

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## Lingdale Primary School

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Ratified by Governors / Head Teachers: | Sarah Thornton/John Whitehead |
| Current ratification date:             | Summer Term 2019              |
| Review frequency:                      | Two years                     |
| Next review date:                      | Summer 2021                   |
| Responsibility of :                    | Attendance Officer            |

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

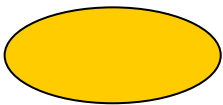

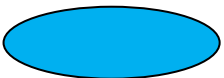
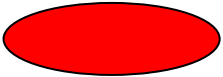
In our primary school we will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment where every member of the School community feels secure and has a real sense of belonging. For each pupil to achieve their true potential, a high level of attendance and punctuality is essential. We work consistently to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum attendance and work in partnership with pupils, families and external agencies to ensure that each pupil attends regularly and punctually.

### **REGULAR ATTENDANCE**

The Department for Education leads schools in implementing attendance policies and procedures. In accordance with these policies, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

The Department for Education provides guidelines on attendance figures for schools to use in order to identify the difference between regular and unacceptable levels of attendance. In our school, we have a 97% attendance target. Any pupil whose attendance falls below that target will be considered a cause for concern. Attendance procedures will be put in place for all pupils with an attendance record below 97% (over a four to six-week period) to ensure that a significant improvement in attendance levels is secured.

## CATEGORISING ATTENDANCE

| Colour Coding  | Attendance Percentages | Actions   |
|--|------------------------|---|
| Gold<br>  | 100%                   | Entry into weekly attendance award<br>Celebrate within class<br>Half termly Head Teachers Breakfast<br>End of year treat  |
| Green<br> | 97 – 99.9%             | Celebrate within class<br>Parents informed  |
| Blue<br>  | 90-96 %                | Teacher support with issues affecting attendance.<br>Close monitoring of attendance.<br>Individual incentives where appropriate<br>SLT and Attendance officer support with issues affecting attendance<br>Early intervention meetings where appropriate<br>Parents notified of concern via phone call or letter home  |
| Red<br> | Below 90%              | SLT and Attendance officer support with issues affecting attendance<br>Close monitoring of attendance<br>Parents notified of severe concern via phone call or letter home<br>Individual incentives where appropriate<br>Referrals to other agencies if required<br>Pre Attendance Case Conference instigated and progressed to Attendance Case Conference where necessary.<br>Insufficient progress towards attendance targets will trigger a Court Warning letter and potentially criminal prosecution |

## REGISTRATION

We have two registration periods -

Morning registration takes place between 9 am. A pupil arriving after 9am into lessons is classed as being late. A late mark at this time and the amount of minutes late will be recorded.

Afternoon registration takes place at 12.45pm.

## ABSENCES

All absences will be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. Should an explanation for an absence not be received, or should the explanation be deemed unsatisfactory, then that absence will be recorded as unauthorised. (Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as holidays, the illness of a family member, shopping, day trips, hairdresser appointments and birthdays).

**Please note that it is the School's discretion as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.** It is our policy to request medical evidence (such as appointment cards, evidence of medication or letters from hospital) for any absences owing to illness or medical appointments.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

Parents are advised to contact the School on the first day of any absence and each day thereafter.

On the first day of absence, School Office staff will telephone parents in the first instance to gain a reason for their child's absence if no message has been received. If no contact is made with the primary contacts, then secondary contacts will be tried. This is the process for each day of absence. If no contact is made with any of the child's contacts, a home visit will be instigated. After three days of absence with no contact being established between the School and home, the School's Attendance Officer will make a home visit.

### **N.B. PUPILS WITH CHILD PROTECTION PLANS**

If a pupil has a Child Protection Plan, is a 'Looked After' child or is identified as being vulnerable, on the first day of absence the Office staff must notify and liaise with the Head Teacher and the Assistant Head teacher if there has been no explanation received from the parents/carers. The Office staff must be kept up to date with the names of pupils with a Child Protection Plan. The responsibility of keeping the Attendance Officer up to date is that of the Safeguarding team.

### **PUPILS MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

When a pupil leaves the School during the course of the school term the attendance team will make every effort to locate the child. If it is not possible to locate the pupil, then the pupil will be considered to be a Child Missing from Education (CME) and the Safeguarding team will be notified.

Any pupil, for whom no contact has been made between home and the School, for ten consecutive school days, will also be considered CME this will result in the Local authority (LA) being informed.

### **TERM TIME HOLIDAYS AND PENALTY NOTICES**

The School strongly urges parents to avoid booking family holidays during term time as this can have a detrimental effect on a pupil's progress and attainment. There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off school to go on holiday during term time.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the School may attract sanctions such as a Fixed Penalty Notice, without a warning being issued. Failure to comply with this Fixed Penalty Notice may result in prosecution.

All applications for planned absence, during term time, must be given in writing to the Head Teacher **4 weeks prior to the holiday**. The Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, evidence will need to accompany notification request.

### **ANALYSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF ATTENDANCE DATA**

Stakeholders both within the School and outside of it require accurate and up to date attendance data and analysis.

- Parents and pupils will receive a percentage attendance update as part of the termly academic progress data. Each teacher will receive an updated copy of their class' attendance on a weekly basis which will be shared with pupils.

- The Head Teacher will receive an updated spreadsheet every week detailing improvements/declines in those individuals achieving less than 90% attendance.
- The Attendance Officer will analyse and distribute attendance data on a weekly, half termly, termly and yearly basis to the Governors, Head Teacher, Senior Team and relevant parties. The analysis will be by: class, year, gender, vulnerable groups, categories of attendance and PA pupils. Trends over a number of years, terms and half terms should be made available and used to inform practice.

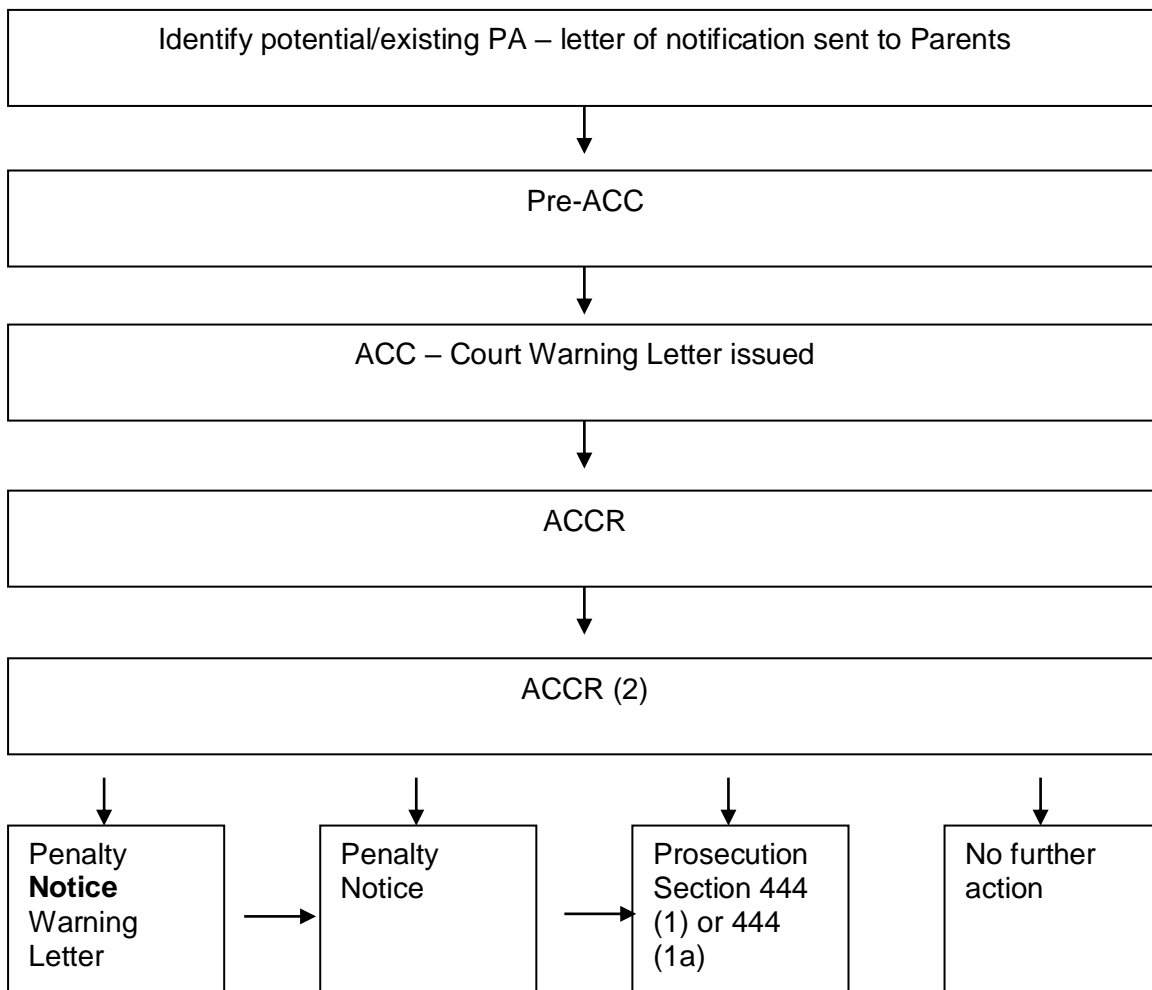
**PERSISTENT ABSENCE**

Persistent absence (PA) is defined as a pupil who has attendance levels of below 90% over a school year. Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need the full support and cooperation of parents to tackle this effectively. There are various milestones identified for each half term to ascertain which pupils are at risk of becoming persistently absent. If a pupil has been identified as being ‘at risk’ of PA (Under 90%), an early intervention strategy will be put in place. If a pupil is classified as a PA pupil a stringent action plan will be drawn up for that pupil. The action plan outlines the pupil’s targeted attendance for each half term, as well as actions taken and future actions to be taken. The School’s Attendance Officer will work with the pupils and the parents/carers to ensure that the pupil’s PA status is removed, preferably by the next review date. The action plan will still be updated for the remainder of the year. A record of persistent absence will be kept to show trends between half terms and years.

Pupils returning to the School following a significant period of absence will be offered a reintegration package.

**PROSECUTION ROUTES**

Attendance Prosecution Process



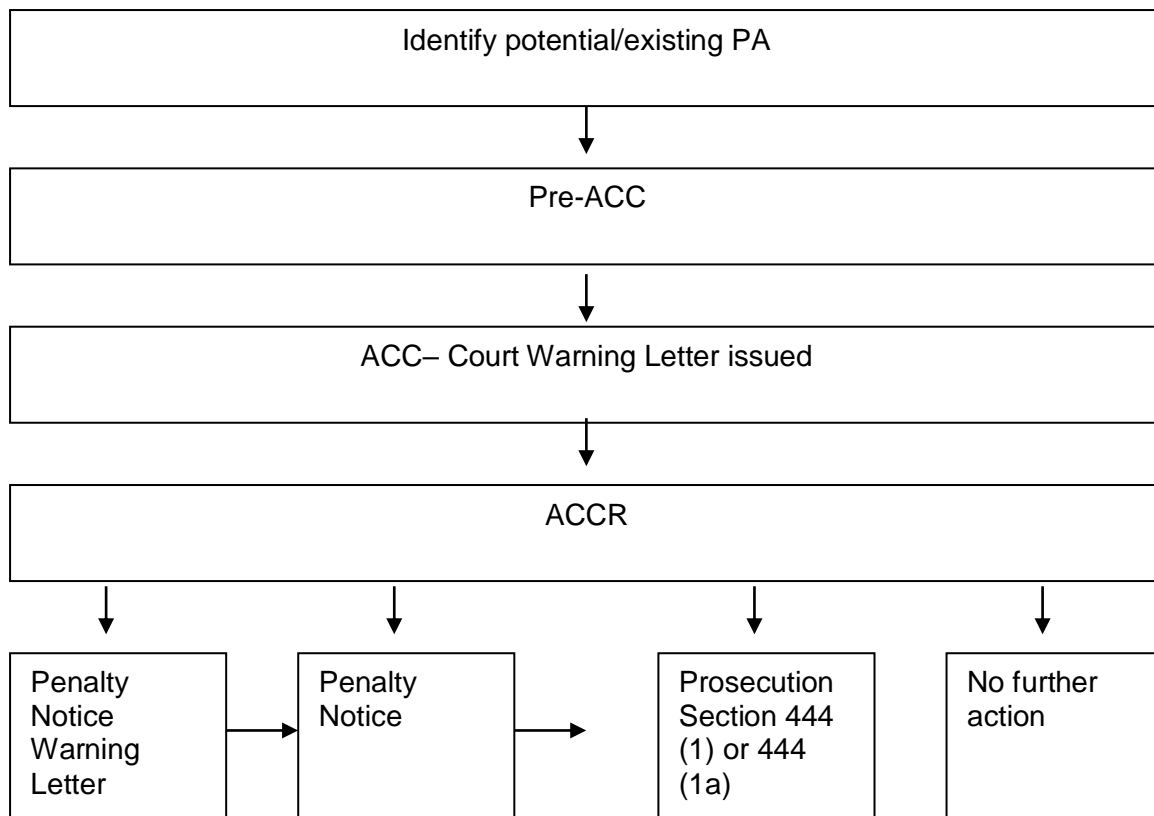
Key to codes:

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| PA                            | Persistent Absence (attendance of less than 90%)  |
| ACC                           | Attendance Case Conference (the first stage of formal attendance procedures)  |
| ACCR                          | Attendance Case Conference Review   |
| Penalty Notice Warning Letter | A 15-day target period is identified in the letter. Any absences during the 15 days will result in an automatic Penalty Notice being issued.                                    |
| Penalty Notice                | Fine is £120, however the fine is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Fines can be automatically issued for holidays during term time. <b>Fine is per parent, per child.</b> |

N.B. If there is no payment within 28 days, the Local Authority will pursue prosecution for the offence of either 444(1) or 444(1a), the offence is no longer the non-payment of the fine.

**PROSECUTION ROUTES**

Attendance Prosecution Process: Fast Track



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|      |  |
|------|--|
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#### Penalty Notice Warning Letter

A 15-day target period is identified in the letter. Any absences during the 15 days will result in an automatic Penalty Notice being issued.

**Penalty Notice** Fine is £120, however the fine is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Fines can be automatically issued for holidays during term time. Fine is per parent, per child.

N.B. If there is no payment within 28 days, the Local Authority will pursue prosecution for the offence of either 444(1) or 444(1a), the offence is no longer the non-payment of the fine.

**Section 444(1)** If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.

**Section 444(1a)** If in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that his child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him to do so; he is guilty of an offence.

Fast-Track prosecution route is instigated for those who have already been identified as a concern using attendance data from previous years.

### HOME/SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

#### **We expect the following from parents/carers:**

- To ensure that their children attend the School regularly and punctually;
- To inform the school of the legitimate reason for the absence on the first day of the absence and each day thereafter until pupils return. Parents/carers can telephone the school and inform office staff
- To attend meetings when invited to do so.
- To avoid taking holidays in term time;
- To inform the School of situations that may affect attendance, e.g. medical issues, pupils from travelling families.

#### **What parents/carers and pupils can expect from the School:**

- To have clear policies and procedures in place for accurate recording, supporting and improving pupil attendance at the school;
- A framework that defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency across the school in carrying out designated tasks;
- Early contact (phone call or home visit) with parents/carers (and secondary contacts if needed) when a pupil fails to attend the school without providing good reason.
- A range of strategies to support attendance and improve individual pupil attendance;
- That good attendance is recognised and rewarded.

### Staff Roles and Responsibilities

#### **Attendance Team:**

- Process Fixed Penalty Notices and Fast Track Prosecutions;
- Identify pupils at risk of PA through intensive monitoring and tracking;
- Meet with parents/carers of pupils who are PA or at risk of PA;
- Visit homes of pupils who have been absent for three consecutive school days without contact from home;
- Work with pupils who are PA or at risk of PA;

- Telephone all parents/carers of absent pupils each day of absence when the School has not been notified of the reason for absence;
  - Recognise and reward good and improved attendance via a range of initiatives including the half termly Head Teachers Breakfast.

### **Class Teachers**

- Monitor attendance and punctuality of their class;
- Ensure that attendance strategy colour coded sheet is displayed on Classroom Notice Board;
- Ensure that the updated and current pupil attendance is displayed on classroom attendance displays; Recognise and reward good and improved attendance.
- Regular contact with parents regarding attendance issues or concerns;
- Regular contact with parents to recognise and reward good and improved attendance;
- Identify patterns of non-attendance and punctuality issues within form groups and liaise with Attendance Officer;
- Take an accurate register for each session and update where necessary.
- Ensure that if pupils are being taken out of School that a register of those pupils is given to the Office staff at the day before the planned visit.

### **Head Teacher and Attendance officer:**

- Monitor attendance and punctuality of pupils throughout School;
- Monitor PA pupils on a daily basis;
- Liaise with Office staff on a daily basis;
- Liaise with Attendance Officer in relation to visits to PA pupils or pupils where attendance issues are developing or have developed;
- Attend Case Conferences for pupils with attendance issues
- Work with the Attendance Officer to develop initiatives to improve attendance and punctuality within their class.
- Support the Attendance Officer in recognising and rewarding good and improved attendance.

### **Teaching staff**

#### **REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

In our school, we realise the importance of celebrating the good attendance of our pupils. Alongside some individually bespoke rewards, we also have some standard initiatives:

- Positive letters and postcards home
- One to one commendation meetings with the Head Teacher
- Head Teachers Breakfast for those pupils achieving 100% attendance over the course of the half term
- Treat for those pupils achieving 100% over the course of an Academic year

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Attendance Team:

Attendance and Welfare Officer Mrs G McQuade – Attendance Officer

Useful websites:

Department for Education:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>

Redcar and Cleveland Families Guide:

<http://www.redcarclevelandcyptrust.org.uk/familiesguide>

**Review Procedures:**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.