



Nether Hall School

# Attendance Policy

<b>Policy Date:</b>	January 2024	<b>Policy Review Date:</b>	January 2026
<b>Responsible Person:</b>	Helen Robinson		
Sarah Naylor Headteacher	Signature: <i>S. Naylor.</i>	Date:	9/1/2024
Adrian Keene Chair of Governors	Signature: Not Required	Date:	

## **INTRODUCTION**

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote good attendance
- Outline how attendance is monitored at Nether Hall School
- Detail parental responsibility for a child's good attendance
- Explain the implications of pupils being absent from school
- Explain the procedures and practice that Nether Hall School follows if a pupil's attendance becomes a cause for concern
- Explain the roles of those involved in attendance proceedings
- Outline how Nether Hall School will work with parents to ensure all pupils attend school as frequently as possible
- Adhere to the Local Authority (LA) guide on the management of pupil attendance

## **ATTENDANCE AT NETHER HALL SCHOOL**

Ensuring high levels of pupil attendance is a significant factor in children achieving positive outcomes. Attending school is a legal requirement. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has access to the education they are entitled to by law. Working together to improve school attendance (GOV.UK) sets out government expectations of schools and local authorities; this guidance sets out new statutory responsibilities for LA's which came into force from September 2023.

At Nether Hall all staff recognise education plays a fundamental role in our pupils' lives.

Pupils spend the majority of their day at school, where they learn, develop and embed new skills, form relationships and are provided with access to a wide range of learning and enrichment opportunities which have a life-long impact.

When a pupil is absent from school, they miss out on vital learning opportunities and as a result their relationships and development may be affected.

We understand that many of our pupils have complex health, care and medical needs that are often the reason for their absence. We will work closely with our families to try to understand reasons for absence and support and improve attendance.

## **RECOGNISING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN PUPILS' ATTENDANCE**

As a special educational needs school, we understand the attendance record of one pupil may be very different to that of another. We always review each pupil's attendance individually and explore the reasons for each absence.

We understand 100% attendance may not be possible for many of our pupils for a number of reasons including; recovery time after being unwell, surgery, hospitalisation and long-term illness. Pupils who are absent for any of these reasons can be supported, if appropriate, to continue their learning at home. The school wellbeing coordinator will work with the family, the class teacher and the phase leader to make these arrangements.

Should we have concerns around attendance, we will follow the school 'Attendance Procedure'.

## **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to a full-time education suitable to them and their individual needs. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at school. Parents also have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.

At Nether Hall School we value our positive relationships with all families and will work alongside them, and in collaboration with wider professionals, where appropriate, to support children in attending school regularly. The school works to promote high attendance levels for all pupils and will seek to involve the education welfare service where a child's unauthorised absence is continuing despite efforts on the school's part to resolve the concerns. (See Appendix 10 for the Statutory support and role of the Education Welfare Service from the LA regarding school attendance).

We ask parents to:

- Notify the school office by 9.00 am on any day their child is absent (this can be via telephone or Arbor). Please note, the school may decide it is appropriate to carry out an unannounced home visit where we have not heard from parents about the reason for absence.
- Notify the office, where they anticipate absences e.g., notify the school if their child has an upcoming medical procedure, appointment or visit.
- Provide evidence of planned appointments prior to the date of absence.
- Make every effort for their child to be in school before/after the appointment.
- Communicate regularly with school during times their child is absent.
- Work positively with the school to improve their child's attendance where concerns or difficulties have been identified.
- Engage with the school when reviewing part-time tables or late starts to ensure their child is able to engage meaningfully with school.
- Share any concerns they have about their child's attendance/health so that appropriate support and advice can be explored.

## **Child Missing in Education**

We recognise that any child missing in education presents a safeguarding concern. The Department for Education recognises the children most at risk include, but are not limited to, children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma or Traveling families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

Child missing status applies to pupils who:

- Haven't returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, **or**
- Have been absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive days

We follow the government guidance as set out in the document [schools.leicester.gov.uk/services/education-welfare-service/children-missing-from-education-cme/](https://schools.leicester.gov.uk/services/education-welfare-service/children-missing-from-education-cme/).

We will make reasonable enquiries to establish contact with families and will work jointly with other agencies in order to try and identify where the child may be. Pupil names will only be removed from the register in consultation with the local authority and once all reasonable avenues, have been exhausted. Reasonable enquiries include:

Contacting parents, relatives and friends using known contact details

- Checking local databases within the LA, or the DfE's Key to Success or school2school systems
- Following local information sharing arrangements, making enquiries to:
- Other local databases and agencies
- Agencies known to be involved with the family
- Checking with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force
- Checking with the LA and school from which the pupil moved from originally, or any past LAs or schools that have educated the pupil
- In the case of children of service personnel, checking with the Ministry of Defence [Children's Education Advisory Service](#)
- Conducting a home visit, following our own policies and risk assessment procedures. If appropriate, making enquiries with friends and relatives.

### **PART TIME OR REDUCED TIMETABLES**

Our ambition for our pupils is that they attend school full time, however, where a pupil's individual needs mean they are not able to do this, a part time or reduced timetable may be appropriate. This decision will be made by the head teacher and always in conjunction with parents. Where possible, advice will be sought from professionals involved with the pupil to ensure the decision is in their best interest. A plan will be created and parents will be expected to confirm they are happy in writing (an email or text message will be evidence of written permission as we recognise that for many families, this is the most efficient way for them to communicate with the school). See appendix 4 and the Supporting the Education of Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

These decisions will be reviewed termly with parents to ensure they continue to meet the needs of pupils. Parents always have the option for their child to return to school full time. In the event of a Part-time timetable extending beyond half a term the LA will be notified in accordance with LA's procedures.

### **ATTENDANCE IN PERCENTAGES EXPLAINED**

The following table indicates attendance in percentages and how this equates to days and weeks of **missed** schooling. For example, a pupil with 90% attendance will have **missed** approximately **4 weeks** of school during the academic year. Our staff will always aim to work with families to ensure their children attend school as regularly as possible.

Attendance as a %	Absence as a %	Equivalent number in days	Equivalent number in weeks
95%	5 %	9 days	2 weeks
90%	10%	19 days	4 weeks
85%	15%	29 days	6 weeks
80%	20%	38 days	8 weeks
75%	25%	48 days	10 weeks
70%	30%	57 days	11.5 weeks
65%	35%	67 days	13.5 weeks
60%	40%	76 days	15 weeks
55%	45%	86 days	17 weeks
50%	50%	95 days	19 weeks

## NETHER HALL SCHOOLS PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Listed below are the practices Nether Hall School uses to monitor attendance.

### Register/registration

- Pupils' attendance is registered in their class using Arbor when they arrive in school.
- Attendance is registered between 8:50 am and 9:30 am.
- The coding used for registers can be found in appendix 1.
- Pupils, who arrive after 9:30 am, will be marked as late unless they have an agreed later start time or there has been an issue with their transport.
- The parents of any pupil who is absent are expected to inform the school as soon as possible about the absence and the reason for the absence.
- Please see pupil absence procedure document chart in appendix 2.

### Absences

Absences will be registered using codes outlined on Arbor, the school's attendance software. Please see appendix 1 for the full list of codes.

Absences will be marked using the correct coding and will be either **authorised** or **unauthorised**.

**Authorised absences** – are when parents have informed the school via a phone call or other means e.g. Arbor of a valid reason as to why a pupil is unable to attend school.

Authorised absences can include; illness, religious observance, medical appointments, (please share proof of appointments via email or copies to the school office) bereavement, marriage of immediate family member and other authorised circumstances

**Unauthorised absences** – are when no valid reason has been provided by parents for an absence or where the school has not been advised of an absence.

### **Leave of absence during term time**

Nether Hall recognises that pupils may require time away from school for a range of reasons and should any pupil require time off during term time, parents should complete a 'Leave of absence request' form (appendix 4) which is available from the school office.

Please note, that in-line with the Government's document, *Working together to Improve School Attendance*, a leave of absence can only be granted providing the request has been made in advance, and where there are exceptional circumstances. Nether Hall School cannot authorise a leave of absence after it has taken place.

When completing the leave of absence request form, parents are asked to include as much detail as possible and provide exceptional reasons as to why the absence could not be taken outside of term time. Parents who do not include enough detail within the leave of absence request may receive a phone call from the school to discuss the reasons for absence. If the absence fails to meet the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria then the request can be denied by the school and any absence will be registered as unauthorised.

The following information has been provided by the Local Authority:

*Please be aware that parents may be fined £60 if their child has unauthorised absence from school. If this is not paid within 21 days the fine doubles to £120. Parents also face prosecution in the Magistrates' Court; a fine of up to £2,500 or a community penalty could be imposed together with a Parenting Order. A criminal record will then exist for the parent.*

### **Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance supported by the School Well-being Coordinator**

The main purpose is to:

- Monitor, analyse and intervene to improve pupil attendance
- Co-ordinate support for pupils and families where absence is long term e.g. illness, hospitalisation etc.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

The senior leader with responsibility for attendance will be informed of all reasons for absence and shall:

- Monitor weekly attendance figures for all pupils in the school and challenge any concerns or patterns of absence
- Discuss any issues with other senior leaders and class teachers as appropriate
- The senior leader will configure attendance figures every half term, term and at the end of the academic year
- Review attendance and school attendance practices/procedures, share these with the rest of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governing Body

- Liaise with the Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) in relation to pupils where attendance has become a significant concern
- Work with the School Well-being Coordinator to discuss attendance concerns with parents before 'Step 1' of the 'Attendance Procedure' is initiated
- Initiate the 'Attendance Procedure' when attendance becomes a cause for concern, see the school 'Attendance Procedure'.
- Nether Hall school will adhere to Leicester City Council's graduated attendance response as outlined in Appendix 11.

### **Long term absences due to long term illness / surgery and recovery**

When a pupil is absent long term, e.g., due to long term illness, long term hospital admission, surgery or recovery from surgery then the School Well-being Coordinator will be informed and they will become the main point of contact within the school.

The role of the School Well-being Coordinator is to ensure effective communication between parents and the school and to facilitate learning where appropriate; support pupils back in to school and support families with any changes or transitions.

With parents' consent, school staff may visit pupils in hospital, provide personalised resources to use at home or in hospital and carry out 1:1 goal focused learning sessions at home. These sessions will be agreed in advance with parents to ensure the pupil is well enough to access them. The School Well-being Coordinator will also liaise with the Children's Hospital School when a pupil is registered there and provide information and advice as required. See Supporting the Education of Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy for more detailed information.

### **Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**

The following information was taken from the Leicester City Council Website:

*Please be aware that parents may be fined £60 if their child has unauthorised absence from school. If this is not paid within 21 days the fine doubles to £120. Parents also face prosecution in the Magistrates' Court; a fine of up to £2,500 or a community penalty could be imposed together with a Parenting Order. A criminal record will then exist for the parent.*

More information on the role of the Education Welfare Officer can be found on the following website: <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-and-colleges/attendance-behaviour-and-welfare/attendance-and-truancy/>

### **Suspensions and permanent exclusions**

DfE Exclusions Guidance is available online. In the case of suspensions, schools have a duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to provide suitable education that is supervised to any pupil from the sixth day onwards during a suspension. This may be through a reciprocal agreement with another school.

When a pupil is accessing the alternative provision, where they are not dual registered, they should be coded 'B' (approved educational activity) and any absences from the alternative provision should be recorded using the appropriate absence code. Where they are dual registered, all sessions at the other provision should be 'D' coded in the main school from which they are suspended/excluded. (Specific advice on enrolment status and the coding of dual registered / guest pupils is available on the Schools' Extranet.)

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (S.103) places a responsibility upon parents to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours during the first five days of their exclusion/suspension; failure to do so constitutes an offence. Under S.105 Education and Inspections Act 2006 parents can be issued a Penalty Notice where it is believed they have committed this offence. The head teacher can request that the EWS issues a Penalty Notice to each parent by completing a form (available from the EWS) and by including relevant documentation.

In cases where incidents have occurred of a serious nature which led to a decision on the part of the head teacher that the pupil must attend alternative provision, if the pupil's parent/s disagree with the decision, should dialogue fail to bring about a resolution, under section 29(3) of the Education Act 2002, the governing body may require pupils to attend at any place outside the school premises for the purposes of receiving education. The LA provides education to permanently excluded pupils from the 6th day onwards.

### **STRATEGIES USED TO SUPPORT AND IMPROVE ATTENDANCE**

Nether Hall School will work with parents to improve attendance before initiating the '*Attendance Procedure*' which follows step by step guidance for the EOC to action.

Strategies the school may use to support parents in improving their child's attendance may include, but are not limited to:

- Messages sent via classroom-based staff
- Text messages or emails
- Phone calls
- Absence follow up if no call has been received from parents notifying the school of the reasons for a pupil's absence (please see the absence flow chart in appendix 2)
- Phone calls to parents from the Senior Leader/School Well-being Team to discuss absence and allow parents an opportunity to inform the school of any concerns or issues they may be experiencing
- Sign posting parents to appropriate agencies for support and advice as appropriate
- Support from teachers to parents due to their knowledge of those pupils.
- Meetings with parents and the Senior Leader/School Well-being Team /school staff to discuss absence
- Discussion about reduced time timetables, where appropriate to the individual circumstance of the pupil which are agreed by both parents and the school
- Sharing attendance data with parents
- Teachers will inform the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of any absence concerns
- The office will ensure consistency when coding absences through checking with the School Well-being Team
- Gathering information from pupil progress meetings where attendance is discussed with class teachers and raising concerns as necessary
- Sending letters home
- Seeking advice and/or making referrals to the Education Welfare Service (EWS)
- Offering support from the School Well-being Team for long term absences.
- Seeking support from external agencies where relevant – Social workers, Family support workers



The strategies listed on the previous page will be implemented prior to following the attendance procedure, shown in appendix 2 and 9, as well as throughout the attendance procedure.

### **Further Education Attendance (Pupils over the age of 16)**

The attendance of pupils over the age of 16 will be monitored and any concerns will be raised with parents. Staff will offer various approaches of support and guidance to the pupil and their parents and the School Well-being Coordinator will highlight the school's concerns and the impact any failure to attend is having on the pupils learning.

#### **Useful websites:**

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-and-colleges/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

#### **APPENDICES:**

**Appendix 1 - Register codes**

**Appendix 2 - Absence Procedure for Pupils**

**Appendix 3 – Staff Roles**

**Appendix 4 - Part Time or Reduced Timetable Plan**

**Appendix 5 – Leave of Absence Request Form**

**Appendix 6 – Letter 1 Template**

**Appendix 7 – Letter 2 Template**

**Appendix 8 – Letter 3 Template**

**Appendix 9 – Consecutive and Non-consecutive absence flowcharts**

**Appendix 10 – Statutory support and role of the Education Welfare Service from the LA regarding school attendance**

**Appendix 11 - Leicester city graduated attendance response**

## Appendix 1 – Register Codes

The codes used to register pupils' attendance on SIMS are listed below:

Please note that Teachers are only required to use limited codes during registration.

Reception, the office, the Attendance Facilitator and the Attendance Manager will consult one another before entering codes to ensure accuracy and the correct codes are used.

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTOR</b>
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (not Dual registration)
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances
<b>D</b>	Dual registration
<b>E</b>	<b>Excluded</b>
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (not agreed)
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)
<b>I</b>	Illness
<b>J</b>	Interview
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)
<b>M</b>	Medical / Dental Appointments
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised Absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip
<b>W</b>	Work experience
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
<b>X</b>	Non-compulsory school age or Covid-19 related
–	All should attend / No mark recorded

## Appendix 2 - Absence Procedure for Pupils

Parents should contact us on the first day of absence with the reason for the pupil's absence. If it is known that the pupil will be absent for more than one day, this will be recorded on Arbor. In all cases of absence, the procedure below should be followed:

Day of Absence	Home Should	School Should
First Day	Call school and give: Reason for absence Expected return date	<b>OFFICE</b> to call home if we have not received a call Mark reason on register/Arbor for duration of known absence
Second Day		<b>OFFICE</b> to call home if <b>we were expecting pupil to return to school</b>
Third Day	If reason has changed or if pupil was expected back in school then call school to explain.	<b>OFFICE</b> to call home and ask how pupil is and ask if they would like a call back from the teacher. The result of this call to be recorded on Arbor.  <b>TEACHERS</b> to call (during lunch or after school) if asked to (check Arbor) – try to get a date for return (if appropriate) – record on CPOMS  If it is known that it will be a longer period of absence then teachers should discuss sending activities home (if appropriate).
Fifth Day		<b>School Well-being Team</b> to call family to discuss concerns and ask if any support is needed.  Date set for pupil to return OR date for meeting (home visit?) with <b>School Well-being Team</b> (unless medically explained) Results of call to be recorded on CPOMS.
Meeting (Home Visit)		<b>School Well-being Team &amp; HOME</b> develop action plan to support return to school - if appropriate.
Weekly		<b>TEACHER</b> to call/email. Send home activities etc in line with action plan. Add to CPOMS.
Action Plan Completed		Further meeting with <b>School Well-being Team &amp; PHASE LEADER</b> to outline next steps if no date for return set.
Still not attending		If all steps followed and pupil is still not attending (and there is not a medical reason documented) then family referred to Education Welfare Service (EWS)
Attending		Action Plan and outcome added to CPOMS

### PUPIL IN HOSPITAL

If a pupil is in hospital, a discussion will take place with Jo and the Phase Leaders to determine the most appropriate person to maintain contact. The named person should add information gained to CPOMS to ensure other staff are kept updated as appropriate.

### Appendix 3 – Staff roles

We recognise that promoting good attendance is everyone’s responsibility:

<b>Roles in regards to attendance matters</b>	
<b>Teachers</b>	<p>Register pupils using the correct coding.            Register pupils before 9:30 am.            Inform SLT of any attendance concerns.            Suggest ways to improve attendance to parents before escalating to Phase Leader or School Well-being Coordinator.            Provide remote or home learning sessions for pupils absent from school due to long term illness or hospitalisation.</p>
<b>Administrative staff</b>	<p>Call parents/carers if no contact has been made regarding an absent pupil - see Appendix 2.            Record outcome of contact on Arbor to inform the Class Teacher, Lead Teaching Assistant, Well-being Coordinator, Phase Leader and DSL if appropriate.</p>
<b>Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance supported by the School Well-being Coordinator (SWCo)</b>	<p>Monitor pupils’ attendance throughout the academic year.            Ensure ‘Attendance Procedure’ is shared with relevant staff, understood and adhered to.            Meet with SLT to discuss attendance concerns and where this crosses over with safeguarding concerns.            Work with families to improve attendance where appropriate.            Liaise with the EWO.</p>
<b>Senior Leadership Team (SLT)</b>	<p>Discuss attendance concerns highlighted by the SWCo.            Call parents/carers to discuss concerns where necessary.            Decide whether a home visit is necessary (where no contact has been made by the parents/carers)</p>
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</b>	<p>Advise staff members on appropriate actions to take following an attendance concern.</p>
<b>Education Welfare Officer (EWO)</b>	<p>Advise and inform school on attendance matters.            Liaise with the School Well-being Coordinator &amp; Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance.            Implement legal proceedings where necessary.            Lead on attendance matters due to unsuccessful attempts by the school.</p>
<b>Governors/Link Governor</b>	<p>Review the attendance policy            Review attendance data (trends and patterns) submitted to Governor meetings. Governors should be informed about attendance of individuals where there is concern.            Ensure that training needs are met for school staff</p>

**Appendix 4 - Part Time or Reduced Timetable Plan**

Pupil Name		Class	
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Reason for Timetable Plan
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Start Date		Review Due Date	
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Week Beginning	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	IN	OUT	IN	OUT	IN	OUT	IN	OUT	IN	OUT

Notes
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Parent Name			
Signature		Date	

Plan agreed by			
Signature		Date	

## Appendix 5 – Leave of Absence Request Form

### Absence Request Form – TO BE REQUESTED BEFORE DATE OF ABSENCE

Pupil Name		Class	
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Reason for Absence – please provide as much detail as possible.
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Absence Start Date		Return Date to School	
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- We must stress that being absent from school for any period of time causes a great deal of disruption to a pupil’s education.
- Holidays or other absence should be taken during the school holiday periods.
- If absence is due to an emergency then the number of days should be limited to the minimum.
- If the return date is not confirmed then regular contact with school **MUST** be maintained – a firm date for return should be confirmed as soon as possible.

Our safeguarding procedures state that we must keep a record of pupils’ whereabouts when they go abroad. **We require copies of your travel documents along with address and contact details of where you will be staying.** If the absence is approved then please supply this information before the absence start date.

Parent Name			
Signature		Date	

Has absence been approved?	Yes		Please supply copies of documents detailed above in bold.	
	No		<u>Reason absence has not been authorised:</u>	
Signature			Date	

## **Appendix 6 – Letter 1**

**School and other Logo's will be visible here at the top of the official letter.**

RE: Attendance Concerns – Attendance below 80%

Dear

We are concerned that (NAME'S) attendance is significantly lower than we would like it to be. Currently their attendance is (%).

Attending school regularly is very important for all children to support both their academic and social learning and development.

We appreciate our pupils often have additional medical appointments that can impact on their attendance. Some of our pupils struggle with their health and we understand this can also affect their attendance. We will always take this into account and would never expect a pupil to attend school when they are too unwell to do so. I have included a leaflet explaining attendance in more detail.

As (NAME'S) attendance is low, we thought it may help you to see their attendance certificate to see when they have been absent this academic year. If you would like to discuss (NAME'S) attendance then please contact me. I am happy to discuss this via the phone, email or during a meeting at school or your home.

As part of our school attendance procedure we require a copy of medical appointment letters to be provided so they can be added to your child's file. We request that pupils attend school before and/or after appointments wherever possible to limit the amount of time out of school.

We will continue to monitor (NAME'S) attendance. If we feel that there are further concerns then we will contact you again to arrange a meeting to discuss a way forward.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Bacon

School Well-Being Coordinator

## **Appendix 7 – Letter 2**

**School and other Logo's will be visible here at the top of the official letter.**

RE: Attendance Concerns – Invitation to Meeting

Dear

We wrote to you on (DATE) regarding our concerns about (NAME'S) attendance. These concerns have continued and currently (HIS/HER) attendance is (%).

At this stage we would like to meet with you to discuss our concerns and work together to agree an action plan.

We have planned this meeting for:

Date:

Time:

Please email us to confirm your attendance and let us know if you would prefer a home visit or a meeting at school? Our main email address is: [office@netherhall.leicester.sch.uk](mailto:office@netherhall.leicester.sch.uk).

Alternatively, you can call the main office on 0116 241 7258.

As part of our school attendance procedure we require a copy of medical appointment letters to be provided so they can be added to your child's file. We also now request that medical evidence of illness is provided for any future absence.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Bacon

School Well-Being Coordinator



## Appendix 8 – Letter 3

**School and other Logo's will be visible here at the top of the official letter.**

RE: Attendance – Referral to Education Welfare Service

Dear

We have been working with you to improve (NAME'S) attendance.

We have tried a number of strategies to support and improve (NAME'S) attendance. These include:

- Phone calls home
- Letters outlining (NAME'S) attendance
- Meeting to agree an action plan

Unfortunately, these concerns have continued and currently (NAME'S) attendance is (%).

Due to the continued low attendance, that meets the legal threshold of 20 absent sessions (equivalent to 10 full days) within a 12 week period, we have now referred our concerns to the Education Welfare Service. They will contact you directly to discuss (NAME'S) attendance.

If you wish to discuss this referral please contact either myself or the Assistant Head Teacher – Helen Robinson.

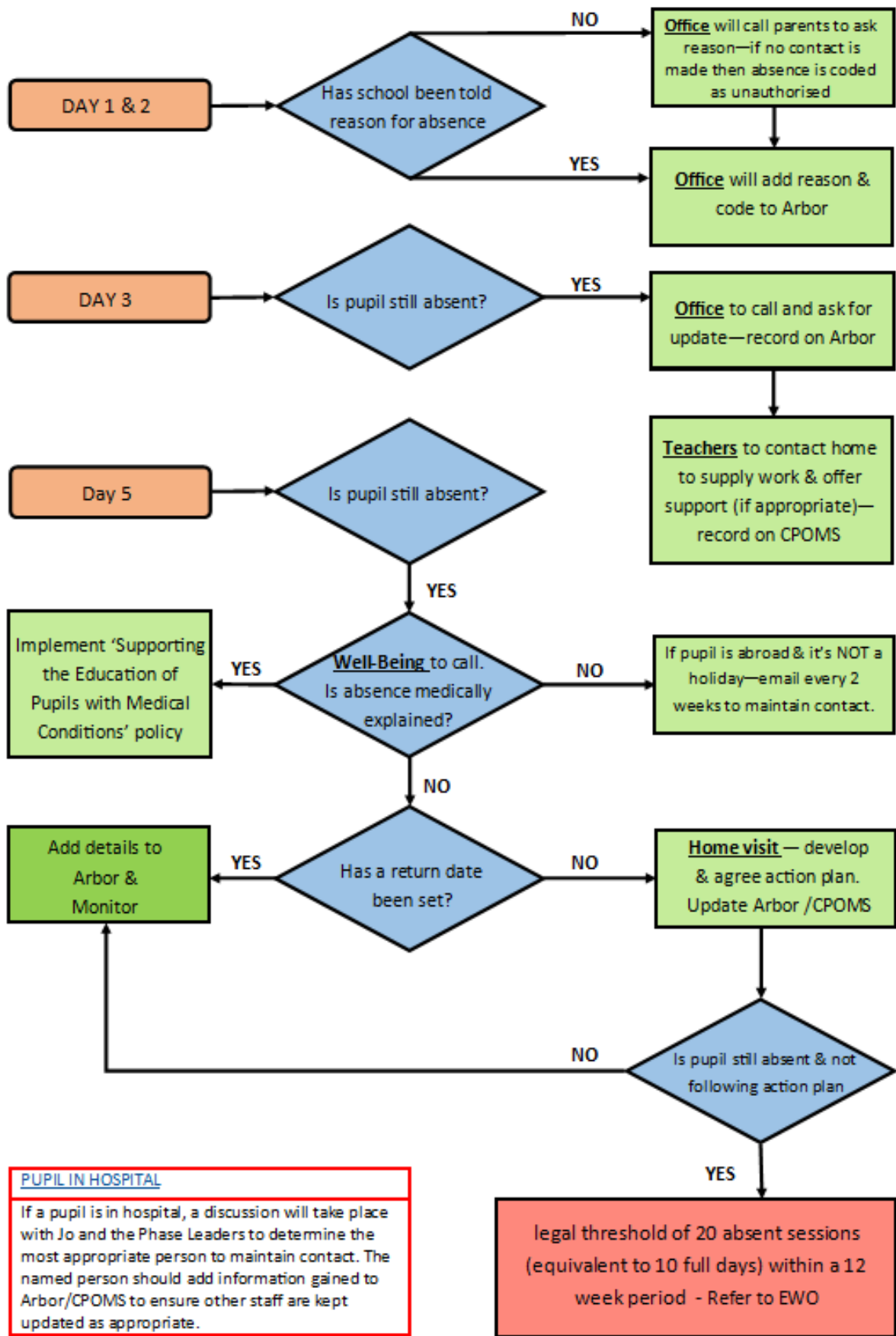
Yours sincerely

Joanne Bacon

School Well-Being Coordinator

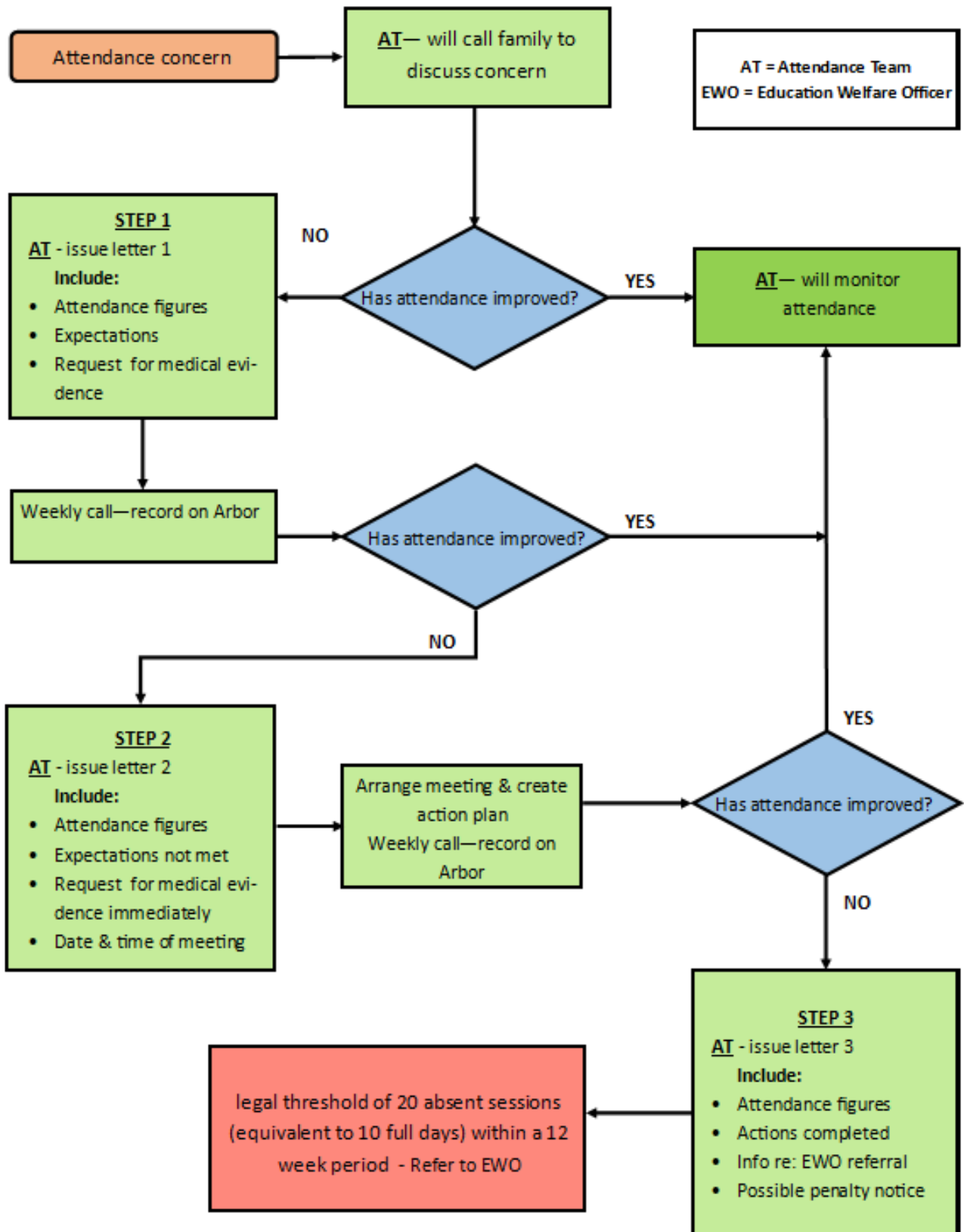
Appendix 9 – Consecutive and Non-consecutive absence flowcharts

Consecutive Absence



Appendix 9 – Consecutive and Non-consecutive absence flowcharts

Non-consecutive Absence



## **Appendix 10 – Statutory support and role of the Education Welfare Service from the LA regarding school attendance**

The statutory work is essentially the work that only the LA can undertake:

- work undertaken from the point we receive a holiday Penalty Notice (PN) request from a school via the E form system
- Court work in respect of unpaid holiday PNs
- Contracts with parents (i.e., school attendance panels) – from September 2023 DfE advise that these are to be treated as a statutory function – see voluntary phase section for more information
- LA Final Warning letters / Interviewing a parent under caution (which we do in a limited number of cases prior to taking court action to determine whether they may have a defence if this is unclear)
- children missing from education referrals (non-starters or leavers) from the point where the school has taken all possible actions including home visits, checks with neighbours etc. and the family cannot be located.
- All work in respect of parents who have elected to home educate and whose children have been removed from roll. (Also, liaison with parents and schools prior to removal from roll where parents agree to engage to discuss their intentions.)
- For children not on a school roll and not receiving a suitable education otherwise, all School Attendance Order casework and enforcement action.
- Child employment and performance licensing related work.

### **The Role of the Education Welfare Service (EWS)**

The primary function of the EWS is that of ensuring that all children of compulsory school age, unless they are receiving a suitable education otherwise, that they are on a school roll and allowed the opportunity to take maximum advantage of the educational provision made available to them by regular attendance at the school.

Specialist duties carried out by the service include enforcement in relation to irregular attendance (Penalty Notices and prosecution in Magistrates' Court), managing child employment and performance licensing (including the licensing of chaperones), work in respect of home educated pupils, work to ensure children who are missing from education (i.e., not on a school roll and not receiving a suitable home education) return to education, and also acting as supervising officers for Education Supervision Orders.

## Appendix 11 - Leicester city graduated attendance response

Details of Leicester City's model of best practice and graduated response to irregular school attendance.

<b>EXPECT</b>
<p><b>Aspire to a high standard of attendance for all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising school attendance improvement across the school.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Display a clear attendance policy on the school website which all staff, young people and parents understand</li><li>➤ Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance</li><li>➤ Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance</li><li>➤ Accurately complete admissions and attendance registers</li><li>➤ Provide regular attendance training for staff</li><li>➤ Have robust daily processes to follow up absence</li><li>➤ Where daily contact cannot be made, consider safe and well checks / follow safeguarding procedures</li><li>➤ Communicate to parents their responsibility for school attendance including their legal duty</li><li>➤ Communicate risks of poor attendance with staff, parents and pupils</li><li>➤ Consider city council BERA approach</li><li>➤ Where absence is for more than 15 days due to ill health, consider Medical Needs Policy</li><li>➤ Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance</li><li>➤ General actions specific to each school - may include;<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use of attendance data</li><li>• Attendance trophies</li><li>• Guidance for teachers/tutors on conversations on attendance</li><li>• Positive messages in assemblies, parents' evenings, in newsletters, on posters, on website, texts</li><li>• First day calling / encouragement</li><li>• Walking bus, breakfast clubs, extracurricular offer</li></ul></li></ul>

<b>MONITOR</b>
<p><b>Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before behaviours become entrenched.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Proactively use data to identify pupils/groups at risk of poor attendance</li><li>➤ Communicate concerning patterns/individual cases to SLT lead for attendance</li><li>➤ Follow attendance procedure to understand attendance issues (e.g., class teacher/form tutor communication with young people and parents)</li><li>➤ Continue to monitor attendance and feedback to SLT on a regular basis</li><li>➤ Engage with termly attendance meeting with LA</li><li>➤ Consider working with sibling(s) schools to monitor whole family attendance</li><li>➤ For young people with other agency involvement, for example those with a social worker, inform agency of attendance concerns, and participate in multi-agency / professionals' meetings</li><li>➤ Monitor and report instances of term time holidays to LA</li></ul>

## LISTEN, UNDERSTAND AND FACILITATE SUPPORT

### Voluntary phase - Assess, Plan, Review, Do

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents, listen, and understand barriers to attendance and agree how partners can work together to resolve them.

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

- Key staff to engage with and form trust-based relationships with young people who are at risk of absenteeism, to listen, understand barriers and support change
- Key staff to work with parents, to listen, understand barriers and support change
- Attendance letters (series)
- Training for teachers / tutors (identification / scripted intervention)
- Targeted group / pupil intervention
- PSP targets
- Attendance letters (series)
- Homework club
- Home visits
- Parents' Evening
- Where multiple issues exist/further investigation is needed, use an **assessment tool** (template available below) with pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance
- Consider how to utilise support services, such as school pastoral team, mentors, school counsellor, Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST), SEMH team, Relate, school nurse, health and wellbeing officers and Early Help and advice, targeted youth support.
- Consider support information available on Leicester Family Hubs / DfE websites
- Act as lead practitioner where all partners agree the school is best placed to lead
- Where young people have other agency involvement, for example pupils with an EHCP, family support worker or social worker, ensure a joined-up approach.
- Consider moving to formal support phase if unauthorised absence continues – complete referral checklist (below)



## FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain consequences clearly and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through a parenting contract (panel) or education supervision order. Educational neglect should be considered at this point.

- Screening of checklist and supporting document - EWS to consider if minimum expectations have been met or if school should undertake alternative actions, or EWS involvement is not appropriate
- Schools / LA to consider using, and implementing a parenting **contract** – panel meeting to be arranged and attended by school, EWO, with parent/s and child (dependent on age and maturity)
- School to monitor compliance with a contract if one is in place following panel meeting
- If the unauthorised absence continues post panel, school to consider request to EWS for enforcement
- If school request further EWS action, based on all information, EWS make decision whether to move to the next stage – if agreed, LA issue Final Warning, or Interview under caution paperwork and EWS monitor attendance with school

## ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working, or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupils right to education.






- If unauthorised absence continues, LA to consider penalty notice for ongoing absence (20 sessions minimum in 12 week period) or
  - LA to consider an Education Supervision Order and/or court action under S444
- Term time holidays – separate process to the above:**
- School to submit penalty notice form to the LA for unauthorised term time holiday (G Code)
  - Cases proceed directly to court in line with Enforcement Policy

List of possible factors to consider during assessment (examples only)

- Health – both physical and mental, also conditions that impact on daily life
- Social – bullying or friendship issues, social media, cyber bullying, feeling of exclusion due to identity related factors
- Academic issues – work, teachers, exams, PE
- Transition issues – new school, new to the city, new to UK
- Home or family factors, parenting, routines, bereavement, parent in prison
- Peer group, vulnerability to risks in community, alcohol, drugs, CSE, radicalisation

### Attendance support plan template

An attendance support plan template is available for use in casework undertaken to resolve attendance concerns. Use of this form is not a requirement although any assessment template used will need to provide a framework for a thorough assessment.

<p><b>Expect</b></p> 	<p>School follows attendance policy - whole school approach to encourage good attendance.</p>
<p><b>Monitor</b></p> 	<p>School undertakes careful monitoring of all pupils' attendance and intervenes early.</p>
<p><b>Listen, Understand, &amp; Facilitate Support</b></p> 	<p>School escalation process. Casework for individual pupils / families. Thorough assessment and planning, involve school colleagues or external services as identified necessary (with consent where required). Review. EWS referral checklist where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with.</p>
<p><b>Formalise Support</b></p> 	<p>School request EWS involvement – share checklist. (Consent not required.)  EWS response – usually either attendance panel meeting or advice to the school re alternative course of action.  If panel held and contract in place, school monitor. If unauthorised absence continues, school request further EWS action.  If agreed, EWS issue Final Warning, or Interview under caution paperwork (EWS decision based on all available information), and EWS monitor attendance with school.  EWS consider Education Supervision Order throughout process.</p>
<p><b>Enforce</b></p> 	<p>Penalty Notice or court action  (decision made by EWS based on all available information.)</p>