Bearwood Primary and Nursery School



"Learning, Enjoying, Succeeding Together"

Attendance Policy

Updated: Autumn Term 2023

Review: Autumn Term 2024

Attendance Lead: Cheryl Smith

Attendance Officer: Sue Pitcher

Attendance Policy 2023 - 2024

Help your child attend today to achieve tomorrow!

Policy overview:

Pupils in our school with higher attendance have a better chance of doing well and this positively impacts their life chances. When a child is in school, we can work to keep them safe and help them to feel valued and make progress. We believe improving attendance works best if it is a whole school approach. Attendance is a safeguarding matter and is therefore everyone's responsibility. We must work together with our Parents/Carers, partners and communities to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. In our school we have a member of senior leadership who leads on attendance, alongside your child's class teacher and our family support worker/attendance officer who are always happy to talk and offer support.

In the event of your child being absent, to support attendance we may:

- make daily contact with you to seek information on your child's well-being and reason for absence
- visit you at home as part of our safeguarding responsibility
- meet with you and your child to find agreed solutions to any barriers in attending
- make reasonable adjustments to help your child attend
- · work with you to decide on a plan to include your child's voice in helping them attend
- seek outside agency help as needed
- keep records of any absence and reasons for absence
- inform the local authority if needed

Missing school can mean missing out. Talk to us if your child is having difficulties coming to school.

Please phone the school by 09:00 using the absence line on the first morning of absence and each morning after that. This helps us keep your child safe.

The absence may not be authorised if we have any grounds to dispute the reason given. If your child has more than 10 unauthorised absences in any 8-week period the Local authority may be contacted and a Fixed Penalty notice may be issued.

This policy adheres to Department of Education guidance found here <u>School attendance quidance</u> (<u>publishing.service.gov.uk</u>). Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education as stated here <u>Stat quidance</u> <u>template</u> (<u>publishing.service.gov.uk</u>)

Statement of Intent

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents/ carers and pupils play a part in making our school successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 96%.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

Legal framework/ responsibilities

- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school.
- Responsibility of the school to support attendance and to take problems seriously which may lead to nonattendance.
- Penalty Notices may be issued under the Local Authority's (LA) Code of Conduct for the use of Penalty Notices in Cases of Non-Attendance at school. A copy of this Code of Conduct can be obtained from the Attendance Officer and the BCP website.

Roles and responsibilities

The responsibilities for school attendance have been set out in the latest guidance and are summarised below.

Role	Responsibilities
Parents	 Inform the school on the first day of absence Complete a leave of absence request form and submit to the office or planned absences in advance Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
	 Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable
	 Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
	Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
Pupils	 Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence Arrive in school on time Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk if they are late

Schools- SLT, Attendance	Have a clear attendance policy
Staff, Administration	 Develop and/or maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance
	Ensure accurate completion of admissions and attendance registers
	Have robust daily processes to follow up on absence
	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance
	 Signpost and support access to any required services.
	Work with LA and outside agencies as needed
	Inform SLT of any concerns
Schools- Teaching and	Develop and/or maintain a whole school culture that promotes the
Learning, Classroom Staff	benefits of good attendance
	Build strong relationships with all pupils and their families
	Contact home where appropriate
	Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately
	Promote and reward good and improving attendance with pupils at
	all appropriate opportunities
	 Liaise with the attendance leader on matters of attendance and punctuality
	Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may
	account for a child's absence
	Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they
	are back in school
Trust	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus
	support on the pupils who need it
	Take an active role in attendance improvement, supporting schools
	to prioritise attendance and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures
	 Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
	 Ensure school readers runn expectations and statutory duties. Ensure school staff receive training on attendance
Local Authority	
Local Authority	9.
	 Have an Attendance Support Team to work with all schools in the area
	Provide a named point of contact
	 Provide a flamed point of contact Provide opportunities for sharing effective practice.
	Hold termly conversations with every school around attendance
	 Work jointly with schools and relevant agencies to facilitate support
	for families and remove barriers to attendance.
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The Registers

The registers will be taken promptly at **9.00 am** and **1.00 pm**. A mark will be made in respect of each child at these times. Children who arrive between **9am and 9:10am** will be marked as a late arrival with the code L. If a child arrives after 9:10am, they will be recorded as absent with the code U, which is classed as unauthorised. The school gates are open from 8:30am and all pupils are encouraged to arrive from this time. This is a positive opportunity to connect and play with friends before formal learning begins.

Interventions and Rewards

Pupils are encouraged to attend school through a rich, exciting and varied curriculum. Improving of attendance is recognised by the attendance officer and pupils will be made aware of their improvements via marvellous me and in assemblies. See the overview of attendance levels below.

98- 100%-	This is excellent attendance.
97.9% - 96%	Your child's attendance is good, and you are giving them a good chance of success.
90 - 95.9%	Attendance at this level is becoming a concern. The class teacher will make contact when a child has dropped to 95% to offer any support required to improve attendance to good. We may use the strategies in Appendix four to help improve attendance. You may also be issued with the first warning letter.
Less than 90%	This is a serious concern as your child is missing out on education – A fixed penalty notice may be issued by the local authority if the absences have been unauthorised. You will also be issued with a second letter. You will be called on the first day of absence by a member of the attendance team. This may also include a welfare check. Medical proof will be required if absence is less than 90%.
Less than 80%	This is a serious safeguarding concern, warning letter 3 may be sent. A fixed penalty notice may be issued by the local authority if the absences have been unauthorised. You may receive a welfare check. You may be invited in for a meeting to devise a 6 weekly fast track support plan.
Less then 50 %	Your child is classed a Severe absentee and the Local Authority, as well as social care, will be notified.

Every term pupils may be presented with certificates and an MME for attendance to celebrate improvements. However, if attendance becomes a concern the interventions outlined in appendix four will be considered.

Day to day absence procedure:

If a pupil is absent from school the following procedure will be adhered to. If you are unsure whether your child should attend school this NHS website is good place to start: <u>Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)</u>

Day One	-Parents are expected to call the school absence line by 9am
	-The school will send a text message out by 10.30am
	-For families who are considered vulnerable or below 90% a phone call will be made, or
	a home visit arranged (this will be agreed by the senior leadership team)
	a nome visit arranged (this will be agreed by the semon leadership team)
Day Two	-Parents are expected to call the school with an update
	-If no contact has taken place a phone call or home visit will be made
Day Three	-If no contact has been made all contact numbers will be tried, a text sent, and a welfare visit will be made
	Visit will be illade
Moving to	We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an
CME	explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been
	established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child
	is at risk of missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key
	services to locate the child. So, help us to help
	you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There
	will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year. We will then follow
	BCP's CME a guidance. School attendance (bcpcouncil.gov.uk)
	Self 3 civil a galladirec. Self-of atternaulice (Sept-odirent, gov. an)
Vulnerable	A home visit or phone call may be arranged earlier if the pupil is deemed to be
and low	persistently absent (below 90%) or who are severely absent (below 50%) and for those
attenders	with any past or current safeguarding concerns
(below 95%	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
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Please note that an attendance fast track support plan can be actioned at any point. This process will be a 12 week plan with a 6 week review.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence

According to the DFE, schools are free to choose how authorised absences are defined. See below for an outline of how the school categories authorised and unauthorised.

Reason for authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
 where leave has been granted by the school in advance where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend- medical proof may be requested where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's or pupil's parents belong in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family bereavement, wedding day only) and for a very limited period To attend medical appointments that can 	 no explanation has been given by the parent the school is not satisfied with the explanation the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday - this could result in a fixed penalty notice the pupil is staying at home to provide care for a parent, sibling or other relative Repeated one day absence and noticeable patterns and trends Attending appointments for/with family members
not be taken outside of the school day.	·

Legal Interventions

There are a number of Legal actions open to a school, Academy Trust or Local Council to enforce school attendance. Local councils and schools can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason. These Include:

- A Parenting Order
- An Education Supervision Order
- A School Attendance Order
- A fine (sometimes known as a 'fixed penalty notice')

Improving Attendance is a priority and as such, we may use any of the above enforcement actions if our internal procedures have not resulted in improved attendance.

<u>Lateness</u> and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register officially closes will be marked <u>absent for the whole session</u> (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be subject to the same procedures as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence.

If a child arrives late (after the registers have closed) more than three times per half term, they will not be considered to have 100% attendance when awards are given at the end of each term.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure. For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day report to the school office.

Term time holidays and request for leave of absence

The DfE states: 'Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.'

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances only and this is not the norm. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable circumstances (which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time). There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family.

There is no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday and, in the majority of cases, holiday will not be authorised.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for a leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available from the school office) in advance and before making any travel arrangements. If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will automatically be unauthorised and the school will request the Local Authority to consider issuing a fine.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and as such, we expect parents to help us by not arranging holidays during school time.

School work for pupils that are absent will only be provided during exclusions or long-term medical absences and not during unauthorised absences.

Medical Conditions

Pupils attending our school may have medical conditions, either long or short term that will affect their attendance at some stage in their school career. It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent school attendance whilst they are facing the challenge of ill health and remove the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering external support and reasonable adjustments, for example, supporting their ongoing learning.

One of our aims is to support children back into school as soon as their health allows. We aim to help ensure that the reintegration process encourages maximum attendance is resumed as quickly as possible. This

includes working with families, ensuring that they understand how important regular attendance is to their child's development and health.

It is crucial that our schools receive and fully consider advice from healthcare professionals and listen to and value the views of parents and pupils. We understand that some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. Some pupils may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. We will ensure that staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need, their healthcare plan is closely monitored and implement a Individual Healthcare plan if needed. We do not, however, have to accept a child in school at times where it would be detrimental to the health of that child or others to do so.

We are committed to ensuring that all relevant staff are made aware of a child's condition, that there are cover arrangements in place in case of staff absence or turnover and any supply staff are briefed fully. Parents/carers should provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs. Where necessary a risk assessment will be put into to support a child return.

Appendix 1 REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING	
/	Present (AM)	Present	
\	Present (PM)	Present	
В	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity	
С	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	
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence	
Н	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 9:10am)	Present	
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence	
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	
0	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence	
Р	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	
Т	Traveller absence	Authorised absence	
U	Late (after registers closed 9:10am)	Unauthorised absence	
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity	
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity	
Х	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances	
Υ	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	

Appendix 2: Fixed Penalty Notice: (FPN)

From the 1st September 2013, the Department for Education (DFE) amended the regulations surrounding holidays in term time. The DFE removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. These amendments make it clear that Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time and gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

We fully appreciate the financial difficulties that some parents face when booking holidays, particularly during school holidays. The Local Authority will be putting stringent checks in place to ensure that there is a significant reduction in the number of absences from school during term time. The Local Authority will be monitoring all school absences during term time and challenging those schools and parents that do not adhere to the new legislation.

With effect from 1 September 2014, the School Attendance Worker on behalf of BCP 5-19s Team will be issuing fixed penalty notice fines when:-

- unauthorised absence or 10 unauthorised sessions occur (including unauthorised late marks) (1 session = a half day)
- a pupil is stopped with parents/carers during a truancy sweep and the absence is not authorised by the school

Parents / carers will receive communication from the school / School Attendance Worker (SAW) prior to a FPN being issued. Bearwood Primary and Nursery School values building relationships with parents and will endeavour to work in partnership with the home to improve attendance.

Currently the penalty is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 between 21 and 28 days. Fining costs were implemented in Spring 2019 whereby the fine is £60 per child per resident parent/stepparent.

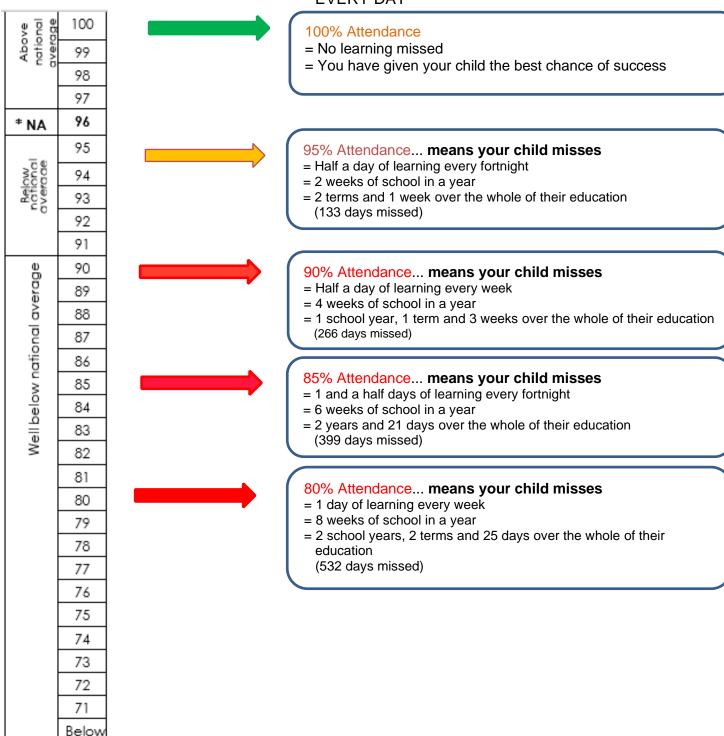
If the penalty is not paid in full within 28 days of the issue, the Local Authority is required to start legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of failing to ensure the child attends school regularly. Currently this may lead to a fine of up to £1000.

Appendix 3:

Attendance Flowchart

Attendance Counts!

Make sure that you give your child the best opportunities for success by sending them into school EVERY DAY



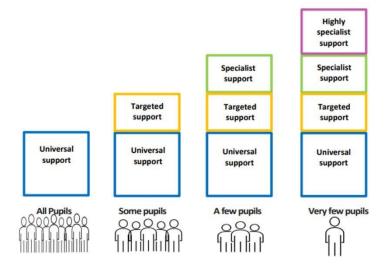
^{*} NA - national average

70



Appendix 4: Graduated Response to Attendance/Non-Attendance

A Graduated response consists of a series of stages that build on one another in response to the level of need, as illustrated in the graphic below. Each stage includes elements of the stages before them. Not every element of each stage will be appropriate for each pupil and support can be tailored for each individual.



Stage	Provision required		Assessment, recording and monitoring systems	Comments
1		children – children feel you know them individually. Children are welcomed daily to ensure they feel known and valued. The classroom provides a safe physical and emotional space for learning.	Daily attendance records Bromcom alerts – second 94%, primary 95% markers Analysing data for groups weekly, particularly for vulnerable groups Robust daily processes to follow up absence.	The purpose of a welfare call is to check how the child is and let them know you are looking forward to their return.

Follow up call by well-known adult for absent pupils after day two missing – welfare/valuing • Additional strategies may include- • Attendance assemblies • Certificates • Attendance awards and praise for improvements • Attendance newsletters • Attendance boards 2 Early intervention support Parent's will receive notifications of their child's attendance by letter/email/text with a reminder of or policy and processes. At risk of PA (92-94/95%) Conversation with teacher or family support worker to consider what migh help improve attendance. Additional strategies may include- • Letters/postcards home for attendance improvements • Targeted Clinic for parents – Coffee morning, keeping in touch, help and support with pastoral team • Transport problem solving • Environmental review and consideration of sensory need • Access to pastoral / ELSA support if appropriate Pupil given role or responsibility if this will support confidence, routine or integration with peers	Log of actions will begin If Attendance at any extracurricular activities will be logged for praise. In-school pastoral/ELSA support sessions will be logged. Records of communications with Parents/Carers will be made. Action plans in place for returning regularly to school if the pupil is working remotely	Attendance Officer and family liaison officers will take a greater role in stage 2. However, it is important to remember that the relationship with the teacher remains pivotal in improving attendance. This stage is focused on supporting a child and parent to understand the importance of education and to help them to feel more comfortable in attending school.
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ac su	dditional upport hose now ose to PA or A 87-91%)	groups and individual support to ensure learning can be accessed effectively. The school will begin to follow the process of referral to the Education Welfare Officer or School Attendance Panel. Team around the child meeting to discuss barriers and solutions with parents present. Home visits as needed, to keep in touch and ensure child feels valued Attendance support plan jointly agreed with parents to increase attendance over time and will consider evidence-based interventions or 1:1 catch up on learning missed through absence. Work with parents regarding routines and signposting support outlining potential need for local authority intervention in the future if there is no improvement. The school will begin to follow the process of referral to the Education Welfare Officer or School Attendance Panel with all accompanying paperwork where appropriate. Where attendance falls in stage three due to medical need, there should be a clear plan to support the child to learn remotely where possible and to maintain contact with peers.	attendance officer and HT. Reviewed at Pupil Progress and Phase Review meetings with Senior Leadership Team Assessment for Learning systems used to identify strengths/gaps Individual Attendance Plan with weekly review	At this stage, pupils should be monitored closely and worked with intensively and positively to reverse negative attendance trends. The teacher must continue to make positive contact with the child in their absence, but it will also be helpful for the child to have a key worker/key person they can speak openly with and who will maintain regular contact.
in ac su (8	utensive dditional upport 80 – 87%) ttendance is	small groups and working individually with an adult The school will work with other agencies to ensure that attendance is a key focus in any support.	(Concern sheet completed, detailing evidence of intervention, impact and outcomes) SENDCo monitoring provision	At this stage children are missing up to a day a week, so ensuring they do not fully disengage with education is vital. We need to ensure specific and detailed plans support education first and attendance on school site as a close second!

a real	Authority Education Welfare		
a real concern	Department or School Attendance Panel will be made by the school if the absences are unauthorised. you may have a child on low percentage attendance but this has all been authorised by the school due to the circumstances or the family have been away on an extended holiday and have received an FPN. In these types of cases referrals would not be made. Discussions will be held with the DSL to identify if there are any safeguarding concerns and need for support through children's social care. Previous schools and the schools of siblings will be contacted to triangulate support. Multi-professional planning and coordinated support including clarity for parents regarding impact of attendance. Where pupil is too young to make their own choices, the focus of the plan will be to support parents' engagement.	EWO referral form will be sent and logged. Contact with other schools and agencies will be recorded. DSL will record contact with children's services.	
	for parents regarding impact of attendance. Where pupil is too young to make their own choices, the focus of the plan will be to support parents' engagement. Offer temporary alternative provision to the classroom – e.g, forest school,		
	home or online tutoring, access to skills courses with a view to return to school Identified on school provision map Possible mentor/friend from outside agency to encourage pupil to learn and aid reintroduction where needed.		
	Opportunities for peer contact to ensure some relationships are maintained.		

	which would be expected (Below 80%) Attendance is a serious concern	In addition to Stages 1 – 4: Local Authority intervention will be sought by the school where appropriate. Any attendance action plans will be strengthened with additional referrals to partners and outside agencies for support and adapted timetable and environment will be put in place where needed. The school will work with parents/carers, outside agencies/partners and the local authority to consider more formal support options including parenting contracts, education supervision orders and prosecution as a last resort. Access to adapted environment if appropriate Possible personalised curriculum	At this stage it is likely that parents are being asked to comply with their legal duty. However, even at this stage we must ensure the child knows we miss them and want them back
6.	(Below 50%) Intensive provision in	The school will agree a joint approach with the Local Authority. The school may ask for consideration for an EHCP or Alternative provision if not already in place. The school will ask for a full Children's Social Care assessment where appropriate and build attendance into existing children in need and child protection plans.	As above

Checklist for Graduated Response – 85%

Intervention	Date of Intervention	Comments/Actions/Outcome
Talk with pupil		
Talk with class teacher/tutor/TA		
Talk with DSL		
Letters home		
Phone calls home		
Meeting with parents		
Home visits		
Review of support needs and pastoral support put in place as needed		
Review of education needs and any differentiation put in place		
Reasonable adjustments made to the pupils timetable/environment		
Peer support		

Referral	Date of Referral	Comments/Actions/Outcomes
School Nurse/ Health Practitioner		
Inclusion Services		
Counselling		
CAMHS		
Educational Psychology		
Alternative Provision		
Early Help		
Children's services		
Parenting services		

Behaviour Support	
Young Carers	
LBGTQ+ Support	
EWO	
YOT	
Other	