



**High Park School**  
*Learning for Life*

## Pupil Attendance Policy

Approved by Governing Body	Chair of Governor signature: Date:	Principal signature: Date:
Policy Review Date	September 2023	

# High Park School

# Pupil Attendance Policy

Signed by:

Principal

Date:

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Chair of  
Governors

Date:

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Statement from "Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities"

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## Section 2: Expectations of schools

14. All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. As set out in section 1, attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school.

15. The most effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance at school, set high expectations for every pupil, communicate those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents, systematically analyse their data to identify patterns to target their improvement efforts, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance. They also recognise that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils want to attend and can learn and thrive

### 1. (updated) Statement of Intent

At High Park School we recognise and believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

The whole school community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance; parents, pupils, governors and all school staff. Regular attendance at school is a legal requirement. As a school we encourage and expect excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of their wide educational opportunities.

We also recognise the importance of close home-school partnerships in supporting our pupils' optimum attendance.

**[New]** We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

**[New]** We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

**[New]** We are committed to:

- **[New]** Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.

- **[New]** Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- **[New]** Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- **[New]** Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- **[New]** Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance team, and can be contacted via [attendanceteam@highpark.org.uk](mailto:attendanceteam@highpark.org.uk). Staff, and parents/carers will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

## 2. (updated) Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

(New) DfE (2022) Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities  
Published: May 2022 Applies from: September 2022  
(Updated) DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education'  
DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'  
DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'  
DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'  
Equality Act 2010  
The UK GDPR  
The Education Act 1996  
The Education Act 2002  
The Education and Inspections Act 2006  
The Children Act 1989  
The Children Act 2004  
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)  
The School Information (England) Regulations 2018)  
The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2014)  
Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 201  
Children and Young Persons Act 1963

## 3. Children Missing in Education

### 4.1 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, a "child missing education" is defined as a child or young person of compulsory school age who is not attending school, not placed in

alternative provision by an LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, SEND.

All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.

The LA has a legal duty to identify when there are CME and help them back into education. This policy highlights what our school will do to help the LA with its duty.

## 4.2 Why Children Miss Education

There are a number of reasons as to why children miss school, including the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of school
- Families moving into a new area

Aside from these reasons, if a child is missing from school, particularly repeatedly, this can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, such as the following:

- Abuse and neglect – including child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE), potentially involving county lines
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse – including risk of FGM or risk of forced marriage
- Mental health issues – such as risk of substance abuse
- Risk of travelling to conflict zones

## 4.3 Children at Particular Risks of Missing Education

As there could be many reasons for a child to be missing from education, the LA will make a judgement on a case-by-case basis. The following list indicates pupils who are most at risk of missing education:

- **Pupils at risk of harm or neglect** – where this is suspected, local child protection procedures will be followed; however, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to children's social care (and the police if appropriate). The LA officers responsible for CME will check a referral has been made, and will contact children's social care if this is not the case. Should there be a reason to suspect a crime has been committed or the child's safety is at risk, the LA will contact the police.
- **Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families** – when a GRT pupil leaves the school without naming their next destination school, the school will contact the LA. If necessary, the school will consult the LA Traveller Education Support Services/named CME officer for advice on the best strategies to ensure minimal disruption to the GRT pupil's education.

- **Children of service personnel** – the school will contact the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service for advice to ensure continuity of education for these children.
- **Missing children/runaways** – should the school suspect a child has gone missing/run away, an appropriate staff member will consult the DfE for advice on missing children.
- **Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System** – in this case, LA youth offending teams are responsible for supervising children (aged 8 to 18). Where a young person is registered at the school prior to custody, the school will keep the place open for their return.
- **Children who cease to attend school** – where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the LA will investigate the situation.
- **Children of migrant families** – there is an increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address, or may have arrived into an LA area without the authority becoming aware.

#### 4. Induction and Training

The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education will be explained to staff during their induction.

All staff will receive annual safeguarding and child protection training, including an update on the various safeguarding concern possibilities that CME could represent, any changes to the early help process and staff members' role in this process

#### 5. Target Setting

Our school sets the annual target for the school year, 2022-2023 as 95%. In accordance with current policies to include Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities Published: May 2022 Applies from: September 2022. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the Governing Body submit annual targets to the Local Authority as required.

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school and parents.

#### 6. (updated) Monitoring

[New] The school will use attendance data, in line with the school attendance protocol in the appendix of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils and families.

Our attendance team meet on a weekly basis and the team will monitor the attendance data, using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated system. The team will log the impact of our attendance intervention on the pupil wellbeing profile, when following the schools attendance protocol and report any concerns to the principal.

Unauthorised absences will be followed up to ascertain the reason, ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken and to signpost to additional multiagency support where necessary.

Authorised term time absences will be monitored separately. A RAG system will highlight the number of request being made and provide an overview of time taken.

When attendance reaches a serious cause for concern (less than 85%), this may result in a referral being made to the Educational Social Worker and further action may be required.

The attendance protocol (see appendix) for pupils who fall into the lower percentage of attendance, follows the government guidance:

100%	0 Days Missed	Outstanding
97 %	5 Days of Absence 1 Week of Learning Missed	Excellent
95%	10 Days of Absence 2 Weeks of Learning Missed	Good
90% and above	20 Days of Absence 4 Weeks of Learning Missed	Satisfactory
90% and below	21 Days or more of Absence 4 and 6 Weeks Learning Missed	Cause for concern
Below 85%	30 Days or more of Absence 6 Weeks or more Learning Missed	Serious cause for concern

90% attendance is the equivalent to one day of absence every 2 weeks. Over an academic year, this amounts to four weeks of absence (120 hours of learning missed)

The Attendance Policy and the implementation encourages some pupils to attend school more regularly through the health and well-being meeting and specific measures the school takes to support families.

We will contact you if we have concerns about the attendance level of your son/daughter. We also reward students who attend well through our Attendance Achievers System.

Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school and to establish preparing for adulthood skills and knowledge for a positive adult future.

Non-attendees will not only miss out on essential learning but also social interaction activities to develop independence skills.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### 8.1 The expectations for school are:



The school will build respectful relationships with parents/carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Good relationships with parents/carers promotes good attendance

Establish good and effective communication with parents/carers by obtaining more than one contact number/method of contact.

Communicate openly and honestly with pupils and their families about their expectations of school life, attendance, absence procedures are understood and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.

The school has a positive and proactive ethos that places a high value on attendance and punctuality.

Provide an education suitable to the pupil's age, P level, ability and SEN

Provide a welcoming and safe environment which encourages attendance

Work collaboratively with other agencies to support attendance, based on clear expectations.

The attendance team will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. if a pupil has a social worker.

Keep accurate and up to date records on pupil's attendance and punctuality as required by legislation

The school works closely with all local schools in the DAP and also within the wider community via multi-agency meetings. It is these partnerships that aim to provide a cohesive approach to attendance by ensuring that every child matters.

Notify the LA in accordance with legislation, of irregular attendance or of continuous absences of more than two weeks (10 days) that are not covered by a medical certificate

Not to grant time off for a family holiday except in exceptional circumstances

Follow safeguarding procedures and the attendance protocol to improve pupil attendance

## **8.2 (updated) The expectations for staff members:**

All staff will be alert to the potential need to implement early help for a pupil who is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home.

All staff will be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Where staff have concerns about pupils relating to CME, staff will use their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated to the DSL or their deputy.

(New) Staff to raise any attendance concerns with the attendance team

## **8.3 The expectations of the Local Authority (LA)**

Under the Education Act 1996, the LA has a duty to establish the identities of children in the area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving education provision otherwise.

Provide full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period exclusion.

When it is brought to the LA's attention that a child may not be receiving a suitable education, the LA will serve notices on parents to assure the LA that their child is receiving such an education.

The LA will issue School Attendance Orders to parents who fail to assure the LA that their child is receiving a suitable education, and the LA believes that the child should attend school.

The LA will prosecute parents that do not comply with a School Attendance Order. The LA will prosecute or fine parents/carers of school-registered children who fail to ensure their child attends school regularly.

The LA will ensure that children identified as not receiving suitable education are returned to full-time education either at the school or elsewhere.

The LA will ensure that the school demonstrates prompt action and effective early intervention procedures to ensure children are safe and receiving suitable education.

The LA will apply to court for an Education Supervision Order for a CME.

The LA will ensure that children who return to full-time education are appropriately supported, taking into account the reasons why they missed education in the first place.

Pupils with EHC plans are able to be home educated. If the EHC plan sets out the provision that the pupil should receive at home, or names a school where the provision will be received, but the parent/carer chooses to home educate the child, the LA will arrange the provision and ensure that it is suitable to the child's special educational needs. The LA will review this statement annually.

The LA is responsible for liaising and sharing information with other agencies to support children who miss education.

The LA is responsible for referring to the LA children's social care where there is concern for a child's welfare, as well as the police if there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed.

#### **8.4 The expectations for parents are:**

Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead

Parents are responsible for providing the school with more than **three emergency** contact numbers where possible and providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.

Make sure your child is provided with an education through attending school regularly

Regular attendance encourages children to build friendships and develop social interaction with peers and adults. Increase the opportunities for personal development and developing life skills

Children's social skills are enhanced and readiness for learning through routine and structure, by regular attendance.

Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible

Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness

Take family holidays outside term time

Attend parent evenings and school events whenever possible

Praise and reward your child's achievements at school

Maintain regular communication with school staff and inform school of any changes of contact details

Work in partnership with school and other agencies in the best interests of your child; this includes informing school about significant changes or influences which may impact on learning and prevent school attendance

Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are there to help and will be supportive

Communicate with the school about possible circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support.

## **8. Absences**

If for any reason your child will not be in school, or may be arriving late due to an appointment, please telephone the school office on the day of absence between 7.30am and 8.30am. You can leave a message either on the answer machine or with a member of staff. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of a child's absence or late arrival at school, not the transport staff. Notification must be provided for all absences from school. First day contact every effort is made via phone, e-mail, letter, and home visit

## **9. (updated) Lateness**

The school day starts at 8.30am and parents who bring their children to school should arrive at this time.

(updated) If pupils arrive afternoon 9.00am due to circumstances beyond the parents' control, parents are requested to sign their child in at reception.

Parents who regularly bring their children to school late, will be contacted by the attendance team who will work with the parent(s) to support with improving punctuality, by working together in creating a support plan.

## **10. Leaving and returning to School during School Day**

The school must be notified in advance of any appointment or request to leave the school site during the school day. This can be by telephone, letter, e-mail or via the home/school diary.

The attendance team and school office staff must be aware of any pupils leaving the school site during the day

### **(updated) Table for Time Missed – Morning and Afternoon**

<b>The number of minutes late or leaving early every day</b>	<b>The number of full days missed every year</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>6.5</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>60</b>	<b>38</b>

## **11. Following up Absence**

High Park School follows up all absences from school. Prolonged or regular absence from school is followed up in conjunction with Safeguarding Policy and Attendance Protocol.

## 12. First Day Response

If a pupil does not attend school, and no reason has been provided to the school for their absence, a telephone call is made to the parent/carer during the morning of the absence.

## 13. Term Time Holidays

High Park School strongly discourages parents from taking family holidays during Term Time. Parents are made aware of the school holidays dates, through the school website, letters sent home, school newsletters. All requests for holidays during term time, are considered individually. Parents are requested to apply in writing up to one month in advance, using the Holiday Request form. Requests for holidays during term time, are kept on the pupils file.

## 14. Safeguarding

For the purpose of this policy, “**reasonable enquiries**” are defined as limited, investigative powers that the school may action to determine a child's whereabouts and whether they may be in danger.

In line with the Children Act 2004, the school will follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries, such as the DSL conducting discussions with neighbours, relatives or landlords, to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.

The DSL will record that they have completed these procedures and, if necessary, make a referral to the children's social care or police.

Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, the school, in conjunction with the LA, may carry out the following actions:

- Make contact with the parent/carer, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- Check local databases
- Check data transfer systems such as school2school or Key to Success
- Follow local information sharing arrangements, and making enquiries via other local databases and agencies where possible
- Check with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force
- Check with agencies known to be involved with the family
- Check with the LA and school from which the pupil moved originally
- Check with the LA where the pupil lives, if this is different to where the school is located
- Check with the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service in the case of children of Service Personnel
- Conduct home visits via an appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessments, and making enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate

**NB.** This list is not exhaustive – the school and LA will use their judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been taken into account.

Good attendance and punctuality minimise the risks of pupils conducting anti-social behaviour or becoming victims or perpetrators of crime or abuse.

## **15. Admissions register**

The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times, and will encourage parents/carers to notify the school of any changes as they occur, such as via email or newsletters.

Pupils will be recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, as the date that the pupil will attend the school.

Once a pupil has been recorded on the admissions register, the school will notify the LA within five days, and will supply the LA with all of the details contained on the admissions register for the new pupil.

Where a parent/carer notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The full name of the parent/carer with whom the pupil will live
- The new address
- The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address
- Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school, or will be attending a different school in future, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:
  - The name of the new school
  - The date when the pupil first attended, or is due to attend, that school
  - Parents are able to elect to educate their children at home, and will subsequently withdraw them from school. This can happen at any time, unless the pupil is subject to a School Attendance Order. If a parent notifies the school, the pupil will be deleted from our admission register and inform the LA.

## 16. Attendance register

The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Duel registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

## 17. Removing a pupil from the admissions register

The school will inform the LA of any pupil who will be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, e.g. home-schooled.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither they nor their parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.
- Have died.
- Have been registered at another school where it is not indicated this should be the case.
- Are registered at more than one school, but have failed to attend the school and the proprietor of any other schools concerned have consented to the deletion.

Have been granted authorised leave but have failed to attend school within 10 school days after the period of authorised absence ended, and:

- There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
- The LA and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries.

Have been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days, and:

- The absence was not authorised.
- There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
- The LA and school is unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries.
- Will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets, and the relevant person has indicated the pupil will not attend the school, or, the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for sixth form.

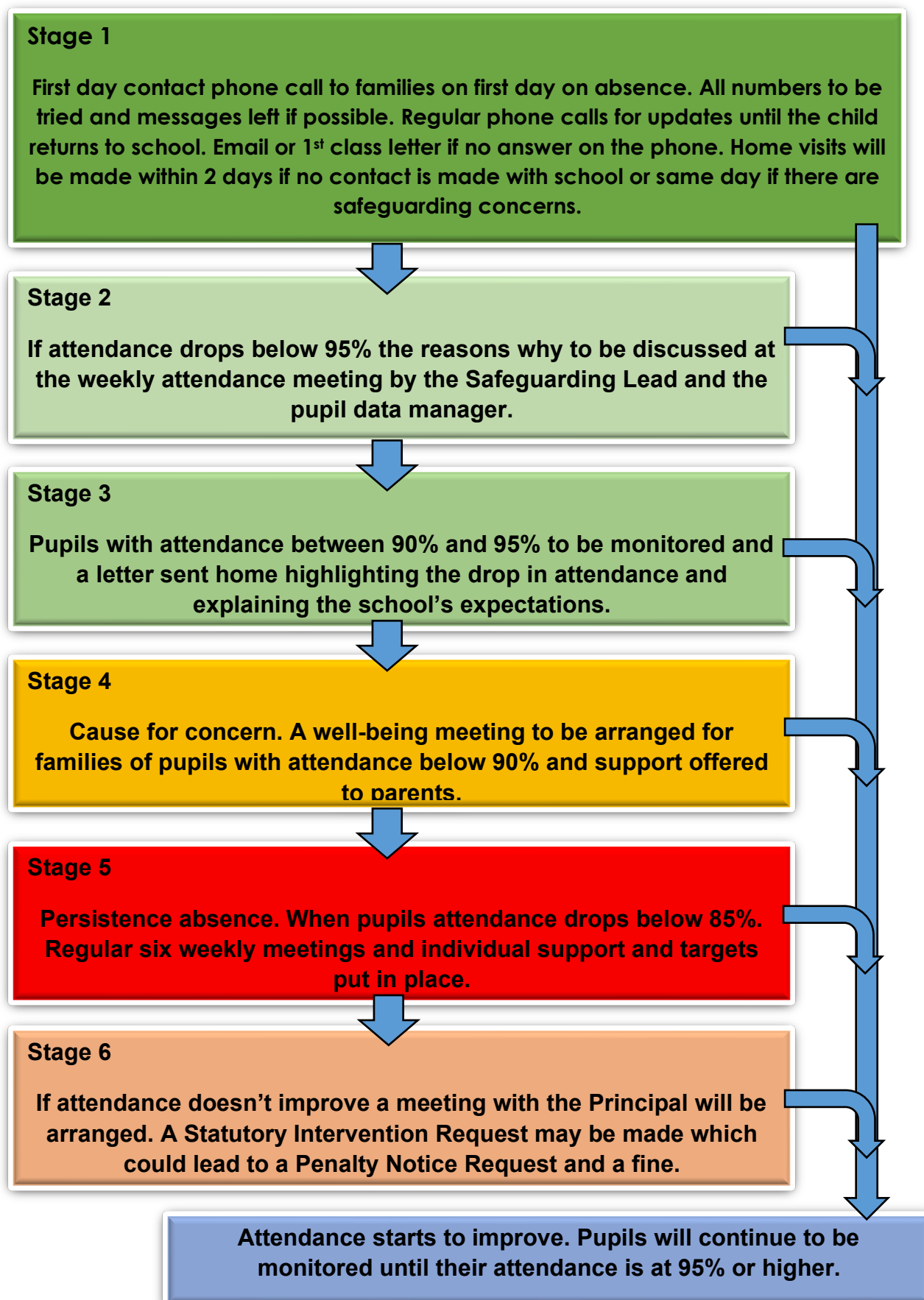
The school will notify the LA that a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as any of the above criteria are met, and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is actually removed.

If a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will provide the LA with the following information:

- The full name of the pupil
- The full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
- At least one telephone number of the parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
- The full name and address of the parent/carer who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
- The name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date, if applicable

## Appendix

### High Park School Attendance Flow Chart





## Guide for Parents/ Carers

1) When does my child need to be in school?

School day starts for pupils at 8.30am. If your child could be ready in good time for the school transport this will help them to arrive on time.

2) Does the school need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will try to contact you by: phone, e-mail, letter. This will be followed up with a home visit requesting this information, if we are still unable to contact you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we cannot authorise the absence.

3) What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Term time absences for families with exceptional circumstances (see question 6)

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details.

4) What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping or birthdays – unless in exceptional circumstances.

5) Will the school contact me if my child is absent?

The school will try to contact you, if we have not heard from you. This is to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance. If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

6) Can we take term time absences?

If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to not be in school during term time, you should complete an application form, stating the reason why. The Headteacher has the right to refuse permission having given consideration to: your child's age, the time of year, overall attendance pattern of your child and the circumstances given.

7) What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

8) My child is reluctant to come to school. What should I do?

Contact the school to discuss any concerns or worries. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to resolve the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. Please contact the school if you would like the contact details of the Education Welfare Service.

## **Process for Monitoring Pupil Absence**

### **Before school:**

- Parents to inform school by phone/letter/email

### **Registration:**

- Class staff will complete the school electronic register between 8.30am-9.00am stating present or absence. Unauthorised absences will be reported to a member of the attendance team. Child arriving after 9.00am parents/carers will be asked to sign children in at reception. Child leaving before 2.20pm parents/cares will be asked to sign the children out at reception.

### **First day phone call home**

- Member of the attendance team will call the family to ascertain the reason for the absence.
- If unable to make contact via phone, e-mail, a home visit will take place within 2 days or same day if there are any safeguarding concerns.

### **Persistent Absences**

- Attendance team will follow the schools protocol. Health & Wellbeing meetings to be arranged with family to discuss the reasons for the absence and an action plan will be put in place and may require the involvement of multiagency professionals to support. 6 weekly meetings to be in place for support to be discussed and changed where required.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead, in liaison with the Principal, will make a referral to the Educational Social Worker, this will be treated sensitively.

