James Cambell Primary School

Partnership Learning

Attendance Policy

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Contents

1. Aims 1

2. Legislation and guidance 2

3. School procedures 2

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence 4

5. Strategies for promoting attendance 5

6. Attendance monitoring 7

7. Roles and responsibilities 9

8. Monitoring arrangements 10

9. Links with other policies 10

10. Appendix 1: attendance codes 11

11. Attendance Flow Chart 14

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We believe that all pupils benefit from education and from good school attendance and are committed to ensuring that all pupils receive the highest quality education.

We will endeavour to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any barriers that impede full attendance are identified and acted upon as soon as possible.

The attendance target for James Cambell Primary School is 96.0%.

The school wishes to work in partnership with parents/carers to achieve good school attendance. The minimum expectation for all pupils registered at this school is 96% attendance. Even though this sounds high it is still equivalent to half a day absence every two weeks. At 90% attendance, it means on average that your child is missing from school half a day each week. If the attendance level slips to 80% then this is equivalent to missing one day of school a week. A child averaging 80% attendance at James Cambell Primary School from year 1 to year 6 will miss the equivalent of a whole academic year's education before they have started secondary school.

The Department for Education defines any child who achieves 90% attendance or below in any academic year as being persistently absent from school.

Parents/carers of children of compulsory age are required to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996). These responsibilities are further outlined in the Home-School agreement.

Regular attendance includes pupils being on time for school, every day. Continued poor punctuality could lead to parents being issued with a penalty notice

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- 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 complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. School procedures

Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

Present

Attending an approved off-site educational activity

Absent

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

The original entry

The amended entry

The reason for the amendment

The 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by the times shown below on each school day.

Nursery
Morning Nursery starts at 8.45am and finishes at 11.45am.
Afternoon Nursery starts at 12.15pm and finishes at 3.15pm.

Lower school
Reception and Years 1 and 2 start at 9.00am. Reception finish at 3.05pm. Years 1 and 2 finish at 3.10pm. In Reception and KS1, gates to the playground open at 8.45am and the doors open at 8.55am.
Pupils arriving after 9.00am will be marked as late.

Upper school
School starts promptly at 8.55am and finishes at 3.20pm.The gates to the playground open at 8.40am and children line up with their class at 8.50am.
Pupils arriving after 8.55am will be marked as late.

The external school doors will be closed at 9.00am (lower school) and 8.55am (upper school). Children arriving late for school will need to enter the school through the Main Office. The children's names will be recorded and they or their parent will be asked to give the reason for lateness.

The afternoon session starts at 12.30pm for Reception.
In Years 1 and 2, the afternoon session starts at 12.50pm.
In Years 3 and 4, the afternoon session starts at 12.40pm.
In Years 5 and 6, the afternoon session starts at 1.30pm.
Pupils arriving from home dinners after these times will need to enter the school through the main office and will be marked as late.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). Parents should call the main school office on 0208 270 4602 or 4684 to notify the school of absence. Answerphone messages can be left is the phone is unanswered.

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents 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.
If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Parents are provided with a report of attendance at parent's evenings and are also provided with an annual summary of their child's attendance on the end of year school report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (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 school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Unauthorised absences

In alignment with borough recommendations, it is expected that parents will plan holidays during school holiday periods. Holidays taken during term time will not be authorised. The school will request the local authority to issue fixed penalty notice at the cost of £60.00 per parent, per child.

If the parent/carer of a child does not notify us with a valid reason for absence, the absence will be registered as unauthorised.

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

We will discuss with pupils and contact parents if there are concerns, likewise within the partnership we at the school wish to have with our pupils and parents, we expect to be contacted by parents if they have any concerns about their child's attendance, or any other matters. The school will arrange to meet with parents who have concerns as a matter of priority and work with them in the interest of their child.

Rewards

The Attendance Lead will be responsible for ensuring that pupils receive awards for good attendance. These include the Attendance Bear which is awarded to the class with the highest number of attended sessions at the end of each week.

Attendance Certificates which are rewarded for excellent (100%) attendance at the end of every term.

At the end of the Summer Term we hold an Attendance Raffle, where all excellent attenders are entered in a draw to win a bike (1 bike per year group) however only children who have achieved 98% attendance at the time of the raffle draw will have an opportunity to win the bike.

Nursery

100% attendance for the week – sticker
100% attendance for the half term - badge

Lower School
100% attendance for Autumn Term 1 – pencil
100% attendance for the full Autumn Term – ruler
100% attendance for the full Autumn Term and Spring Term 1 – pencil case
100% attendance for the full Autumn Term and the full Spring Term – bookmark
100% attendance for the Autumn, Spring and Summer Term 1 – water bottle
100% attendance for the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms – badge and a £5 voucher

For those children who achieve 100% attendance for the year, parents / carers will receive a bouquet at a special celebration assembly.

Upper School

100% attendance for the full Autumn term – key ring
100% attendance for the full Autumn and Spring terms – pen
100% attendance for the full Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms – a mug and a £5 voucher

For those children who achieve 100% attendance for the year, parents / carers will receive a bouquet at a special celebration assembly and children will receive a £5 gift voucher.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents must call every day of their child's illness.

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

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

Response to Absences

When a pupil of this school is absent for no apparent reason it is the duty of all staff to consider possible causes. When considering reasons they should bear in mind factors that could relate to child protection, behaviour, discipline and anti-bullying policies. The class teacher will have a particular role to play in identifying reasons for absence and addressing such issues, with the support of the whole school staff.

Where attendance issues have been identified and initial contacts have not brought about the required improvement then the following stages will be used to resolve the situation:

Stage One
If attendance levels reach below 95% a letter will be sent to the parents notifying them that the school will be monitoring the attendance levels of that pupil. Within this letter it will state that there needs to be an improvement in the pupil's attendance. Meetings with parents may be organised and the parent support advisor's support will also be offered.

Stage Two
If the situation is not resolved by Stage One and the attendance levels are below 92% the school will send out a second letter detailing the level of absence and increased concern. Parents/Carers will be requested to attend a meeting with the attendance lead to discuss any issues and plan ways forward.

Stage Three
From <90% the school will invite the pupil (where appropriate) and parents/carers to discuss the issue at a meeting. Where parents are giving ill health as a reason for continuous absence without medical verification a meeting is arranged with the attendance officer who will liaise with the school nurse if required. Where long term absence is supported by documentary medical evidence then a request for Home Tuition may be made.

Stage Four
When a pupil's attendance is not resolved by action at Stage One, Two or Three within the school a referral will be made to the attendance officer and parents will be informed of this referral. At this stage action will be taken by the local authority through the Attendance Service to resolve the situation. This may include direct work with the pupil, the family and referral to other agencies. There may also be referral to other provisions set up to support the pupil in making a return to full attendance. Legal proceedings may be considered by the attendance service under the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Fixed Penalty Notice's)1996 Education Act (prosecution) and the Children Act 1989 (Education Supervision Orders). There is an appeals process for parents who have received and contest a fixed penalty notice.

7. Roles and responsibilities

Pupils
Pupils should be ready to learn and appropriately prepared for lessons. The target attendance figure for all pupils is a minimum of 96%.

The Governing Body
The Governing Body has responsibility for school attendance and will be familiar with current legislation. There is a named school governor with responsibility for school attendance. They will be acquainted with the registration system in the school and will be part of daily attendance interventions, including meetings with parents, where required. The Headteacher will report on attendance to the Governors at regular intervals.

The Head Teacher
The Headteacher has day to day responsibility for attendance and will ensure that the school meets the legal requirements for all aspects of school attendance, set required targets for attendance, reduce unauthorised absence and will publish attendance figures. The Headteacher will report regularly to parents about attendance issues and figures and will ensure that the whole school attendance policy is reviewed every two years.

The Headteacher, alongside the admissions lead, will ensure that parents and pupils are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality at the point of admission. This will be supported in the signing of the Home School Agreement.

The Headteacher has a duty under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 to make a return to the Local Education Authority where a pupil has been absent for more than two weeks.

The Headteacher will have the final say on whether to authorise or not authorise all absences and will be responsible for considering and authorising any parental requests for leave taken due to exceptional circumstances. Parents will be informed of this decision.

The Attendance Lead
The Attendance Lead, will take responsibility for registration procedures, monitoring overall attendance, including key groups, collation and reporting of attendance information, ensuring staff training on attendance and advising the Head Teacher and Governors. Attendance data will be analysed and used to inform the Governors, staff, pupils and parents with progress made on attendance targets. The attendance lead will meet regularly with the local authority attendance officer allocated to the school, along with the parent support advisor, and will discuss attendance issues highlighted by the schools monitoring system.

The attendance lead will share persistent absentee data with the local authority on a half termly basis. This workbook tracks pupils whose level of absence is high. Regular meetings with the parents of persistently absent children will be organised. The attendance officer and the attendance lead will also become involved.

The attendance lead will oversee the sending out of letters to the parents of children with attendance concerns and will organise meetings where progress has not been made. If there is still no improvement in their child's attendance a referral will be made to the school's allocated attendance officer for further action to be taken.

The attendance lead will be responsible for ensuring that pupils receive awards for good attendance (see appendix II) The attendance lead will also monitor and advise class teachers on their own class based attendance strategies. The attendance lead will write the attendance policy and ensure that it is up to date and reviewed every two years.

The Attendance Team

The Attendance Team, will be responsible for ensuring that the online registers are kept in the correct manner as well as supporting them in following up all attendance issues. Phone calls will be made to parents/carers on the first day of absence if a reason has not been received by 9.30am. If no contact is made on the first day an electronic message will be sent to the parent in the first instance. If there is no response to this message, a letter will be sent by the attendance requesting the reason for absence.

Data inputting will be completed by the attendance officer who will also provide attendance reports requested by the attendance lead, and Children's Services.

The attendance team will be responsible for sending out letters to the parents of children with attendance concerns. Meetings will take place between parents, the attendance team, and attendance lead, where appropriate.

The Class Teacher

The class teacher has a vital role to play in raising the attendance and punctuality in school. The class teacher will ensure that they collect their class from the playground promptly and on time, that registration periods are orderly and calm and that the registers are called promptly and correctly. The class teacher will follow the registration routines outlined by the registration procedures document. The online registers will be completed by the class teacher at 9.00am and immediately after lunch each day so that they are available for inspection by Local Authority Officers and for information and data reading processes.

Class teachers will be responsible for welcoming back pupils to school following their return from absence and will endeavour to enable pupils to access any learning that was missed due to absence. They will also notify other staff members if a pupil is experiencing particular difficulties, allowing for confidentiality. When reviewing Individual Education Plans, the class teacher will include attendance.

The class teacher will use Management Information Systems to link attendance with attainment, passing on this information to the parents at Parent Consultations, or where appropriate.

The class teacher will use new and emerging technologies where applicable following appropriate training.

If there are any child protection concerns, the school's child protection co-ordinator, should be informed on the first day of the pupil's absence.

Inclusion Lead

The inclusion lead will monitor attendance of all pupils on school action/ school action plus, statemented, English as an additional language or children with disabilities. They will be working in conjunction with the parent support advisor and will support class teachers in the inclusion of attendance on Individual Education Plans, where appropriate. The inclusion lead will monitor identified needs and levels of absence and will refer to the appropriate member of senior staff for discussion with the local authority attendance officer when necessary.

Reception Staff

Reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy. See also, Attendance Procedures document

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

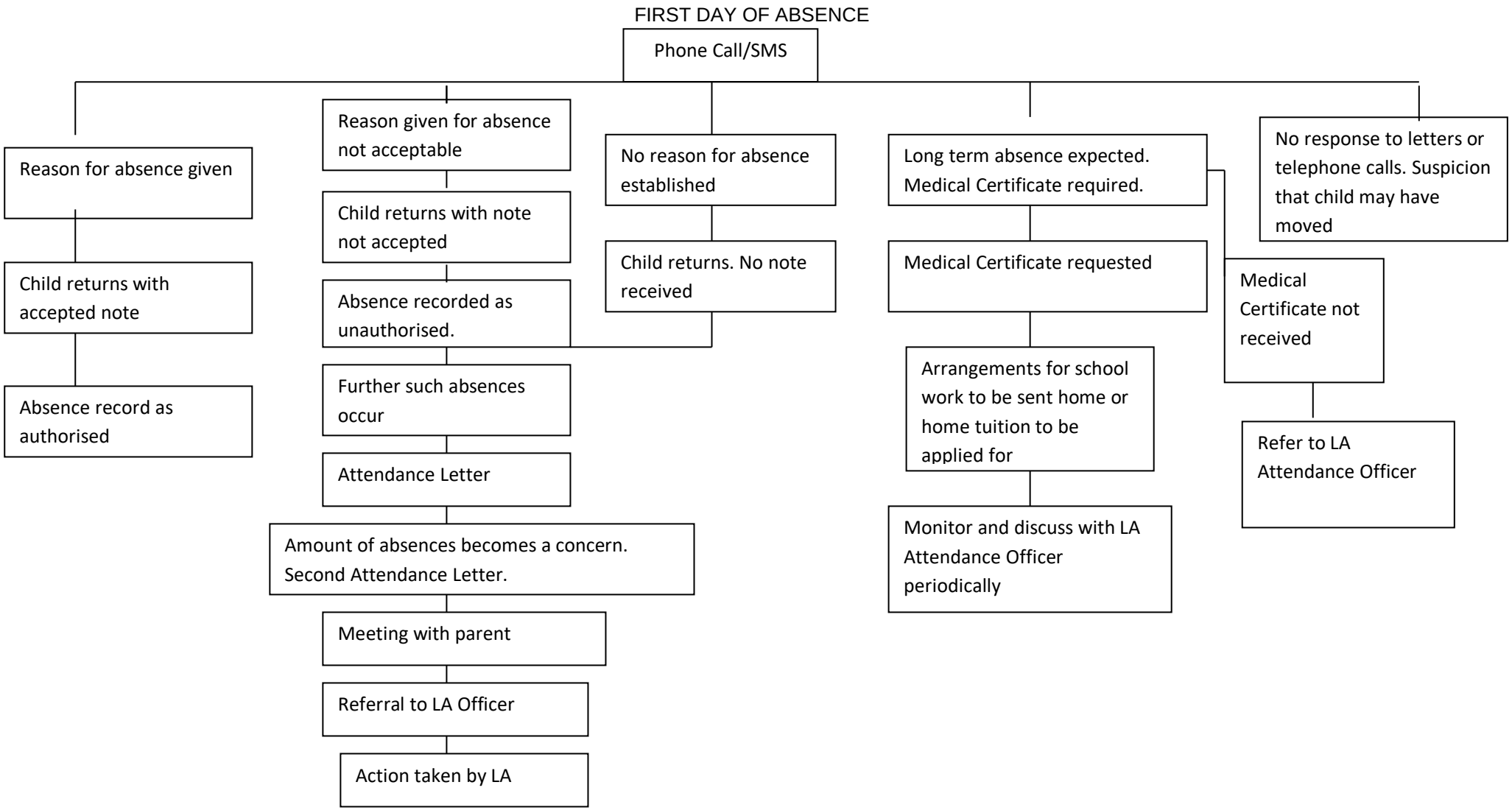
Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the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

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

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

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

APPENDIX II

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY – FLOW CHART

Only the school is able to authorise absences. All reasons are received in good faith