



Dowdales School

Attendance Policy 2025-26

Key contact information

Position	Name	Contact details
Senior Lead for attendance	Mr R Waddington	01229 469800 ext 221 attendanceenquiries@dowdales.cumbria.sch.uk
Attendance officer	Mrs R Gilchrist	01229 469800 ext 212 attendance@dowdales.cumbria.sch.uk
Link Governor	Mrs N Barnes	
Designated Safeguarding lead	Mrs L Massicks	01229 469800 ext 253
SENCO	Mrs A Dove	01229 469800 ext 279/226
Achievement leader year 7	Miss Preston	01229 469800 ext 225
KS3 achievement leaders	Mr W Brown (year 8)	01229 469800 ext 280
	Mrs C Hunt (year 9)	01229 469800 ext 280
KS4 achievement leaders	Mr J Chapman (year 10)	01229 469800 ext 289
	Mrs L Massicks (year 11)	01229 469800 ext 253

School day and contact details

School Day

8.30am arrival onwards
8.50am Form/Registration
9.15am Lesson 1
10.05am Lesson 2
10.55am Break
11.15am Lesson 3
12.05am Lesson 4
12.55pm Lunch
1.35pm Movement time
1.40pm Lesson 5/Registration
2.30pm Lesson 6
3.20pm KS3 Dismissed
3.25pm KS4 Dismissed

Absence text: 07984 440335

Call: [01229 469807](tel:01229469807) or [01229 469800](tel:01229469800)

Students will be expected to:

- Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend every timetabled lesson.

The school day starts at 8.50am, and students will be in their form room, ready to begin registration at this time; therefore, students will be expected to be on the school site by 8:45am. The morning register will be marked by 8:55am. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Students attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark (L). The morning register will close at 9:15am (20 minutes after registration closes). Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time (U). Students will have a morning break at 10:55am, which will last until 11:15am, and a lunch break at 12:55pm, which will last until 1:40pm – students will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Contents

An Introduction to our Attendance Policy and the legal framework that Underpins it.....	4
Responsibilities.....	5
Categories of absence.....	5
Practice/Procedure.....	7
Punctuality.....	8
Truancy.....	8
Missing children.....	8
What to do if your child is absent.....	8
Attendance intervention.....	9
Attendance monitoring procedures.....	9
Monitoring absence.....	10
How parents/carers can help their child.....	11
Support Systems.....	11
Legal and financial sanctions.....	12
Deletions from register.....	13
Monitoring Policy.....	13
Attendance/absence codes.....	14
Challenging and Improving Attendance Checklist.....	16
Request for leave of absence.....	17
Attendance agreement form.....	19
Attendance plan form.....	20
Westmorland and Furness referral form.....	22

Introduction

Dowdales School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Regular attendance is essential if students are to achieve their full potential. We believe that regular school attendance is key to enabling students to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and be successful in their adult lives. We value all students and will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties together. Attendance should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, and is an important aspect of safeguarding. This policy will continue to evolve as we monitor and evaluate our practice.

AIM

Dowdales school aims to encourage every student to achieve the highest possible level of attendance in order to take full advantage of the learning experience available to them

The legal framework

A student is required by law to attend regularly at the school where they are register under the Education Act 1996. This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DFE), and refers to the statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility and measures. These documents also draw from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education Regulations 2006
- The Education Regulations 2013
- DFE (2016) Children Missing Education
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

Responsibility

Regular attendance is achieved by a close partnership between the LA, parents/carers and support agencies.

Students

All students are expected to attend all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Where there are difficulties support will be offered by Form Teacher, Year group leaders and the schools attendance officer. We expect students to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their son/daughter attends school regularly, on time and properly equipped for learning. Parents are discouraged from making medical/dental appointments during the school day if possible. They are expected to notify the school promptly on the designated attendance line if their child cannot attend. Absences will not be authorised unless parents/carers provide a satisfactory explanation. Examples of unsatisfactory

- A student/family members birthday
- Shopping for uniform
- Having a haircut
- Family holidays
- Closure of a siblings school for INSET (or other) purposes

School

Attendance is the responsibility of all, but especially the attendance officer Mrs Gilchrist who closely monitors absence patterns and makes daily contact with parents/carers. The attendance officer keeps records of attendance patterns and liaises with year group leaders and the SLT line manager. Form teachers should be vigilant to changing patterns of attendance and report any concerns to the attendance officer or

year group leaders. The school will inform parents/carers of their child's attendance/punctuality at three points throughout the school year (autumn, spring, and summer term). Working closely with the attendance officer is the schools attendance lead Mr Waddington This role is to ensure that everyone works together to improve attendance creating a whole school ethos of 'Every School Day Matters.'

The attendance lead and attendance officer meet at least half-termly with their linked School Attendance Support Officer.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels each term. Additionally parents/carers will be contacted if their child's attendance falls below the level of persistent absence (90%) or is causing a concern due to a declining trend. A specific focus and intervention will be applied for if a child's attendance falls below the level of severely absent (50%).

Categories authorised of absence

Illness

There may be exceptional occasions where a student is ill and there is no alternative but to stay at home in order to ensure a speedy recovery and/or reduce the risk of transmitting infection to other students/staff. Parents/carers must advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible and provide an expected date of return. The school may require medical evidence at any time to authorise any absence. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

Students whose school attendance is affected due to a medical condition will be referred to complete an Individual Healthcare Plan. The purpose of this plan is to promote attendance for the individual student by providing strategies to minimise the impact of their medical issue. This may include access to medication/pain relief during the school day, reducing the requirement for movement around the school site, authorising short term amendments to timetables, providing rest breaks or flexi timetables.

Medical/dental appointments

Parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical appointments out of the school day (eg doctors, dentist). Where this is not possible and appointments can only be made during the school day, students should attend school for part of the day. If the medical appointment is during the school day, evidence must be provided. Parents/carers should notify the school in advance or a student may bring in the hospital appointment letter or dentist/doctor's appointment card to the attendance office. We encourage parents/carers to restrict time out of schools for appointments to a minimum, if an appointment takes place in the morning; the student would be expected to return to school in the afternoon and vice versa.

Other authorised circumstances

These relate to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances

Suspension (no alternative provision made)

Suspension from school is counted as an authorised absence. The school will make arrangements for work to be sent home during this period.

Granting approval for term-time absence

In line with the Education regulations 2013 (Pupil registration) Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances' The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteachers discretion. Absence during term time should be avoided because students can fall behind with their work and find it hard to reintegrate.

Parents/carers who need to take their son/daughter out of school during term time due to exceptional circumstances must complete an application for absence from school in advance of the event. Enough time should be left for the school to discuss the request with the parent/carer. Retrospective requests, or requests which leave no time for the schools consideration, will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. The Headteacher will respond to parents/carers in writing to outline the conditions of any leave granted.

Exception circumstances for which Headteacher may grant leave include:

- When a family needs to spend time together because of an immediate family members bereavement, crisis or serious illness.
- Funeral of immediate family member.
- Religious observance.
- Children of service personnel about to go on deployment.
- One off sporting events/performing arts competitions, if the child is participating and is of a representative standard.
- One day of absence could be authorised for an immediate family member's graduation ceremony/passing out parade.

Leave of absence for child performers

The Head teacher may grant a leave of absence for a student to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963. Legislation sets out that a local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Where the license specifies the dates that a child is to be away from school to perform, then the head teacher may authorise those days. However, where the terms of the license do not specify dates it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise leave of absence. However, where the terms of the license do not specify dates it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise leave of absence. Head teachers will strive to be sympathetic to requests that are supported by a licence, as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a child's education

Religious observance

We acknowledge the multi-faith nature of British society and recognise that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends. This necessitates a consideration by written request by the parent/carer of the student prior to the period of absence. Requests cannot be made retrospectively and any such requests will be unauthorised.

Study leave

Study leave may be granted for Year 11 students approaching GCSE examinations in discussion with parents/carers.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

It is expected that Traveller children, in common with other children, are to attend school as regularly as possible. To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1996, section 444(6) states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (ie 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

Practice/Procedures

Registers are taken formally at the start of the school day within tutor groups. Registers are marked in the morning between 8.50am and 8.55am. In addition subject teachers undertake a register at the start of each timetabled lesson. All staff must comply with the schools procedure of calling the names of individual students and recording the appropriate attendance code into a SIMMS mark sheet.

If a student arrives at school during the morning registration but after the formal register has been called in their tutor group without a valid reason they should be marked as late on the register. If a student arrives at school after the morning registration they should report to the attendance office opposite the school library so that the school register can be amended. The absence for any missed session will only be authorised if a valid reason is provided by the student or if their parent/carer has provided one to the school. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the student has arrived late to school without justification. The attendance officer will contact parents/carers to inform them of the student's late arrival and check the reason given. If a student needs to leave the school site during the school day they should notify their teacher and where appropriate provide evidence of a reason. Students should go to the attendance office in order to sign out of school. Staff in the attendance office/student Welfare will facilitate their exit from the school site and amend the attendance record. Students will only be permitted to leave the school site if their parent/carer has provided prior notice to the school via a written note/email or phone call. Information relating to prior notice provided by parents/carers will be collated by student welfare and sent out as an email to teaching staff.

If a student requires first aid due to an accident/illness their classroom teacher will contact student welfare to request a first aider visit the student to assess them within their class room. Following this assessment if it is felt that the student is too unwell to remain in school or requires further medical attention off site they should be escorted to student welfare where they will wait until they can be collected. An email should be sent to the school office informing staff that this action has been taken.

If a student receives an absent mark on any register having previously been marked present the attendance officer will check contact the class teacher to check if the student has left the session. If required a search of the school site may be conducted if there are concerns for a student. Parents/carers will be contacted if a student is suspected of leaving the school site without gaining prior permission. In the event that the school is unable to contact a parent/carer and a student's whereabouts if not known the police will be contact and the student recorded as a missing person.

If a student is suspected of truanting from school their parent/carer will be contacted, those that are vulnerable will result in a call to the police. Students will return to lesson and have their attendance closely monitored by the pastoral team and attendance officer. The schools sanctions of detentions will be utilised and or use of internal exclusion.

Punctuality

A sanction is given for students who are late to school without good reason. A student who arrives to school late on two or more occasions within the same week will be issued with an afterschool detention by their form teacher on Monday morning. This detention will be undertaken on a Tuesday evening and supervised by members of the schools pastoral team. Sanctions are also issued for students who persistently arrive late to timetabled lessons. A student will receive a lesson late mark if they arrive after the main body of students within the class without a valid reason. Punctuality cards may be used to monitor this issue if a pattern of behaviour is identified.

What to do if a child is absent

Parents/carers

Contact the school as soon as possible to prior to or on the day of absence via email or a messaging system. Ring the school as soon as possible after 8.00am and before 8.50am with an explanation of the absence.

The school will

Contact the parent/carer via text message following the close of form period at 9.15am to notify that their child is absent if no reason has been provided before this time.

Phone/Text/email the parent/carer asking them to contact the school to provide a reason for their child's absence if no response to the initial text has been gained by 10.00am.

Mark the student's absence as unauthorised if the reason for absence is unsatisfactory or after one week if no reason has been provided.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence. All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of students, and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning. Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the attendance office and sign back in again on their return. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the deputy headteacher and members of the safeguarding team is notified, and the attendance officer will contact the parent/carer in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a telephone call will be made to the parents and carers of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

Missing children

Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform the pastoral team and/or the senior leadership team immediately.
- The attendance officer will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- All available staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises.
- The following areas will be systematically searched: - All classrooms - All toilets - Changing rooms - The library - Any outbuildings - The school grounds including wooded areas at the back of Ashburner house
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- Completion of a search may take approximately 45 minutes. If the student has not been found, then the parents/carers of the student will be notified immediately.
- The school will attempt to contact parents/carers using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents/carers have had no contact from the student, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted. Additionally if the missing child is viewed to be at risk the police may be contacted even if contact has been made.
- If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed by the Pastoral Team.
- When the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located. The pastoral team and/or the senior leadership team will take the appropriate action to ensure that student understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy. The pastoral team and/or the senior leadership team will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.

Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the pastoral team and the senior leadership team, will:

- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Engaging with LA attendance officer.

The school will look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, to develop specific strategies to address these patterns. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the students whom the intervention is designed to target.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

The school will use a range of day-to-day processes and procedures to monitor attendance to school, which includes:

- Weekly punctuality tracking by the pastoral team to ensure that concerns regarding poor punctuality are address swiftly and effectively
- Daily attendance calls by the Attendance Officer and directed members of the schools administration to speak to parents and carers of students that are absent from school without explanation
- Attendance calls by the Attendance Officer during students first day of absence to identify a date for their return to school and offer support to overcome any barriers to attendance.
- Daily attendance and/or punctuality reports to address emerging areas of concern

Whole-school monitoring procedures will also be implemented to support long-term attendance monitoring, including:

- A weekly whole-school summary report sent to the senior leadership and pastoral team to raise awareness regarding absence data and trends
- A weekly, year group attendance dashboard to year teams to support early intervention

Monitoring Absences

Attendance data is reviewed daily by the schools attendance officer and a member of the schools leadership team to determine if intervention actions are required for specific students. Data is reviewed weekly by pastoral leads within the school. An overview of current trends is shared with form teachers in order to identify students with emerging patterns of concern. The schools attendance officer attends weekly safeguarding meetings to facilitate the sharing of information about the attendance patterns of vulnerable students.

We support parents and carers by following a number of stages to help promote good attendance.

In the first stage of absence at 94.9% - 90%. A phone call is made by the schools attendance officer if appropriate due to falling attendance or broken weeks to highlight that the student is at risk of being classed 'persistently absent'. A weekly breakdown of the student's attendance may be used to help inform this call and may be shared with parents/carers. A focus of the call will be to review absences to identify and discuss any emerging patterns so that they can be addressed.

In the second stage of absence at 89.9% - 85%. Formal contact will be made in writing to the parent/carer highlighting concern (facilitated by the Attendance Officer) as the student has fallen below the threshold of 'Persistent Absence'. Following the issue of this letter a 2 week review will take place to identify if attendance has improved. If an improvement has been shown ongoing monitoring will take place over the remainder of the term.

In the third stage of absence. If no improvement has been shown in attendance following the first concern letter a second formal contact will be made with the parents/carers in writing with a breakdown of total absences and lost periods of learning. Following the issue of this letter a further 2 week review will take place to identify if attendance has improved. If an improvement has been shown ongoing monitoring will take place over the remainder of the term.

In the fourth stage of absence. If no improvement is seen in attendance during the review period following specific concerns have been raised regarding a child's attendance the parents/carers will be invited into school for an attendance meeting with the Attendance Office. The circumstances of each student will be considered individually and an contract, attendance plan or medical plan will be generated to support issues that affect attendance. At this stage medical evidence may be required to authorise further absences. Following this meeting a 3 week review will take place.

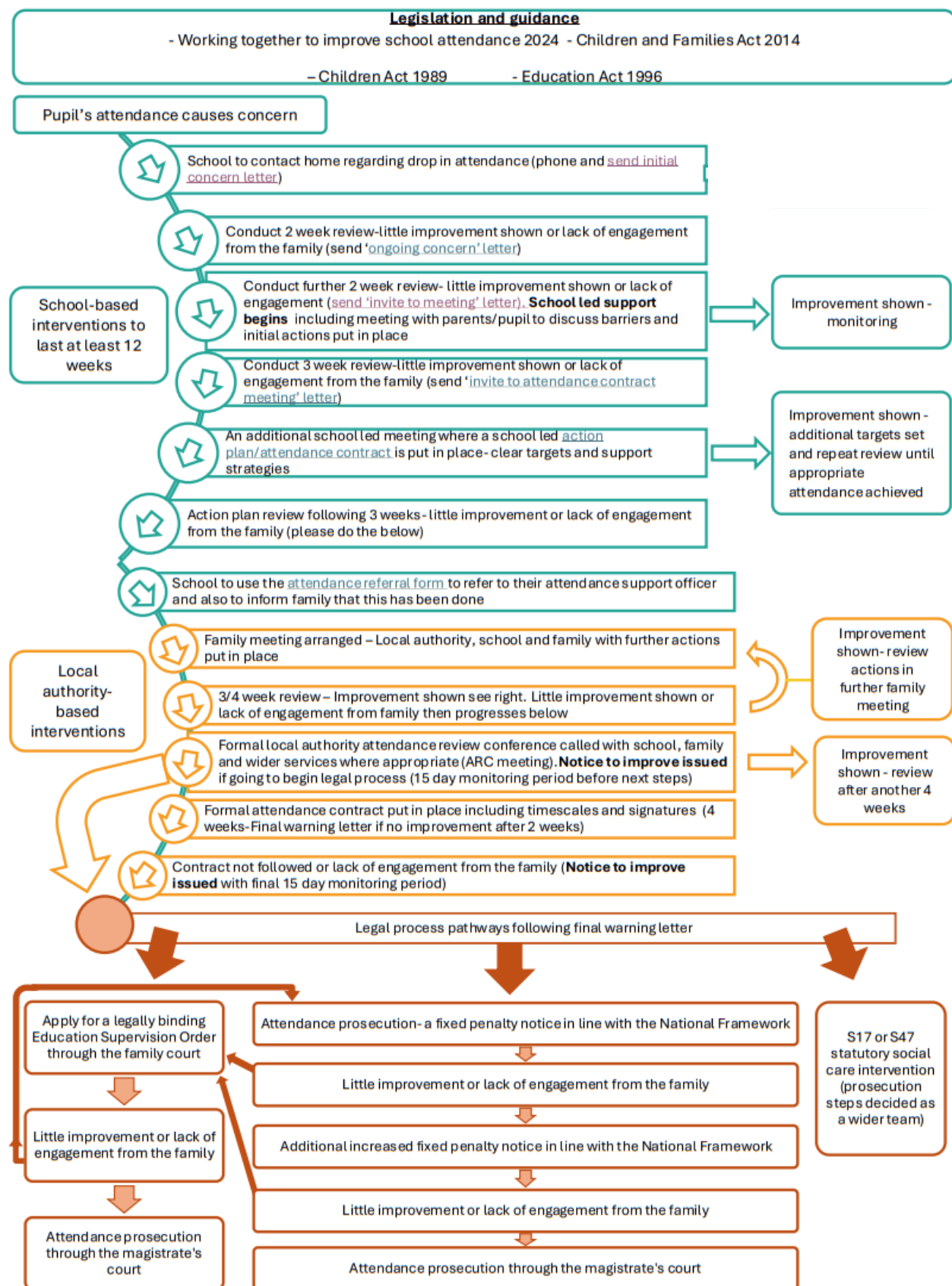
In the fifth stage of absence. An additional school led meeting will take place to review progress and generate/amend attendance plan. Parents/carers will be made aware that they may face statutory action if further absences occur.

In addition to the actions above the attendance officer/attendance lead/safeguarding officer/pastoral leaders may make a home visit to the registered address to discuss attendance concerns. On the third day of any continuous absence without contact from parent/carer a safeguarding visit will take place to check on the student who is absent and agree a day for their return to school. Home visits may also be undertaken if the school has concerns about whether the absence should be authorised or not.

Referrals to the local authority attendance support

Students whose attendance continues to give concern will be referred to the school attendance support officer using the Westmorland and Furness referral form. All students with unauthorised absences will be discussed with the schools attendance support officer. Meetings with the school attendance support officer

will take place at least half-termly to discuss individual students. The school follows the Westmorland and Furness council framework for attendance support and intervention which is shown below.



How parents/carers can support their child

We request that parents and carers:

Talk to their child about school and show interest in their child's work and progress.

Instil the value of education and regular attendance.

Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.

Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments outside of school hours.

Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.

Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.

Inform the school of any changes in contact information to aid communication.

Encourage routine at home for example, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.

Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time.

Support systems

Dowdales school recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home or in school. We encourage parents/carers to make the school aware of any difficulties or change in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school for example, bereavement, illness of a family member, separation/divorce, a parent/carer working away from home, incidents of aggression or domestic abuse in the home. This will help the school to identify any additional support that may be required.

The school will always strive to have two sets of emergency contact details for each student wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a student where they are absent without notification or authorisation. The school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents/carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality at the end of each term, and will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

We also recognise that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance for example those with physical or mental health issues. Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents/carers and the student. Where appropriate an early help assessment may be initiated to co-ordinate support from outside agencies.

Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the school will liaise with the local authorities school attendance officer regarding the use of education supervision orders, fixed penalty notices and legal proceedings.

School refusal/reluctance

School refusal/reluctance behaviour refers to child-led behaviour in children or young people who refuse regularly to attend school, showing one or a combination of the following:

Completely and illicitly miss school.

- Attend school but leave during the course of the day.
- Attend school only following severe behaviour problems in the morning.
- Attend school under great duress and plead with parents/carers not to go.

Related terms include truancy, school phobia, or school anxiety. We use the term 'school reluctance' to cover all of the above. Research by Kearney (2004) analysed the functions of school refusal behaviour and found that there are four broad categories of school refusal behaviour. The first two functional conditions refer to young people who refuse school for negative reinforcement (factors making them not want to go in), whereas the latter two functional conditions refer to young people who refuse school for positive reinforcement (factors making them want to stay away). Of course, some students refuse school for multiple reasons as well:

- Avoid school-related stimuli that provoke a general sense of negative affectivity (i.e., anxiety and depression).
- Escape school-related aversive social and/or evaluative situations; (social anxiety, avoidance of humiliation, situations, including performance, public presentations, test taking, class participation, being called on, social interactions etc. Stereotype threat).
- Gain attention from significant others (e.g., parents).
- Pursue tangible reinforcement outside of school (e.g., shopping, playing with friends, time with romantic partner or drug use).

The reasons for school refusal behaviours are important to understand in order to inform strategies that are likely to be more or less effective. The school will implement a range of support strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents/carers and students
- Support from members of the schools pastoral team and or inclusion team.
- Attendances agreement form
- Attendance plans
- Attendance panels
- Adapted timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behavioural management plans
- Reintegration support packages such as:
 - Enabling a student to have a reduced timetable.
 - Implementing a system whereby students can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
 - Temporary late starts or early finishes.
 - Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
 - Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

If more intensive advice is needed the school may use the Early Help process, to make a more formal request for external agencies to become involved with the support for the child.

Legal and financial sanctions

Prosecution is the last resort. The school will work with the local authority attendance support officer to seek improvement in attendance. Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the local authority will be notified and legal action may be taken. The school will provide the attendance support officer with evidence required for a prosecution under section 444 of the Education act 1996. This is to ensure that parents/carers realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

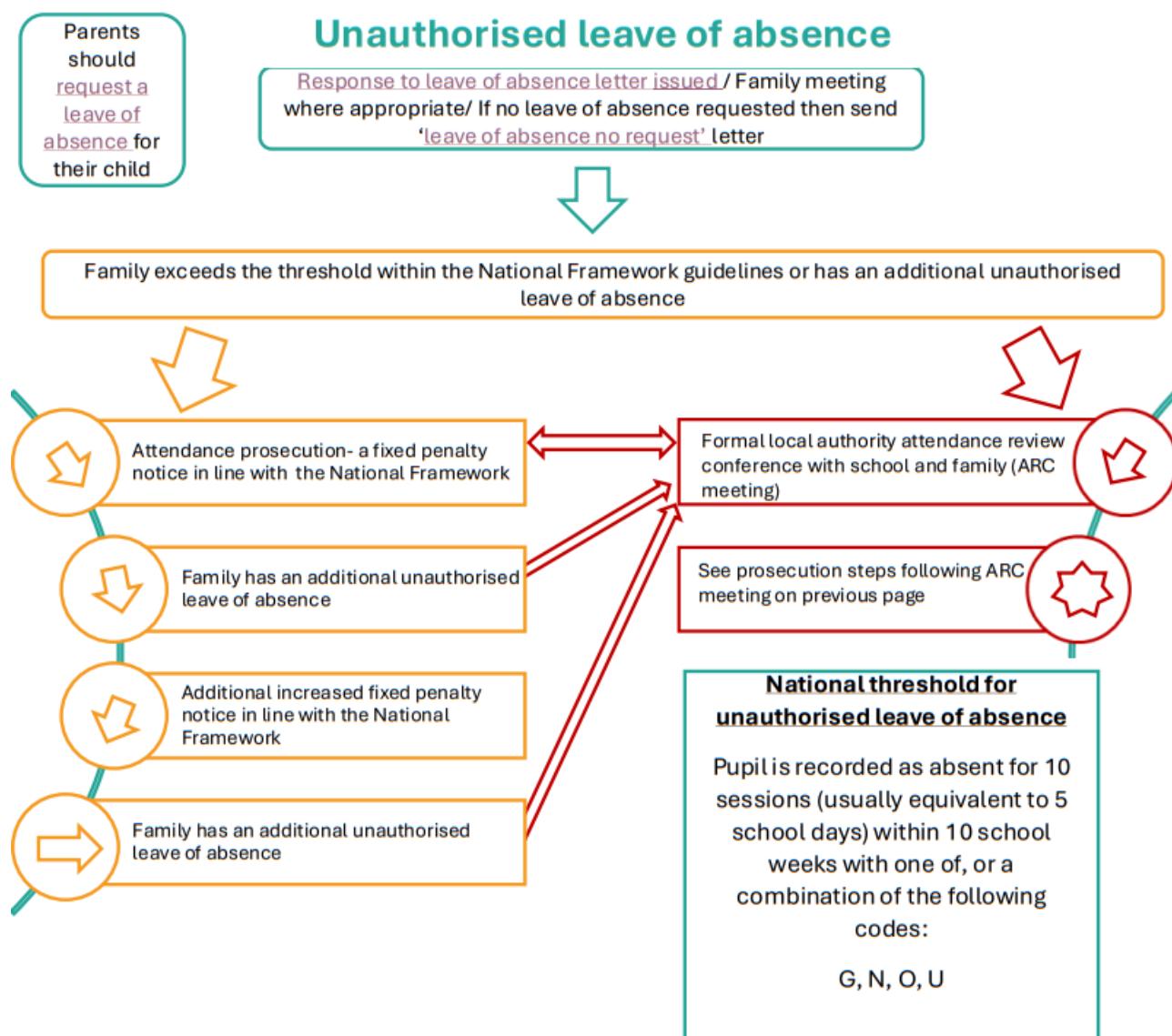
Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'if a parent fails to ensure regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.'

Parents can face legal and financial sanctions if their child fails to attend school. The threshold set by the DFE is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

- Fixed Penalty Notices to the amount of £ 160, this amount will reduce to £ 80 if paid within 21 days.
- An Education Supervision Order issued by the family court.
- Prosecution in a Magistrates' court.

There is no right of appeal for parents/carers against a fixed penalty notice.

The schools follows the Westmorland and Furness attendance procedures for fixed penalty notices due to unauthorised absence as shown below.



Deletions from the schools register

In accordance with the Education Regulations 2013 (pupil registration) students will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order.
- The school attendance order is revoked by the local authority.
- The students has ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a student
- Transfer between school.

- The parent of a student has notified the school in writing that the pupil will be leaving the school to be educated otherwise than at a school
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with the Youth Offending Team)
- 20 days of continuous unauthorised absence and both the school and local authority have tried and been unable to locate the student.
- A student has been granted a leave of absence and has not attended school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period granted, and the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause (the school and the local authority will have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the student's location, but they have not succeeded).
- The student has left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate them.
- a pupil no longer lives a reasonable distance from the school - regulation

Dowdales school will follow the children missing education protocols where a student's whereabouts is unknown. Students who leave school without a forwarding school or address will be tracked via the Child Missing in Education Team. This team will be informed by the completion of Form CME1. Students who leave the school for home education will also be tracked by this team. Any parent/carers contacting the school stating that they wish to remove their child from school roll to electively home educate will be encouraged to submit a HE2 notification of home education form to the local authority. Where a student has not returned to school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the student may be removed from the admission register when the school and local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the student. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the school is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable causes. The school will also act accordingly if it is felt there are safeguarding concerns due to a student's absence.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation of Policy

This policy is reviewed every year by the Senior Leadership Team. Attendance and Punctuality are monitored by the Attendance Officer, Lead Practitioner for Student Safety & Behaviour and Pastoral leaders.

The Headteacher reports on attendance and punctuality at each Governors Meeting.

Absence and Attendance Codes

(Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities May 2022)

The national codes are used to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives later before the register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
K	Attending educational provision arranged	Student is attending a place, other than the school, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2),

	by the local authority	or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site)
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Authorised Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
C1	Leave of absence for regulated performance	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a student undertaking a part-time timetable	A student undertaking a temporary part timetable where it is in their best interest to meet their individual needs. Student will be marked as X for sessions where they are not expected to attend school.
C	Leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances	Each application is individually considered using specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
J1	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
E	Suspended	Student has been suspended but no alternative provision has been made
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious Observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study Leave	Yr11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Student is a mobile child such as a member traveller community with no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Q	Unable to attend due to a lack of access arrangements	Student is unable to attend the school because a local authority has a duty set out in regulation 10(12) or (13) to make access arrangements to enable the pupil's attendance at school and have failed to do so
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	School is not within walking distance of their home (3 miles) and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the student by the school or local authority is not available.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Student is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the student is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use
Y4	Unable to attend	School was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed

	due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather),
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	Student is unable to attend the school because they are: • in police detention, • remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Attendance would be contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the student from attending the session in question.
Z	Student not on admission register	Register is set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure.

Unauthorised Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student in on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason. This should be amended when the reason emerges or replaced with code O if no reason is provided
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with the reason provided for a student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.

Challenging and Improving Attendance Checklist

ACTION	BY WHO	WHEN
Completed first day telephone calls/home visits		
Letters sent to share attendance concern		
Assess / Plan / Do / Review process started		
Information gathered from Form Tutor / Head of Year / Pastoral Manager		
Explored patterns to absences		
Spoken with the child with regards to issues impacting on their attendance & discussed their needs The Three Houses templates - Free Social Work Tools and Resources: SocialWorkersToolbox.com		
Explored any un-met learning needs Does Individual Education Plan need to be put in place?		
If an Individual Education Plan is in place are the outcomes being supported? When was this last reviewed?		
Met with parents / carers to discuss family circumstances, issues impacting on child's attendance, & what support school can offer		
Have any referrals to other agencies been offered? Which:		
Place in breakfast club offered If not, why not:		
If applicable, contacted siblings' schools & compared attendance / absences (If unsure which schools, ask your Lead Attendance Officers		
Is the child a Young Carer, and is this having an impact on their attendance? If yes, referral to Young Carers done:		
Has EBSA toolkit been completed? Referral done:		
Has evidence of any ongoing medical needs been received? If yes, health plan completed:		
If external services are involved has a meeting taken place? E.g., TAF, CIN, PEP, TAS meetings		
Has a Story so Far been completed with the family to identify barriers and opportunities to support?		
Where appropriate have you consulted with the School Attendance Lead for support and advice		
Attendance improvement plan drawn up with input from parent/carers & Child		
Has the family been invited to an attendance panel meeting? If not, why not?		

Request for leave of absence

Pupil Name

Form/Class

Date of first day of absenceam or pm

Date of return to schoolam or pm

Number of school days that your child will be absent from school

Time lost by children and young people due leave in term time can be disruptive to their education. Wherever possible, absence from school should be avoided as it can have a serious effect on your child's educational progress and can create difficulties for them on their return to school.

From September 2024 new guidance came into place which removes the ability for parents to take their child out of school for an authorised term time holiday. There are new codes for the school register which make it clearer as to the reason for the absence. The registers are legal documents and school must use the codes correctly.

Please tick

G -Term Time Holiday

C- Leave of absence for Exceptional circumstance.

C1- leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance e.g. show, modelling

J1- leave of absence for attending an interview, employment, or an education establishment.

P - Approved sporting activity

R - Religious observance

Please detail the reason for requesting a leave of absence

--

I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the Local Authority may be notified, a Penalty Notice may be issued. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is usually the opportunity to pay a reduced amount of £80 if paid within 21 days. I also understand that failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution, except in limited circumstances.

Name(s) of Parent/Carer (s) making application.

Dr/Mr/Mrs/ Ms Forename..... Surname

Dr/Mr/Mrs/ Ms Forename..... Surname

Signed

Dated

Please ensure you are giving at least 14 days' notice of the proposed absence; retrospective applications cannot be authorized

N.B. the maximum number of fixed penalty notices that can be issued to a parent in respect of a child is two within a rolling three year period. Should a further offence be committed in this time the LA will be required to consider alternative legal measures including prosecution

For school to complete: AUTHORISED UNAUTHORISED

Attendance Agreement Form

Student Attendance Agreement

I agree to attend school and understand the consequences I may face if my attendance drops below 100 percent. I will ensure that the school is made immediately aware of when I will not reasonably be able to attend, and will give the school full details of my absence. As a student of Dowdales school I am dedicated to:

- Being in attendance every day.
- Always being punctual to school and lessons.
- Informing the school of the reason for any absence.
- Not missing school for trivial reasons.

Student signature		Date:	
-------------------	--	-------	--

Parental Attendance Agreement

I understand that it is my responsibility to send my child to school. I agree to send my child to school every day and understand the consequences if I fail to do so. When my child is absent from school due to exceptional circumstances, I will ensure the correct procedures are followed.

Student signature		Date:	
-------------------	--	-------	--

ATTENDANCE PLAN FOR PERSISTENT ABSENTEE

Name:	Year Group:	Date Plan Drawn Up:
Those Present:	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Attendance Officer
	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Parent/Carer
	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Student
	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Designated Teacher
Apologies received:		
Date of Referral:		
Attendance at Referral:		Previous Term's Attendance:
AGREED TARGETS FOR THE NEXT 4 WEEKS:		
Pupil:	To get up when called for school each day To have school bag prepared the night before To have done homework To have right equipment for the day	
Parent or Carer:	To book an appointment to take xxxxx to the Doctors To continue to telephone the school when xxxxx is not well enough to come to school To ensure xxxxx has everything needed for school the night before To set aside time in the evening to discuss and sign the Report card	
School:	Attendance Officer: To continue to telephone carer or social worker if xxxxx doesn't arrive at school. To continue to monitor the situation on a daily basis and speak to xxxxx on her return to school if she has been absent. Designated teacher: To continue to meet with xxxxx weekly and set a review date with the Head of Year as soon as possible to discuss xxxxx's academic progress.	
Other Agencies		
Agreed Targets:	No unauthorised absence for the next 4 weeks Xxxxx to attend all lessons when in school Xxxxx to make contact with Designated Teacher if she has any issues that need to be addressed in school	

Review Date:

Venue:

Time:

ATTENDANCE PLAN REIEW

Name:	Year Group:	Date Plan Drawn Up:
Those Present:	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Attendance Officer
	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx:	Parent/Carer
	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Student
	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Designated Teacher
Apologies received:		
Attendance since plan agreed:		
1. Have parents/carers carried out actions agreed in the contract? YES / NO If no, please explain below.		
2. Has the school carried out actions agreed in the contract? YES / NO If no, please explain below.		
Additional Actions Agreed		
Parents/Carers will		
Student will		
School will		
External agencies		

Attendance Referral Form

Name	
Address	
Date of Birth	
School & year	
Parent/Carer name/s	
Parental responsibility	
Any sibling/s. If Yes, please give details including school and year group if possible	
Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)?	
Is there Social Care involvement and if so, at what level? CiN, CP If yes, please provide Social Workers details.	
Professional referrals made?	Eg, Ed Psych, Targeted Youth Support, CAMHS, GP, Police, EHA/EHP, PRU.
Please provide details of any other agencies involved	
Please provide any further relevant background information about the child/YP and family	

Please also provide evidence of school interventions, including:

- Attendance record covering the period of concern
- Case Summary / Witness Statement covering the period of concern

- Evidence of the Attendance Response being followed including the education/attendance plan informed by Assess Plan Do Review process including notes from meetings/attendance panels
- Copies of correspondence sent to parents including letters warning of possible legal action
- Records of home visits and phone calls
- An up-to-date attendance record (with reasons for absence / comments from your attendance system)
- Copies of assessments e.g. Early Help Assessment

If evidence/information meets the requirements for an Attendance Review Conference (ARC) a date will be agreed with the Attendance Support Officer inviting parent/s to attend along with school staff. Where further intervention/information is deemed necessary the Attendance Support Officer will make contact with school to discuss the case within 10 working days.

Outcome:

Referral accepted and ARC to be arranged:		Further intervention/information required. Attendance Support Officer to liaise with the school:	
---	--	--	--