

Pupil Attendance Policy



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Review Date:	January 2024



Langley School Pupil Attendance Policy

Introduction

We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all of our pupils.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. This policy sets out how school staff will work with pupils, parents, and partners to promote, encourage and support regular attendance at school and remove any barriers to attendance.

Aims

- To set clear expectations and aspirations that all pupils have a high standard of school attendance and punctuality.
- To improve children's attainment through good attendance.
- To make attendance a priority for everyone.
- To ensure there is a clear process to identify and address emerging attendance concerns
- To work effectively with parents, pupils, and partners through building trusted relationships to work together to remove barriers to attendance.

To achieve these aims for our pupils, we are committed to the following:

- creating a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment
- listening to parents and pupils to understand barriers to attendance
- building trusted relationships with parents and pupils where attendance concerns can be discussed, understood
- promoting a broad, balanced, relevant and engaging curriculum
- recognising and celebrating achievements in all areas of school life.

Legislative Framework

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (sec 444) to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the education authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in the area.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children receive education. Estranged parents with whom the child has had regular contact may be prosecuted as well as the day-to-day carer. Each situation must be dealt with on an individual basis, always remembering the welfare and safety of the child is the paramount concern. The

term 'parent' also includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child as defined by the Children Act 1989 or who have care of the child as defined by the Education Act 1996.

Attendance Partnership Expectations

We expect the following from parents and carers:

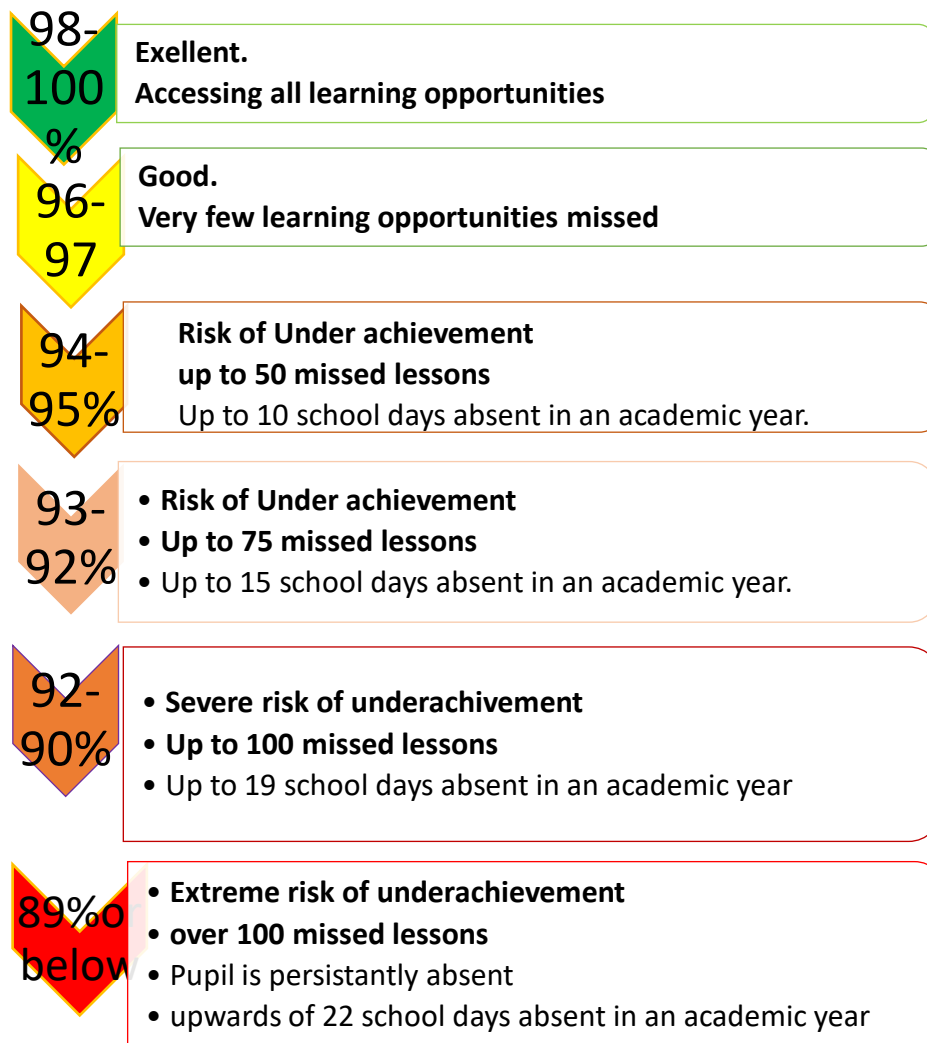
- they ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- they ensure that they follow the school guidelines to report an absence
- to talk to a member of school staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school

Parents/carers and pupils can expect the following from school:

- same day early contact when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason
- regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- follow up support if needed.

Expected levels of attendance

Attending school regularly and on time has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for pupils. Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success. At Langley School we expect all children to achieve attendance that is at least **96%**.



Roles and Responsibilities for attendance:

- Langley School has a named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance.
- Members of school staff both teaching and non-teaching have responsibility to promote good attendance in school for our pupils.
- Members of school staff, both teaching and non-teaching have a responsibility to be vigilant and raise concerns regarding attendance issues e.g. unexplained absences, punctuality, patterns, etc.
- Attendance matters are reviewed by the members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Attendance issues are reported at least termly to the Governing body.
- Langley School are supported with the processes associated with children's attendance by an Attendance and Welfare Officer (CSAWS Ltd). The Attendance and Welfare Officer will support school in reducing the number of persistently absent pupils and improve whole school attendance. They will support families in ensuring their child/ren attend school regularly and will make contact with parents by phone, letter or home visit to discuss the school's concerns and how attendance and punctuality can be improved. They will carry out Fast Track procedures with parents of children whose attendance is of a concern.
- Requests for leave of absence during school time must be formally given to the Head Teacher for consideration by completing the form in appendix 2. Only those with exceptional circumstances will be authorised at the Head Teacher's discretion.

- If you have a concern about your child's attendance your first point of contact is Langley School Office.

Procedures

Our school procedures follow the expectations set out by the Department for Education in the guidance Working Together to improve school attendance (September 2022).

Our procedures are based around the principles and stages of:

- Preventing poor attendance
- Early intervention and Early Help to address early patterns of poor attendance and agree ways to improve
- Targeted interventions (including Early Help and Formal interventions) for those children who are persistently absent or severely absent
- Understanding barriers to individuals' attendance and agree individual plans for children with specific needs.
- Formal Statutory Interventions where support has not been effective or engaged with.

Absence:

If a child is absent, parents/carers should contact the school on the 1st day of absence and leave a message on the telephone from 7:30am to inform the school of the reason for absence.

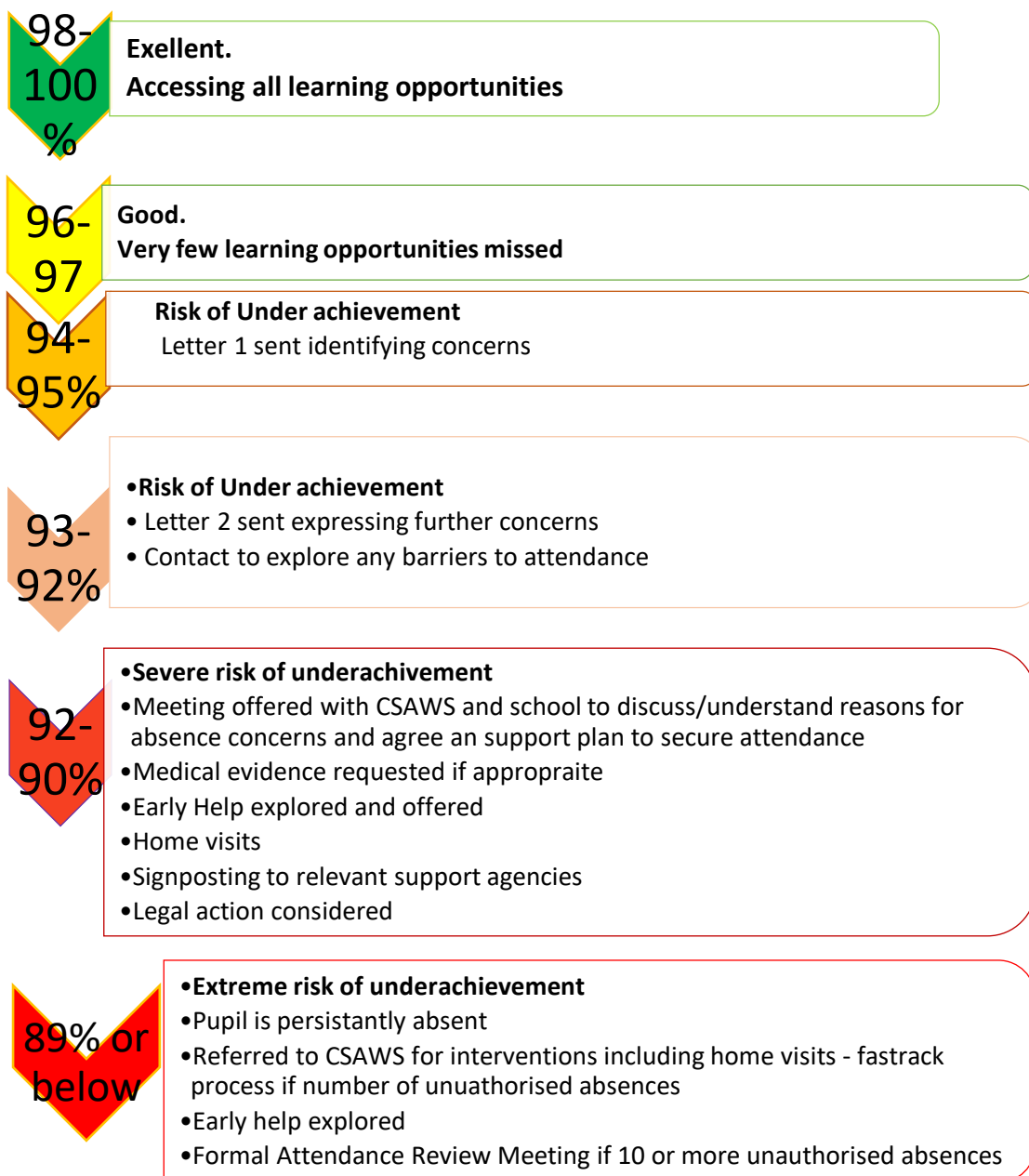
Parents/carers are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

At 9.30am the school registers are checked for any absences. Where there has been no contact by parents/carers and reason given, a telephone call to parents/carers will be made to obtain a reason for the absence.

If staff are concerned about a child's absence or there is no response, they will follow the process in detailed in Appendix 1. This includes telephone calls to parents, other emergency contacts, text messages, home visits, referrals to the CSAWS Attendance and Welfare Officer and to the police for a visit to see the child.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school. Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child (KCSIE 2022) Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.



Where attendance has deteriorated rapidly, there are concerning patterns of absence, unauthorised absences, or parents have not responded to concerns raised, a referral may be made straight to CSAWS. The Birmingham attendance process for addressing attendance concerns and where appropriate legal action including the issue of penalty notices will be followed.

Illness:

Not all illness requires an absence from school. For minor childhood ailments such as coughs, colds, earaches etc we would not expect children to be absent. However, when a parent makes the assessment that their child is unfit for school they should follow the above absence procedure.

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parent's explanation that their child was ill can be accepted

without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance/reason for absence further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

Langley School will challenge parent's statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Attendance is less than 90%
- Where there is a concerning pattern of absence/reason for absence
- There are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated
- Where there is a medical problem and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support

Medical appointments

Parents should avoid making routine medical appointments and dental appointments during the school day, as far as is possible. In the majority of cases appointments can be made outside of the school day/during the school holidays.

Where appointments have to be taken during the school day only the time for the appointment and travel to and from will be classed as an authorised absence. Pupils are expected to return to school for the remainder of the day/attend school prior to the appointment.

Parents are required to provide a copy of the appointment letter or card prior to the day of the appointment.

Other reasons for absence:

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on each occasion. Notes will **not** necessarily be accepted as proof of valid reasons. The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays or child minding.

Religious Observance:

Langley School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. However, parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

Requests for leave of absence (exceptional circumstances)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Procedure for requesting a planned absence

- All leave of absence requests will be unauthorised unless the circumstances are exceptional. A parent/carer should complete an absence request form (Appendix 2) and submit this to the school at least two weeks prior to the date required. School will respond to the request within two weeks.
- DfE guidelines make clear that leave of absence during term-time should be regarded as exceptional.
- If a parent/carer considers they require their child to have a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances they should complete the absence request form which can be obtained from the school office (Appendix 2). There is a requirement that parent/carers provide evidence of the exceptional circumstance and may be required to meet with the Head Teacher.
- If the Head Teacher deems that the reasons for the request are exceptional and authorises the absence, a home-school contract confirming that the request has been authorised will be sent to the parent/carer (appendix 3)
- If the Head teacher deems that the reasons are not exceptional, then the leave of absence will not be authorised. A letter informing the parents of this decision for each child and warning them of the legal implications of the absence being taken will be sent to each parent (appendix 4).
- If once notified in writing of the decision not to authorise the leave of absence, the absence is taken it will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the pupil's register.
- Langley School will follow the 'Term Time Leave Guidance for Schools and Academies' (September 2021) and implement the Birmingham City Council Leave in Term Time Legal Process (September 2022) which could result in a referral being made immediately to the Education Legal Intervention Team (ELIT) for consideration. Any legal action required will be taken by the Education Legal Intervention Team. This could result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice.

Punctuality

It is important that pupils are punctual so that they do not miss out on the beginning of each school day. Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session.

If a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



3 Days Lost	6.5 Days Lost			
5 Minutes Late	10 Minutes Late	15 Minutes Late	20 Minutes Late	30 Minutes Late

(Over one academic year)

Children arriving after 9 a.m. at Langley will be late for school and will have to report to the school office, where a late (L) (before registers closed) will be recorded. In the case of unavoidable delay for pupils using school transport, this will not incur a late mark. Where a pupil arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (code U as per DfE compulsory attendance codes). **School registration will close at 9.30 a.m.**

The registers are monitored daily to identify pupils who are arriving late and regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable.

Stages in Attendance Support

Our school procedures follow the expectations set out by the Department for Education in the guidance Working Together to improve school attendance (September 2022).

Our procedures are based around the principles and stages of:

- Preventing poor attendance
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- Formal Statutory Interventions where support has not been effective or engaged with.

Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing from Education

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in the future.

All schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12).

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll on the limited grounds set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm.

Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties.

Pupils with EHC plans may not be removed from roll without the consent of the Local Authority (SENAR). Children in care or pupils with Child Protection or Child in Need Plans should not be removed from roll until discussions have taken place with Children in Care Education Services (CiCES) and the child's social worker.

In September 2016, the Department for Education updated the statutory guidance to reflect the 2016 amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006 Regulations.

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the 2006 regulations (as amended).

Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the CME officer, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii).

This attendance policy is part of a broader suite of safeguarding policies including the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Registers

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations.

Every half a day of absence from school has to be classified as either authorised or unauthorised. An authorised absence is where the Head teacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Langley School complies with and uses the DfE compulsory national attendance codes to categorise absence (Appendix 5)

Use of Attendance data

All schools must provide their attendance data to the DfE, most schools use their management information systems to send their data via school census. The figures returned are then published by the DfE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

We collect, use and store attendance information about our pupils and may receive information about you/them from their previous school. The information we keep regarding attendance includes name, contact details, attendance records, late records and any relevant medical information.

Where there is cause for concern, this information is shared with the Attendance and Welfare

Officer (CSAWs) during regular attendance meetings held at our school. The Attendance and Welfare Officer (CSAWs) will support school to follow up on attendance concerns with parents and carers.

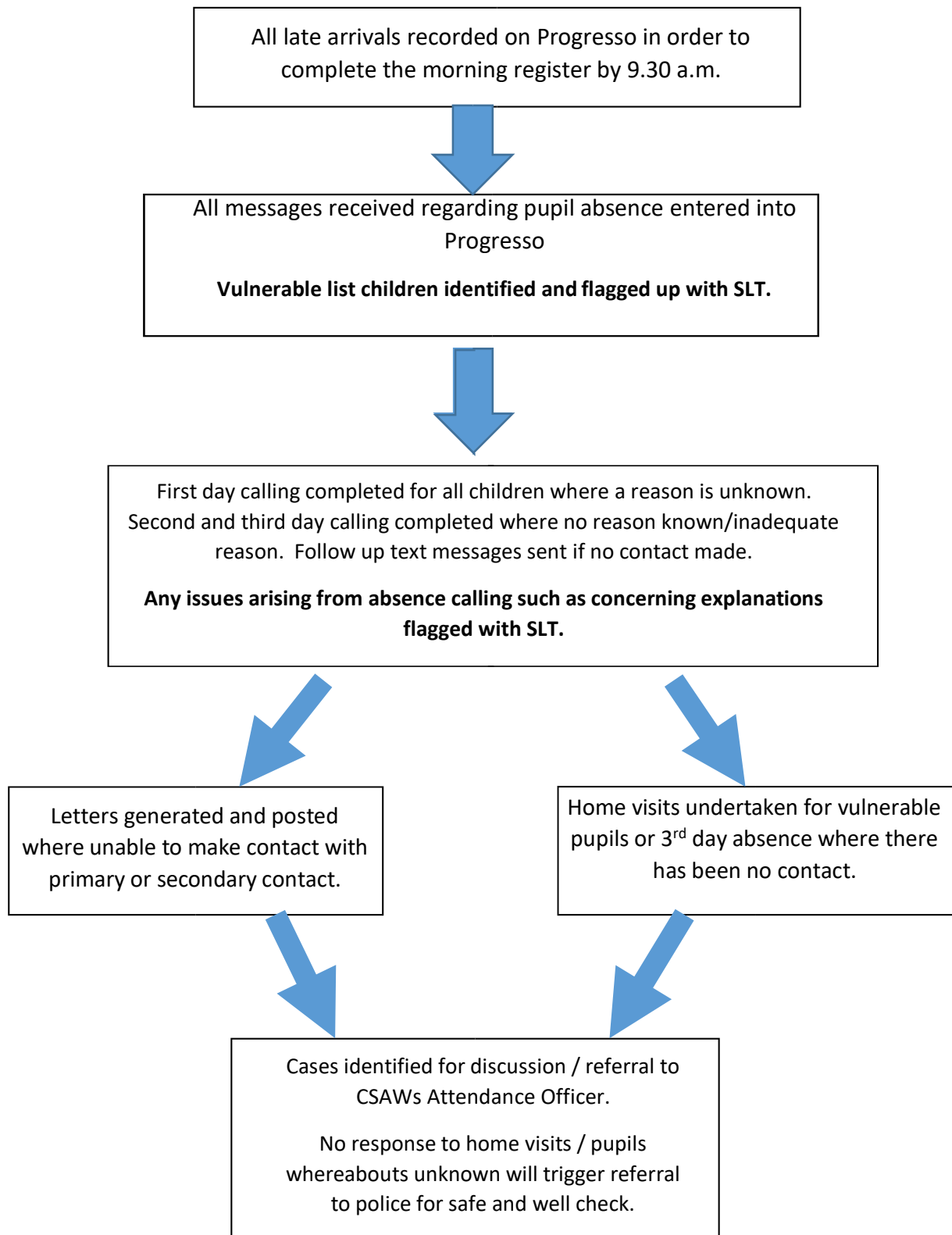
We will also share attendance information with the Local Authority Attendance Support Team at least termly in line with Working together to improve attendance (2022)

Policy written by Rebecca Ford and Claire Hynes 9th January 2023

To be reviewed January 2024

Appendix 1

Langley School Absence Procedure





Appendix 2

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES – PUPIL TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST

(to be completed by parents/carers only)

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

I request permission for the above named pupil to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request

.....
.....

Dates of Absence

From..... To No of school days

Address where we will be staying

.....
.....

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- if travelling abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I / we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
- if I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I do not pay the fine, the case may be referred to Court which could result in a fine of up to £1000 per child and a criminal record.
- In exceptional circumstances penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.

Parent/Carer Name	Parent/Carer Name
DOB	DOB
Address	Address
Signature	Signature
Date	Date

Request **agreed / denied**

Signed Head Teacher Dated



Appendix 3

Home School Contract

(For authorised pupil term time leave only)

This contract is an agreement between

The Parents/Carer ofand the school.

We have agreed that will be absent from school

from (date).....to
(date).....

The absence is due to exceptional circumstances and needs to take place at this time because

.....

He/she will return to school on or before

The address he/she will be staying at whilst on leave is

.....

.....

It is understood that if he/she does not return by the agreed date:

- the Local Authority may take legal action/issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each absent child;
- he/she may be reported to the Local Authority as a missing child and/or removed from the school register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Parent's/Carer's signature:

Head teacher's signature:

Date:



Appendix 4

Ref: LD1

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»

«AddressLine1»

«AddressLine2»

«City»

«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence.

Section 444 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/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.

If you decide to take the leave the absence will be marked as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action taken.

If the request is due to a family emergency, careful consideration is required as to whether it is appropriate or in the best interest of the child to miss school for emergencies being dealt with by adult family members.

It is essential for your child to be in school regularly to benefit fully from their educational opportunities. Good attendance will ensure that your child can reach their full potential. To achieve this, your child needs to attend school every day. For example, two weeks absence is equivalent to around 50 lessons missed which will never be repeated.

We are sure you would not wish to jeopardise your child's academic progress by taking them away at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Enclosure: copy of 'Leave of Absence Request Form'

Appendix 5

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

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