

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

<b>SCOPE:</b>	Academy Policy
<b>AUTHOR/ORIGINATOR:</b>	Principal
<b>NAME OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL:</b>	Academy Principal & Sector Director
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**Outstanding Achievement for All**

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## 1. Statement of Intent

Ambitions Academies Trust believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

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

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

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The academy's attendance officer is Mrs Karen Gardner who can be contacted via [karen.gardner@bayside-academy.co.uk](mailto:karen.gardner@bayside-academy.co.uk). Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

## 2. Legal Framework

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

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2023'

- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (under review at time of publishing Attendance Policy)
- Children with Health Needs who cannot Attend School Policy (Trust Policy in development)

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the Trust.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the Trust's ethos and policies.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help academy leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Trust's Complaints Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Principal is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the academy.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

## **4. Introduction**

Here at Bayside Academy we believe it is of vital importance that our students have good attendance at school. This is a successful Academy and all students play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and empowers all members of the community to be proud to belong and to achieve of their best. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and should be at Bayside Academy, on time, every day the Academy is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that we promote daily attendance for every child and this policy sets out how we work as staff and parents / carers together to achieve this.

Regular attendance at school is of critical importance to a child's education. Evidence tells us that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment<sup>1</sup>. Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts the learning of others in the same teaching groups by disrupting classroom routines. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at Bayside Academy is a legal responsibility and permitting absence from Bayside Academy without a good reason creates an offence in law that may result in prosecution.

## **5. Aims**

An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. To ensure all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand these expectations, and how they apply at Bayside Academy this policy sets out:

Section 1: the practical procedures to be followed at Bayside Academy in relation to attendance

- Section 2: the measures in place at Bayside Academy to promote regular attendance by its registered pupils
- Section 3: the responsibilities of particular members of staff in relation to attendance
- Section 4: the action to be taken by staff if a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly

## **6. Section 1: Practical Procedures**

This section sets out the practical procedures to be followed at Bayside Academy in relation to attendance are as follows:

- The attendance and punctuality expectations of pupils and parents, including start and close of the day, register closing times and the processes for requesting leaves of absence and informing the academy of the reason for an unexpected absence.
- Information and contact details of the academy staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis (such as a form tutor / class teacher, attendance officer, admin team etc) and for more detailed support on attendance (such as a head of year, pastoral lead or family liaison officer etc).
- The academies day to day processes for managing attendance, for example first day calling and processes to follow up on unexplained absence.

There are clear links from this policy to our safeguarding and child protection duties as set out KCSIE.

## **7. The Admissions Register (or “school roll”)**

1. As an academy, we are responsible for keeping the Admissions Register up to date. This contains specific personal details of every pupil along with the date of admission or readmission to the academy, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the last school attended.
2. We also hold emergency contact numbers for each pupil. It is our policy to hold more than one such number, so that we have options to contact a responsible adult should the need arise.
3. A pupil’s name can only be lawfully deleted from the admissions register in very limited circumstances.

## **8. The Attendance Register**

4. The register will be taken at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion, the academy will record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
5. These records will be kept electronically to ensure accuracy and the timely sharing and analysis of information – all of which is critical to ensure good attendance.

## 9. Punctuality and Regular Attendance

6. The Academy day starts at 8.30 and finishes at 3.15pm

## 10. Lateness

7. Pupils are recorded as late if they enter the school past 8:45am as formal lessons begin shortly after this time. At this point, pupils have to enter the school through the front office and are signed in by office staff (gates to the site are closed).
8. Registers are open until 9:15, from which point a child will be marked as either absent (with a relevant code for reason for this absence) or with a 'U' code to show that they were late to school and past the time where registers closed. In these cases, a time of entry to school is recorded.

## 11. Absence

9. Parents must contact the academy when their child is absent to explain that absence. This can be done as follows: Call the school main office on 01202 685459 Option 1 or email [office@bayside-academy.co.uk](mailto:office@bayside-academy.co.uk) both with the following details:
  - full name of pupil;
  - pupil's Year group or Form;
  - Full name of person reporting absence and relation to child;
  - Reason for absence.
10. Where a reason for the absence is not received by 9:15 on the day of the absence, the academy will contact the parents on the morning of the same day to understand the reason for the absence. A prioritised list of pupils to contact in the first instance is maintained in order to call high priority or vulnerable pupils first, including those supported by a social worker or with an EHCP.
11. Where further unexplained absences occur, the academy will make further contact with the parent (including foster parents and/ or social workers where appropriate). This should be with the aim of understanding **why** the absence has occurred, and **when** the pupil will return.
12. The correct absence code will be inputted into the Attendance Register as soon as the reason is ascertained.
13. Granting a leave of absence will only be made in exceptional circumstances. Each application will be considered individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted it is for the Principal to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from academy. It is extremely unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. To request a leave of absence families have to submit the relevant form from the school office and submit this form directly to the Attendance Lead, Mrs Karen Gardner, prior to consideration from the pupil.

## 12. Absence Response

### Vulnerable Pupils

For pupils identified as CP/CIN/CIC or in any other way identified as vulnerable and highlighted on the academy's register as such, the process for managing an absence of up to five days is set out as below.

All actions to be recorded directly onto MyConcern.

Day	Action required	Responsible	Desired Outcome
Daily	<p>Text, email and phone contact attempted.</p> <p>Information to be shared with allocated social worker via e-mail, follow up actions to be undertaken in line with social worker advice.</p> <p>If no response from social worker by 1:00pm / no social worker named / a concern exists of an immediate threat to safety of pupil, refer directly to First Response. Action all resultant points, including contacting police / conducting home visits.</p>	<p>Admin Team</p> <p>DSL</p> <p>DSL</p>	<p>Contact to be made with family.</p> <p>Explanation for absence obtained: arrangements for pupil to come to school made where possible.</p> <p>All information re. absence shared with allocated social worker.</p> <p>All actions suggested by social worker to be completed and information requested to be shared.</p> <p>Pupil viewed safe and well.</p> <p>Arrangements to maintain safety and welfare organised.</p> <p>All necessary information shared with professionals working with the family.</p>
3	<p>For children at CP level / family under section 47 inquiries, conduct home visit.</p> <p>Share information with Social Worker via e-mail.</p> <p>If concerns continue to exist and no response from social worker by 1:00pm, refer directly to First Response. Action all resultant points,</p>	DSL	<p>Pupil viewed safe and well.</p> <p>Arrangements to come into school made as appropriate.</p> <p>Additional support put in place for family.</p> <p>All information shared with professionals working with the family.</p>



	including contacting police where appropriate.		
5	<p>For children at CIN level / family under section 17 inquiries, conduct home visit.</p> <p>If concerns continue to exist and no response from social worker by 1:00pm, refer directly to First Response. Action all resultant points, including contacting police where appropriate.</p>	DSL	<p>Pupil viewed safe and well.</p> <p>Arrangements to come into school made as appropriate.</p> <p>Additional support put in place for family.</p> <p>All information shared with professionals working with the family.</p>
10	Pupil logged with the LA as a child missing education on day 10.	Attendance Officer	LA takes action to locate and support family to return to education.

### 13. Sharing Information Practices

A record of all vulnerable pupils is included in the academy's weekly Attendance Focus List that is shared with all administration staff with responsibility for Attendance.

During First Day Contact, vulnerable pupils from the Attendance Focus List are contacted first in order to allow for swift action to be taken re. attendance.

Information re. absence for any vulnerable pupil is shared via email to DSL following on from attempts to make contact with the family.

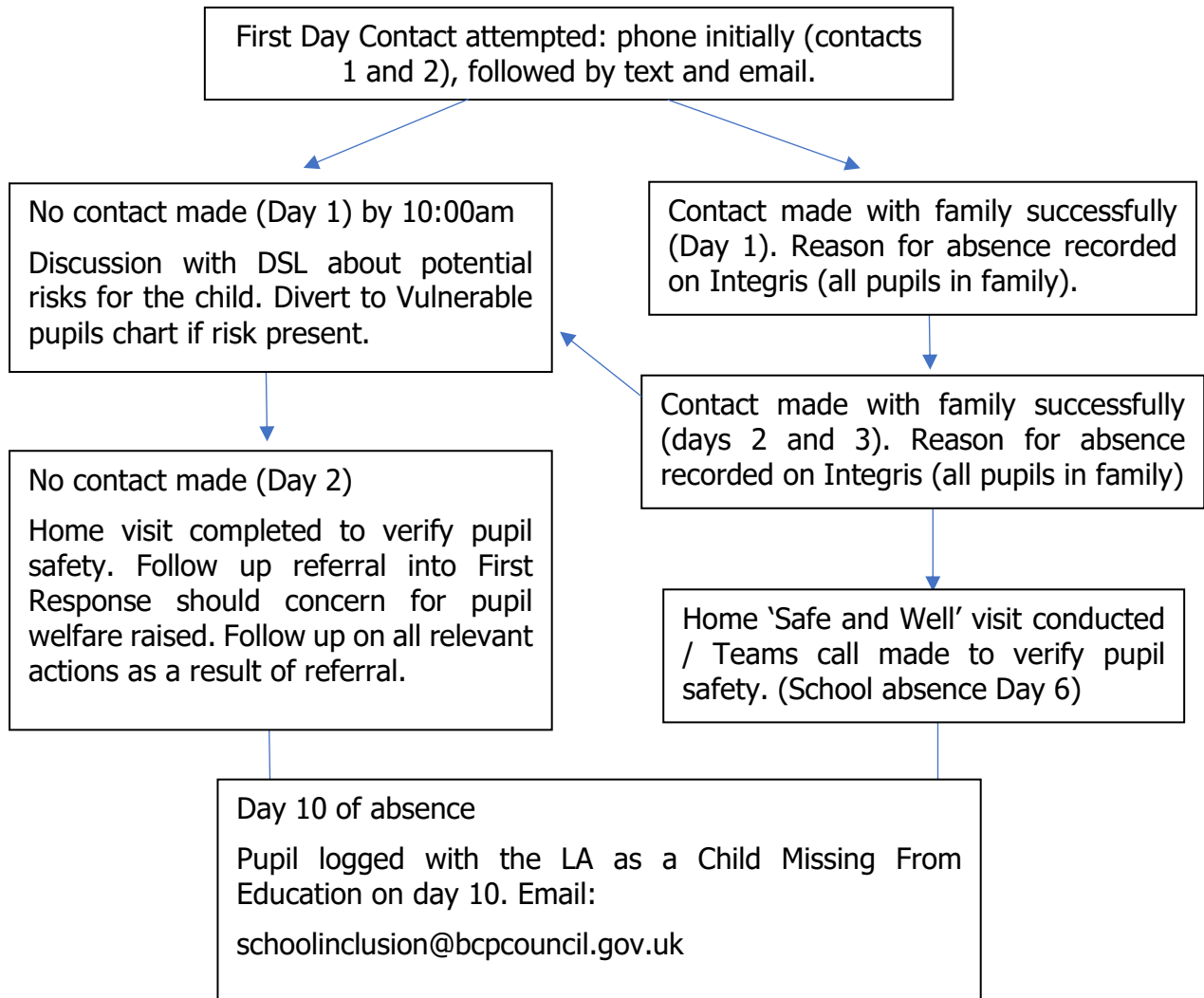
Lists are updated weekly on Mondays by a DSL and an Attendance Officer in order to be an accurate reflection of need. All pupils who are supported by a CIN or CP plan or who are in care are always placed onto this list. Other children are added due to professional knowledge about the family, for example following historic concerns raised, PPNs received or due to being under assessment from social care.

### 14. Definition of Children Missing Education

For the purpose of the Statutory Guidance on Children Missing Education, children missing education are defined as those who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 school days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'. Consequently, the policy of the academy for any pupil who has not attended their school for a period of ten days without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'.

## 15. Pupils who do not fall into a Vulnerable category

For pupils where pupils are not deemed to be at imminent risk in the context of the evidence available to the DSL and are therefore not deemed to be Vulnerable, the following processes apply.



## 16. Section 2: Promoting Regular Attendance

This section sets out the measures in place at Bayside Academy to **promote** regular attendance by its registered pupils.

- How the academy is **promoting** and **incentivising** good attendance.
- The academy's strategy for using **data** to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- The academy's strategy for **reducing persistent and severe absence**, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority

- The point at which **Fixed Penalty Notices** for absence and other sanctions will be sought if support is not appropriate (e.g. for an unauthorised holiday in term time), not successful, or not engaged with.

## 17. Promoting and incentivising

14. The Academy will:

- a) Treat all pupils and parents with dignity. Our staff will always seek to model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance.
- b) Regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- c) Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the academy (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- d) Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- e) Make the necessary statutory data returns to the local authority.
- f) Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- g) Provide incentives such as half termly certificates and prize draws to acknowledge and reinforce positive attendance.

## 18. Data Strategy

15. The Academy understands that as poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early detection is crucial. We will therefore undertake regular data analysis to:

- both identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils and/ or pupil cohorts that need it;
- look at historic and emerging patterns across the academy and develop strategies to address them.

16. The Academy will typically carry out the following analysis:

- a) Monitoring and analysing weekly attendance (including punctuality) patterns and trends, including whether there are particular issues for some children on certain days and for key groupings, including Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- b) Half-termly, termly and full-year data analysis of patterns and trends, including analysis of pupils and cohorts, identifying patterns in use of certain codes, days where attendance is typically poor and (where appropriate) subjects with low lesson attendance
- c) Four weekly individual attendance tracking identifying any pupil whose attendance is below the expected rate for this four weekly period.
- d) Benchmarking attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against Trust-level, local, regional and national data.

17. We will use this analysis to identify pupils who need support so that we can focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those students and to identify any common themes to support improvement planning. We will use the data to inform us regarding the impact of academy-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented, to evaluate approaches or inform action. We will also provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and

to academy leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).

## **19. Absence reduction strategy**

20. We will devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data. This may, for example, include pupils in a year group with higher-than-average absence or for specific groups of students.
21. Data and reports will be shared with the Local Governing Body.
22. As part of promoting regular attendance the academy will consider the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (see paragraph 30).

## **20. Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities**

23. The Academy recognises that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as they are for any other pupil.
24. That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, we will be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This could include:
  - a) Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed.
  - b) Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
  - c) Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, the academy will work with families to help support routines where academy transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Please see the Academy's SEN policy for further details on SEN support.
  - d) Establishing strategies for removing the in-school barriers pupils may face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
  - e) Ensuring joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance, recognising that such arrangements can be for a limited time only.

- f) Ensuring data is regularly monitored for these groups including at Trust and Academy Advisory Committee meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.
25. Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. Please see the Academy's policy on supporting pupils with medical conditions at school for further information.
26. In all cases, the academy will be sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents; and talk to pupils and parents and understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance to develop individual approaches that meet an individual pupil's specific needs.

## 21. Part-time timetables

27. All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. Please note that a part-time timetable cannot be used as a reasonable adjustment for SEND, unless this is on a temporary basis and as advised by an external agency e.g., Educational Psychologist.
28. A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. Formal arrangements will also be put in place for regularly reviewing it (minimum fortnightly) with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore will treat such absence as authorised. Careful consideration will be made to how to best support learning when a child is working on a part time timetable.

## 22. Section 3: Particular Responsibilities

**This section outlines responsibilities of particular members of staff in relation to attendance.**

- The name and contact details of the senior leaders responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school are Matt Vernon, Principal and Chrissie Maher, Inclusion Lead;

- Responsibility for identifying unexplained absences on “day 1” will fall to Karen Gardner, Attendance and Admissions Officer;
- Responsibility for identifying further unexplained absences will fall to Karen Gardner, Attendance and Admissions Officer;
- Information and contact details of the academy staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis are Karen Gardner, Attendance and Admissions Officer, Abi Lowe, Receptionist;
- More detailed support on attendance can be requested from Karen Gardner, Attendance and Admissions Officer.

## **23. Section 4: Specific Action for Failure to Attend Regularly**

**This section sets out the action to be taken by staff if a registered pupil fails to attend the academy regularly.**

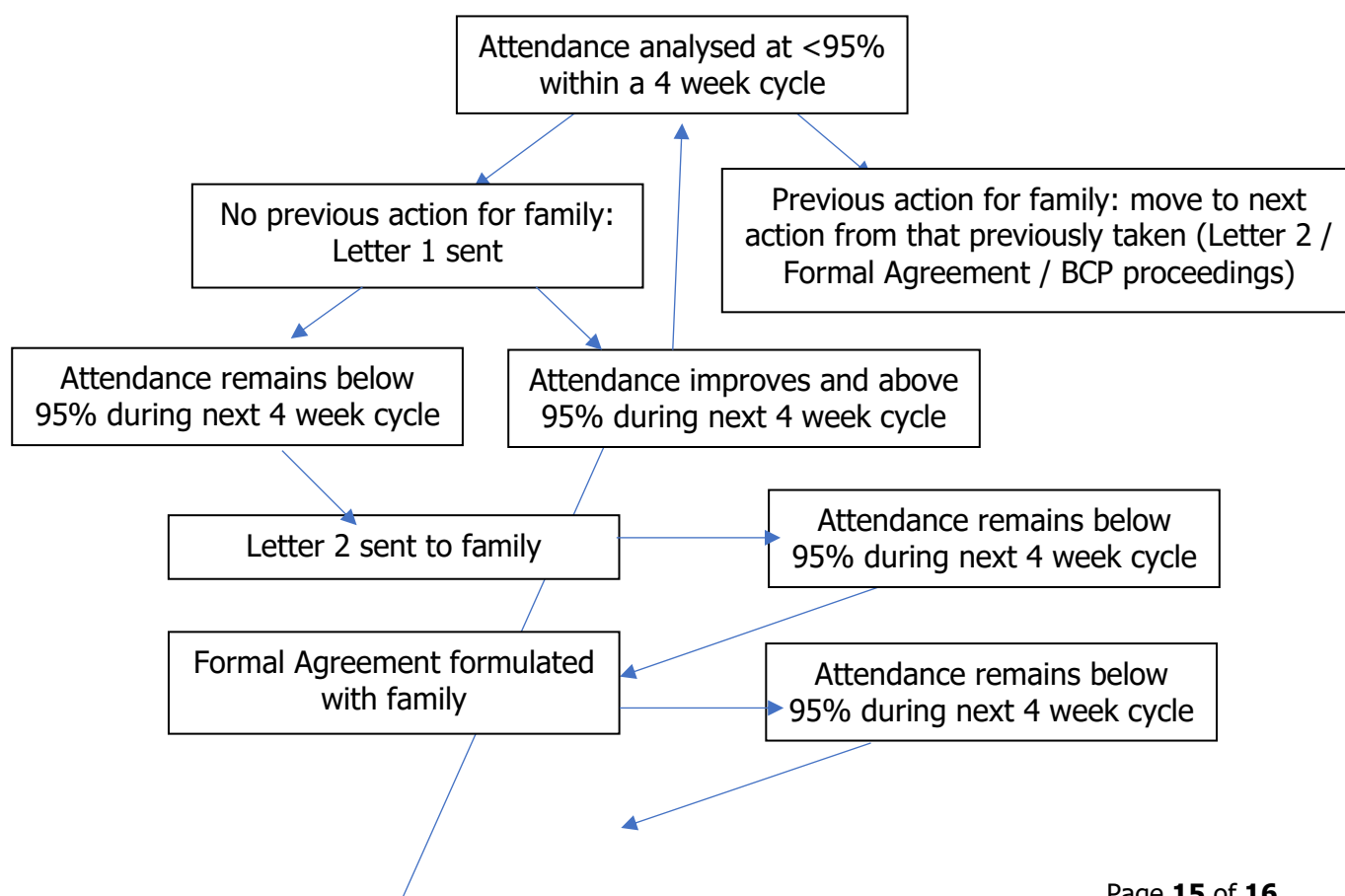
29. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, it is important that the best placed person in the academy works with and supports the family. Wherever possible, we will keep this person consistent.
30. Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic the academy will draw on these relationships and listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing. In doing so, the academy will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support.
31. In the first instance, the academy will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
32. Where barriers are outside of the academy’s control, we endeavour to work together with all partners to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need. As a minimum, this will include the Attendance Lead meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school, agreeing actions or interventions to address them and keeping those actions under regular review in discussion with pupils and families. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support, for example food support services, mental health charities, BCP Early Help or the BCP Inclusion Team. Where absence intensifies, so will the support provided, which will require us to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners, as follows:
  - If the needs and barriers are individual to the pupil this may include provision of mentoring, 1-2-1 tuition or out of hours learning, or where appropriate an education, health and care plan or alternative provision.
  - Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment.
  - Where engagement in support is proving challenging, the academy will hold more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand). This is likely to be led by the senior leader responsible for attendance and may include the academy’s point of contact in the local authority School Attendance Support Team. The aim of these meetings will be to clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but will also be an opportunity to

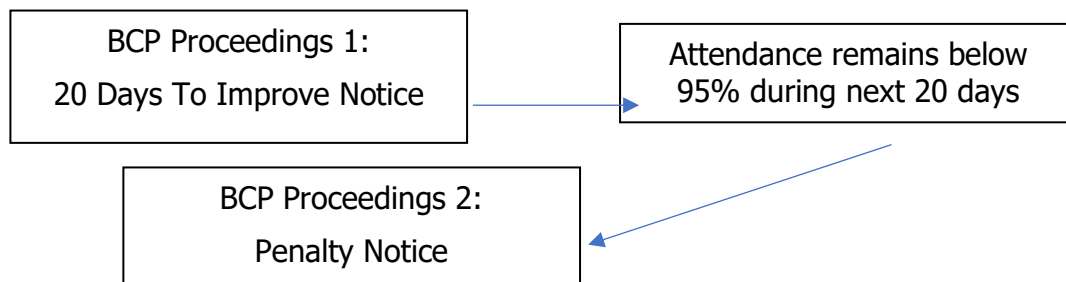
continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.

- Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with the academy will work with the local authority to:
  - Put formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or an education supervision order.
  - Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).
  - Issue a fixed penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour.
  - Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

33. In all cases, the academy will monitor the impact of any intervention(s) and make adjustments where necessary in discussion with the pupil, parents and any other partners involved as part of any whole family plan or team around the family. Where interventions are failing, the academy will work together with all parties to identify the reasons why and either adjust or change the approach.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for setting actions with families where a pupil is Persistently Absent: Attendance below 90%. These actions follow the approach cited below, in line with the school's four weekly absence review programme:





Where pupils are vulnerable, these actions will be shared and agreed with the pupil's social worker, in line with their plan.