



Kedington Primary Academy

Attendance Policy

Date Approved	
Signed	(Chair of Governors)
Minuted	(Date)
Date of Next Review	Autumn 2019

Introduction

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all of our pupils and recognise that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending the Academy regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole Academy community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

The policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations. The Academy will ensure that all members of the Academy community know of the policy and have access to it.

Academy's roles and responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) at Kedington have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils / students are eager to learn, feel valued members of the Academy community and look forward to coming to the Academy every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Leader

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the Academy's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the Academy. This person, known as the Attendance Leader, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team, are made regularly available to all staff, pupils and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good attendance) and that a report is prepared for the governing body termly. S/he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

Registration

The Academy is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes (Appendix 1).

The register will be called promptly from 8:40 – 8:50 a.m. and 1:00 - 1:05 p.m. by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child. If they arrive after 8:50 a.m. they will be marked late.

The registers will close at 9:15 a.m. and 1:20 p.m. respectively. Any pupil who arrives after the closing of the register will count as absent. Pupils who arrive before the register closes will be counted as present but will be dealt with under the Academy's policy on lateness and punctuality.

Categorising absence

A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the Academy in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the Academy as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the Academy at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.

Kedington Primary Academy recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Kedington will therefore challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the Academy.

If no explanation about an absence is received by the Academy within 2 weeks, the absence will remain unauthorised;

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- where leave has been granted by the Academy in advance, for example –
 - i. a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority;
 - ii. a pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance will be considered;
 - iii. in exceptional circumstances, permission has been granted for a family holiday for which the parents have sought permission in advance.
 - iv. where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
 - v. where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of Academy hours wherever possible, and to return their child immediately afterwards – or send him / her to the Academy beforehand);
 - vi. vi. where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
 - vii. vii. the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong;
 - viii. the pupil lives more than two miles (if he/she is under eight) or three miles (if he/she has reached eight) and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority;
 - ix. the pupil is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which require him/her to travel, the pupil has attended the Academy as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;
 - x. in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a very limited period.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- the Academy is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house;
- the pupil is shopping during Academy hours;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- the pupil is absent from the Academy on a family holiday without prior permission;
- the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

Approved educational activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the Academy will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Staff Training

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

Collection and analysis of data

The Attendance Leader will ensure that:

- attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the Senior Leadership Team, parents and the Governing Body. The report will inform the Academy's future practice to improve attendance.
- attendance is monitored by year group and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.
- accurate attendance returns are made to the Department for Education (DfE) within the stipulated time frame.

Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at Kedington. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and Academy meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

Kedington Primary Academy has procedures for dealing with unexplained absences within a week. The Admin team will make contact with the family concerned to establish an explanation.

First-day calling

Kedington Primary Academy has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge.

Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3 to 4 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the Academy will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

Referral to the Education Welfare Officer

If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend the Academy at all), the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at the Academy for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the Academy is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

If a pupil arrives late but before the register closes, it must be recorded in the late book in the office. This is then followed up by the Headteacher to seek a clear explanation and to reaffirm the Academy's expectations on attendance.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the Academy knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the front office with a responsible adult. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure. From the Summer Term of Year 5 upwards children are allowed to come to the Academy independently, provided the Academy is in receipt of signed permission. If these children are late, their parents will be contacted to request an explanation for the late arrival. Persistent lateness will lead to the privilege of coming to the Academy independently being withdrawn.

For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment) or returning to the Academy later in the day leave through the office and that the office staff record this.

Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a pupil goes missing from the Academy having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the pupil will not be receiving a full-time education, it also potentially renders him/her vulnerable to harm. Kedington Primary Academy takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen. If, however, a pupil appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the Academy will try to make contact with his/her parents immediately.

Term-time Holidays

Term-time holidays are intended for children whose parents are unable to take holiday at any other time. Kedington Primary Academy will consider every application individually; its policy is to **NOT GRANT** leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off for family holidays is not a right. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence, in advance of the intended holiday.

We will **consider** authorising holidays for:

- service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during non-term time;
- a family needing to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;

Requests for holidays for the following reason will not be authorised:

- cheaper cost of holiday;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in Academy holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

Kedington Primary Academy will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing giving the reasons for the decision. We will NOT authorise a holiday during periods of national tests, i.e. SATs examinations.

Extended leave of absence

In considering absence for extended trips overseas we will take account of the following:

- a visit to family overseas has a very different significance from a normal 'holiday';
- such visits may be important in terms of children's identity and self-esteem as they grow up;
- parents may feel that the reasons for their visit outweigh the importance of their child's uninterrupted attendance at the Academy (although parents could be encouraged to use the Academy holiday periods for at least part of their trip);
- the reason for wishing to make a visit is more difficult, particularly for minority ethnic families, where huge distances and high costs are involved;
- where extended leave of absence is granted there will be an expectation that the pupil undertakes some Academy-set learning during this period.

Parents' / carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by our Academy.

We expect parents / carers will:

- ensure their child attends the Academy regularly;
- support their child's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the Academy to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from the Academy.

Parents will also be expected to:

- notify the Academy on the first day of absence either in person or by telephone;
- ensure their child arrives at the Academy on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;

- work in partnership with the Academy, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, writing in Home Learning Communication books regularly, taking an interest in their child's work and activities;
- contact the Academy without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their child's Academy life. Our Academy will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending regularly, they should speak to their class teacher.

If they have been absent from the Academy they should give their class teacher a note from their parents to explain the absence. Pupils also have a responsibility for following Academy procedures if they arrive late.

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

When does my child need to be at the Academy?

Your child should be at the Academy in good time for registration. The morning register will be called at 8:40 a.m. and the afternoon register at 1:00 p.m.

What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at 8:50 a.m. in the morning and 1:05 p.m. in the afternoon.

If your child arrives between 8:50 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. he/she will be marked late.

If your child arrives after 9:15 a.m. he/she will be marked absent.

If your child arrives after 1:05 p.m. he/she will be marked late.

If your child arrives after 1:20 p.m. he/she will be marked absent.

(Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the office, and the accompanying adult should complete the late book with a reason for the lateness and a signature. The Headteacher monitors the late book regularly and liaises with families when needed).

Does the Academy need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the Academy on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. However, we need a written explanation on your child's return to the Academy. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

What reason will the Academy accept for absences?

- Illness;
- Emergency dental / medical appointment (please make routine appointments after Academy hours or during the holidays);
- Day of religious observance;
- Family bereavement.

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss time at the Academy well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

What is unacceptable?

The Academy will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping or birthdays, etc.

Will the Academy contact me if my child is absent?

The Academy operates a first day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular Academy attendance.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas trip to visit relatives. What should I do? The Academy recognises that such absence can be important for children to keep in touch with their extended family. Contact the Headteacher as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit.

The Academy would strongly recommend that such absences do not take place during your child's SATs examinations. You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence and if the Headteacher then approves the visit, the Academy will set learning for your child to complete while away.

As far as possible we will ensure the learning set reinforces the educational value of such a visit.

What can I do to encourage my child to attend the Academy?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he / she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his / her education.

My child is trying to avoid coming to the Academy. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding coming to the Academy for a number of reasons – difficulties with learning, bullying, friendship problems and family difficulties are just some of the possible reasons. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend the Academy and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The Academy may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Attendance Service is based at:

Western Area Education Office
West Suffolk House
Western Way
Bury St Edmunds
IP33 3YU

Tel. No. 0845 606 6067

Appendix 1 REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical, or dental etc., appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances



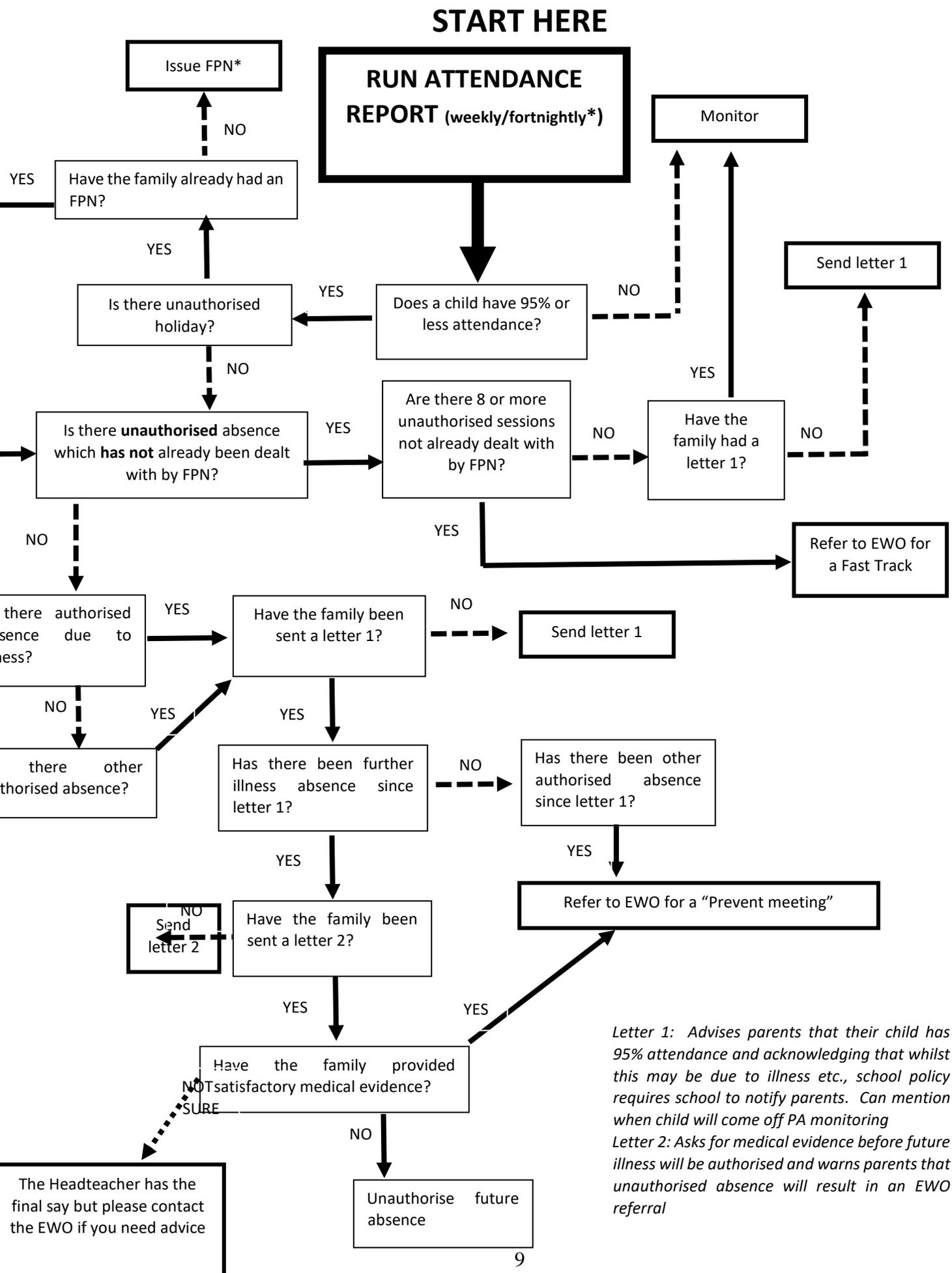
First Day Calling Procedure

1. Class registers are completed by teachers by 9.00am;
2. Absent pupils are marked with a red ;
3. Pupils arriving late must enter through the front office door and sign in at the school office. The pupil's attendance is updated on the register and given the code 'L'. If the pupil is at a medical appointment it will be marked as 'M';
4. Emails are checked for communication from parents regarding absence;
5. Office staff check if any siblings of the absent pupil are present, and if they are, to ask if they are aware of why their sibling is absent;
6. Office staff attempt to telephone those on the pupil's contact list, starting with the home phone and working down the list. If no answer, a message is left and the office staff will try reach the next contact on the list;
7. Contact the high school of any known siblings to check if the sibling is present;
8. By 10.30am inform the SLT of absence;
9. SLT to decide whether a home visit would be appropriate and risk assess for this visit;
10. Home visit to be made if appropriate by school staff (as a pair) or any other agency already involved with the pupil;
11. If no contact is made after all steps are completed, SLT contacts the police by phoning 101 to initiate a 'safe and well' check.

Signed by the Head:

Date: February 2018

Review Date: February 2019



Letter 1: Advises parents that their child has 95% attendance and acknowledging that whilst this may be due to illness etc., school policy requires school to notify parents. Can mention when child will come off PA monitoring
Letter 2: Asks for medical evidence before future illness will be authorised and warns parents that unauthorised absence will result in an EWO referral