

**Part 1**

<b>Name of policy</b>	<b>P13 Attendance Policy</b>
<b>Status of policy</b>	This is a statutory policy
<b>Consultation</b>	This policy has been developed following consultation with Pastoral Governors, Senior Leadership Team, Parents and Students
<b>Relationship with other policies</b>	This policy should be read in conjunction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Safeguarding / Child Protection Policies</li><li>- Home School Agreement</li><li>- Behaviour Policy</li></ul>
<b>Date policy was agreed</b>	<b>October 2016</b>
<b>Date for full implementation</b>	Immediate
<b>Date for review</b>	<b>Annually – October 2017</b>

1. Good attendance at school is essential for a pupils' education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.
2. The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
3. Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).
4. The school will communicate to the Parents/carers that they must be fully aware of the schools attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on their child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents/carers, together with school staff all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved.
5. Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an ***exceptional reason*** for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:
  - **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
  - **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.

When a parent/carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. The child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

6. Keeping a child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that medical evidence is obtained from the doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)
7. The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, or carers, school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools. To review reports on attendance figures, numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices issued and reasons for not issuing others.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **School Practice**

In line with the Government and Local Authority guidelines

- Registers are taken twice daily. In the morning 8.50 – 9.10 and in the afternoon 2.10 – 2.20.
- Parents/carers should always telephone the school office before 8.30am if their child will not be attending school.
- First day responses are made by the Pastoral team if the school has been given no prior notification of a pupil' absence. The team hold a list of all vulnerable students and the parents/carers will be contacted by telephone if any vulnerable students are absent with no reason communicated. HOYs will monitor pupils who are seen to be developing a pattern of absence.
- The HOY will write to the parents/carers of those children whose attendance is a cause for concern (see appendix 1-5).
- Parents/carers may be asked to meet with the HOY/SLT member to discuss absences and attendance workshops may be an option.
- Should absences persist with no improvement then the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

### **Absences during term time**

*The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 states: Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended 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.*

### **Parent Action**

- Parents must request leave as far in advance as possible.
- Applications to be made in writing on the schools 'leave of absence form', giving the reason for the request (see appendix 7)

### **School Action**

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. **If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.**

Edgbarrow School: Governors' Policy  
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As of 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2013, the rate per parent per child will be £60 if paid within 21 days and rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days.

If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

All parents/carers are requested that all holiday should be taken during holiday periods ie. The school holidays (this is over 13 school weeks)

**Lateness**

Pupils learn best when they arrive punctually at school. The school day begins at 8.50am and all pupils are expected to be in school at the time. Registers are open at 8.50am and close at 9.40am. A pupil will receive a late mark 'L' if they are not in the classroom when the registers are taken. A detention will be set for lateness.

Any pupil arriving late should enter the building through the main entrance and will report to the school office. They will register on the vericol system as a late and give the reason. A member of the office staff will then send the pupil to their classroom. If the arrival at school is after the registers have closed, the pupil will receive a 'U'. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Parents or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping (see appendix 6-8). If lateness persists parents or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem with the HOY/SLT member.

**The Role of the School Management**

Pupils learn best when parents and staff work in partnership to maximise pupils' attendance at school and everyone is clear of expectations and procedures.

- School staff have an obligation to enquire and challenge the reasons for pupils' absences and/or lateness.
- The school will send letters to parents/carers as to their child's current attendance level, unexplained absences or lateness's or any other concerns. (see flowchart)
- The school collects information daily and weekly from the registers on absences. This information is forwarded to the Local Authority and Department for Education.

### **The Role of the Education Welfare Officer**

The Education Welfare Officer strives to support schools, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

**Section 444 of the Education Act states that “if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence.”**

Bracknell Forest Council, through the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

A Fixed Penalty Notice when requested by a Headteacher can be issued as long as the following criteria apply:

- At least 10 sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence by the pupil during the current school term, or 20 sessions (ten school days) in the previous 4 months
- Other than in specific circumstances, the parent will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given 15 school days to affect improvement. Within the 15 day period, further unauthorised absence will trigger the issue of a notice without warning.
- No more than two Penalty Notices will be issued per pupil per academic year.

In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority reserves the right to:

- issue a Penalty Notice for a first offence
- issue a Penalty Notice without warning

The Fast Track framework promotes early intervention and aims to ensure that appropriate action is taken to tackle non-attendance as soon as attendance problems become apparent. Fast Track involves engaging the parent and specifying what improvements need to be made over a fixed time-frame (usually 12 weeks). Parents have the responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly. Where a parent fails in this responsibility and no improvement is brought about within the specified time frame, legal proceedings are initiated in the Magistrates Court.

### **Promoting Good Attendance**

We celebrate excellent attendance throughout our School, with certificates, prizes, awarded to individual children during the academic year (September to July).

**What parents/carers can do to help?**

Parents/carers are asked to work with the school staff and ensure they are fully aware of the schools attendance policy as this has a huge impact on a pupils' learning.

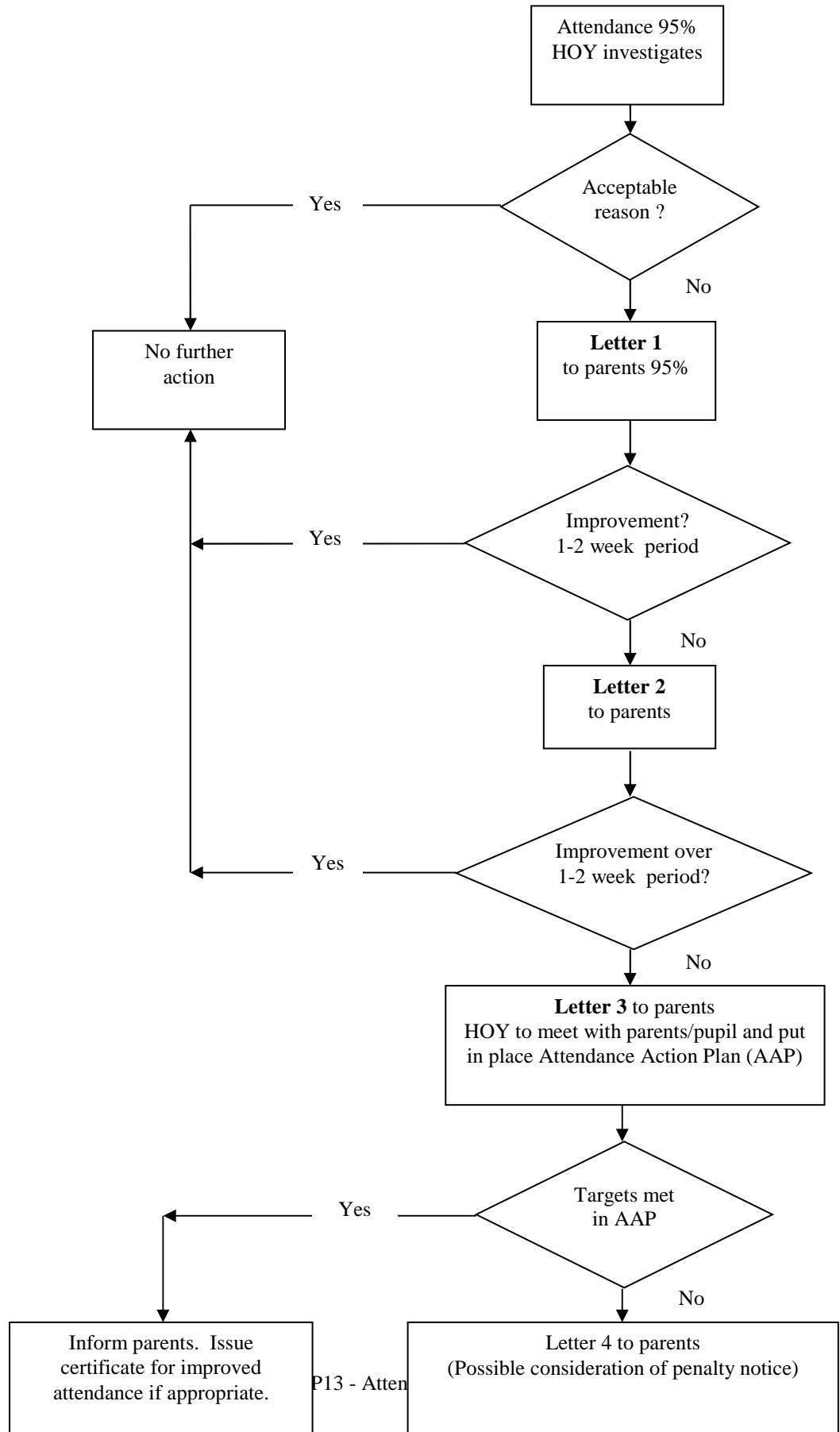
- Telephone the school each day that a child is unable to attend school due to illness
- Avoid appointments during the school day
- Do not condone a child's absences
- Do not take holidays in term time.

**Governors**

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools. Attendance data will be reviewed Annually by the Pastoral governors.

## EDGBARROW SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

Edgbarrow School procedure for addressing attendance concerns at 95% or below



**Letter 1**

Ref

Date

Address

Dear

**Re : Student**

From monitoring our registers we find that **NAME's** attendance has dropped to below 95%.

It is important that children attend school regularly and the law states that children of compulsory school age must be educated. Prolonged and irregular absence from school can disadvantage pupils. Failing to attend school regularly can have a major impact on a child's education, their future and their life chances. There is strong evidence to show that absence has a serious impact on a child's performance in tests and examinations and means that they will fail to meet their full potential. Other reasons are also important:

- relationships with other pupils are built and sustained.
- children who are away from school may be at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse.
- children may be drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour; and
- a good record of attendance at school is attractive to future employers.

Parents and carers, the school, the Local Authority and the pupil all need to work together to maximise attendance and punctuality.

It is with this in mind that we are contacting you about **NAME's** attendance and if there is anything we can do to support you in getting your child into school, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year



**Letter 2**

Ref

Date

Address

Dear

**Re : Student**

We are very concerned at the number of absences that **NAME** has recorded against **his/her** name.

I wrote to you on **DATE** about your child's attendance, but unfortunately there has been no improvement and their attendance is currently **?%** which falls short of the expected level of attendance. Please see attached a copy of **NAME's** attendance register.

One of the most important things that a parent/carer can do is to make sure that their child goes to school regularly, arrives on time and keeps to the school rules of attending all lessons.

If there is a reason for the current level of attendance, I should be grateful if you could contact me to discuss the matter. We shall continue to monitor your child's attendance and hope to see an improvement. If there is no improvement, we will need to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further.

I look forward to seeing an immediate and sustained improvement in **NAME's** attendance.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

**Letter 3**

Ref

Date

Address

Dear

**Re : Student**

Further to my letter of **DATE** I am concerned to see that there is no improvement in **NAME's** attendance. I enclose another copy of **NAME's** attendance register for your information and consideration.

I would like to invite you and **NAME** to a meeting on **DATE** at **TIME** in **PLACE** to discuss **his/her** attendance and look at ways of improving the situation. The purpose of the meeting is to complete an Attendance Action Plan in which we will agree how to support **NAME** in improving **his/her** attendance, and to understand the consequences if the situation does not improve.

Under the terms of the 1996 Education Act, it is your legal responsibility to ensure the regular school attendance of your child.

The Education Welfare Officer is aware that I am contacting you and that, if the result of the Attendance Action Plan is unsuccessful, I will make a formal referral to the Education Welfare Service and they will consider taking legal action.

I hope the above time is convenient, however, please contact me at school if you are unable to attend this meeting in order for us to be able to set another more convenient time.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

**Letter 4**

Ref

Date

Address

Dear

**Re : Student**

Further to the recent **correspondence/meeting** expressing concerns about **NAME's** poor attendance at school, I note that there has not been any improvement. **NAME's** attendance is currently ?% (see attached attendance register).

Attendance at school is important and it is your legal responsibility to ensure that it happens. Poor attendance will affect your child's attainment, as outlined in our previous letter.

I am therefore making an immediate referral to the Education Welfare Service for appropriate action to be taken. The Education Welfare Service work closely with us and this referral may result in the Education Welfare Officer making a visit to your home to establish why your child is persistently absent. It will therefore be important that you co-operate with the Education Welfare Service to ensure that any problems are addressed and your child attends school.

If you fail to co-operate with the Education Welfare Service and the school, the Local Authority could consider applying to the Court for an Education Supervision Order. The Local Authority can also prosecute parents/carers which could result in a maximum fine of £2,500 plus costs and/or a custodial sentence of up to 3 months or a community sentence. Alternatively the Local Authority has the authority to issue a fixed penalty notice to parents of between £60 and £120. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution as set out above.

Please contact me if there is anything more that we can do to support you and improve **NAME's** attendance.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

## **Lateness to School**

Registers close at 9.40am.

If a student is late before 9.40am they will receive an 'L' in the register (late before registers have closed) – (authorised absence).

If a student is late after 9.40am they will receive a 'U' in the register (late after registers have closed) – (unauthorised absence). Any student who accrues 10 'U's will be fast-tracked to prosecution (EWS).

**NB** – A student who arrives late after 9.40am due to a medical appointment or for any other authorised reason, will have their mark amended.

All late students (after 9.10am) **have** to report to reception to register with the electronic VeriCool system.

On assembly days any student who comes late to the assembly **must** register with reception (VeriCool) before coming to the assembly as registers have already been taken.

Electronic registration enables the tutors to mark students present and if late enables them to record on the system how many minutes late they are.

Any student that is late will receive a sanction .

Dear Parent / Carer

**AUTHORISED LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST**

Please find attached a form to request authorised leave of absence.

There is not a legal entitlement to time off for a holiday during term time. Government guidelines say that a leave of absence may only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Absence from school can impact negatively on your sons/daughter's learning and progress. It is often difficult to make up the class work missed due to absence and pupils have to work hard when they return to get back on track. Absence can result in pupils falling behind in their studies and, ultimately, this can significantly impair progress and result in lower levels of educational attainment.

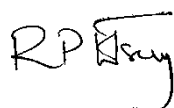
We understand that, very occasionally, there may be problems in arranging holidays to coincide with school holidays. **However, in view of the negative impact on pupils' academic performance and the Government's view that holidays should be taken when a school is closed to pupils, Edgbarrow School will not authorise absence for this purpose.**

Bracknell Forest Council, through the Education Welfare Service will consider the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice where a pupil has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence during a term or 20 sessions in the previous four months (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 school days - 20 sessions = 10 school days).

As of 1st September, 2013, the rate per parent per child will be £60 if paid within 21 days and rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the penalty notice is not paid each parent/carer may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

Requests for leave for other reasons should be made on the form overleaf and returned to your son/daughter's form tutor or Head of Year at least two weeks before the leave is required.

Yours faithfully



Mr R P Elsey  
Headteacher

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**IMPORTANT NOTES - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

The form is to be completed and sent to the relevant Head of Year at least two weeks before the period of absence.  
 Except in very exceptional circumstances a pupil will not be granted any leave of absence.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT AUTHORISED ABSENCE WILL NOT BE APPROVED FOR HOLIDAYS**

**To the Assistant Headteacher**

Please accept this letter as a request for authorised leave of absence from compulsory school time.

<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Tutor Group</b>
<b>Home Address :</b>		
<b>First Date of Absence</b>	<b>Date of return</b>	<b>No. school days absent</b>
<b>Please provide details as to why this request is necessary:</b>		
<b>Has your son/daughter been taken out of school before for any reason other than medical (please give details):</b>		
<b>Name of Parent/Carer (who student resides with)</b>		
<b>Home Telephone Number</b>		
<b>Mobile Telephone Number</b>		
<b>E-mail Address</b>		
<b>Signature of Parent / Carer</b>		
<b>Date</b>		

Please now pass to your son's/daughter's Head of Year for an attendance comment. The form will then be forwarded to the Assistant Headteacher.

<p><b>Head of Year comment</b></p> <p>Current attendance percentage : _____ No. of Lates: _____</p> <p>Any other concerns/details: _____</p> <p>Head of Year recommendation : YES / NO</p>
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**Assistant Headteacher Authorisation**

Please delete as appropriate:    Approved / Not Approved

If not approved give reason(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
                     Assistant Headteacher