out – the class is disrupted and the teacher must take time away from the other pupils to explain what is going on for the lesson.

If you have any concerns about your child's punctuality please talk to us.

Give your child the best possible chance to succeed. Please ensure they arrive on time each day.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 6 - Example letter requesting information from Doctor

Dear

Re:

As there are concerns regarding the attendance of [child's name] at school, I would be grateful if you could confirm in writing that you have no objection to your GP providing Singleton C of E Primary School with relevant information about absences from school.

Would you therefore kindly complete and sign the section below and return this copy of the letter to the School office as soon as possible. Please retain the second copy as a record for yourself.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

.....

Date permission given _____

Name of GP _____

Name of Health Centre _____

Tel _____

I hereby give permission for my GP to provide information to the Headteacher regarding absences from Stonesfield Primary School of the following:

Name(s) of child(ren)

Date of birth

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix 7 - Example letter to Doctor

Dear

Re: [Child's Name] DOB:

Parent/carer Name:

Address:

[Child's Name] has been absent from [] on [] occasions out of a possible [].

According to school records, for much of the time this absence has been due to illness.

[Child's Name]'s level of absence is well in excess of the average absence rate and because of this we are concerned that this will have a negative impact on [Child's Name]'s ability to learn. To enable us to plan appropriate provision for [Child's Name]'s learning, we would appreciate it if you would complete the enclosed form and return it in the pre-paid envelope provided. We enclose for your information signed consent from [Child's Name]'s parent or carer to release the required details.

Please note this information will be used to determine whether the level of absence is justified and to enable us to make the right education provision where appropriate.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

School Representative

Note : This request is made with the full permission of the parent/carer in order to ensure that appropriate education provision can be made. No payment can be made for information provided.

[Form to go with letter on the next page]

Appendix 8 - Form to be included with letter to Doctor

Response to information request re absences for medical reasons

Name of Child:

Date of Birth:.....

Address:.....

Parent / Carer:.....

Phone No:

[] is seen regularly by myself or other health professionals **YES/NO**

The child suffers from a medical condition, which will account for this level of absence **YES/NO**

Additional Information:

.....
.....
.....

The child suffers from a condition which will require significant management during the school day

YES/NO

Additional Information:

.....
.....
.....

In my professional opinion I would say that the level of absence due to illness and medical appointments shown on the attached registration certificate would be: **Justified / Not Justified**

Where the level of absence may be justified are there any recommendations you would like to make regarding appropriate educational provision:

.....
.....

Signed:

Name:

Organisation:

Date:

Appendix 9 - Absence and Attendance Codes

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

Present at School

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed at 09:00am should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity **such as field trips, educational visits, work experience, induction days at high schools or alternative provision.** Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at school are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, but only when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advance notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

- Examples include entrance exams, music exams, drama exams, dance exams – but evidence must be provided to school on each occasion.
- For exceptional and gifted sporting children the governors will authorise up to four days a year for specific competitions / training camps. But each case will be looked at individually and discussions / information will be gained from the external coaches as part of this process.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code F: Extended family holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers / Governing Body, may in exceptional circumstances agree more than 10 school days leave of absence in a school year. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be

satisfied that the circumstances warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's / Governing Body discretion and is not a parental right.

Code H: Family holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers/ Governing Bodies, may in special circumstances grant leave of absence of up to 10 days, for the purpose of family holidays during term time. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher / Governing Body must be satisfied that there are special circumstances, which warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's / Governing Bodies discretion and is not a parental right.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify the school as soon as possible when a child is ill. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the seriousness of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical certificates unnecessarily (particularly retrospective certificates), especially if the illness was not treated by a doctor at the time. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

We require the Governors to decide if medical appointments in school time should be excluded from the child's attendance record (i.e. if they are only not hitting 100% attendance due to a medical appointment – but need to consider whether dental check-up etc. should be taken outside of the school day – like the staff have to- hospital appointments are different as you cannot to an extent pick and choose – although now this is becoming more readily available.)

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as

normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Family holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of agreed period

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence and the parents still take the child on holiday, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for the leave of absence in advance the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after one week it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation (i.e. after 0915)

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

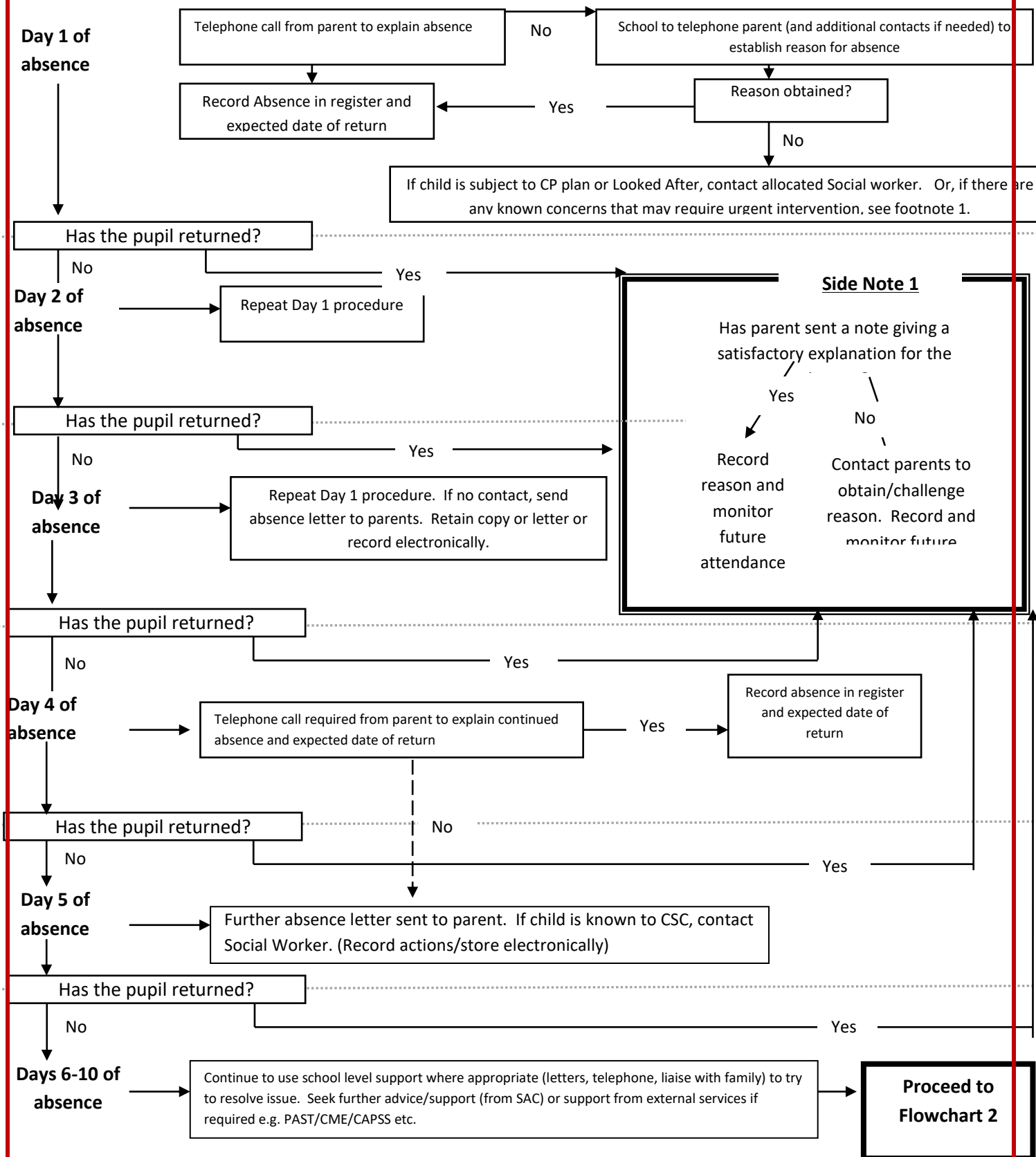
This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms, half terms, occasional days (for example, bank holidays), weekends (where it is required by the management information system), up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training and use of schools as polling stations.

National Attendance Codes

Code	Description Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Abs
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience

#	School closed to pupils & staff
Y	Enforced closure
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Pupil not on roll
-	All should attend / No mark recorded

FLOWCHART 1: PRIMARY SCHOOL PATHWAYS FOR ATTENDANCE ISSUES – DAYS 1-10

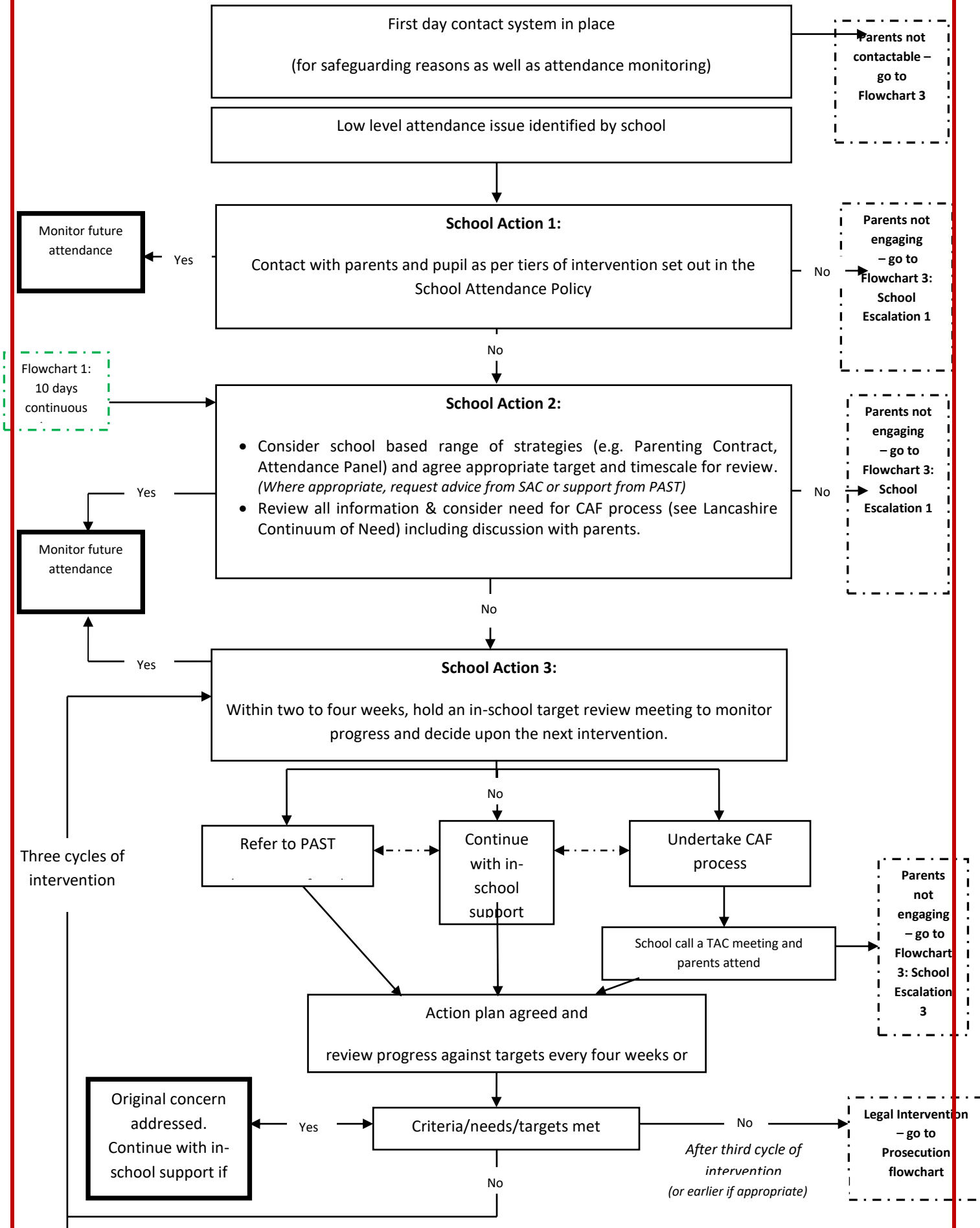


If at any point there are concerns about the safety or welfare of the pupil, follow safeguarding procedures immediately.

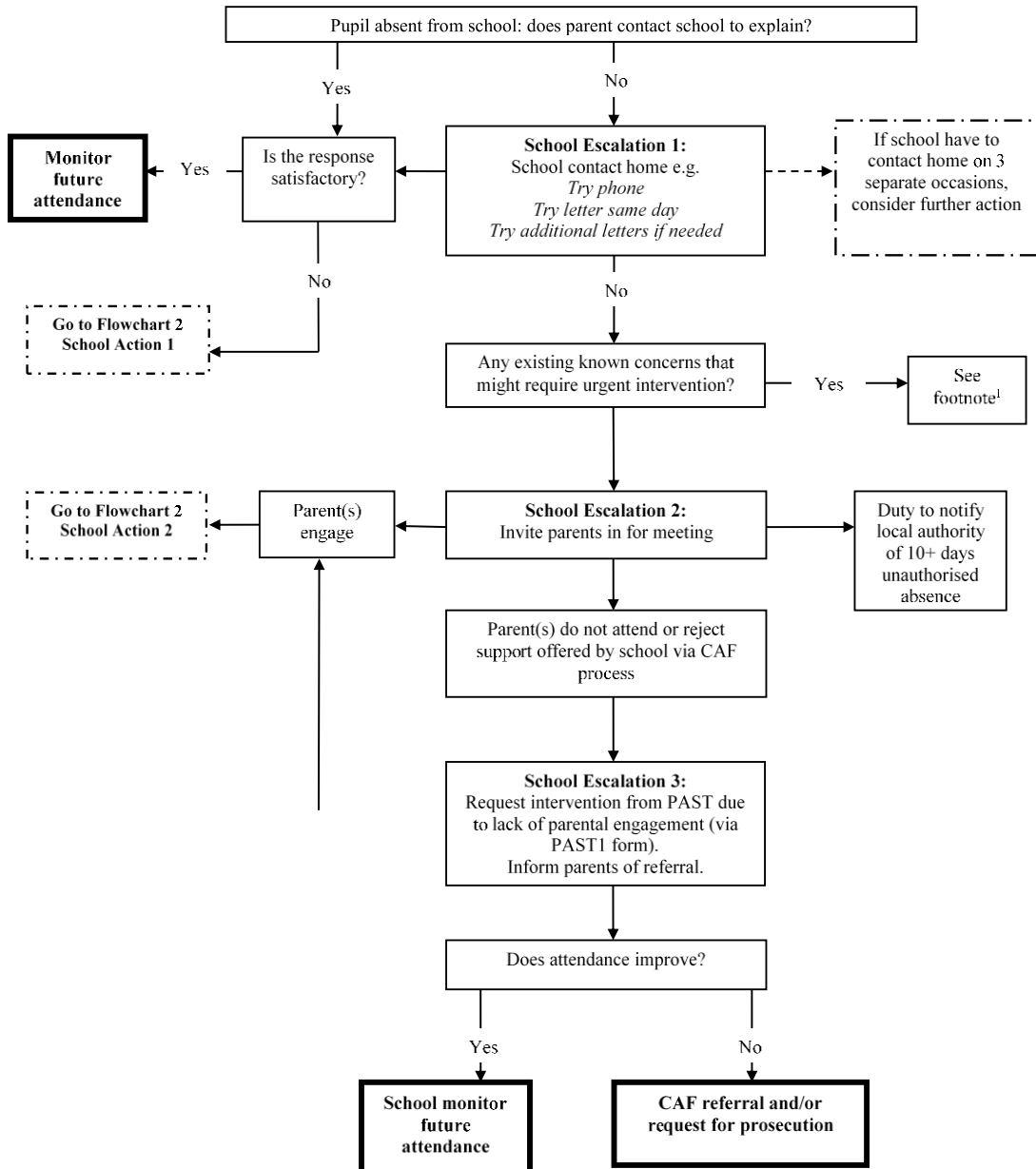
¹In some instances, more urgent notification to the local authority may be appropriate if contact with parents/carers is problematic e.g.

- Children Looked After – schools should notify the CLA Service Manager
- Children subject to a Child Protection plan – schools should notify the named social worker
- Children in situations of known domestic violence – schools should consider whether safeguarding/child protection procedures should be followed.
- Advice can be sought from the School Attendance Consultant at any time if this is required.

FLOWCHART 2: PRIMARY SCHOOL PATHWAYS FOR ATTENDANCE ISSUES



FLOWCHART 3: PRIMARY SCHOOL PATHWAYS FOR ATTENDANCE ISSUES **HARD TO ENGAGE PARENTS**



Appendix 1

Singleton C of E School

Protocols for Punctuality and attendance

Punctuality

1)

Rachel Reeves—Inputs data from registers daily and fills in CPOMS

2)

If Child does not arrive in school by 9.20am **Rachel Reeves** contacts parents – phone logs kept of this in attendance / punctuality folder

3)

Katie Ashworth – collates weekly data and – highlights any concerns - fills in monitoring sheet

4)

Katie Ashworth -

Evaluates individual progress and raises concerns with Amanda Clayton. If there is a pattern of regular lateness emerging then Katie will use her discretion at this stage and will perhaps talk to older children or have an informal chat with parents to see why they are arriving late and offer support

5)

If a child has 10 late arrivals in a term :-

→Katie then meets with the parents and gives them a copy of the punctuality letter. Support is also offered at this stage.

6)

If punctuality continues to be an issue support is sort by:

**Local Authority
Attendance Officer**

Singleton C of E School

Protocols for Punctuality and attendance

Attendance

1)

Rachel Reeves – Inputs data from registers daily

2)

Katie Ashworth – collates weekly data and highlights any concerns - fills in monitoring sheet

3)

Katie Ashworth -

Evaluates individual progress and raises concerns with Amanda Clayton. If there is a pattern of regular absence emerging then Katie will use her discretion at this stage and will perhaps talk to older children or have an informal chat with parents to see why they are having time off and offer support

4)

If attendance drops below 93%

Katie gives parents a copy of the attendance letter 1. (2 versions available) Support is also offered at this stage

However, children with medical needs who receive regular treatment are not contacted at this stage – if there absence is due to medical issues associated with their condition – The SENCO / Family Learning Mentor will support the situation according to the needs of the child

5)

If attendance drops below 91% the second letter is given to parents

Katie organizes this and will implement recommendations from the Local Authority continues to offer support – but it is made clear that the

Local Authority Attendance Officer will be consulted at this stage and a referral may be made if there are no improvements.

6)

If attendance continues to be an issue support is sort by

Local Authority Attendance Officer