

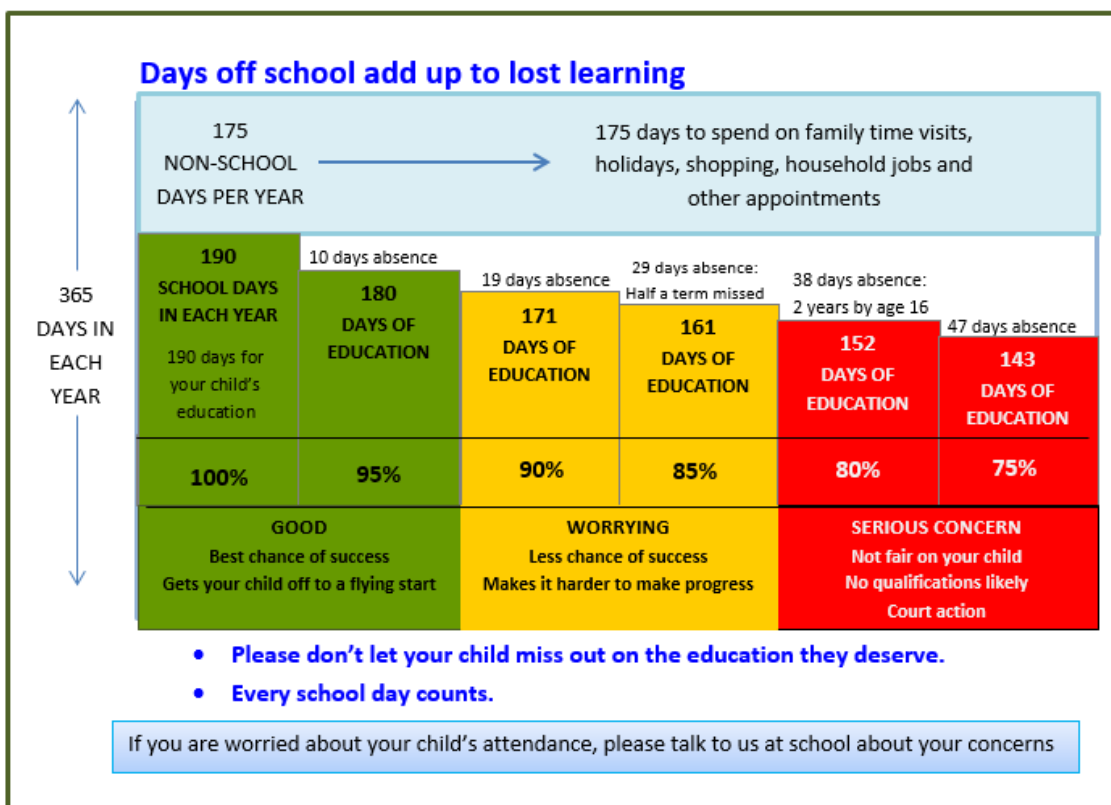
Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

This is the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy which outlines what parents can expect from the school and what the school can expect from every parent/carers and pupil. The policy will be reviewed to accommodate any changes which may occur. Please read the policy and ensure that your child is familiar with it. Please keep it in a safe place for reference.

At Holbeach Primary School, the Headteacher and staff recognise that there is a direct link between regular attendance and good academic performance. It is our aim that all pupils will reach their full potential both academically, creatively, personally and socially.

At our school we aim to achieve very good or better attendance for all our pupils.
(Expected = 96%, Very Good = 97.5%, Excellent = 99%, Perfect = 100%)



2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy seeks to provide clarity of the procedures followed at Holbeach Primary School with regard to attendance and punctuality.

It also seeks to support the school in achieving its three clear Aims/Objectives with regard to attendance. These are:

- To raise and maintain attendance levels to at least 96%
- To reduce the levels of unauthorised absences
- To improve levels of punctuality on a daily basis

3. Punctuality Procedures

Holbeach Primary School actively discourages lateness. A pupil who arrives late not only disrupts their continuity of learning, but also that of others in their class.

School begins at the following times each day:

- Nursery - 9:15am
- Early Years, KS1 and KS2 – 9:00am

For the Nursery the gate is opened at 9:15am and a member of staff stands by the gate for 10 minutes to allow parents/carers to drop their children and leave. The class teacher then takes the register (by 9:20am)

In the rest of the school, the bell is rung at 9:00am and the children line up in designated areas. The class teacher brings the children into class and the register is taken. Meanwhile, the school gates on Doggett Road are closed and locked (by 9:05am).

If a child arrives after the gates are locked (9:05am), they are considered to be late and will need to register with the main office on Nelgarde Road. Children who arrive late are marked with an 'L' in the register and a note is made of the time arrived and the reason for the lateness. If a child arrives after 9.30am (i.e. after the register is closed), they are considered to be absent from the morning session and will be marked with a 'U'.

Any persistently late pupils are monitored by the School Attendance Officer (SAO) who will write to parents/carers if their child is late three times within a two week period. The SAO will also liaise with the Local Authority's Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO) with a view to further action.

School finishes at the following times each day:

- Nursery (morning session) - 12:15pm
- Early Years, KS1 and KS2 – 3:20pm

In the Nursery, parents/carers collect their children promptly from the class room (as teachers have further commitments after school).

In the rest of the school parents/carers collect their children promptly from the designated area in the playground (or from the classroom door in the case of Reception classes).

Please note that only adults identified on the school records as permitted to collect the children will be allowed to collect (see separate Safeguarding policy for further details).

If a child is not collected at 3:20pm, they will remain in the playground until 3:30pm when they will be taken to the Reflection Room for late collection. Parents/Carers should go to the main office on Nelgarde Road for late collection of a child

In cases where a child is not collected within 15 minutes of the end of the school day or after school activity a charge of £5.00 will be made to the parent/carer for the first 15 minutes of non-collection, and then £1.00 thereafter for each minute that the child is not collected (see separate Charging Policy for further details).

Children who are persistently collected late after 3:20pm will be referred to the Headteacher or possibly Children's Social Care.

4. Absence Procedures

Regular attendance enhances your child's education and social development. Which is why, we aim for all children to maintain between 95-96% attendance through the school year.

Therefore, if your child's attendance falls below 90%, we will have to ask you to provide medical evidence as proof for any absences before we can authorise it. This can be in the form of an

appointment letter, doctors or nurses note, copy of a prescribed prescription, or the actual medical label from the medicine bottle.

Once this evidence has been seen your child's attendance will be authorised as illness. Without any form of medical proof your child's attendance will be recorded as unauthorised.

Absences that are not medical

If you require your child to be absent from school, then you are asked to complete the 'Absence Request Form' stating why your child will be absent from school and on which days.

Please note: This can only be authorised if your child has an attendance of 95% or over. All requests will be looked at and under exceptional circumstances maybe authorised but not guaranteed.

The school's absence procedures are summarised in Appendix A (which is a flowchart identifying the steps taken by the school), however, the following section provides a detailed overview of the process.

Absence Due to Illness

In the event that a child becomes ill and cannot attend school, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform the school on the first day of absence (by 9.30am), giving a reason. There is an answerphone service to enable parents/carers to report the absence before the office is open.

Alternatively, you can email admin@holbeach.lewisham.sch.uk and confirm the absence and reason that way. However, please note that a telephone call or letter does not authorise an absence. Only the Headteacher can authorise an absence.

If the school does not hear from the parent/carer by 9:30am during the first day of absence, you will receive a telephone call asking for a reason for the absence and the expected date of return. Any absences for which the school does not receive a reason will be followed up via telephone and email.

From the second day of absence onwards, when parents fail to provide a reason for the absence, the SAO may conduct a home visit or, for safeguarding purposes, request a welfare check from the police. This is to avoid a child becoming 'Missing in Education'.

If your child has a medical appointment, please inform the school office in advance and provide evidence of your appointment (e.g. a copy of the appointment letter). Children are expected, when possible, to attend school before/after the appointment. **However, in order to minimise the disruption to your child's education, whenever possible all medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours or at the very start or very end of the school day.**

In addition to absence due to ill health, there may be other occasions when a child might be absent from school (e.g. for Religious Observance or other exceptional circumstances).

5. Term time absence due to exceptional circumstances

Although there is no entitlement for children to have time off during term time, the Headteacher may agree to a request for absence. However, this will only be in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Parents/Carers must complete and submit a Leave During School Time Request Form (see Appendix D) addressed to the headteacher, in advance of the intended absence. Each request is then judged on an individual basis and in line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and the Human Rights Act.

A reply will be sent to the parent within 48 hours, confirming if the request has been authorised or not and explaining the reasons why.

It is our policy that:

- Only in exceptional circumstances will any requests be allowed, and then only up to a maximum of 10 school days. (The cheaper cost of holidays in term time is not an acceptable reason for an application).
- A pupil's overall attendance pattern will be taken into consideration when a request is received (in most cases an attendance record of well over 96% would be a minimum requirement).
- When an employer will only allow specific term-time dates for holiday the parent will be asked for a letter from the employer stating this.
- We will request confirmation/evidence of any family functions (e.g. the order of service at a wedding or funeral) to support any requests.
- If the school does not agree and your child is still taken for a holiday, the absence will be unauthorised and a form will be sent to the Attendance & Welfare Officer informing them of the absence.
- Please note, Parents/Carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (e.g. birthdays, shopping, haircuts) will be recorded as unauthorised and Parents/Carers may be requested to meet with the Attendance & Welfare Officer.
- Evidence such as copies of Flight tickets/travel tickets are likely to be requested.

Incidences of children being taken on an unauthorised holiday will be dealt with on a case by case basis, but may result in the Parents/Carers receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Please note that, when year 6 children visit their prospective secondary schools in the Autumn Term, these are not deemed as absences.

6. Persistent Absence

The law (Section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996) states that:

“If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence”

When a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, the school will write to the parent/carer to inform them and may invite them in to discuss if any support is required.

If there is no improvement in the pupil's attendance (e.g. it remains below 90% without any good reason) a referral will be made to the Local Authority's Attendance and Welfare Officer and the pupil's parent/carer will be invited to attend a meeting in school with the school's AWO and the Local Authority's AWO. Additionally, where a pupil has had three or more broken weeks over a six week period, the AWO will monitor the pupil's future attendance to identify any concerns that may need to be addressed.

The Attendance and Welfare Officer can also offer a range of support to families in the first instance, but may initiate legal action against the parent/carer if they fail to ensure their child/children go to school regularly and where there is no legitimate reason for the absence. This action may take one of two forms:

- The issuing of a Penalty Notice and Fine (A Penalty Notice shall be for the sum of £60.00 to be paid within 21 days. The penalty rises to £120.00 should payment not be made within 21 days and must be paid within a further 28 days)
- Prosecution in the local Magistrates Court

If a child's attendance falls below 90% from the start of term in the September, their attendance will be marked as unauthorised until suitable medical evidence (e.g. a note from GP, hospital letter, prescription or a label form prescribed medicine) or other relevant documentation has been presented to the school for photocopying. Once the evidence is accepted, the attendance code will be changed to an authorised absence.

7. School Attendance Responsibilities

- The School Attendance Officer and the Headteacher are responsible for monitoring attendance on a weekly basis.
- The School Attendance Officer and the Headteacher are responsible for liaison with the Local Authority Attendance and Welfare Officer.
- The School Attendance Officer and the Headteacher will consider pupils' attendance difficulties on an individual basis.
- The School Office Staff will telephone parents/carers if an absence is not notified to the school by 9:30am.
- The School Attendance Officer and the Headteacher are responsible for monitoring and updating the Attendance Policy.
- The school will discuss attendance and punctuality during parent/carer consultation days and parents will also receive a copy of their child's attendance in the end of year report.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the school fulfils its legal duty to publish its attendance figures all stakeholders (children, staff, governors, parents/carers etc.) on a regular basis, including via the school Newsletter.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the school promotes good attendance.
- Parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure their children attend school.

8. School Leavers

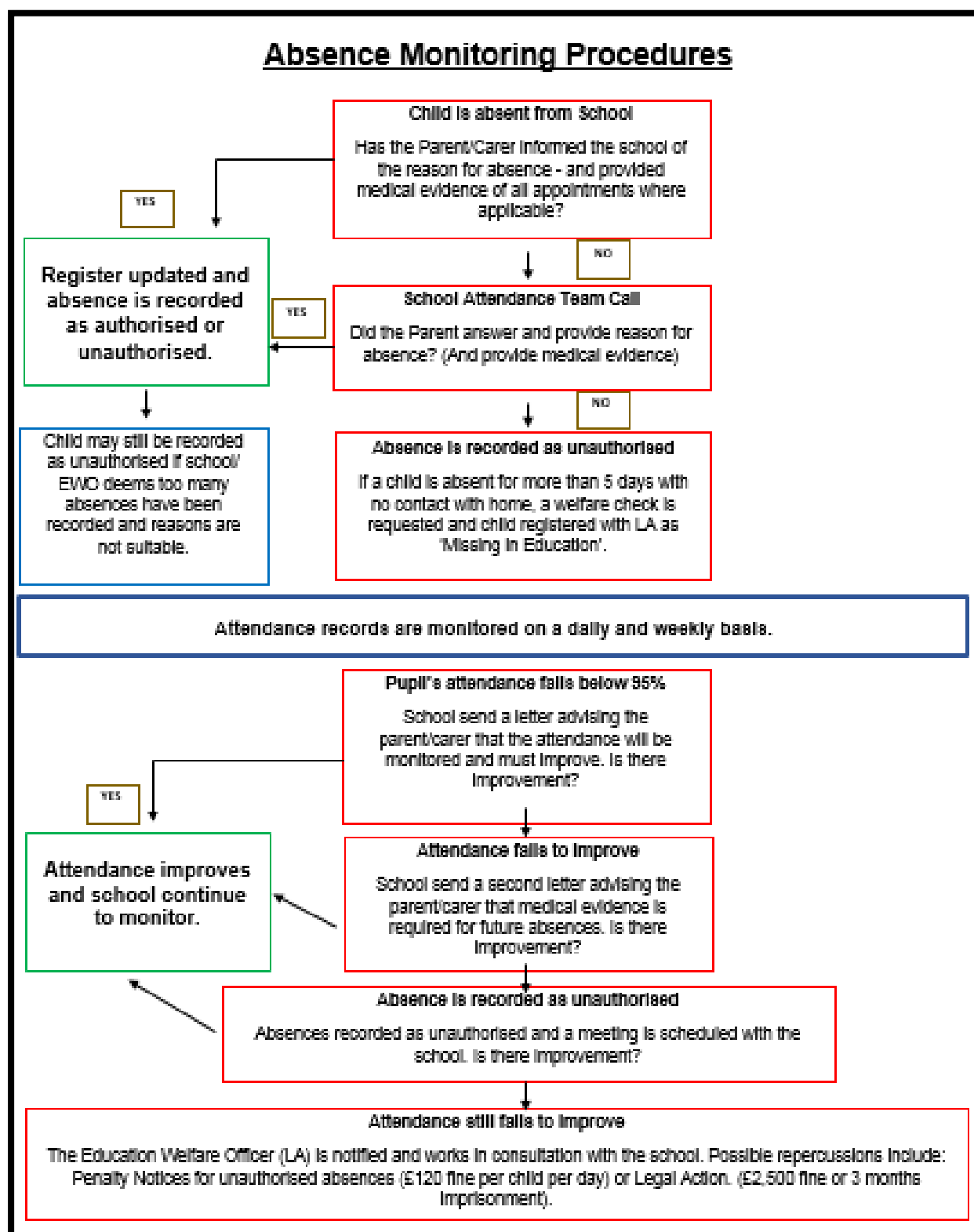
If a child is leaving, other than at the end of Year 6, parents are asked to:

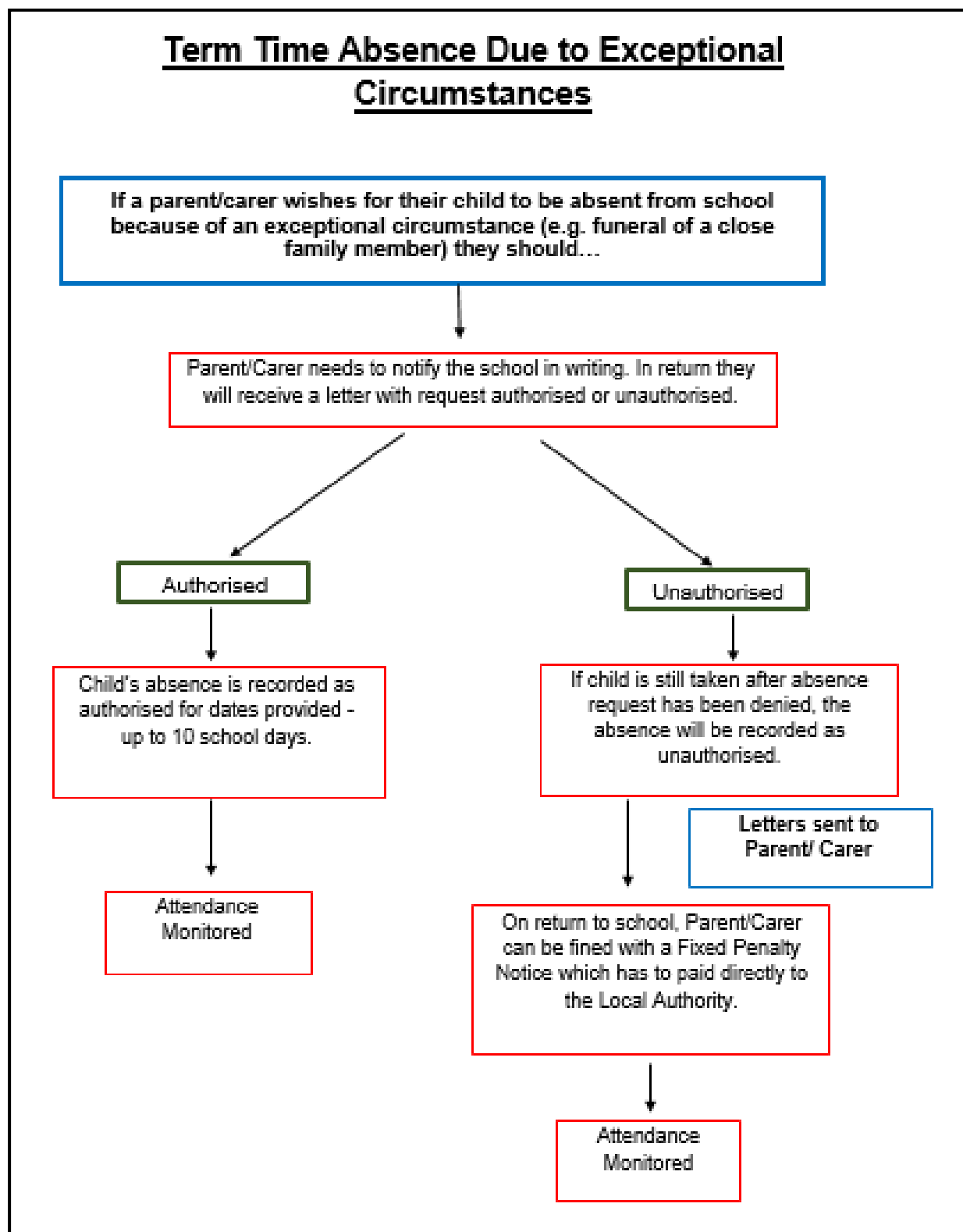
- Notify the school before completing an in-year application form (to allow the school to ascertain the reason for the move).
- Give the school full information about their plans, including date of move, new address (where appropriate), or at least the town you will be moving to; name of new school and start date, when known, and reasons for moving.
- Provide the new school with contact details for Holbeach to make it easier for them to make contact and records to be transferred.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and the above information has not been provided, and no contact can be made then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Social Care, Attendance & Welfare, the Policy and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child. By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Appendix A – Holbeach Absence Monitoring Procedures



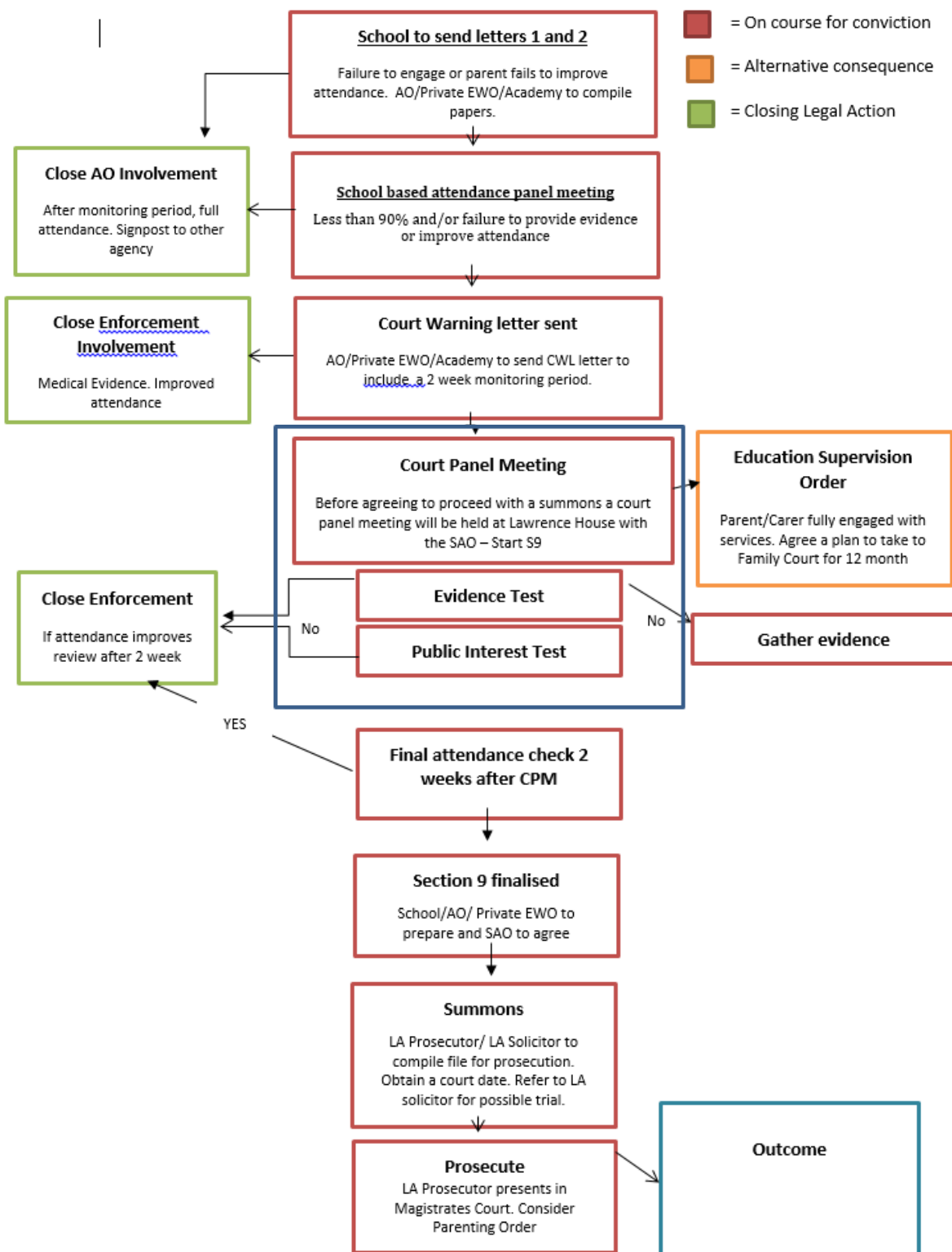


Appendix C – Absence Monitoring Procedures



Early Help Service – Enforcement Model

Education Act 1996 (revised 2011) Section 444 1 & 1(a)- failure to ensure regular attendance.



Appendix D – Leave During School Time Request Form

Leave During School Time - Request Form

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during school term time. Since September 2013, the Government have instructed schools that absence can only be considered under exceptional family circumstances.

A request for absence to be authorised MUST be made in advance. Before we consider authorising any absence the following points will need to be considered:

- Your child's previous attendance history
- Age of the child
- Reason for absence
- No absences for year 6 pupils will be authorised prior to the May

Child's Name:		Class:	
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Date of 1st Day of Absence:		Date of Return to School:	
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Number of School Days Absent:	
Reasons for Absence (Please include as much detail as possible):	

Signed:		Date:	
Name:			
Relationship to Child:			

Please email completed form. The school will contact you with the outcome of your request.

Office Use Only			
Total Number of Days Requested:			
Total Number of Days Authorised:			
Total number of Days Unauthorised:			
If Unauthorised Reason Why:			
Signed:			Date:
Name:			
Copies sent to:	Parent:	Pupils File:	Other:



Attendance Policy

Chair of Governors: *Sharon Farnley* (please print name)

Signed:

Sharon Farnley

Headteacher: *Tom Bulpitt* (please print name)

Signed:

T Bulpitt

Date of Policy: March 2023

Date of Review: March 2024