



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date- Governor reviewed: May 2024
Next Review: May 2025

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL, FELLOWS LANE, HARBORNE, BIRMINGHAM, B17 9TS

TELEPHONE : 0121 427 3191

VISION STATEMENT

To provide an outstanding, inclusive educational provision, to prepare students for a fulfilled life.

School Motto
Together Aspire
Together Achieve

School Context

All of our students have autistic spectrum disorders across a range of abilities; they have greater difficulty than other students with social understanding and communication.

In order for children to achieve their potential, students must be highly motivated to learn and keen and eager to attend school. There is a correlation between good attendance and student progress and outcomes and regular attendance will establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives. School attendance is a priority for our school and we are constantly monitoring student attendance.

Attendance at school is mandatory and it is parents' duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age, attends school.

The following information shows how school attendance can affect your child's future progress.

Above 97%	<i>Above 97%. Less than 6 days absence a year: Excellent attendance! Students with this attendance should achieve the best grades they can.</i>
95%	<i>95%. Less than 10 days absence in a year: Students with this attendance are likely to achieve their target grades and will be well prepared for starting education.</i>
90%	<i>90%. 19 days absence over the year: Students with this attendance are missing a month of school per year and may fall behind in some subjects; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.</i>
85%	<i>85%. 29 days absence in a year: These students are missing 6 weeks of school a year, it will be very difficult for them to keep up and achieve their best.</i>
80%	<i>80%. Students with this attendance are missing a day for every week of school. It will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of students with this level of attendance could be issued with a Penalty Notice.</i>

1. Aims

To enable all students to aspire and achieve, the school will:

- Promote excellent attendance.
- Act early to address poor patterns of attendance and analyse attendance data, which in turn will inform future policy, practice and interventions.
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Maximise the attendance of all students by working with parent and carers, thus increasing achievement within school.
- Provide a school in which students feel welcome, cared for, secure and valued as individuals.
- Monitor, support and communicate with students whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership to develop an action plan with parents and carers to resolve any issues or difficulties, including an offer of a home visit.

The school will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.

Attendance below 90%: Persistent absence

Attendance below 90% is considered to be of significant concern. Where student absence falls below 90% the Pastoral Manager- Family Support and Engagement, will contact the family and offer support to make improvements. This is part of the schools Early Help Offer and help will be tailored to the individual needs of students and their family.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and the **addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year**, and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold and also follows the statutory guidance set out in "Supporting Students with Medical Conditions at School" December 2015

3. School Procedures

Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.

It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Absent

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 9.00am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.15am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 13.40pm and will be kept open until 13.55pm.

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on each day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). Parents/ carers must inform the school via the school reception phone number which is 0121 427 3191 which is answered from 7.30am.

Contact must be made with the school directly by parents/carers, as we are unable to accept messages passed on by student guides.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance. In these cases, students may be referred to the school nurse.

Coronavirus

Students **MUST NOT** attend school if they have symptoms of coronavirus as this can put others at risk.

Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences which should be presented to the Pastoral Manager – Family Support and Engagement.

We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

If a medical appointment is necessary then a copy of the appointment letter or card should be produced and a copy made available to the Pastoral Manager – Family Support and Engagement in advance.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance to the Headteacher using the form attached, appendix 3. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Minutes late will be recorded for monitoring purposes.

At Baskerville School, many students access travel assistance in order to attend school. We understand that some students are occasionally late due to school transport issues and will record this in order to provide additional context.

Ongoing punctuality issues will be monitored by the Pastoral Manager- Family Support and Engagement, and where necessary parents and carers will be contacted to begin to develop an action plan to reduce missed learning hours.

If a student has ongoing punctuality issues due to school transport, this will be escalated to Travel Assist and parents will be informed.

Following up absence

First Day Absence

The school will follow up any absences on the first day to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use, see section 4.

The Pastoral Manager- Family Support and Engagement will follow up any absences after the close of registers and ensure all absences are correctly coded.

The school must be informed via telephone by a parent or carer prior to this if an absence is to be authorised. Informing a student guide, fellow student or other person of an absence is not sufficient.

Absence of 3+ days

The Pastoral Manager- Family Support and Engagement will contact families after 3 days absence from school to check on safety and wellbeing. They will also offer advice and guidance on accessing home learning.

Home visits will be conducted in accordance with the absence procedure flow chart, Appendix 2.

Reporting to parents

We report to parents on attendance annually through the student reports and also in the student annual review. Parents and carers can request a copy of their child's school attendance certificate at any time.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Students are expected to come to school every day and should only be absent if the reason is 'unavoidable'. Every half day absence from the school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Therefore, the reason for each absence is always required. Any absence coded C in the register must be authorised by the Strategic Lead for attendance.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason. Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- **Illness** - If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily
- **Medical appointments** - Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary
- **Religious observation** – where a day is exclusively set apart for religious observation by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will see advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Unauthorised absences are those the school does not consider reasonable. This includes keeping students off for:

To which the student

- Feeling tired
- Birthdays
- Caring for siblings or other family member
- Shopping

Granting approval for term-time absence

Applications for leave of absence in term time should be made by completing the 'Student Term Time Leave Request Form', Appendix 3.

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- death of parent/carer or sibling of the student
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the student
- parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)
- leave for armed forces personnel who are prevented by operational duties to take their leave at any other time

- leave of absence already granted by a previous school or local authority (granted within the last six months and supported by documentation from the previous school)

school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Headteachers are within their rights to turn such applications down and refuse authorisation for parents/carers to take their children out of school during term time.

Parents and carers should plan all holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine.

Legal Sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices.

This may take into account:

- A 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Individual certificates will be presented termly to students who have achieved 95% or more attendance that term and at Awards Evening for those achieving 100% during the whole academic year
- The importance of good attendance will be promoted daily in class with display posters, through assemblies and on the electronic display board in the school's reception area.
- Each term the tutor will speak to students about their individual attendance, whether good or needing improvement, and to parents at Parents' Evening, to encourage families and the students to take ownership of their own attendance.

6. Strategies for addressing persistent absence

- If attendance continues to drop and falls below 90%, the Inclusion Manager will send a letter to parents and an action plan will be put in place where there are reasons **other** than medical difficulties.
- Where there are medical difficulties, the Inclusion Manager will ask for correspondence from medical professionals to support the reasons for persistent absence from school.

- Consistent poor attendees whose attendance does not improve with following a school action plan will be targeted under the Fast Track to Attendance Procedures. Parents will be made aware of this process in writing where attendance is a concern by the Inclusion Manager.
- Attendance will be reported to parents in Annual Reviews and end of year reports.

Student level data is collected each term and published at national and local level through DfE's school absence national statistics and releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside national statistics. We compare our attendance data with the national average, and share this with Governors.

At Baskerville School we use attendance data to track the attendance of individual students as well as using data to identify whether there are particular groups of students whose absence is a cause for concern. We use data to monitor and evaluate students who are identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7. Child Missing in Education

If a student is absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown, the school has a duty to carry out a reasonable enquiry **jointly** with the local authority to ascertain the whereabouts, which might be a result of:-

- The family moving within the city but the parents fail to inform the school of the house move or transfer to a new school.
- The family move out of the city and relocate to a new area within the UK but parents fail to inform the school.
- The family relocate abroad and fail to inform the school of their destination.
- The family is displaced as a result of 'crisis' e.g. domestic violence, homelessness.
- Parent/school disagreement and parents withdraw the child from school.
- Family separation.

In these instances, the school will take and record the following action:

- Call the CME Team to conduct 'background checks' on the family
- Consider the likely reason for the absence – has the family been granted leave of absence or is the school aware of an extended trip abroad; has the child been absent due to sickness or unavoidable cause? If not:
- Make a first day of absence call to the parents to establish the reason for the absence and to confirm the student's whereabouts.
- Check with all members of staff who the student may have had contact with.
- Check with the student's friends, siblings and known relatives at this school or other schools.
- Make enquiries with other professionals who have been involved with the student.
- Make telephone calls to any numbers held or identified.
- Conduct a visit to the last known address of the student within the first five days of the student's absence.
- If possible, enquire of neighbours about the location of the family.
- Send a letter to the last known address and record the outcome.

Refer the student to the BCC 'CME' team within the first five days of the student's absence and inform BCC's CME officer telephone: - 0121 303 4983.

See BCC CME Policy

Attendance Monitoring and Wellbeing

The less children attend school, the more socially isolated and out of step with education they can become. At Baskerville we recognise the link between good attendance at school and positive mental health; The Attendance Team will monitor students attendance identify attendance concerns and help students and their parents and carers to develop realistic plans to improve attendance.

We aim to provide the best support to a child's mental and emotional well-being, we do this in conjunction with parents/families, health professionals and external agencies, eg Malachi, Forward Thinking Birmingham, Health and Social Care.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on a termly basis. At Baskerville School a Key Performance Indicator report is presented to the Governing Body each term for challenge and support.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, reporting it to Governors.

The Attendance Team

SLT Strategic Lead for Attendance

- Lead the student Attendance Team and support strategies to improve student attendance
- Quality assure the work of the attendance team including accuracy of data and consistency in implementing the attendance policy
- Work collaboratively with the SLT Strategic Lead for Inclusion to Safeguard students
- Monitor attendance registers weekly and check absence codes
- Authorise the use of Code C in all cases
- Receive half termly attendance KPI reports to analyse data and identify trends across specific groups and equalities

SLT Strategic Lead for Inclusion and DSL

- Follow up on safeguarding concerns raised by the Attendance Team
- Oversee the provision for non-attendees
- Receive referrals for intervention and behaviour support plans from the Attendance Team
- Authorise part-time time tables as a planned, time limited intervention to support a students' attendance to fulltime education
- Authorise home visits and safe and well calls in line with safeguarding protocols and the Student Attendance Policy
- Liaise with SENAR re change of placement if appropriate
- Work collaboratively with the SLT Strategic Lead for Inclusion to Safeguard students

Inclusion Manager

Develop strategies and plans for raising student attendance in collaboration with the Pastoral Manager – Family Support and Engagement

- Monitor attendance and implement policies and strategies to combat absences including persistent absence
- Maintain close links with families and make home visits where necessary, particularly in respect of attendance issues
- Produce data for the Attendance Team meetings
- Produce and analyse attendance data and produce KPI reports half termly for SLT and Governors

Pastoral Manager – Family Support and Engagement

- Manage daily attendance for students: checking attendance registers, ensure correct coding is used in line with DfE guidance
- Record daily absence comments on SIMS, absence book and attendance tracker.
- Complete first day absence calls
- Follow up attendance matters in accordance with the Absence Procedure flowchart, appendix 2.
- Monitor attendance data at school and individual level student level.
- Develop strategies and plans for raising student attendance in collaboration with the Inclusion Manager
- Monitor attendance and implement policies and strategies to combat absences including persistent absence
- Follow the direction of the Strategic Lead – Inclusion for student non-attenders whilst on roll, contact regularly, arrange work with the Key Stage Co-ordinators and support external agencies, SENAR, SENDIASS, Travel Assist, FTB

Co-related policies

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE information for all school and college staff)
- BCC Children Missing from Education (CME)

COVID 19 Addendum

January 2021

Following the announcement of lockdown 3 on 4th January 2021, Baskerville has been partially open for our key worker children and most vulnerable.

Government definition of vulnerable

Currently the Government deem all children with an EHCP as vulnerable. However, we know the majority of our students are safer at home and well loved. The Government have not specified the percentage of students expected in schools or the maximum number of students per bubble.

Our definition of a most vulnerable student is:

All students at Baskerville school are considered as vulnerable because they have an EHCP: this does not mean that a student should be in school in this current situation. We apply the principle if a student is safe at home then stay at home. A red rating student at Baskerville school is applied to those for whom we have significant concerns over, and this includes safeguarding concerns, looked after children, mental health needs, having a social worker, challenging behaviour at home including being violent, domestic violence or the student is considered safer in school compared to home. Some students that have a red rating are safer at home than in school due to health needs, or support in place at home to ensure their safety.

Students can move up or down the scale if there is a change in circumstance. All of our students have an EHCP so this is not a factor that automatically means that a student should be in school during this second wave of the COVID pandemic. We would not be able to keep all students and staff safe if the school was at full physical capacity.

Attendance Codes

The X Code is used to mark that a student has not been offered a place and is not required to attend school

The X Code is used to mark that a student is self-isolating, but is well. The X Code is a non-statistical absence.

If a student receives a positive test the I code will be used.

Some parents, carers and students may hold anxieties about returning to school following lock down. However, Government expectation from the start of the autumn term 2020 is that student attendance will be mandatory. Students not attending school long term because of worries around COVID-19 will be coded as O (unauthorised). Measures will be put in place to support families. School will work with external agencies and specialist therapeutic services to improve attendance and access to learning.

Self-Isolation

Students will follow the latest government guidelines on when to self-isolate, as legally required by government and local authority.

In addition to normal attendance monitoring processes, school will track students who are self-isolating, ensuring

- Students, parents, and if required transport, will have a set date to return back to school
- Parents of students on FSM will be offered vouchers to the value of weekly free school meal to a student is self-isolating
- Students who are well, but self-isolating will be sent work so they do not fall behind academically

Monitoring Procedures

All students who are self-isolating, or absent due to Covid 19, will receive a weekly 'Safe and Well' call from a member of staff from the class team. Close Liaison will be maintained with Social Workers or Family Support workers during this time.

Staff making safe and well calls will ask a discreet question to allow a student to raise a safe guarding concern. Normal safe guarding procedures will be followed if a concern is raised.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

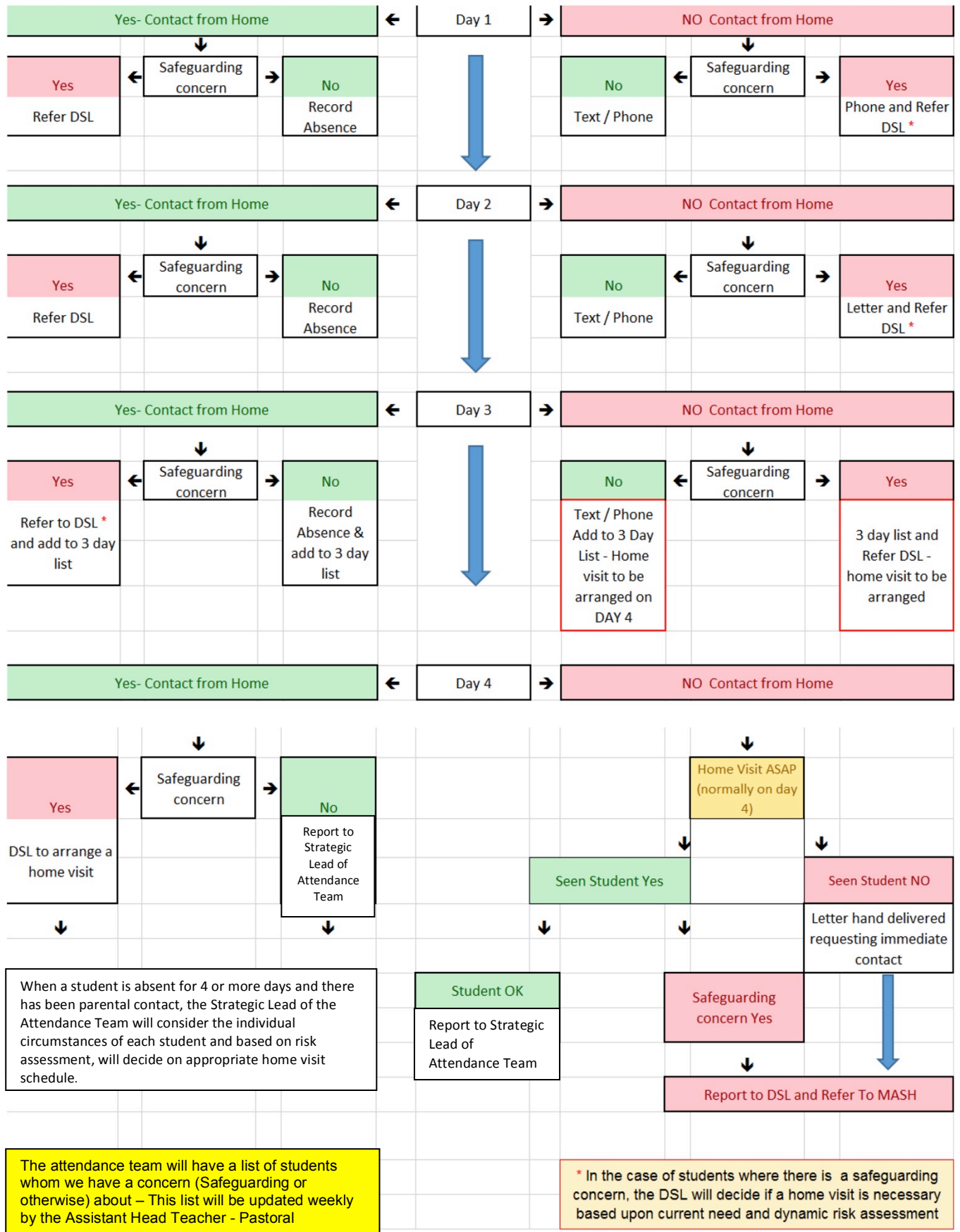
The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance. In addition the following advice will be followed:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
X	Untimetabled sessions for noncompulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced and partial enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 2 – Student Absence Procedure



EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES – STUDENT TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST

Student’s Name: D.O.B Class

I request permission for the above named student(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request:

.....

Dates of Absence

From To No of school days

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- if travelling abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I / we will supply the name and telephone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
- if I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I do not pay the fine, I / we could then be required to attend Court; this could result in a fine of up to £2500 per child and having a criminal record.
- In exceptional circumstances penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.
- he/she may be removed from the school register in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Parent/Carer Name: DOB: Address Signature Date	Parent/Carer Name: DOB Address Signature Date
School Action by Joy Baker	
Attendance %	
External Agencies Involved:	
Additional Information	
Signed by:	
Role:	

Request **agreed / denied**

Signed Head Teacher Dated