

**SETTLEBECK SCHOOL**

## **Whole School Attendance Policy**

**Date approved:**

**Date of review:**

**Signed on behalf of the Governors:**

**All Settlebeck Policies are regularly reviewed by the Policies Committee. HR policies will be additionally updated in the light of any amendments recommended by South Lakes Federation Schools following Trade Union consultation.**

# Whole School Attendance Policy

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## 1. Rationale and Purpose

- 1.1. Regular and punctual school attendance is essential to enable all students to gain the maximum benefit from the opportunities provided throughout their education. Improving attendance and punctuality is a vital element of school improvement and as research indicates, positively impacts on the levels of achievement of students.
- 1.2. We recognise that some students have long term medical issues which will have an impact on the student's attendance at school. The school will ensure that such students are fully supported and not penalised for absences. Please see Supporting Students with Medical Needs policy.
- 1.3. The school will offer an environment, in which students feel safe, valued and welcome. Students will know that their attendance at school is important and why.

## 2. Statutory Framework

- 2.1. The school's policy is based on Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act which states, "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, ability, and aptitude, and to any special needs he/she may have, either by attendance at school or otherwise." Failure to do so is a strict liability offence (Section 444(1), 1996 Education Act) with a maximum penalty of a £1,000 fine per parent per child.
- 2.2. Where parents are shown to have known that their child was out of school without leave of the Headteacher and that they "without reasonable justification" failed to cause the child to attend, they may be found guilty of a higher offence with a maximum penalty of £2,500 per parent per child, and/or 3 months imprisonment (Section 444(1A), 1996 Education Act).
- 2.3. Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours after being excluded from school. The fine is a level 3 fine of up to £1,000.

## 3. Implementation

### Registration

- 3.1. Registers will be taken punctually twice daily at 8.50am and at 1.45pm
- 3.2. If a student arrives after the end of registration then he/she must sign in at reception and will be marked in late for that session.
- 3.3. A student who arrives after 10am will be marked absent for the morning session. A student who arrives after 2pm will be marked absent for the afternoon session.
- 3.4. When a student is marked absent, parents will be contacted to establish the reason for absence by the Pastoral Manager or Reception Staff
- 3.5. Written notification of absences are recorded and retained.

### Promoting Attendance

- 3.6. The school has set a whole school attendance target of 95%.

- 3.7. Students will be offered a varied, flexible and rewarding education matched to their individual needs.
- 3.8. The school will employ a range of strategies and rewards to encourage good attendance and punctuality including form prizes, prize draws and weekly celebrations.
- 3.9. Attendance data will be collected and analysed regularly, and combined with an annual review of the school attendance policy will inform future practice and school targets to be shared with parents and carers.
- 3.10. The school's Pastoral Manager will arrange to support and set targets for poor attenders in partnership with parents, and other external services will be made known to parents where appropriate.
- 3.11. Students with medical issues which will have an impact on the student's attendance at school will be supported in line with the Supporting Student with Medical Needs policy.

**Authorised Reasons for Absence**

- 3.12. If a student will be absent for any part of a day other than for sickness a parent/carer must request authority from the school in advance by submitting a request in writing. The following table sets out those events for which authority will be granted and those where it will not.

Absence will normally be authorised	Absence will never be authorised	Approved Education Activity – authority not required but school should still be notified
Unavoidable medical/dental appointments but wherever possible these should be made outside school hours Days of Religious Observance Exceptional family circumstances examples would include family funerals and weddings of close family members	Shopping trips, birthdays or similar events Looking after other family members or family chores Any work (paid or unpaid) Driving lessons	Sporting/cultural activity Educational visit (in both cases where such activities are organised through school or a recognised sporting body) Work experience Courses/classes in other educational establishments Interviews for apprenticeships, college and schools Music exams

**Holidays in Term Time**

- 3.13. Parents are strongly encouraged to avoid booking family holidays during term time and especially during examination time.
- 3.14. Parents may request leave of absence. However it is at the discretion of the Head Teacher as to whether the time off will be authorised, and only then in very exceptional family circumstances.
- 3.15. Parents should apply to the school by requesting a leave of absence form from the Headteacher. This should be filled in and returned to school in advance of any requests.
- 3.16. Before granting any leave of absence the school will give consideration to:
  - the student's previous attendance
  - academic progress
  - any examination commitments
- 3.17. If leave is granted, parents must appreciate it is their responsibility to ensure their child catches up with any missed work on their return.

## **Following Up Lateness and Absence**

- 3.18. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to contact school by 9.15am on the first day of all absences, and where possible to give a return date. Where this is not possible the parent/carer should ring school daily to inform of another days absence.
- 3.19. If a student is absent and the parent/carer has not contacted the school by 9.15am, the school will contact parents/carers as they have a legal responsibility to ensure regular attendance. The Pastoral Manager/reception staff will telephone parent(s)/carer(s) on the first day of absence if notification is not received.
- 3.20. If a student is persistently absent (below 93%) the Pastoral Manager will commence the procedure as outlined in the flow charts attached in the Appendix to this policy.
- 3.21. It is recognised that the procedure outlined in the Flow Charts may not be appropriate for students absent through sickness.
- 3.22. Where students are absent through sickness, or any other unavoidable cause, for an extended period the school will support them to achieve the highest possible level attendance which is consistent with their medical condition and will support them in continuing their education at home where they are not able to attend school.
- 3.23. Students who have been absent for a lengthy period the Pastoral Manager will support them in re-integrating back into school on their return.
- 3.24. Where a student's absence is for more than 5 school days the school may request a note from a doctor confirming the diagnosis, depending on the circumstances.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Head Teacher**

- 4.1. Responsible for overseeing the whole policy.
- 4.2. Ensuring the implementation of the policy has particular regard to the equalities aspects of the policy as they pertain to gender and ethnicity and to those students who are looked after or with SEND.
- 4.3. Reporting to governors on attendance issue on a regular basis.

### **Progress Leaders**

- 4.4. To oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and on time.
- 4.5. To ensure that all reasons for absence are recorded accurately in the register.
- 4.6. To report to the on attendance and punctuality matters and trends as necessary.
- 4.7. To liaise with the Pastoral Manager regarding attendance and to oversee the strategy for their year group(s).

### **Pastoral Manager**

- 4.8. Collating attendance and punctuality data.
- 4.9. Overseeing the registration process and ensuring that registers are completed accurately and on time.
- 4.10. To ensure that all reasons for absence are recorded accurately in the register.
- 4.11. To follow-up any unexplained non-attendance by contacting the parent/carer - on the first day of absence wherever possible.

- 4.12. To initiate contact with parent/carer in case of prolonged and unexplained absence in accordance with the Flow Charts.
- 4.13. To liaise with the Education Welfare Officer.

#### **All Staff**

- 4.14. Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.
- 4.15. Attendance is the responsibility for all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff), who will respond to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care.
- 4.16. To advise the Pastoral Manager of any students whom are causing concern in regard to attendance and punctuality.
- 4.17. The Pastoral Manager will monitor attendance and report fortnightly to the Progress Leaders and the Headteacher on any concerns.

#### **Governors**

- 4.18. Attendance will be an agenda item at a Governors' meeting after the completion of the previous academic year. The Headteacher will report to the governing body at this meeting highlighting progress against the school's action plan.
- 4.19. The Governors will nominate a member to be the contact for the Headteacher/Pastoral Officer on matters of Attendance.

#### **Parents and Carers**

- 4.20. Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in fit condition to learn.
- 4.21. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is going to be late, parents are requested to notify the school by 9.15am at the latest on the same day – by phone call or message.

#### **Students**

- 4.22. Students will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level so they achieve their potential.
- 4.23. All students are expected to attend school regularly and punctually, and to adhere to the school's policies on behaviour and dress.
- 4.24. All students' attendance will be monitored using individual attendance records.

### **5. Monitoring**

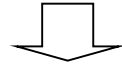
- 5.1. Whole school and individual attendance and persistent absence will be kept under regular review and the Headteacher has an overall responsibility for school attendance. She should provide attendance reports to the Governors.
- 5.2. Accurate marking of registers with the appropriate code letters for absences will enable analysis of the nature of absence as well as the quantity.
- 5.3. This information is compared to local and national benchmarks and targets, as well as the previous performance of the school and is formally reviewed with Governors at least once per year.

### **6. Review**

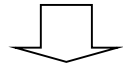
- 6.1. This policy is formally reviewed by the Governors' Policies Committee on a biennial basis.

**Attendance  
Flow Chart  
A**

Student's attendance drops below 93%



Send letter 1 to Parent/Carer



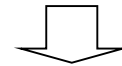
If attendance has not improved within 2 weeks



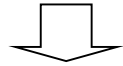
If attendance has improved with 2 weeks



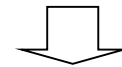
Send out letter 2 inviting parents /carers to a meeting at the school to discuss attendance concerns



Continue to monitor

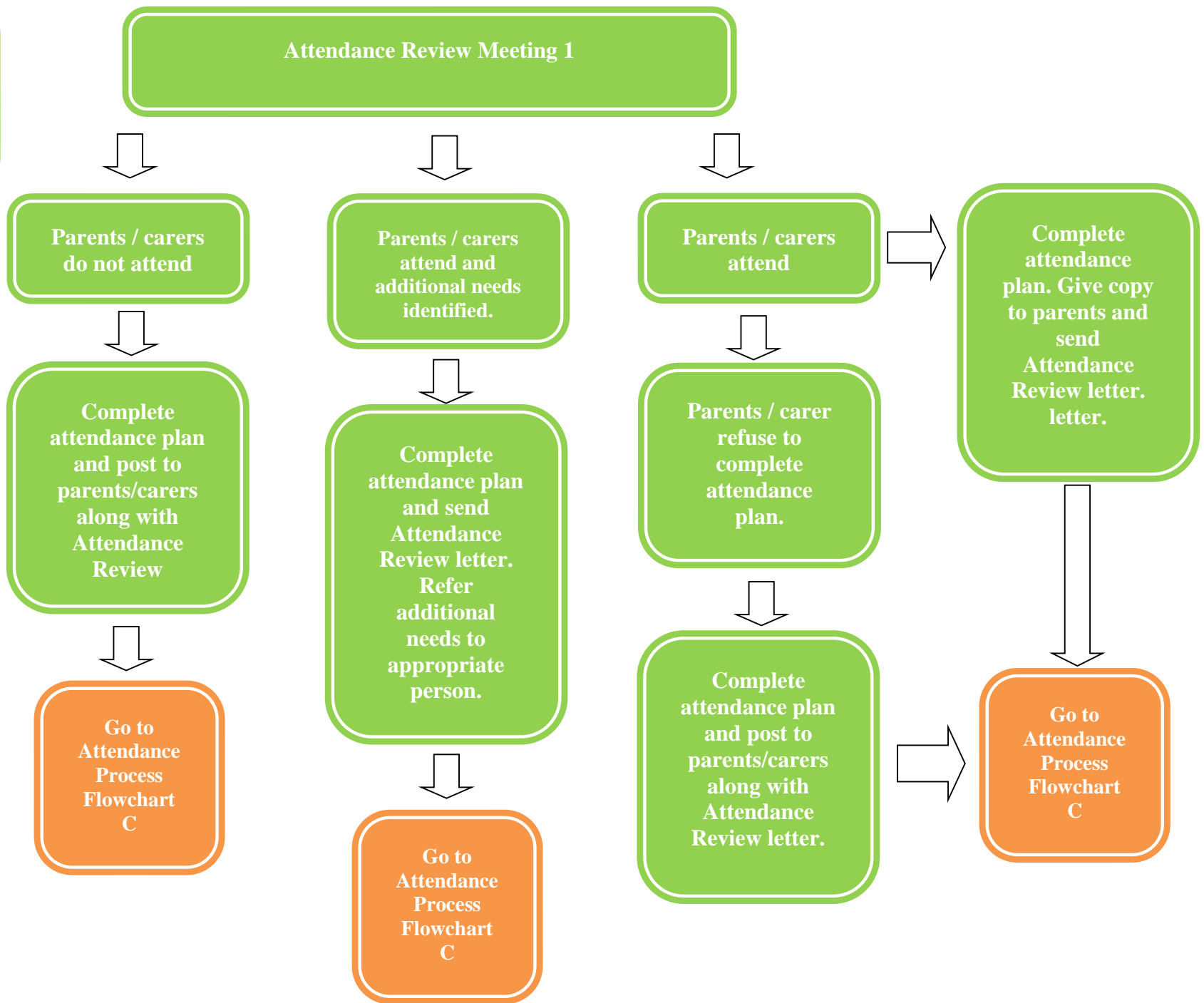


Go to Attendance Process Flowchart B



Attendance drops within the SAME academic year start process again

**Attendance  
Flow Chart  
B**



**Attendance  
Flow Chart  
C**

Attendance Review Meeting 2  
(4 weeks later)

Attendance  
improves

Attendance  
doesn't  
improve

Continue  
to monitor

Review attendance plan to assess  
what is working and what needs  
addressing and revise attendance  
plan as needed.

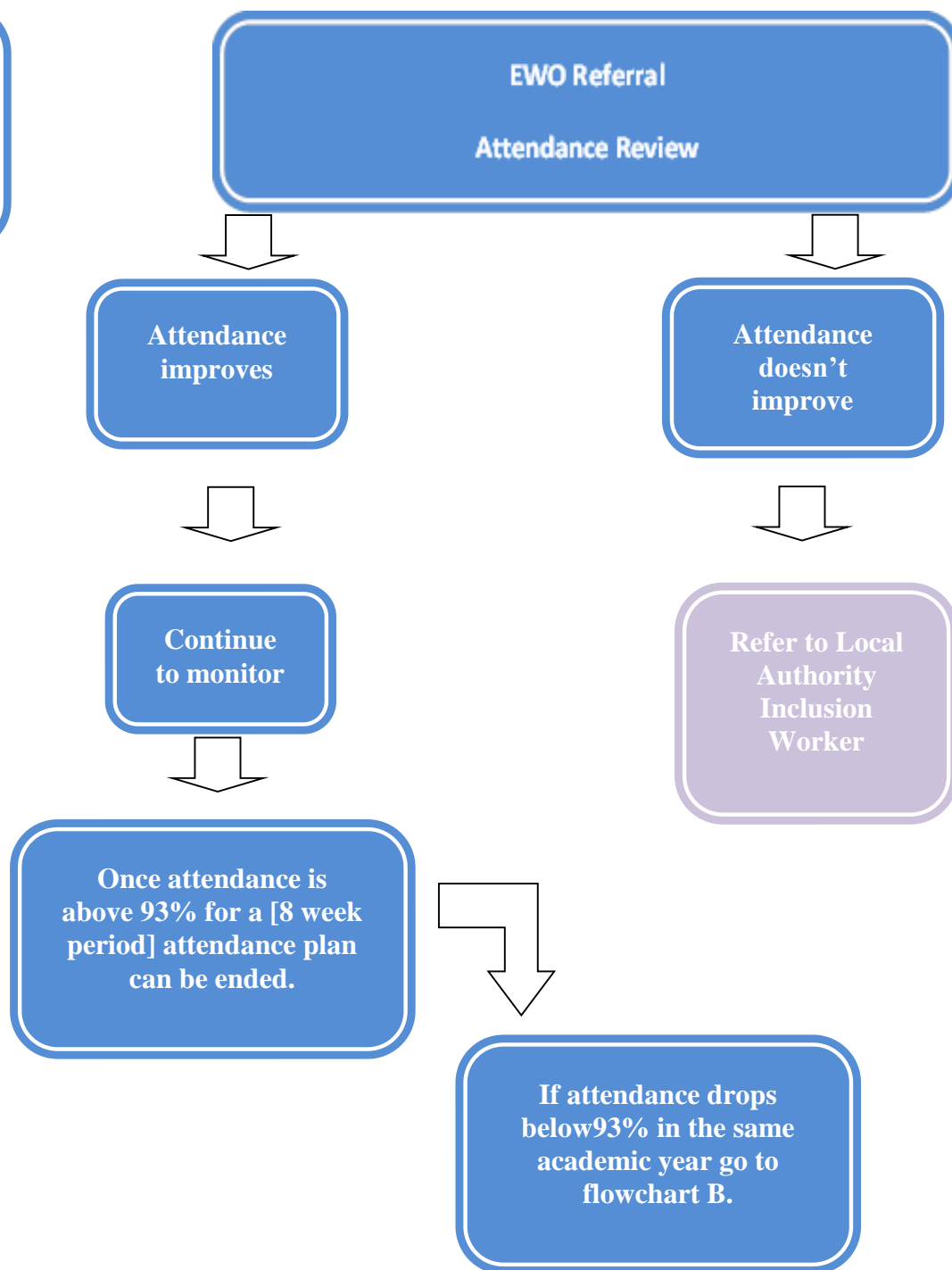
Once attendance is  
above 93% over an 8  
week period attendance  
plan can be ended.

If attendance drops  
below 93% in the same  
academic year go to  
flowchart B.

Consider whether appropriate  
to refer to Attendance  
Process Flowchart D or to set  
another 4 week period. After  
12 weeks go to Attendance  
Process Flowchart E



**Attendance  
Flow Chart  
D**

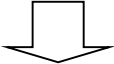


**Attendance  
Flow Chart E**

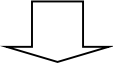
Referral made to Local Authority Inclusion Worker.



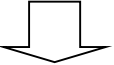
Review attendance plan in 4 weeks



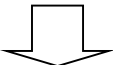
Attendance improves



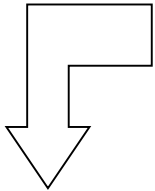
Attendance doesn't improve



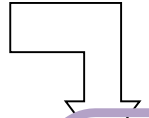
Continue to monitor



Local Authority implement sanctions.



Once attendance is above 93% attendance plan can be ended.



If attendance drops below 93% in the same academic year go to flowchart B.