



# Fulston Manor School

## Attendance Policy

**Version Date:**

**September 2025**

**Review Date:**

**September 2026**

**Member of Staff Responsible: Mrs G Davies- Attendance Lead**

**Mr A Beaumont- Attendance Improvement  
Co-ordinator**

## **Aims**

Fulston Manor School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our students and this is embedded in our ethos of everybody matters, everybody succeeds, everybody helps and our Fulston Family Values. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our students and we use a variety of termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some students 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 students and parents.

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 student attendance. The governors, headteacher and staff, in partnership with parents, have a duty to promote full attendance at Fulston Manor School. This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Parental Responsibility**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts students at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

There is a clear link between high attendance and high achievement. Students with higher rates of attainments have higher attendance levels in comparison to students with lower levels of attendance. We expect all students and parents/carers to know their attendance/absence from school and the impacts low attendance has on a child's mental health and outcomes and communicate regularly regarding this.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent and everyday thereafter. This is a safeguarding issue requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should inform the school when their child is returning.

Students are expected to arrive by 8.40 am. each day and lesson 5 ends at 3.10pm. Between 8.45 am and 9.05 am, if a student arrives late, they should still go to form tutor period and sign in with their Form Tutor. If the student arrives after 9.05 am the student should sign in at the House Office via Main Reception. Persistent lateness will result in sanctions.

Parents should contact our attendance team by 8.30am on the first day of absence and everyday thereafter using the contact information below:

*Tel: 01795 412639*

*Email: [attendance@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)*

## **Students**

Students are expected to attend school every day and be on time to each timetabled session. Should there be barriers to attendance, they are encouraged to speak to their Head of House in order to resolve any issues, together with the school.

## **The Role of the School Staff**

At Fulston Manor School there is a whole school responsibility for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

The governing board promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos, making sure leaders fulfil expectations and statutory guidelines. They regularly review data, ensure staff have appropriate training and hold the headteacher to account for implementation of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, monitoring the attendance data and reporting this regularly to governors. They support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students and the impact of implemented strategies and issue fix-penalty notices, where necessary.

Mrs G Davies, Assistant Headteacher, has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues and having an oversight of data analysis, providing a clear vision for attendance improvement and devising strategies to address areas of poor attendance.

Email: [gdavies@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:gdavies@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)

Form tutors complete a register at the beginning of each morning and class teachers complete a register during the afternoon session (Period 4). Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement and our registers remain open for the length of the form tutor time. Teachers mark students present, absent or late in all other lessons throughout the day.

## **It is the responsibility of the Attendance Team and the Pastoral Managers to ensure:**

- ❖ Attendance and lateness records are up to date.
- ❖ If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call or email.
- ❖ Where there has been no communication, contact is made to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- ❖ Should students be absent for a period of 10 days, we will complete a welfare call at home (we reserve the right to complete this sooner, should it be deemed necessary).
- ❖ Attendance is looked at weekly and towards the end of term by the Attendance Team and the Pastoral Managers. Attendance letters will be issued regularly for students with poor attendance using our Attend system.

- ❖ The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register.
- ❖ Parents are informed regularly (via monitoring feedback) of their child's attendance figure. Live information is also available via the Arbor app.
- ❖ Excellent and improved attendance will be celebrated in celebration assemblies throughout the academic year.
- ❖ The LA are informed of any student name being deleted from the admission register unless exceptions apply.

## **Principles**

- ❖ We expect students to attend school every day when the school is open.
- ❖ Students should only be absent if the reason is unavoidable. Allowing a student to be absent without good reason is against the law and parents can be fined substantial sums of money and ultimately prosecuted. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.
- ❖ Fulston Manor School will authorise 5 days of illness per academic year provided contact has been made and deemed acceptable. All further absence will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided. Acceptable medical evidence could include; appointment card, letter, sick note, appointment text or prescribed medication.
- ❖ Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given by the school. This includes keeping students off school for trivial reasons, truancy and absences, which have never been properly explained. Providing a note may not be sufficient if the reason given is not an unavoidable one.
- ❖ Where there are more than 10 sessions or 5 days of unauthorised absence in a 100 session or 50-day period the school may request a Penalty Notice (see Appendix 1).
- ❖ Attending school regularly safeguards the welfare of children while they are not in the care of their parents.
- ❖ All children whose attendance is irregular will be considered vulnerable.

## **Attendance register**

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

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 students are:

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

The school will use the national attendance codes (see Appendix 2) to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = Planned whole school closure

When the school has planned in advance to be fully closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant students who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Students who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will still be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

The school will share its daily attendance data with the DfE directly from the management information system.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

### **Attendance Support**

We understand that some students may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our attendance and pastoral team are here to provide support and guidance for students and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please do reach out to your child’s House team. Parents should contact the student’s Head of House at an early stage in such situations in order that difficulties may be speedily resolved.

#### **Head of Cromer House:**

Ms Z Hadok-Quadrio - 01795 412609 / [cromer@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:cromer@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)

#### **Head of Hales House:**

Mr H Deeks - 01795 412610 / [hales@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:hales@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)

#### **Head of Morrison House:**

Mr H Box - 01795 412611 / [morrison@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:morrison@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)

#### **Head of Stanhope House:**

Mr C Patey - 01795 412612 / [stanhope@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:stanhope@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)

#### **Head of Sixth Form:**

Mrs G Davies - 01795 412630 / [sixthform@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:sixthform@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)

- ❖ In cases where the absence persists and further support is required Mrs M Broad, the school’s Attendance Support Liaison Officer, or Mr A Beaumont, the school’s Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator, will provide additional and more intensive support for the family with the aim of resolving difficulties. Mrs Broad can be contacted via e-mail, [mbroad@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:mbroad@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk). Mr Beaumont can be contacted via email, [abeaumont@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:abeaumont@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk).

- ❖ Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school sessions and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school sessions. Access to wider support services will be provided where possible to remove the barriers to attendance.
- ❖ If matters cannot be resolved satisfactorily, they may be referred to the Kent PRU & Attendance Service Officer. The KPAS Officer will try to resolve the difficulties by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, it may be necessary to use a Penalty Notice and/or Court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an education supervision order for the child (see Appendix 1).
  - ❖ Should parents wish to contact the **Local Authority KPAS Officer** themselves in order to seek advice, the telephone number is available from the school office.

## Procedures

We employ a wide range of strategies to do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students and ensure students have the support in place to attend school. We use our Attend software to analyse data and identify stages of attendance in order to provide early intervention support with any barriers to school attendance (see Appendix 3). Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as a priority and we value the process of working together to improve attendance (see Appendix 4).

### 1. *Illness and other legitimate reasons*

If a child is unfit for school, parents should contact the school on the first day via our attendance line and medical evidence should be provided wherever possible. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot take place outside of normal school hours, provided a written explanation is received.

### 2. *Holidays*

Parents do not have the right to take students out of school for holidays during term-time.

The School will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The School will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Holidays will not be authorised for any student in any circumstances. Any unauthorised absence may be referred to the LEA, who may issue a penalty notice to parents and this process does not require a monitoring period.

### 3. *Lateness*

Students must arrive on time to be given a mark for a session. Students arriving after the register has been completed will be given a late mark. If lateness occurs on a regular basis without valid reasons being given, the school will put procedures in place to endeavour to combat the persistent lateness and this may again result in the issue of a Penalty Notice by the Local Education Authority. Students arriving after close of registration at 9.10am will be marked with an unauthorised absence and receive a same day lunchtime isolation.

#### **4. Safeguarding**

The school reserves the right to carry out unannounced home visits when the welfare of a child is in doubt. When this has been necessary, the pastoral team will make contact with the parent/carer to discuss the reasoning behind this. This may lead to requesting further support for the family or young person. This may be internally or externally and could include Specialist Children's Services or the Kent PRU and Attendance Service.

The attendance team may also carry out home visits when contact has been difficult to make regarding an absence, or there is a concern of a lower level.

If you wish to speak to us regarding any safeguarding concerns for a child, please contact Ms H Woollcott – Lead DSL: [hwoollcott@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:hwoollcott@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)

#### **5. Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absence (SA)**

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance. Absence at this level can cause considerable damage to any child or young person's educational prospects and the fullest support and cooperation is needed from parents/carers to tackle this. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA or SA mark or at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority; parents/carers will be informed of this immediately and we will work together to put support in place before legal action is discussed.

#### **Authorising Absence**

Only the headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised and following 5 days of absence (does not need to be consecutive) all absence will be unauthorised, unless in exceptional circumstances, without medical evidence.

All requests for leave of absence must be in writing to Mrs S Burden, Executive Headteacher ([sburden@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk](mailto:sburden@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk)). The headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body. Each case will be judged on its merits and the headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school (See Appendix 1). Absence during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- ❖ Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- ❖ Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- ❖ Oversleeping
- ❖ Inadequate clothing/uniform
- ❖ Confusion over school dates

- ❖ Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- ❖ Child's/family birthday
- ❖ Family holidays (with some rare exceptions)

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

**Local Authority action may include:**

- ❖ Attendance Improvement Meeting
- ❖ Home visits
- ❖ Liaison with other agencies
- ❖ Fast track to prosecution

**Legal Sanctions**

The school can request a fine to be issued by the local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

**Leaving Fulston Manor School**

Deletion of a child must be a reason set out in regulation 9 of the DfE school attendance 2024 guidance. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the student's name must be deleted. If a student is leaving Fulston Manor School, please inform us. We need the student's new address and the details of the new school, including school name, address and start date. This safeguarding procedure means that we know that the student is still in education, safe and well. If a parent/carer decides to home-school their child, it is essential that you inform school in writing.

**Legislation and guidance**

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

- [The Education Act 1996 and The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and amendments\)](#)
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [DfE \(2024\) 'Working together to improve school attendance'](#)
- [DfE \(2025 statutory guidance\) 'Children missing education'](#)
- [DfE \(2024\) 'Keeping children safe in education \(KCSIE\) 2024'](#)
- [DfE \(2023\) 'Providing remote education'](#)

- [DfE \(2024\) 'Sharing daily pupil attendance data'](#)
- [DfE \(2025\) 'Children missing in education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools'](#)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs Disability (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Mental Health Policy and Wellbeing Policy
- Children with Health Needs who cannot Attend School Policy

### **Summary**

The School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures, authorised and unauthorised, both nationally and individually to parents through reports. These figures may be requested as part of any reference for employment or further/higher education. The School also has a duty to promote good attendance. Very good attendance is recognised through the awarding of certificates and other positive reinforcements.

Fulston Manor has a duty to ensure that time in school is worthwhile and stimulating. Parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. The School is committed to working with parents to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Penalty Notice proceedings for lateness**

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from June 2020, when:

- ❖ 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed during any possible 100 school sessions leads to a formal Notice to Improve Letter.
- ❖ The Notice to Improve Letter sets out the monitoring period (typically 3 to 6 weeks) during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded. The school reserves the right to request a penalty notice before the end of this period.
- ❖ If unauthorised absence is recorded during monitoring period, a Penalty Notice(s) will be requested (one per parent per child).
- ❖ Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings

### **Penalty Notices Proceedings for Poor Attendance**

The school can make a Penalty Notice Application so that the local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for a child will be charged at £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between days 22 and 28. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same student within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance. Part payments or payment plans are not acceptable and fines must be paid in full within 21 or 28 days, at the rate specified within the penalty notice.

When a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. The matter will be considered for prosecution via the Single Justice Procedure.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police and the decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- ❖ The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- ❖ One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- ❖ Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

### **Exceptional circumstances could include:**

- ❖ Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- ❖ Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- ❖ The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- ❖ To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- ❖ Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.
- ❖ Part of the school premises is closed, and the pupil cannot be practicably accommodated.
- ❖ The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly.
- ❖ The pupil is in criminal justice detention.
- ❖ Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that headteachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are guilty of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- ❖ With leave (the school has given permission)
- ❖ Due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- ❖ Religious observance
- ❖ Failure by the Local Authority to provide transport
- ❖ Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- ❖ Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- ❖ Study leave for a public examination
- ❖ Students subject to a part-time timetable - In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a student's best interests, the school will grant leave of absence to accommodate for a student on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the days on which the student is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance.

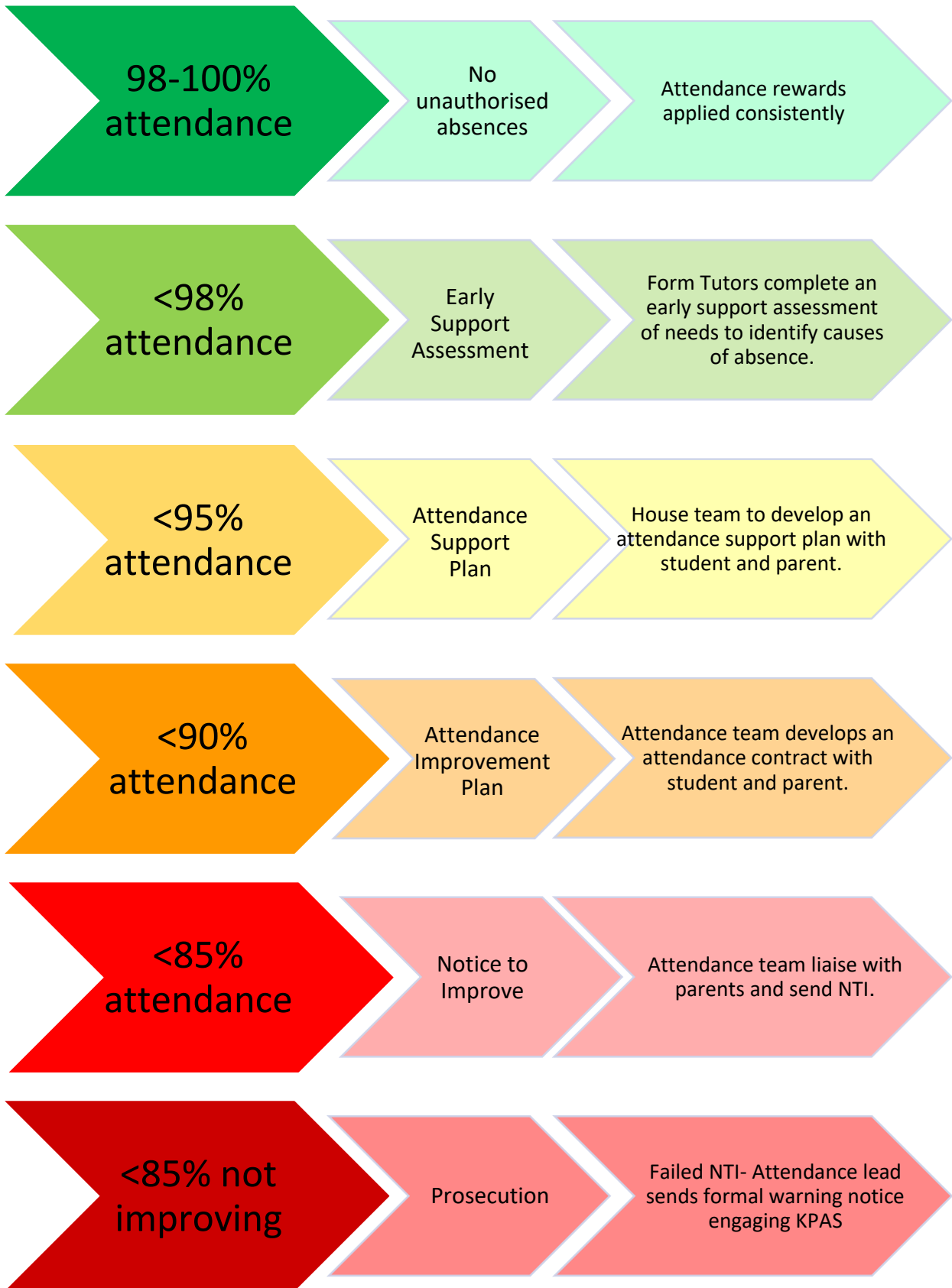
In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

## Appendix 2 - Register codes

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
- C1 = Leave of absence granted by the school for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- S = Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- T = Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- N = Reason not yet provided
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- D = Dual registered at another school
- B = Attending any other approved educational activity
- J1 = Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- K = Attending education provision arranged by the LA
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- Q = Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- W = Work experience
- X = Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- Y1 = Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Y2 = Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Y3 = Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
- Y5 = Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Y7 = Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
- Z = Prospective pupil not on admission register

**Appendix 3**

*Stages of escalation for attendance procedure*



## Appendix 4

*Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)*

### Working together to improve attendance

13. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

