



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Ethos and Vision

Oak Green School believes that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

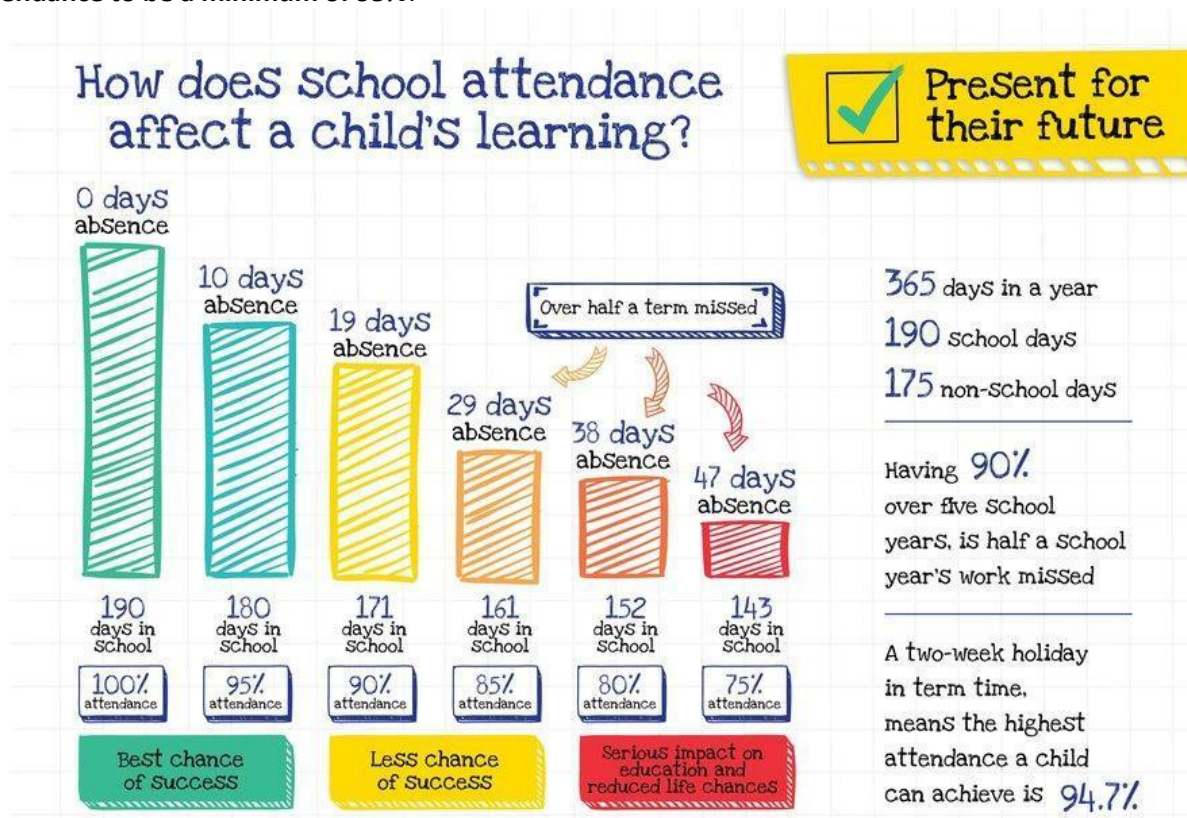
This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school; and
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and irregular absence will seriously affect their learning, social interactions and wellbeing. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Unless children and young people attend school regularly and punctually, they will not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. **The school's aim is for pupils' attendance to be a minimum of 95%.**



(image from <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/campaign/present-for-their-future/#primary-school-children>)

Oak Green School recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our attendance policy runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying and behaviour. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations Act 2000 and is guided by the DfE's 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2024) document.

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

Roles and Responsibilities

See next page.

<u>Role</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Pupil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To attend school as much as possible -To speak to an adult if they are worried about school -To (where age appropriate) get organised for school the night before (school bag, uniform etc) -To eat breakfast, wash and get ready for school quickly to help parents -To not use electronic devices before bed to support a good night's sleep -To drink water and eat fruit and vegetables to support a strong immune system
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To ensure children attend school as much as possible -To inform the school (by 9am) of any absence (unless you have been informed not to by the school) -To provide medical evidence, when asked to, for absences and seek advice when unsure what to provide -To (where possible) book all appointments outside of school time, or bring children into school before them and back after -To develop good sleep and morning routines at home -To work with the school to support good attendance (and therefore good outcomes) - To not take pupils out of school during term time to attend holidays
Class Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To accurately mark the register two times a-day (morning and afternoon) -To contact the office if unsure about the register's accuracy or the whereabouts of a pupil -To develop positive relationships with families to support good attendance -To spot any patterns of irregular attendance (for example always off on a Thursday) -To log any concerns around attendance on CPOMS -To make contact home for pupils whose attendance falls below 95% and offer support
Teaching Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To support class teachers in the accuracy of completing registers -To build positive relationships with pupils to make school a safe and welcoming environment
SENCOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To know (through the sharing of attendance data) the attendance of pupils with additional needs -To support families where needed to promote positive attendance -To be involved in any parental meetings for pupils with additional needs, regarding attendance, where appropriate
Family Support Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To build positive relationships with families -To offer practical advice for families to support with improving attendance/building positive routines
Attendance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To track and monitor the accuracy of registers -To update registers with the appropriate and accurate coding (enquiring reasons for absences) -To support morning procedures (lates, parent phone calls etc) -To track attendance of pupils who are below 95% and inform the relevant CT/AHT/DHT accordingly -To track and record all term time leave of absences -To send letters regarding attendance to families when appropriate -To advise parents on lengths of absence due to the reason for the absence - To give advice, such as how to fill in leave of absence forms, making a doctor's appointment etc to parents -To liaise with other settings where appropriate to promote positive attendance for the school's families -Complete relevant paper work regarding Fixed Penalty Notices -Support with the monitoring and delivery of agreed rewards

Attendance Mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To build positive relationships with pupils and families who are vulnerable to becoming persistently absent -To help overcome barriers to pupils attendance before they become a reason for school absence -To make the relevant members of staff aware of any barriers to attendance to ensure appropriate support is given -To make weekly contact with the pupils who are being mentored -To make half termly contact with families of pupils being mentored
Assistant Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To meet with parents of pupils (in their relevant phase/area of responsibility either face to face or via phone call) with pupils who either are, or have been persistently absent -To provide support for the pupils families to encourage good attendance
Deputy Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To lead on Attendance Contracts to support pupils (and families) where attendance has fallen below 90% -To monitor and review Attendance Contracts within given time frames -To support families at risk of needing an Attendance Contract -To deploy the school's EBSNA (Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance) where appropriate -To liaise with external agencies where appropriate -To promote positive attendance across the school through assemblies, newsletters etc -To analyse whole school attendance data (by year groups, vulnerability etc) -To review and develop the school's attendance policy -To use attendance data to report to Governors (and other external personnel) and to direct strategies and resources to improve attendance -To decide if term time absences are authorised or not in conjunction with the Co-Headteachers
Co-Headteachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To ensure that the monitoring and developments around attendance are robust -To support attendance improvements in line with the school's development plan -To decide if term time leave of absences are authorised or not
Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To monitor and challenge the school's leadership regarding improvements to attendance -To provide appropriate support and guidance to the school's leadership regarding attendance.

Daily Monitoring/Recording of Attendance

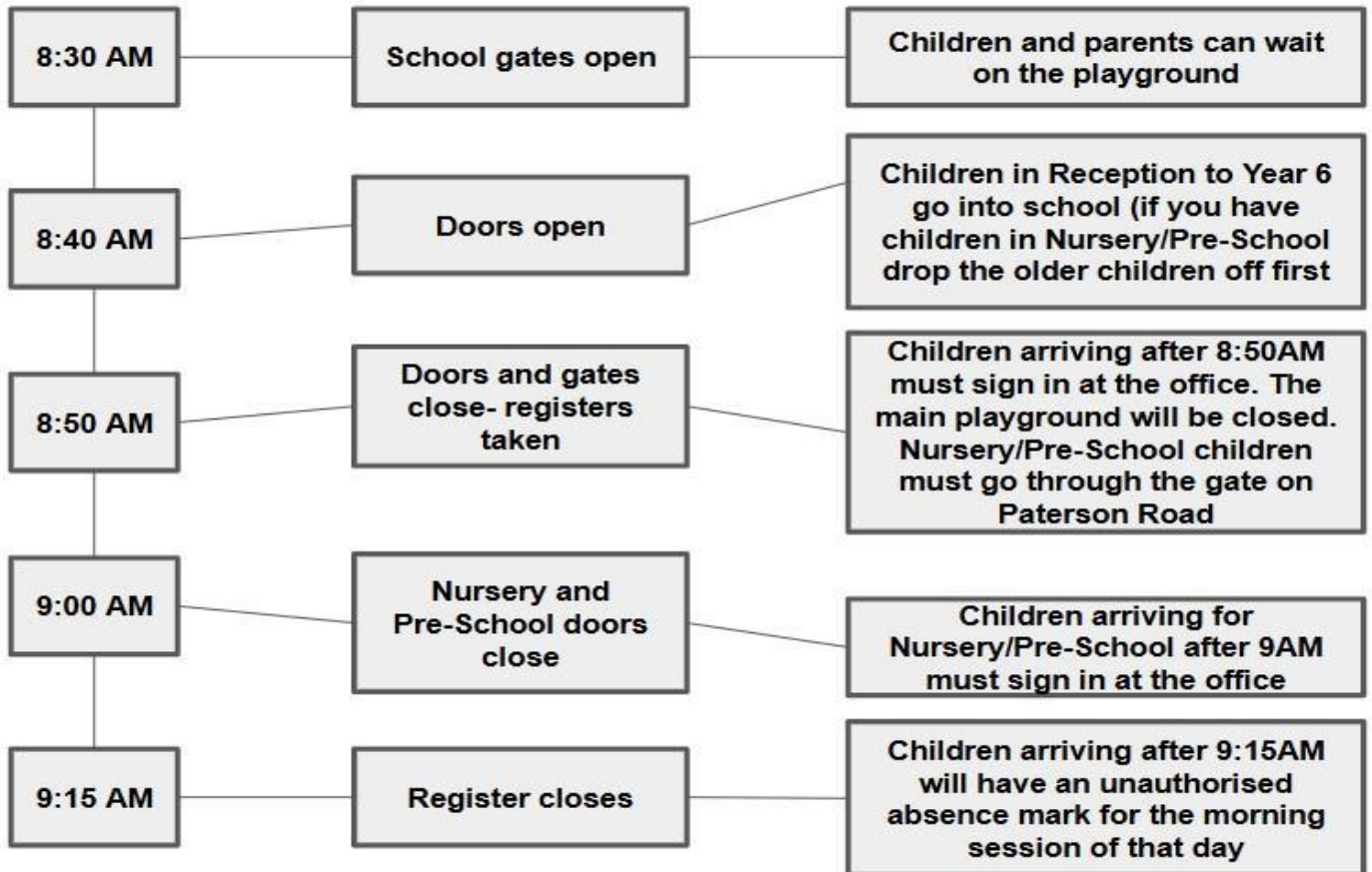
Absence Procedures (& safeguarding)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

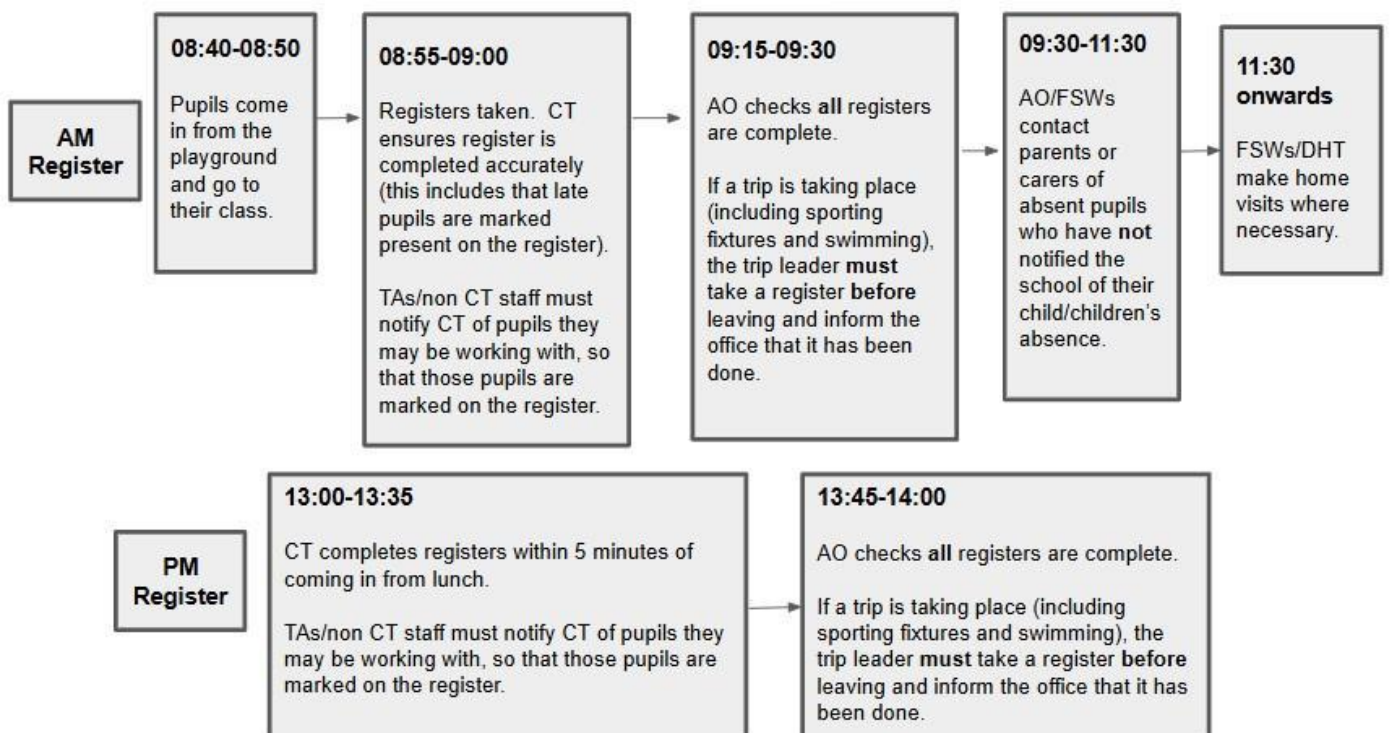
The register must record whether a pupil was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at an approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- Where appropriate additional notes will be added alongside absence codes
- Lates (both before and after registration closes) will also be recorded

Start of the Day Procedures



Register Procedures



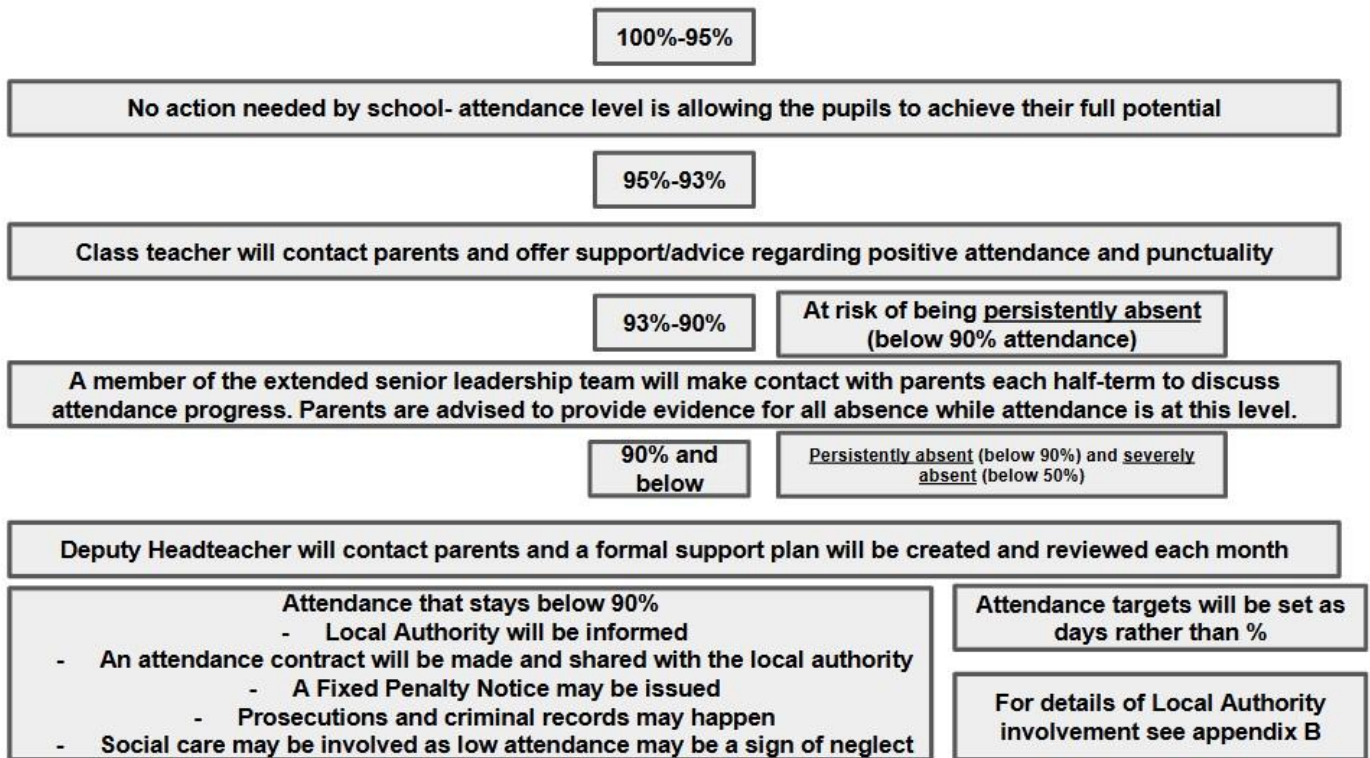
Supporting good attendance

Below are the number of school days missed and percentage of attendance that they relate to. If attendance falls below 95% during the year, this will initiate school intervention (detailed in the Attendance Support Chart).

Total school days	97+%	95%	93%	90%
37	<u>Autumn 1</u> 1 day absent	<u>Autumn 1</u> 2 days absent	<u>Autumn 1</u> 2.5 days absent	<u>Autumn 1</u> 3.5 days absent
72	<u>Autumn 2</u> 2 days absent	<u>Autumn 2</u> 4 days absent	<u>Autumn 2</u> 5 days absent	<u>Autumn 2</u> 7 days absent
102	<u>Spring 1</u> 3 days absent	<u>Spring 1</u> 5 days absent	<u>Spring 1</u> 7 days absent	<u>Spring 1</u> 10 days absent
127	<u>Spring 2</u> 4 days absent	<u>Spring 2</u> 6 days absent	<u>Spring 2</u> 9 days absent	<u>Spring 2</u> 13 days absent
157	<u>Summer 1</u> 4 days absent	<u>Summer 1</u> 8 days absent	<u>Summer 1</u> 11 days absent	<u>Summer 1</u> 15 days absent
190	<u>Summer 2</u> 6 days absent	<u>Summer 2</u> 10 days absent	<u>Summer 2</u> 13 days absent	<u>Summer 2</u> 19 days absent

Attendance Support Chart

(guidance taken from DfE 'Summary Table of Responsibility for School Attendance' see appendix A)



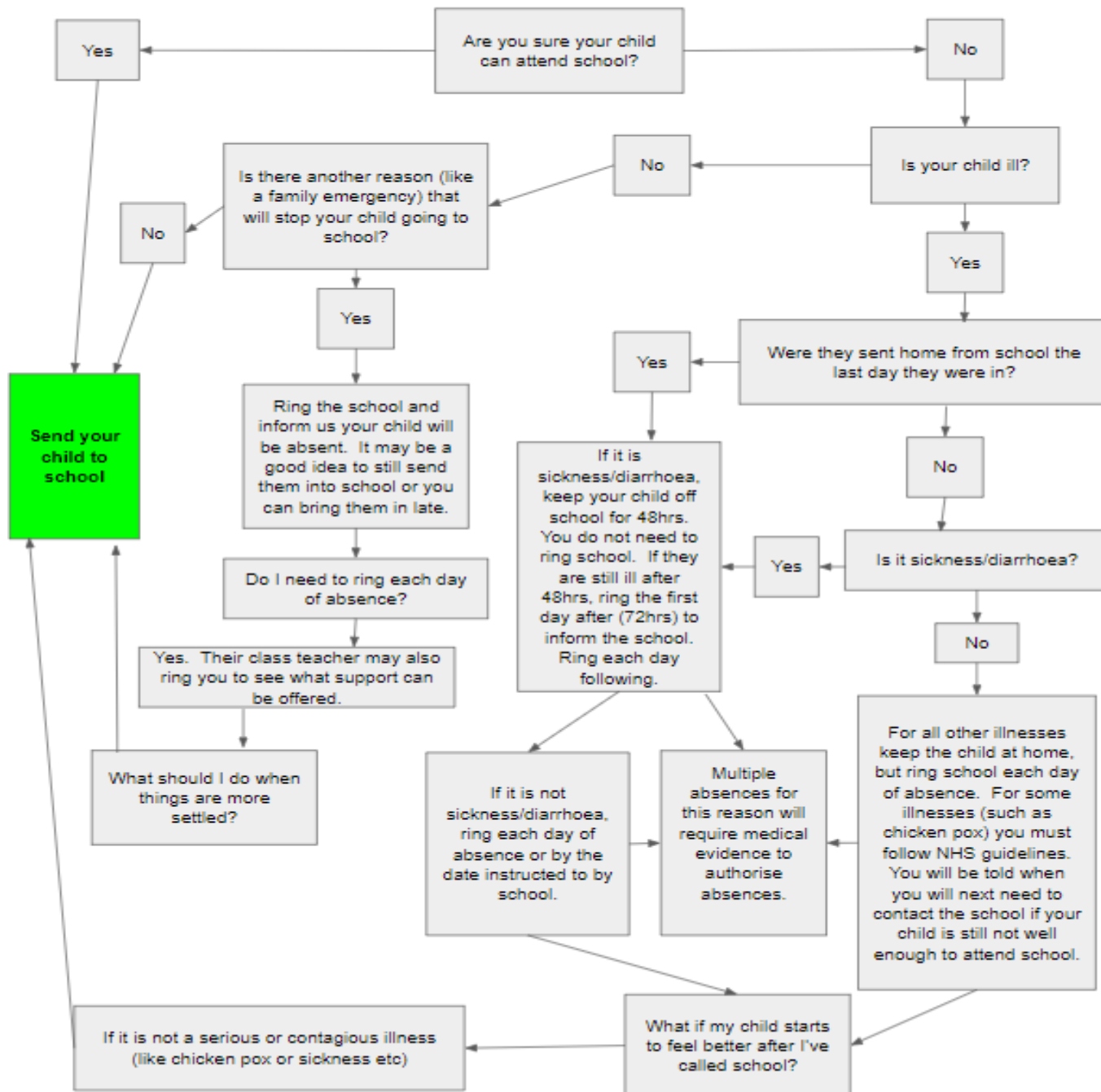
It is the responsibility of **all staff** to make school a safe and welcoming environment, which pupils want to attend.

The following additional strategies, to support good attendance, will also be developed:

- Rewards for good attendance (individual and class based)
- Clear and specific targets for families where attendance levels have dropped
- Support from the school's EBSNA
- Referrals to the school nursing team
- Sharing of attendance strategies and information with parents (letters, newsletters, coffee meetings etc)
- Attendance mentors to support vulnerable pupils who are at risk of becoming persistently absent and support in overcoming barriers before they result in low attendance
- Section 19 alternative provisions applied for where deemed appropriate

Absence and procedures:

What to do if you are unsure whether to send your child into school



Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised (**O code for unauthorised absences**).

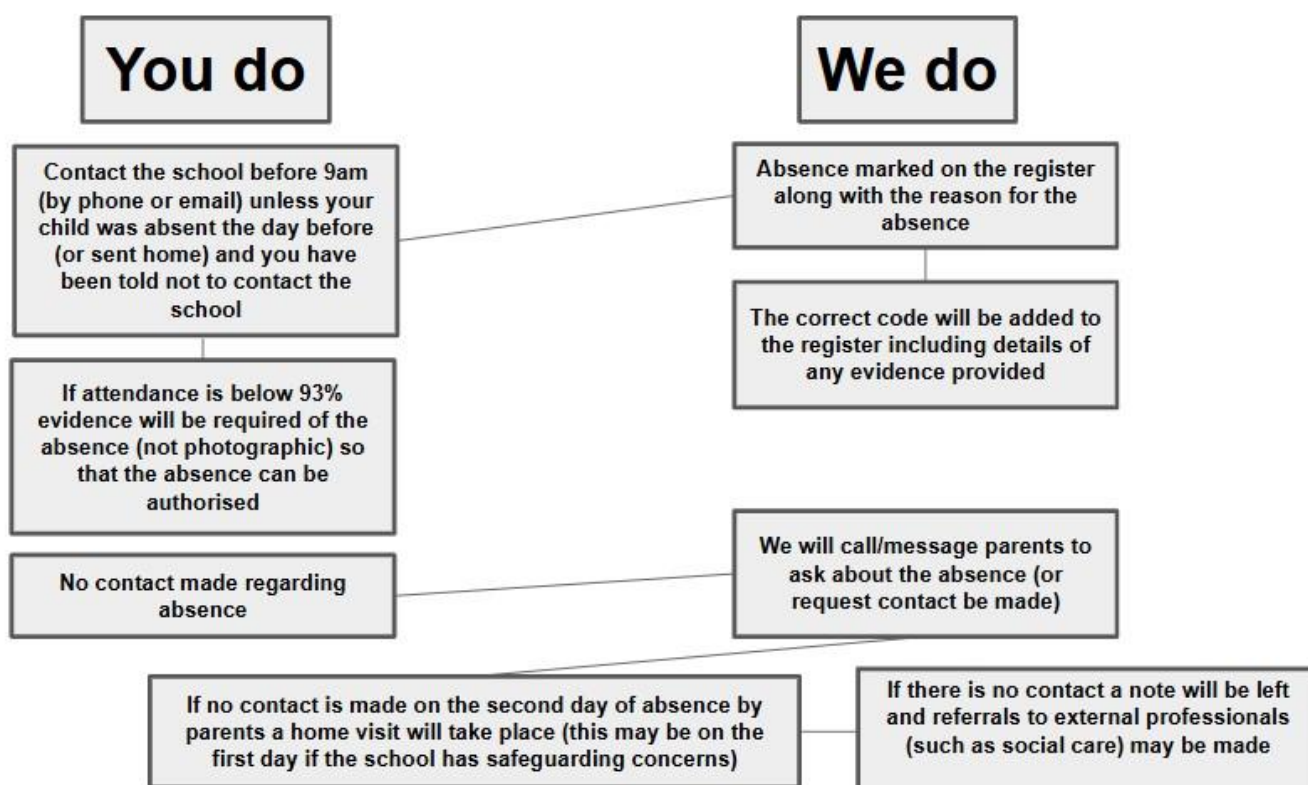
Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

If a pupil is absent the parent/carer must do the following:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 9am with a valid reason for the absence.
- Provide medical/supporting evidence of your child’s absence when they return if your child’s attendance is 93% or below (see Attendance Support Chart).
- Advise the school of the length of the absence and any changes that may take place.

Alternative arrangements can be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

If a pupil is absent, the following should take place:



Absence Categories

Illness:

In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill is acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences; this can be either an appointment card or prescription. **(I code)**

Medical/dental appointments:

Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible pupils should attend for part of the day and evidence of the appointment given to the school office. **(M code)**

Other authorised circumstances:

This is on a case by case basis and authorised by the Co-Headteachers if circumstances are exceptional, for example, funeral attendance. (**C code**)

Suspended / Excluded (no alternative provision made):

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Late Arrival:

Registration is at 08:50 and pupils must arrive by this time.

On arrival, after the close of register, pupils must report to the office to sign in using Inventry (the sign in screen at the front office). Late arrivals before 09:15 will be marked with an **L code**; pupils arriving after 09:15 (when the registers have closed) will be marked with a **U code**. If pupils have a persistent late record, parents will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer/Deputy Headteacher to resolve this problem; a letter may be sent if lateness becomes a persistent issue.

Unauthorised absence:

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation (**O code**).

Leave of absence (LOA):

The high court has confirmed that schools, not parents, authorise absence. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and are strongly advised not to do so.

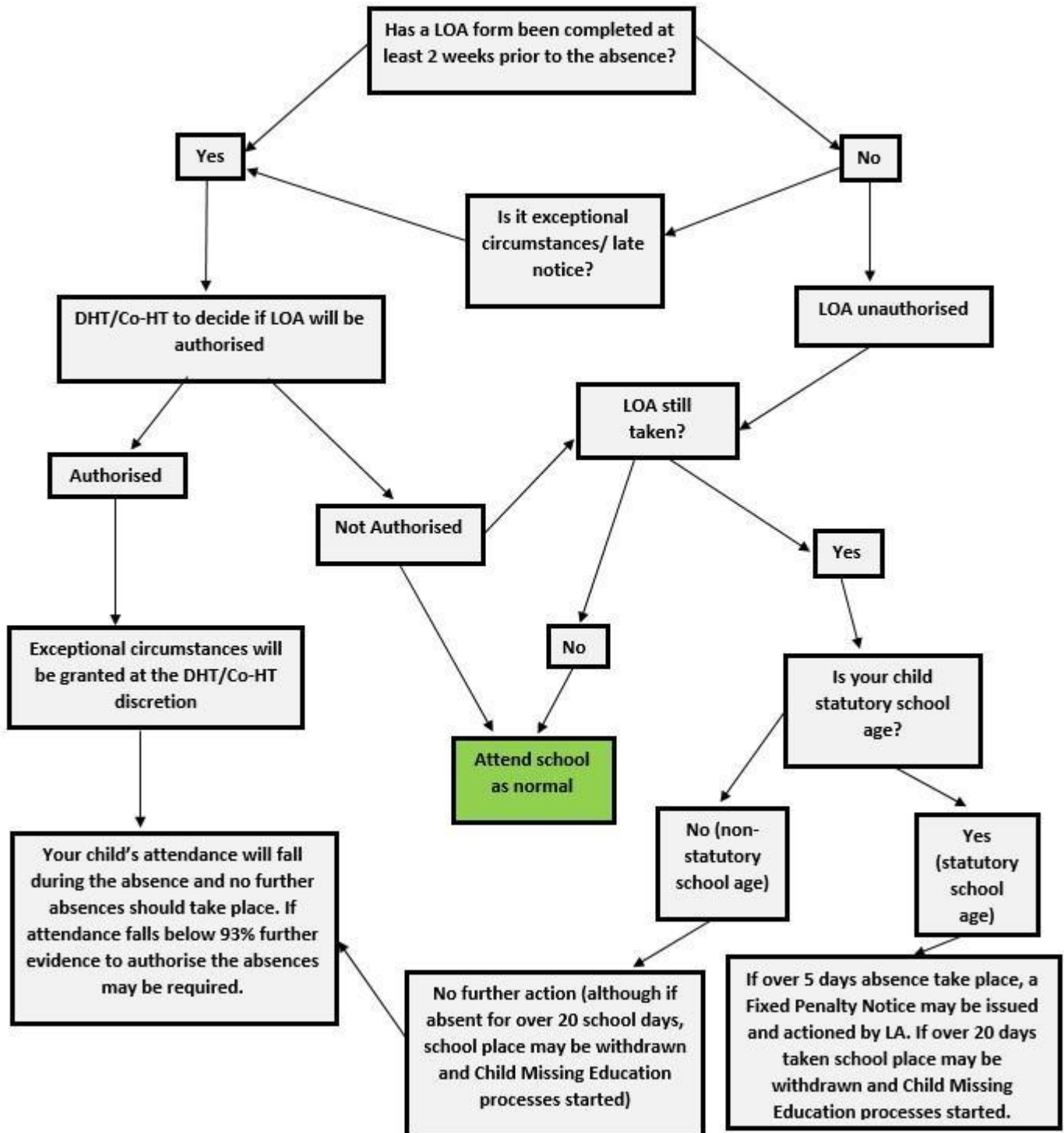
Parents should be aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days, they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year.

Parents wishing to take their child out of school during term time must complete a **Request for Leave** form from the school office and send in a **written request** to the Headteacher **before arrangements are made**. Evidence of leave and return dates will be required in order to process the request. Retrospective requests **WILL NOT** be considered and therefore WILL result in the absence being unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually taking in the following:

- Length of the leave;
- Proximity of SATs (and other statutory assessment points)
- Welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- Previous term time holidays taken

Upon a decision being made, a copy of the LOA form will be returned stating if the absence will be authorised or not. If the leave is **not granted** and the pupil is absent, the absence will be unauthorised (**G code**). The school will refer the matter to the County Attendance Team who may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. If the pupil is absent for more than 20 school days, they may be taken off the school roll and will need to re-apply to the Council for a school place.

Leave of Absence (LOA) Process



(See Appendix C for Local Authority involvement)
Religious Observance:

Oak Green School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holiday periods or weekends and that this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance (**R code**).

Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent, however no more than one day is designated for any individual occasion of religious observance. Absence in excess of this will be marked as unauthorised.

Traveller Absence:

The aim for the attendance of traveller children, in line with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances in a year. Traveller absence (**T code**) is acceptable only when the family is engaged in a business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school regularly. It does not mean that part-time education for traveller children is legally acceptable; it does not relieve parents of their duties to ensure their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When in or around Buckinghamshire, if a traveller family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full time.

Oak Green School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily whilst away from their base school. In such cases, the pupil's school place at Oak Green School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

Oak Green School can operate effectively as the child's base school only if we are engaged in on-going dialogue with traveller families. This means parents **must**:

- Advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns **before** they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding their proposed return dates.

Oak Green School will only authorise absence of traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has indicated that they intend to return.

Where traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as for any other pupil.

Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education Regulations 2006 (Pupil Registration), pupils will be deleted from the register only when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order.
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the Local Authority
- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age/are older than the school's oldest year group
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures followed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools
- When a parent informs the school in writing (or e-mail) that the pupil is to be withdrawn to be home educated or educated outside of the school system.
- Failure to return from a leave of absence after both the school and the Local Authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school age
- 20 days' continuous unauthorised absence have lapsed
- A pupil has left the school but it is not known where he/she has gone after the school has informed the Children Missing in Education (CME) Team and followed the correct protocol to try to locate the pupil

When a pupil is deleted from the register, parents will need to reapply for a place at the school.

Using Attendance Data

All pupils' attendance will be monitored and will be shared with the local authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every week the Attendance Officer/Deputy Headteacher will look at the attendance data for the previous week and for those pupils whose attendance has fallen below 95%. This pupil data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the **Attendance Support Chart**.

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

Oak Green School will share attendance data with the Local Authority as required. All information shared will be done in accordance with the GDPR regulations.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils, all members of staff and a range of services within the local authority.

To help us all focus on this we will:

- Offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed and missed when they are late or absent.
- Give parents/ carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- Report to parents/ carers annually on their child's attendance with the annual school report.
- Contact parents/ carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying class achievements.
- Reward good attendance and greatly improved attendance through certificates and mufti days.
- The Co-Headteacher will report termly to the school's governing body on attendance matters.
- Pupils who have been absent through sickness for any extended period of time will, when appropriate and through school to parent communication, have work sent home to them and will be reintegrated back into school upon their return
- The Attendance Officer will liaise with other agencies where appropriate in supporting and assisting pupils who are experiencing attendance problems.

Legal Sanctions

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, Oak Green School will notify Buckinghamshire Council's Attendance Team of the irregular attendance.

The school may invite parents to attend a Parenting Contract Meeting (PCM) which may lead to the County Attendance Team issuing a formal warning of a Penalty Notice.

Attendance Contracts

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between the school and or Local Authority and the parents to address irregular attendance. This is not legally binding, but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support. This is not a punitive measure and is intended to avoid prosecution. Parents can not be compelled to enter an attendance contract and contracts can not be agreed in a parent's absence. Attendance contracts do not have a minimum or maximum duration, although they should be reviewed regularly. If parents fail to positively engage with the attendance contract the school may choose to terminate the contract and seek another course of action, such as Fixed Penalty Notice fines.

Fixed Penalty Notices

(Anti -Social Behaviour Act 2003) penalty notices will be considered when:

- Intervention has failed to bring about improvement for a pupils attendance and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.
- A pupil has taken leave of absence i.e. for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised.

How and when Penalty Notices are issued

- As of 19th August 2024 a new National Framework for Penalty Notices came into force for unauthorised absences.
- Penalty notices will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days, and for fewer days where this happened before.
- Penalty Notice fines will also be considered when there have been 10 sessions (5 days) of absence in a 10 week period.
- Penalty Notice fines are issued to each parent, for each child who was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.
- **The first time** a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child (£80 if paid within 21 days).
- **The second time** a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days (there is no option of a reduced amount for early payment).
- **The third time** an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will proceed to magistrates' court and a fine of up to £2,500 per parent, per child can be issued.

Prosecution:

The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Oak Green School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendix A

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

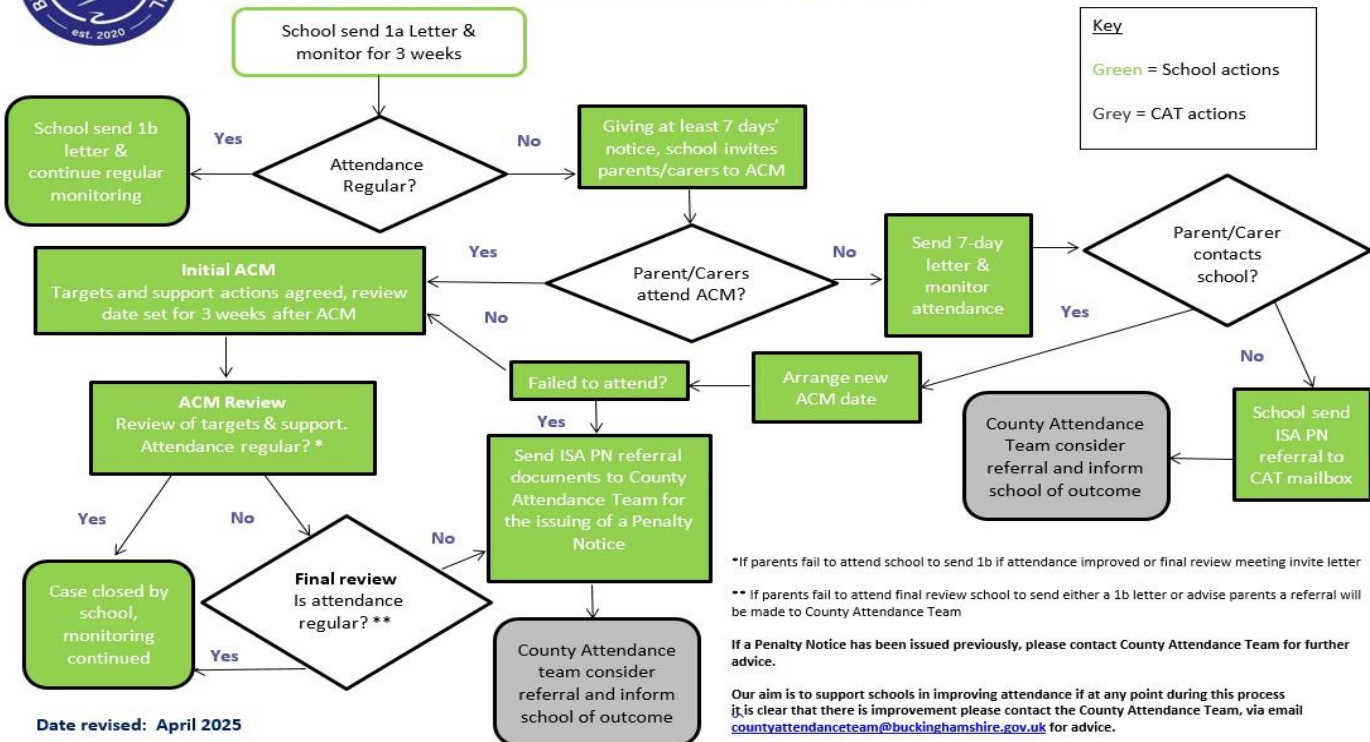
Appendix B



PROCESS FOR ATTENDANCE CONTRACT MEETINGS

Please make sure school have followed the irregular attendance flowchart first.

Email contact details:
countyattendanceteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk



Date revised: April 2025

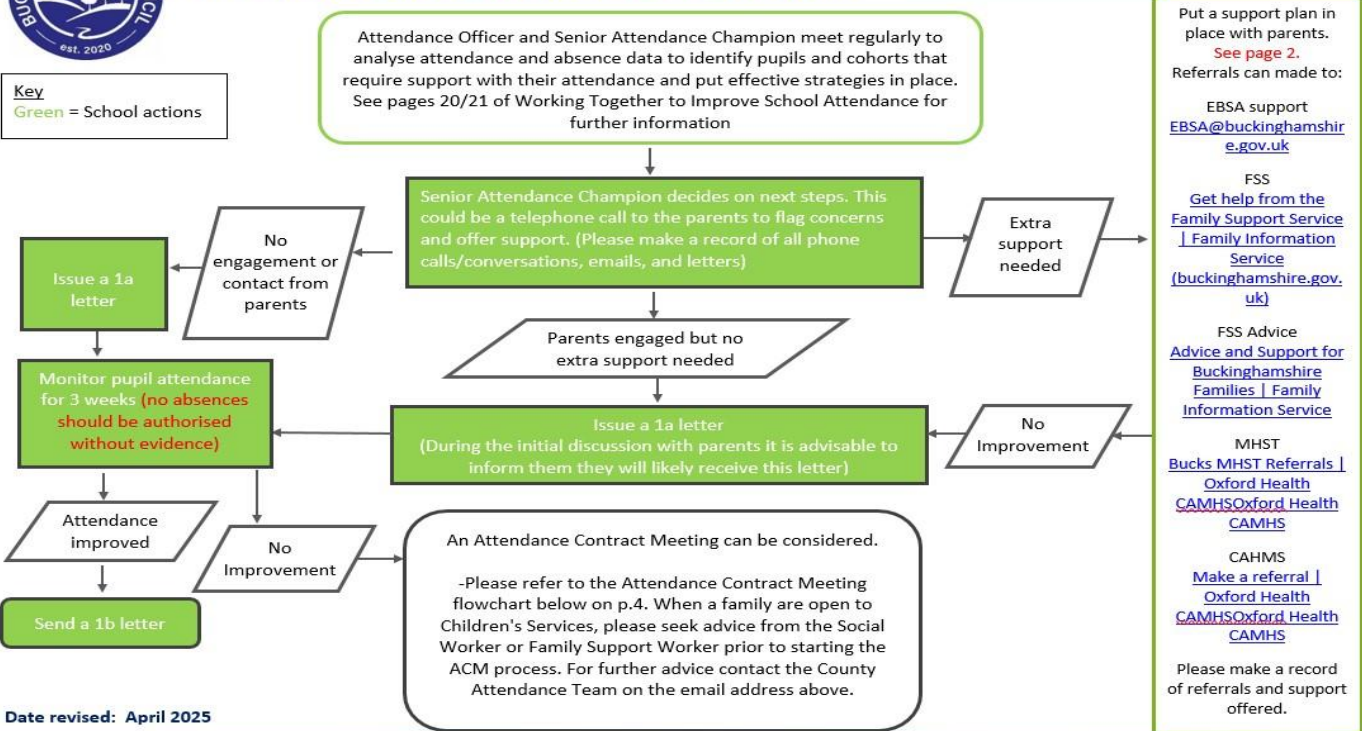
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IRREGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART

Email contact details:
countyattendanceteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Key
 Green = School actions



Date revised: April 2025

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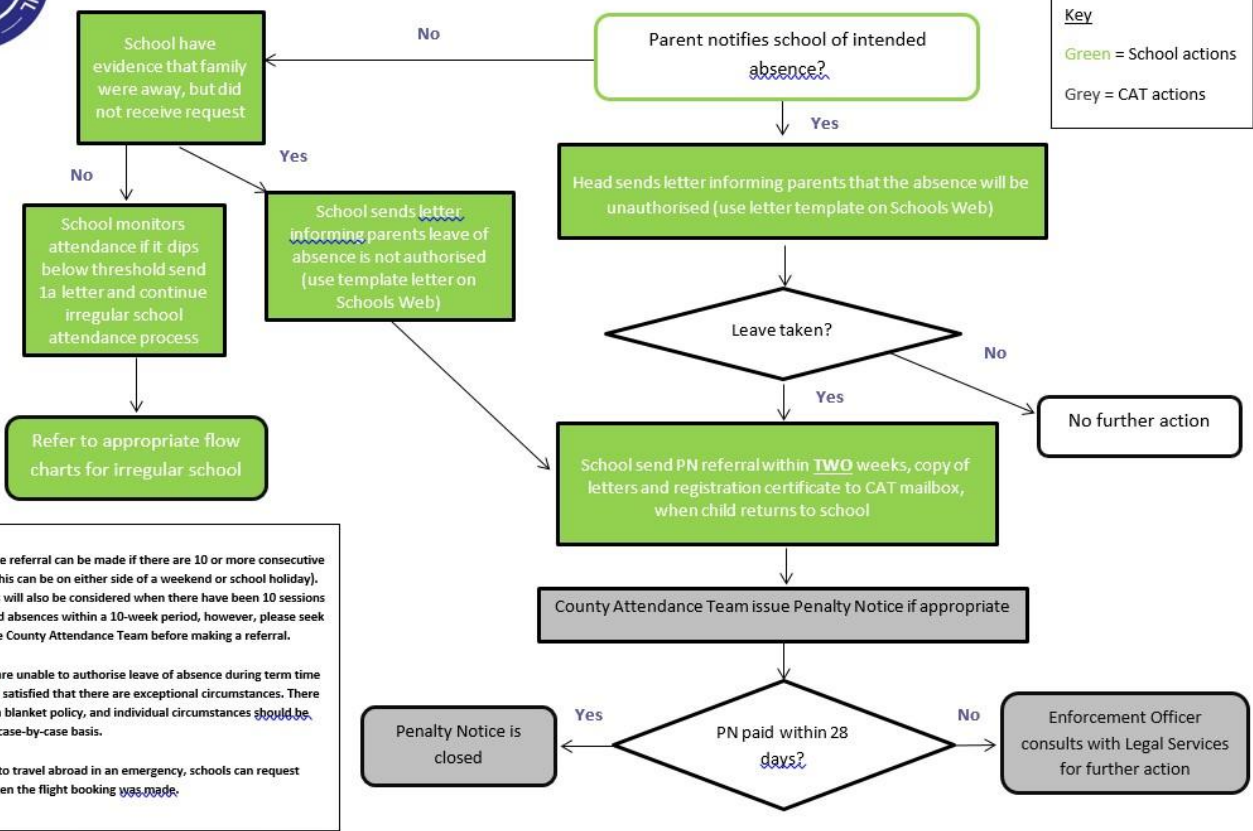
Appendix C



TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE FLOW CHART

Email contact details:
 countyattendanceteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Key
 Green = School actions
 Grey = CAT actions



A penalty notice referral can be made if there are 10 or more consecutive G or O codes (this can be on either side of a weekend or school holiday). Penalty notices will also be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absences within a 10-week period, however, please seek advice from the County Attendance Team before making a referral.

Headteachers are unable to authorise leave of absence during term time unless they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances. There should not be a blanket policy, and individual circumstances should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

If a family had to travel abroad in an emergency, schools can request evidence of when the flight booking was made.