



Waverley Junior Academy

Attendance Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL		POLICY LEVEL	
APPROVED BY	Governing Body	APPROVED DATE	Dec 2023
BUSINESS/CURRICULUM LEAD	Principal	AUTHOR	Lindsey Burgin/Rachel Bolton
NEXT REVIEW DATE	DEC 2025	FREQUENCY	EVERY 2 Years
VERSION NUMBER	DATE ISSUED	UPDATED INFORMATION	
V1	June 2021		
V2		Updated policy content to reflect change of timetable. Also to reference current guidance.	

This is the Attendance and Punctuality Policy for Waverley Junior Academy

Waverley Junior Academy
Waverley Walk
Rotherham
S60 8DD

Name of Senior Attendance and Punctuality Lead – Mrs Rachel Bolton - Principal

CONTENTS - Sections

Section 1: The aims and principles underpinning the Waverley Junior Academy Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Section 2: Legislation and guidance informing our policy

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

Section 4: Expectations of pupils and parents/carers

Section 5: Recording attendance

Section 6: Authorised and unauthorised absence

Section 7: Promoting attendance at Waverley Junior Academy

Section 8: Attendance monitoring

Section 9: Working with the Local Authority

Section 10: Monitoring arrangements

Section 11: Links with other policies

Appendix

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Appendix 2: RBMC Local Authority Fixed Penalty Notice guidance

Section 1: The aims and principles underpinning our Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our academy has the highest standards and expectations in place for all pupils.

Waverley Junior Academy teaches and promotes the importance of attendance and punctuality to all pupils to enable an ethos of attendance and punctuality excellence to be established and shared by all members of our community.

Our academy is committed to maximising the achievement of all pupils and recognises the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality as a part of this. There is a clear link between excellent attendance and educational achievement. Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities which are offered to them. A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at the academy. The global Covid-19 pandemic did have an impact on some of the attendance and punctuality routines of our pupils. We are committed to ensuring that learning is not lost, but that it has experienced delay and we continue to focus closely on attendance so that any learning gaps are closed for all our pupils.

We value partnership working and parents/carers have a crucially important role in ensuring that their children access school regularly (*Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise e.g. the parent can choose to educate their child at home – DfE School attendance parental responsibility measure*) and to support the academy in encouraging attendance excellence with their children. Waverley Junior Academy looks to work in partnership with families to ensure that their child's attendance is as regular and punctual as possible. The building of strong relationships with families is a key priority.

Waverley Junior Academy regularly reviews practice and looks to ensure that attendance and punctuality policies and procedures are following effective practice models. We work in close partnership with multi-agencies and the Local Authority to ensure that resources are directed swiftly and effectively to pupils and their families where attendance and/or punctuality is a concern.

Waverley Junior Academy will always take appropriate action to promote and encourage excellent attendance to the academy and to promote and support attendance and punctuality to lessons during the academy day.

Waverley Junior Academy is committed to reducing persistent and severe absence levels and recognises the importance of personalised approaches to supporting attendance and punctuality.

This policy is key in ensuring that the highest standards and expectations of attendance and punctuality are in place for all of our pupils and that a consistent

approach is taken when working with families where the attendance of children is a cause for concern. Ultimately, we want all of our pupils to access the best educational and enrichment opportunities and it is only with regular attendance and excellent punctuality that pupils will be able to experience a full range of opportunities and learning experiences.

It is because we want the best for all of our pupils that this policy is in place and is regularly reviewed

Section 2: Legislation and guidance informing our policy

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 [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Waverley Junior Academy Behaviour and Rewards and Safeguarding Policies.

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

a) The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the academy's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Agreeing Waverley Junior Academy attendance targets with the Principal
- Monitoring attendance figures for the academy
- Regularly receiving, reviewing and challenging attendance data

b) The Principal is responsible for working with the attendance lead to ensure:

- The Implementation of our Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Monitoring academy-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, and in line with Local Authority procedures
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Supporting the academy in its efforts to improve and raise attendance
- Contributing to plans where attendance is a cause for concern
- Contributing to the academy's strategies to improve attendance e.g. Academy Attendance Panel meetings
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

Specific responsibilities linked to this role, include:

- Meeting with the Principal/ Attendance Team to review punctuality and attendance data and consider against local and national contexts
- Reviewing and supporting attendance action plans linked to key groups of pupils where attendance is a cause for concern
- Accessing relevant attendance training to ensure that effective attendance training is rolled out across the academy
- Develop, monitor and regularly review the Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Lead attendance across the academy
- Have a clear ethos, vision and strategy for improving academy attendance and communicate this effectively with staff, governors and parents/carers
- Produce and distribute attendance information for parents/carers
- Ensure programmes are in place to educate pupils about the importance of punctuality and attendance
- Set and monitor targets for improving attendance within the academy
- Support all staff in their work related to attendance
- Meet with the Attendance Team to regularly discuss attendance patterns and pupils causing concern (Intervention strategies will be planned, implemented and reviewed)
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Ensure that attendance data is collected effectively and patterns and trends are used to inform timely intervention for individuals and cohorts of pupils
- Collate attendance data for the DfE, Local Authority and the Local Governing Body and in liaison with colleagues
- Report pupils missing in education (CME) following academy and local authority procedures
- Report to the Local Authority any pupils where written notification of Home Education has been requested
- Liaise with multi agencies and the Local Authority regarding attendance targets and the Academy Strategy
- Identify individual pupils with known punctuality/attendance concerns and ensure these pupils are monitored closely using tracking systems that show their punctuality/attendance over time and the impact of any intervention in place
- Supporting the role/s of the Attendance Team and using academy resources efficiently and effectively
- Identify those pupils whose attendance is falling below average and work with parents/carers towards improvement
- Liaising with the Local Authority and relevant multi-agencies regarding pupils whose attendance is giving significant cause for concern
- Liaising with other partner agencies and services towards improving and developing strategies to raise levels of attendance where relevant
- Rewarding outstanding / improving attendance
- Liaising with relevant colleagues regarding additional support and implementation for pupils with specific medical needs

The designated member of staff responsible for attendance is Mrs Rachel Bolton and can be contacted via email at Rachel.bolton@waverleyjunioracademy.org

d) The Academy Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Principal
- Informing parents of attendance concerns through a staged letter procedure
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

e) The Academy Attendance Support Team is responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the academy system (SIMS etc.)
- Notifying parents/carers of their child's absence via the telephone messaging system, where no message or call has been received by 9.30am, contact will be made after this time with parents/carers. Where contact has not been made for 3 days contact will be made with the Academy Education Welfare Officer to initiate a home visit . This will be on day 1 if there are any safeguarding concerns.
- Entering Information received regarding attendance onto the SIMS system
- Notifying staff and parents/carers of absences in line with attendance procedures
- Providing administrative support in logging, tracking and communicating individual and collective attendance levels and patterns

f) Class Teachers should:

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. For morning registration, registers should be taken within the first fifteen minutes of the school day and submitted no later than 9.00am. Afternoon register is taken at 1:00pm and submitted no later than 1:15.

g) Education Welfare Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and improving attendance of target groups in collaboration with the Senior Attendance Lead, Principal and Attendance Lead.
- Conducts visits, writes letters, caseworks and liaises with other agencies linked to pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Attends Case Conferences, TAF meetings and/or other-directed professionals' meetings on behalf of the academy/trust
- Works closely with our inclusion team to ensure that families receive coordinated support, where needed
- Attend a half-termly attendance liaison meeting with the Attendance Team
- Liaising with the Local Authority Attendance Teams regarding case-loads and prepares any relevant documentation

Our Educational Welfare Officer is Lynn Jeffries.

Section 4: Academy Expectations

We expect parents/carers of our pupils to work with us to ensure:

- Parents/carers are fulfilling their responsibility by ensuring their children attend the academy regularly and on time
- Parents/carers contact the academy every day that their child is unable to attend
- Their child arrives on time and is well-prepared for the school day (being well prepared means that pupils arrive in full academy uniform, with a school bag, equipment, their planner and PE kit that may be needed for that day)
- Parents/carers contact the academy whenever any problem arises that may lead to their child's absence/keep their child away from the academy
- The academy is informed and authorisation sought for any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, appointments are arranged outside of academy day.
- The continuity of their children's education by taking holidays during the academy holiday periods
- Parents/carers can be easily contacted by providing more than one contact number as per safeguarding requirements

What pupils and parents/carers can expect of the academy:

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at our academy
- The encouragement and promotion of excellent attendance
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- Contact with parents/carers on a daily basis when a student does not attend
- Prompt action taken if any problems are identified that prevent a child attending the academy
- Prompt action taken linked to any problems brought to a member of staff's attention
- Close liaison with the Early Help Team to assist and support parents/carers, pupils and their families where needed
- Notification to parents/carers of their child's attendance record through regular reports, and letters home
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1)

- When a student is absent and contact cannot be made by telephone, a standard letter will be sent and a home visit will take place
- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day. Electronic registration takes place at the start of the morning session between 08.45-09:00 and once in the afternoon session between 13.00-13.15 using SIMS. (Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'School Attendance' published November 2018 by the DfE).
- Registers close at 09.00, after which pupils will be marked with the unauthorised absence (U code).
- Where the academy's procedures and contact with home have failed to bring about improvement and poor attendance persists, the academy will request that parent/carers attend meetings within the academy with the attendance team.
- Where attendance continues to cause a concern parents will be informed through staged letters
- Through partnership working with Early Help and the Local Authority, further action may be taken in the form of a penalty notice should concerns regarding a child's attendance persist despite the academy's procedures being followed (see Appendix 2).

Section 5: Recording attendance

1. The Attendance Register

We keep attendance registers for all taught contact periods during the academy day. AM and PM attendance registers take place.

Attendance registers mark whether pupils are:

- 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 date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of the circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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 08.45 every day.

The morning register will be taken by 9:00am. The afternoon register is taken by 1:15pm

2. Unplanned Absence

- The student's parent/carer must notify the academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.00 or as soon as practically possible by calling the school on 0114 3570150 (see also section 8).
- We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness
- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent's/carer's to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily

3. Planned Absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides appropriate documentation e.g. appointment card/letter. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

- Please contact the academy and follow Leave of Absence procedures (Section 6) where making a request for absence during term time.
- The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 6 to find out which term-time absences the academy can authorise

4. Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the U code

The academy actively discourages late arrival, monitors and tracks patterns of late arrival and will contact parents/carers to identify why pupils are arriving late and prevent late arrival moving forwards.

Staff actively encourage punctuality to the academy each morning and to lessons. Pupils arriving late disrupt the continuity of learning for others as well as themselves.

Persistent lateness may provide grounds for prosecution and parents will be informed of this. The Education Welfare Officer will notify parents/carers if pupils develop a pattern of lateness.

5. Unexplained absence

- Where any student we expect to attend the academy does not attend, or stops attending, the academy will:
- 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
- Phone parents/carers of their child's absence, where no message or call has been received by 9.30am. Where this generates no response and there is safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the ACET EWO to initiate a visit. For those pupils where no contact has been made by day 3 the ACET EWO is contacted to initiate a visit.

- If the academy cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the academy may need to seek support from external agencies including the Police, Social Care and/or Early Help

Section 6: Authorised and unauthorised absence

1. Approval for term-time absence

- The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time authorised linked to the absence request.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off events that are unavoidable and could include (non-exhaustive list):

1. funerals or weddings of immediate family members
 2. to visit a terminally ill relative
 3. forces staff returning from abroad
 4. parents/carers returning from having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period
 5. compassionate leave
 6. performance at representative level (County/National) with accompanying letter from the relevant body
- Please note: Parent/carer employment holiday rotas and differences in the financial costs of holidays in term time compared to designated school holiday periods, are not exceptional circumstances and holidays will not be authorised linked to these reasons.
 - Children have to attend school for 190 days per academic year. This leaves 175 days (including weekends) free for families to take holidays.
 - The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
 - Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, available from the school office. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

- Parents/carers who remove their children from the academy without authorisation or do not return their child to the academy on the agreed date following an authorised period of leave of absence, may face a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning (FPN) which could lead to a fine/prosecution.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 5.2 and 5.3 for further details)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's/pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the student's/pupil's religious body to confirm if the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish travellers, fairground workers, circus people, occupational boat dwellers and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the academy, but it is not known whether the student/pupil is attending educational provision.

Government advice and guidance regarding supporting the attendance of children that identify as members of traveller communities is stated below:

Code T: Traveller absence

230.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.

231.This code should not be used for general absences by those groups. It must only be used when the pupil's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes and the school has granted a leave of absence following a request from the parent. This code should not be used to record any other types of absence by these groups.

232.Pupils from these groups whose parent(s) do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to attend school as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirements to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

233. Where a pupil has no fixed abode because their parent(s) is engaged in a business or trade that requires them to travel, there is an expectation that the pupil attends at least 200 sessions per year. The pupil must attend school as regularly as the business permits and therefore, if the business or trade permits the pupil to attend for more than 200 sessions per year, they should do so.

234. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes, it is expected that the pupil should attend school elsewhere when their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.

2. Legal sanctions

- The academy or Local Authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.
- If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £60.00 within 21 days or £120.00 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.
- Penalty notices can be issued by a Principal, Local Authority or the Police.
- The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:
 - The number of unauthorised absences occurring within an academic year
 - One off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken within term time without permission
 - Where an excluded student is found in a public place during academy hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice

DfE guidance issued in May 2022 – ‘Working together to improve school attendance’, clearly shows the responsibilities of academies, parents/carers, Local Authorities and agencies in ensuring that pupils/pupils attend school.

We are committed to proactive attendance intervention that enables our families to feel supported and break down the barriers that may impact upon their children attending the academy. However, we will use every possible means of ensuring that our young people attend our academy and receive an education, as is their legal entitlement.

Section 7: Strategies for promoting excellent attendance and punctuality at Waverley Junior Academy

We promote excellent attendance and punctuality as a high priority and seek to celebrate outstanding/improving attendance and punctuality.

- Attendance and punctuality and their importance is very high profile at our academy and pupils are taught about the impact of their attendance and punctuality on their learning
- Attendance figures are shared in assemblies
- Certificates are awarded for attendance
- Excellent attendance is celebrated at celebration events
- Recognition is made of improving attendance for individuals/groups of pupils
- Excellent/improving attendance is shared with parents/carers through monitoring reports and attendance updates where a child is part of attendance support planning
- Information is sent to parents/carers about the importance of attendance – Attendance Matters Leaflet and communication linked to attendance updates
- Our website displays our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and further advice and guidance for parents/carers where a student's attendance is a cause for concern

Section 8: Attendance monitoring

1. Attendance monitoring

At Waverley Junior Academy we monitor attendance data daily, weekly and half termly. We look at percentage attendance absent rates and compare our attendance levels with national and regional statistics. We carefully monitor and track the attendance of all pupils/pupils individually and key cohorts including, year groups, gender groups, SEND, disadvantaged, LAC and EAL.

Our academy attendance target is rightly ambitious at 96.0%. Children with attendance at 96% or above are more likely to achieve in line with their targets and above peers that have lower attendance levels.

2. Analysing attendance

The academy will:

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

3. Using data to improve attendance

The academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussion with pupils/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

4. Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Regularly communicate with the parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. Dependent upon the level of attendance concern, different verbal/written communication will be had with/sent to parents/carers indicating the next stages of support and intervention
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the academy (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement in school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove attendance barriers

Our academy cares about your children and their educational and wider success. If we did not have this level of care and high expectations for them, we would not invest time, energy and resources in working with all of our pupils and their families where attendance needs to improve. It is important that this is kept in mind when communicating with the academy about your child's attendance levels. Judgements are not being made about how attendance levels have become a cause for concern but a firm focus is placed on improving attendance levels for all pupils where their attendance may impact on their learning and wider success. It is important that

professionals, parents/carers and all supporting adults work together to remove attendance barriers.

It is vitally important that parents/carers are actively engaged in promoting good attendance. The academy will keep parents/carers informed on issues surrounding attendance and punctuality through the academy prospectus, website details, newsletters, electronic, written and verbal communication and monitoring reports. The academy will react as swiftly and effectively as possible to any parent/carer concerns. Parents/carers will be encouraged to make contact with the academy to discuss any issues impacting on their children's attendance. A child of compulsory academy age who is registered at an academy must attend regularly. In law parents/carers have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

Section 9: Working in partnership with the Local Authority and professional agencies

Rotherham Local Authority Attendance Guidance can be found at:

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/education-2/school-attendance#:~:text=The%20Local%20Authority%20takes%20poor,of%20absence%20in%20term%20tim>

We work together with Early Help Teams to support the intensive needs of children, young people and families. We will ensure that children, young people and families who have emerging needs are supported through an Early Help Assessment.

We work together with Social Care to support the intensive and complex needs of children, young people and families. We will provide input and information for agency checks, assessments and review meetings.

Section 10: Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated.

At each review, the policy will be approved by the Waverley Junior Academy Local Governing Body.

Section 11: Links with other policies at Waverley Junior Academy

This policy links to the following policies:

Waverley Junior Academy Safeguarding Policy

Waverley Junior Academy Behaviour and Rewards Policy

Waverley Junior Academy Supporting pupils with medical needs

Waverley Junior Academy Medicines in the academy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Updated DfE guidance – May 2022

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING	FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSE
/	Present (AM)	Present	
\	Present (PM)	Present	
B	Off-site educational activity	Approved educational activity	Counted as physically present
C	Leave of absence authorised by the academy	Authorised absence	
D	Dual registered – at another educational establishment	Not counted in possible attendance	
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	
G	Family holiday (NOT authorised by the academy or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence	
H	Family holiday authorised by the academy	Authorised absence under exceptional circumstances	

I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence *In line with transition to 'Living with Covid-19' and the latest public health guidance, code I should be used for those pupils/pupils who have Covid-related symptoms or have a positive test result.	
J	Interview	Approved education activity	Counted as physically present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised appointments	
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence	
P	Approved supervised sporting activity	Approved education activity	Counted as physically present
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence	
U	Late arrival (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved education activity	Counted as physically present
W	Work experience	Approved education activity	Counted as physically present
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (enforced closure)	Not counted in possible attendances	
Z	Pupil not yet on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances	
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in possible attendances	

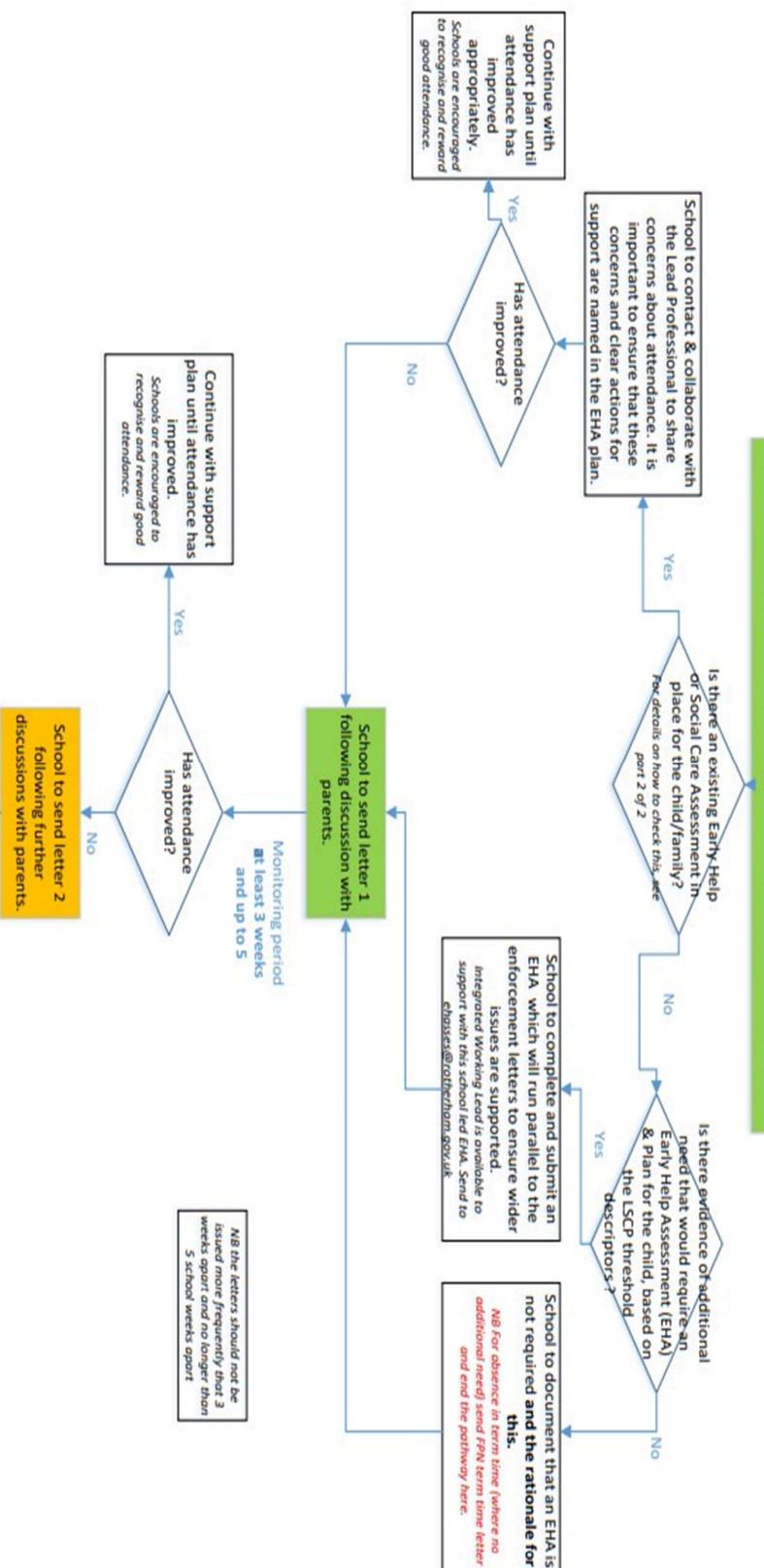
**Appendix 2: DCC Local Authority Fixed Penalty Notice advice for
parents/carers**

PENALTY NOTICES

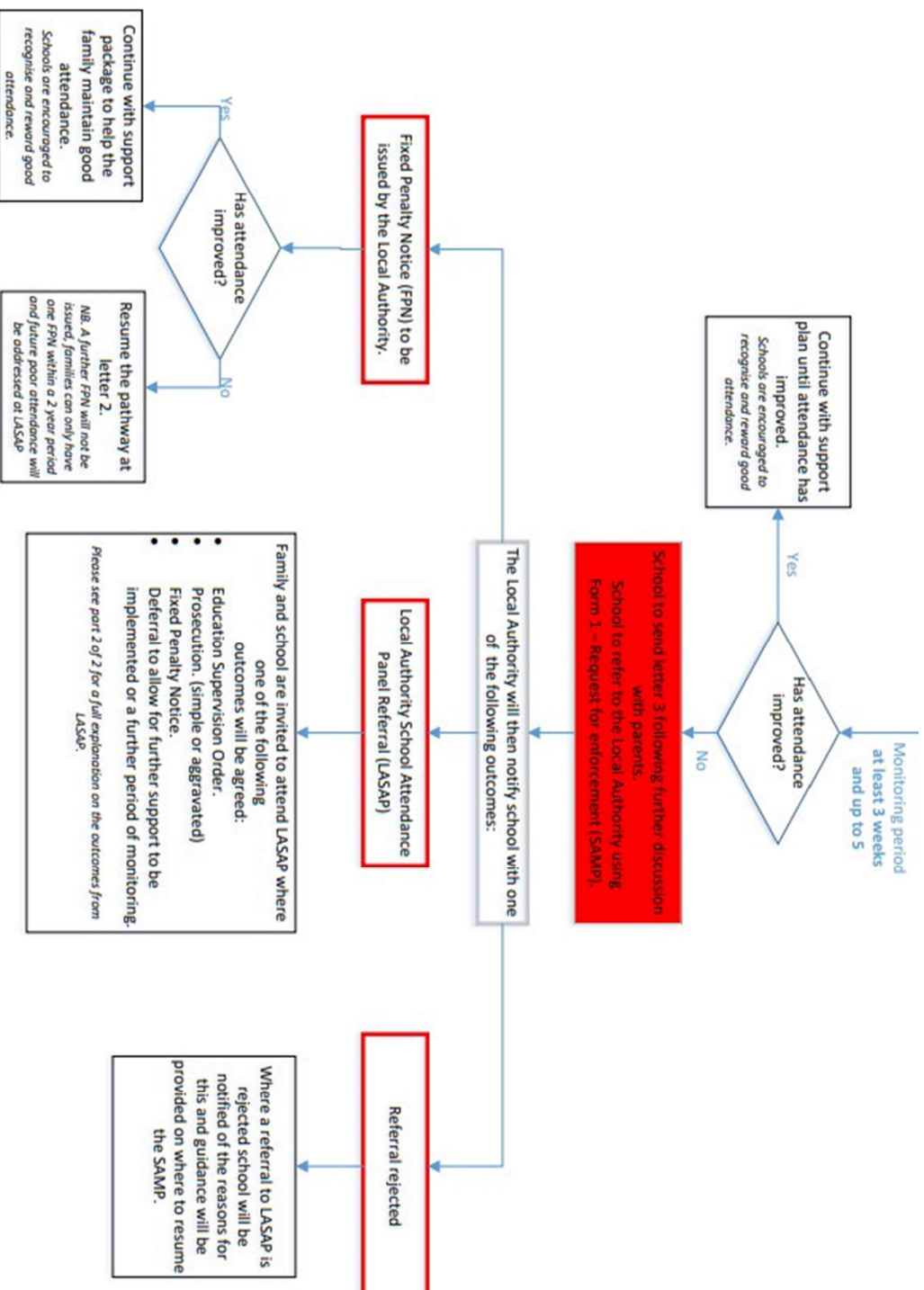
<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/3098/code-of-conduct-september-2022>

Rotherham Early Help 'School Attendance Matters Pathway' for Schools
 Part 1 of 2
 Please see part 2 of 2 for accompanying guidance on the implementation of this pathway

School has concerns about attendance and has already raised this with parents, e.g. 92% or 10 sessions unauthorised absence, or threshold to be agreed internally by school using accompanying guidance part 2 of 2 (threshold to be agreed internally by school using guidance 2 of 2)



NB the letters should not be issued more frequently than 3 weeks apart and no longer than 5 school weeks apart



Early Help & Family Engagement Service

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)

The FPN is used as the first step of enforcement action in the SAMP. This consists of a fine of £60 per parent per child and this rises to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Non-payment of the FPN is escalated to Court. **FPNs are usually issued only once in line with the Code of Conduct** and if future issues regarding attendance occur the pathway restarts at letter 2 and the child will be escalated to LASAP. In the instance of an unpaid FPN the headteacher will be asked to sign a Headteachers Certificate of Attendance that is required for the Court. The Attendance Leads will request this and set a timeframe for this to be returned.

To avoid unnecessary work that results in a withdrawal of an FPN prior to submitting to Court, **it is important that school check with parents for any mitigating issues** prior to progressing with the SAMP and make this clear to the Local Authority.

In the instance of an escalation to Court and a parent pleads not guilty, school may be approached for additional information to support the prosecution.

Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP)

For children with persistence absence where an FPN has not had the desired impact.

The LASAP is Rotherham's multi-disciplinary decision-making forum that oversees enforcement action under the provision of the Education Act (1996) with regards to parental responsibility for regular school attendance.

The LASAP will consider children that are referred by schools, where there is extremely poor attendance and where all appropriate strategies (and application of the School Attendance Matters Pathway) have been tried and exhausted.

Schools are responsible for submitting requests to the SAMP for further enforcement following the issue of a previous FPN.

Following request for further enforcement to SAMP, schools will be informed by Attendance Leads of one of the following outcomes:

- ✦ Fixed Penalty Notice issued.

- ✦ Agreed to hear formally at the next LASAP.
- ✦ Decision to hear formally at a future LASAP to facilitate the gathering of all information.
- ✦ Referral rejected and school notified of the reasons.

The chair of the LASAP is the Early Help Head of Service and meetings are attended by a range of professionals including a Local Authority solicitor. When school has a child being discussed at LASAP the school will be invited to attend the meeting along with parents, and the child where appropriate.

The LASAP is responsible for ensuring that appropriate action is agreed and that the correct procedures have been followed. The panel will decide on one of the following outcomes:

- ✦ **Education Supervision Order (ESO).** An ESO is a court order that triggers a formal plan to bring about a return to regular school attendance. This can be in conjunction with an existing Early Help or statutory assessment. The application is heard in the family proceedings court where magistrates have the power to grant the order. An ESO is granted for twelve months initially but extensions can be applied for annually for up to a period of three years until the end of compulsory education.
- ✦ **Prosecution.** Section 444 of the Education Act has two separate but linked offences, under which parents can be prosecuted: a) where a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance and b) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. Parents who are prosecuted for the simple offence (a) could receive a fine of up to £1,000 per parent/carer. For the aggravated offence (b), parents could receive a community order, a fine of up to £2,500 per parent/carer or a custodial sentence.
- ✦ **Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN).** FPN's are fines of £60/£120 imposed on parents, who are defined as any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child.

- ✦ **Deferral.** In some instances, it may be necessary to agree a deferral of enforcement. This may be where attendance has started to improve prior to the LASAP, or where some specific support has been agreed but not yet tested. In these cases, a decision will be made to defer enforcement and an agreement will be made about when to bring back to a future LASAP.

Following consideration of the child, the decision will be circulated to the referring school and relevant family members within three days of the panel meeting, however all relevant parties are usually telephoned on the day of LASAP, prior to the formal letter being issued.

Maintaining attendance

Sometimes attendance can improve whilst progressing through the pathway, however later, it again deteriorates. This can be extremely difficult for schools to manage and repeating past processes can be frustrating and is not in the best interests of the child.

Schools should therefore be aware that if there has been less than a six-week period between the initial improvement and subsequent deterioration and this can be evidenced, schools do not need to start from the beginning of the pathway; but can start from the place where they last were (i.e., rejoin the pathway where they left off i.e. if letter 2 was sent; re-send letter 2 and progress from there.)

Leave of Absence / Holiday in Term Time FPN requests

To process an FPN for a holiday in term time, the child's attendance must be below the **combined National Average (currently 95.2%)** for the previous 12 months including the holiday absence period.

A child's percentage should be calculated prior to requesting an FPN to establish whether the child is **below the combined National Average**. If the child is in Year 7 this should include the year

registration certificate of attendance from their previous school. To work out the child's percentage a calculation is needed of the previous 12 months, including the holiday absence period. For example, if the holiday was 18th November 2022 – 29th November

2022 the previous 12 months including the holiday absence period would be 30th November 2021 – 29th November 2022.

When a leave of absence is requested and school do not feel there are exceptional circumstances to authorise the absence, school should notify parents immediately in order to inform them of their intention to progress a request for enforcement. This then provides evidence to the

Local Authority that the parents were aware that their child's absence was not authorised prior to going on holiday / taking leave of absence.

When it comes to school's attention that a child is taking leave of absence in term time without a prior request being submitted, the school should send the letter **during the absence (i.e., do not wait for families to return home.)**

When it comes to school's attention that a child has taken a leave of absence after the absence period (ie. where this has been shared after they have returned to school), the school should send the letter within five working days.

In all cases the referral to the Local Authority should be sent within five working days of the last date of the holiday.

Form 2 – Request for Enforcement (Leave of Absence)^{vi} should be completed and sent to the Local Authority.