



## **Objectives of the attendance policy**

- We expect all students to attend on every day they are due to be with us, when the education provision is open, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
- We do all we can to encourage the students to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures.
- We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards the education provision, its staff and the environment. To this end, we strive to make our centre a happy and rewarding experience for all students.
- We will also make the best provision we can for those students who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to the centre.

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

Regular attendance Alpha Learning Staffordshire Ltd is vital if a pupil is to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that Alpha has to offer. At Alpha we aim for our whole school attendance of 95%.

If a pupils attendance drops below this the following strategies will be use;

- Informal chat with student and parents by telephone at each incidence of absence (recorded on SIMS)
- Formal conversation with parents when percentage attendance starts to drop below 95%
- In the event of no contact with parents/carers by telephone we may complete a home visit
- Letter to parents/carer informing them of their parental legal responsibility in ensuring their child attends school – a copy will also be provided to their key worker/ on roll school/relevant people- further continued absence will result in
- Referral to the on roll school/The Education Welfare Service will be made if attendance does not improve

However it should be noted that as a provision we receive many students referred to us with extremely poor attendance and that may be a reason for their referral, in this case we will put in place strategies to support the student arriving into school and we may approach each case on an individual basis providing that we see progression with improved attendance.

## **Arrival and Registration**

Upon arrival all students should sign in at reception ready to commence their day by 09.00am.

If a student arrives after 9:20am he or she will be marked as late. After 09.45 a.m. this will become an Unauthorised Absence.

It is essential that all students inform reception and sign in or out of the centre. The signing in / out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

## Illness and Medical Appointments

Although every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours, we understand that is not always possible therefore if it is necessary for a student to be out of school for this reason the student parents needs to contact the centre and provide evidence of the appointment.

- If a pupils attendance falls to 90% or below then they are classed as persistently absent under new government guidelines – DFES 2022.
- If the pupil is classed as persistently absent – known as PA then medical evidence is required in order to authorise any absences below the threshold of 90%.
- Medical evidence is any medicine, prescription that has the child's name and date on. Doctors appointment card for the session that is dated and stamped.
- If absences cannot be authorised due to the lack of medical evidence this may lead to a referral to the EWO and possible statutory action.

Authorised and unauthorised attendance –

- As an education provider we clearly have to differentiate between authorised and Non-authorised attendance.
- We authorise absence only when the reason (illness, bereavement and religious observation) can be seen as a genuine explanation of the absence.
- Evidence as outlined is required for any medical appointments such as the GP, Dentist or hospital.
- If the pupil returns during the session from an appointment they will be given their mark for the session.

### Authorised Absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a student has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the Centre has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a student has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the Centre to explain the absence.
- Only the Centre can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a student out of the Centre to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a student is away from the Centre without the permission of the Director

### If a Student is Absent

When a student is absent, reception will notify contact the parent/carer to see if they are aware and/or to obtain an explanation. Reception will then make Nadine Wedgwood (Head of Centre/DSL).

Parents are, however, expected to email or telephone the school by 09.30 a.m. on the morning of the day of absence to inform the Centre that their child will be absent. They are asked to state a reason.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a student, the any member of staff they should take immediate action by notifying Nadine Wedgwood (Head of Centre/DSL)

They will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the young person.

### THE EDUCATION (PUPIL REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS 1995

Section 8(1) "Leave of absence may only be granted by a person authorised in that behalf, by the proprietor of the school".

Section 8(3) of this act gives the school discretionary powers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of annual holiday during term time.

Holidays in term time are not an entitlement and are strongly discouraged by the Government, Local Authority, the Governors and the school.

#### **Holidays**

All holiday requests should be discussed with the Nadine Wedgwood (Head of Centre/ DSL) before any bookings are made. A holiday form should be completed and submitted for approval.

An absence for holiday that has not been agreed by Nadine Wedgwood (Head of Centre/DSL) will be recorded as unauthorised. Authorisation will not be granted retrospectively.

#### **Criteria for approval of an absence**

- a) The general attendance of pupils will be considered. If a student has had a significant number of absences for any reason they will not be able to "afford" to miss any further schooling. A holiday request for exceptional circumstances is unlikely to be approved unless the student attendance is 95% or above for the past year.
- b) The timing of the proposed holiday – one of the worst times for a student to be absent is at the beginning of a new school year, or in the build up to and during planned exams.

Teachers will not set work for completion when a student is absent on holiday, but the child should be encouraged to read and keep a diary of their experiences.

#### **Long Term Absence**

When students have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will support the student to the best of its ability.

#### **Repeated Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absences remain on the students record and may affect the student placement at the centre.

All members of staff monitor attendance and punctuality. If a student has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents and guardians will be contacted to discuss the problem.

### **Monitoring and Reviewing**

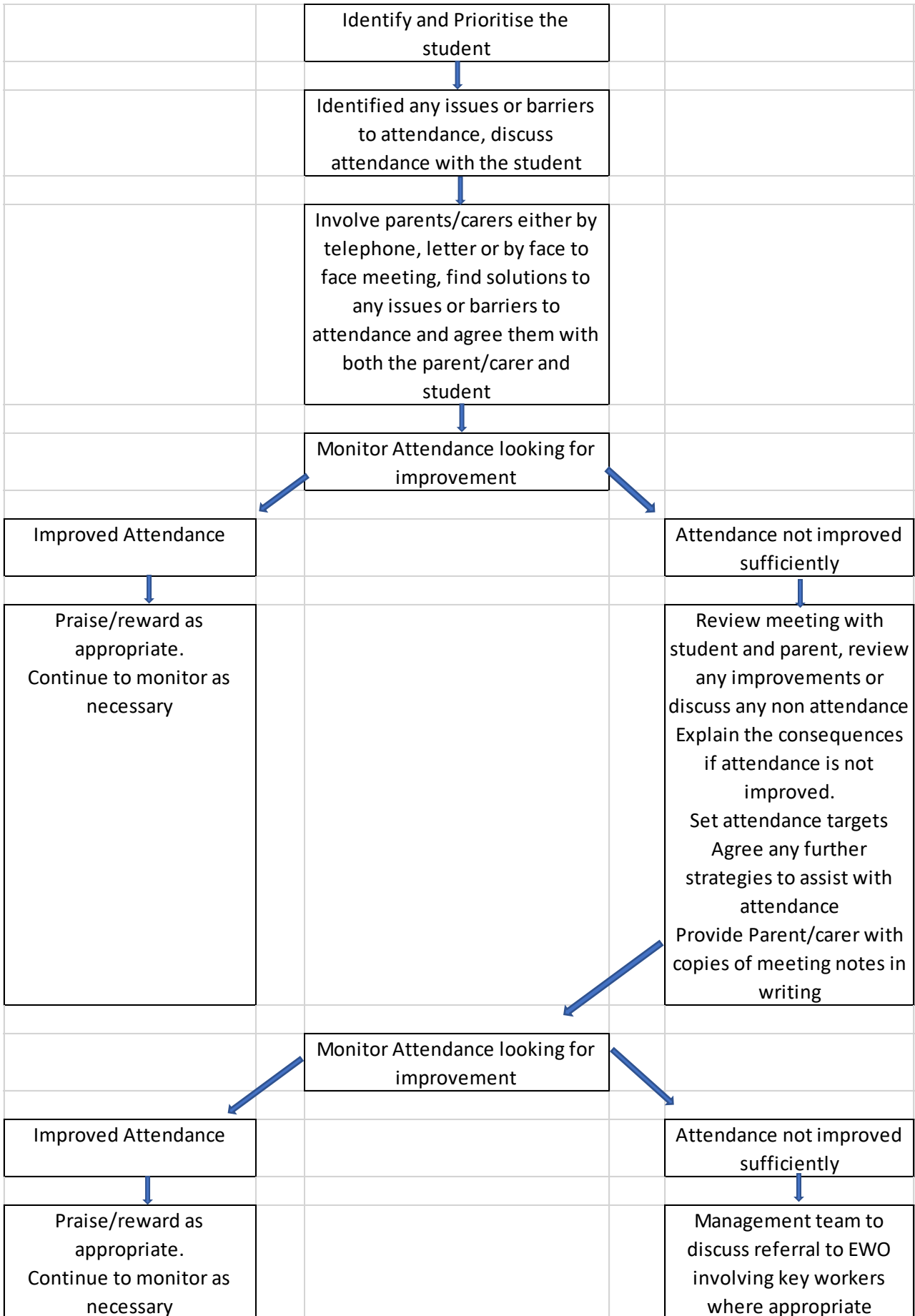
It is the responsibility of the Nadine Wedgwood to monitor overall attendance. Nadine Wedgwood also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. Nadine Wedgwood will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The Centre will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. If they become aware of an unexpected pupil absence during the course of the school day, they will contact the reception and Nadine Wedgwood immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular student, this will be reported to the Nadine Wedgwood by reception or staff will be free to discuss in weekly staff meetings any concerns. Procedure would then be followed to speak to parents/carers and establish reasons for absence and any support required.

In order to facilitate the monitoring of attendance an agenda item will be listed for the weekly staff meeting who is responsible for day to day monitoring of attendance will meet to discuss each pupils attendance.

Attendance monitoring is completed following the procedure outlined in the Attendance Monitoring flowchart shown below, a concern is raised on an attendance monitoring form, which is filled out in each attendance review with their current attendance, any mitigating factors and a general comment. It is also used to record contact with parents, setting attendance goals and generally recording the monitoring procedure and any actions taken.



Attendance Monitoring form example

