



Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2024-2025

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1. Introductory statement

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils and to enable them to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Molehill Primary Academy's ethos encourages children to feel that their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late. The Academy will take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of the Policy.

At Molehill Primary Academy we take seriously our responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all our pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school. All children have the right to an education.

Parents and carers have a vital role, as well as a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance and punctuality. As an Academy, developing effective links with parents is a high priority and we are committed to regularly conveying to parents, carers and pupils the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality. It is an offense in law to permit absence without good reason and may result in prosecution under the Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2003 and under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Academy will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Registration procedures and receive appropriate professional development with regard to these.
- Complete Roll Call accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, including registration during every lesson of the day.
- Stress to parents / carers the importance of contacting the Academy on each day of absence, and provide effective mechanisms for them to make contact with the Academy.
- Promote the importance that full attendance and punctuality play in achieving the best possible educational outcomes.
- Promote race, disability and gender equality within all practices and procedures related to attendance and punctuality.
- Through consultation days and reporting systems, ensure that parents, carers and pupils are made aware of the attendance pattern and provide an opportunity to discuss how it may affect learning and offer supportive strategies to improve attendance.
- Work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued.
- Support pupils who have difficulty accessing education through the work of the Academy support, Local Authority, Early Help, Schools Liaison Officer/Attendance service.
- Actively promote, encourage and celebrate 100% attendance.

2.2 Parents / Carers will:

- Actively promote and encourage 100% attendance.
- Contact the school whenever the pupil is absent on the first day and on each subsequent day of absence.
- Provide proof of medical appointments and medical treatment if requested to do so by the Academy.
- Avoid removing their child during the Academy day.
- Attend attendance meetings with members of staff from the Academy when requested in order to put in place strategies to improve attendance.

3. Attendance Procedures

3.1 Registration

- The statutory recording of attendance and absence at the start of each session (am / pm) is known as Roll Call. This is undertaken within the first 30 minutes of the morning and afternoon sessions. Wherever possible this Roll Call is taken 'electronically' by register calling.
- Designated staff will be reminded of their legal duty to complete and submit Roll Call at the appropriate time, and use the correct registration codes (Appendix 1).
- Registers for Roll Call will officially close 10 minutes after the start of the am and pm sessions.

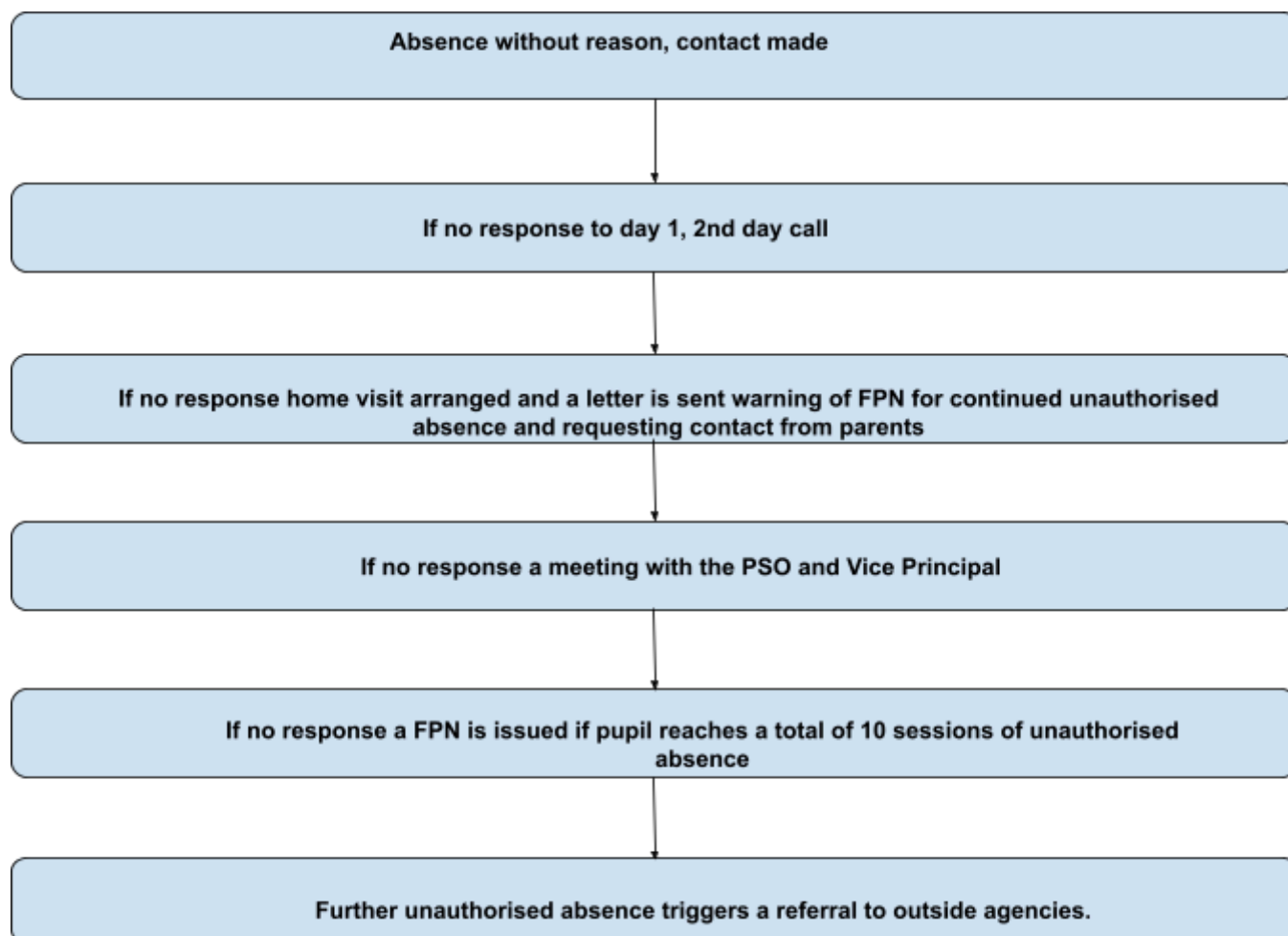
After this time a pupil will be registered as late. Therefore, pupils who arrive late after 8:50am will be marked as an unauthorised absence for the morning session. Afternoon registration will take place at 13:00 pm. Any mark after this time will be marked accordingly.

3.2 Informing the Academy of Absence

If a child is absent Parents or Carers must:

- Contact the school phone line prior to 8.15am on the first day of absence, advising of the reason and likely length of absence. Parents or carers should continue to inform the Academy on each subsequent day of absence.
- Medical evidence must be provided for attendance to be authorised if your child' attendance is below 90%. The Academy will not chase up medical evidence as this is a parental responsibility to provide. Wherever possible, all medical appointments should be taken outside of school time. Medical evidence can be an attached photo, or photocopy, of:
 - a. letter from medical professional,
 - b. appointment card with name date and time,
 - c. copy of prescription note,
 - d. copy of prescribed medication sticker on side of medicine packaging
- Request a discussion/meeting with the Pastoral Support Officer to discuss extended absence due to illness or if there are any other concerns affecting school attendance.

If the Academy is not informed of an absence, it will take the following action:



3.3 Unauthorised Absence

PrincipaUnauthorised Absences lead to a referral to the Local Authority and / or a prosecution or instant fine under the Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2003 and under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Absence will be deemed unauthorised where:

- Parents or carers do not provide medical evidence to support absence due to ill health
- Parents or carers remove pupils from school for holidays or trips (leave of absence) during term time
- Pupils arrive at the Academy after the registration period has ended unless there are agreed arrangements in place
- Parents or carers keep children from the Academy unnecessarily
- Parents or carers do not communicate the reason for absence to the Academy
- A pupil truants- where they are absent without the parents' or carers' knowledge

Holidays in Term time will never be authorised. The Academy is closed for 14 weeks a year when parents can take holidays and travel abroad. Where there is an exceptional and immediate circumstance where a pupil will need to be absent during term time, a request can be made to the I in writing or via email who will then consider the application and respond in writing. The Principal's decision is final.

3.4 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Pupils arriving late cannot start the day effectively, disrupt lessons, and encourage absence or poor punctuality in others. Where pupils are late to the Academy with no valid reason the following punctuality protocols will be followed:

- The Academy day starts at 8.40am and we expect pupils to be through the gate and on their way to their morning registration
- Any pupil who arrives through the gate after 8.50am will be expected to report to the office
- Persistent lateness can lead to a meeting with the Pastoral Support Office and Vice Principal and where necessary a court referral being processed.
- Poor punctuality is classed as irregular Academy attendance and is dealt with accordingly. This may mean that parents or carers could face the possibility of legal action.
- If you know your child is going to be late for a specific reason please call the Academy before 8:30, following the same procedures for absence.

Illness during the school day

If a child becomes ill in school the following procedures will be followed:

If a child informs a member of staff that they feel unwell the member of staff will monitor the child and rule out any common reasons by ensuring that they have been to the toilet, that they are hydrated and that they are warm/cool enough. The member of staff will check that there is nothing worrying the child. Staff will also check that there is no known condition on medical lists for this child.

Following initial checks, the member of staff will then decide whether symptoms may require a call home. If this is the case they will contact the office and a call will be made home. If symptoms suggest that they do not require a call home then the teacher will continue to monitor in class or request that they are monitored (as they feel sick) by admin in the first aid area. The child will be monitored and should the symptoms worsen a call home will be made. If in any doubt a call will be made to parents to discuss the pupil, sometimes parents will be asked to attend the school to administer pain relief or cough mixture. If the child improves and or feels better they will return to class.

If a child has sickness or diarrhea in school they will be sent home immediately. The child will be made comfortable while they wait to be collected. If contact cannot be made with parents then staff will contact the emergency contacts provided by the parents on the admissions form. If parents/ emergency contacts cannot be reached the child will be made comfortable and monitored and staff will continue to try to make contact. If necessary a first aider will be consulted for advice on an illness.

In the case of an emergency when the child's health is at risk an ambulance will be called and a member of staff will accompany the child to hospital. Parents/ authorised adults will be contacted. As soon as possible a senior member of staff will be informed.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of attendance takes place on a daily basis. It is systematic and rigorous to ensure there is a strategic approach to improving a pupil's attendance where it is below expected and impacting on their progress:

- Academy attendance data will be published for consideration at every Academy board meeting. It may also be submitted to the Trust Academies Standards Committee as required.
- Attendance Data will be produced regularly and distributed to the Senior Leadership Team to enable interventions to occur.
- A Designated Principal/Senior Leader has overall responsibility for the publication and monitoring of the attendance data for the whole Academy.
- Attendance data will be collected via the DfE Census three times per academic year.

5. Strategies for Improving Attendance and Punctuality

- The person responsible for leading attendance will meet regularly with relevant staff and make them aware of significant attendance trends and patterns and seek their support to address any issues with pupils, parents / carers and other stakeholders.
- Attendance, punctuality and its impact on learning and progress will be a key area for discussion between teachers, leaders and parents / carers during consultation days.
- A range of positive strategies will be used to reward individual pupils and groups for outstanding and/or improved attendance.
- Regular attendance meetings will be held
- Pupil attendance data may be shared with Parents/Carers, Local Authority, Early Help, School Liaison Officer/Attendance Service , Children's Social Services, Police, relevant LEA's, Ofsted and the DfE.

6. Absence of Leave during Term Time

The Academy may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in writing to the Principal of the Academy. The Principal of the Academy will make the final decision of acceptance or refusal. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'.

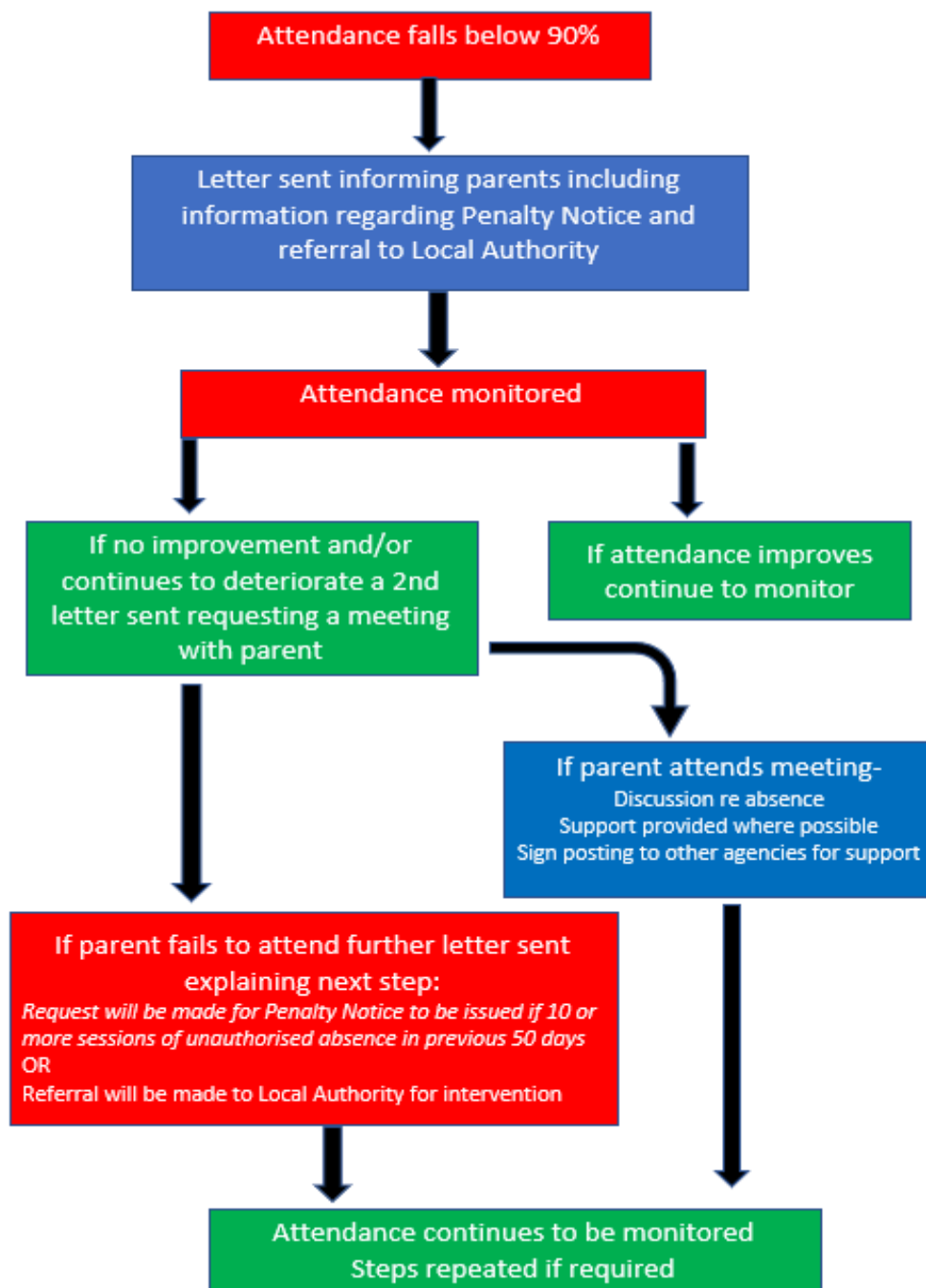
If absence is not authorised and a leave of absence of at least 10 sessions (5 days) is taken, a referral will be made to the local authority attendance service which may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each Parent for each child taken out of the Academy.

7. Persistent Absence Referrals

A pupil is deemed to be a PA (Persistent Absentee) if their attendance falls below 90%. The Academy will consider pupils below 95% at risk. Pupils who fall into either of these categories will be monitored by the Academy

Analysis of attendance by micro population will identify strengths and areas for intervention to further improve attendance. Use of external data including Data dashboard will be analysed and further information on groups made available. A referral may be made to the local authority attendance service should attendance remain poor after Academy and Trust Interventions.

The following flow chart outlines the procedure taken by the Academy if attendance falls below 90%.



8. Penalty Notices

Regular and punctual attendance at school/alternative provision is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. [Section 444A of the Education Act 1996](#) empowers designated local authority officers, Headteachers (and deputy and assistant Headteachers authorised by them) and the police to issue penalty notices.

A Penalty Notice may be requested for:

- Overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps)

- Parentally-condoned absences
- Unauthorised leave for the purpose of a family holiday in term-time
- Delayed return from leave of absence without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the school register has closed)
- Where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours during the first five days of exclusion.

Exclusion:

A penalty notice can only be issued where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours of days 1-5 of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Where penalty notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the local authority.

Education for Health Needs including Mental Health

Where possible, a pupil's health needs - including mental health, will be managed by the Academy. If needs are unable to be met, a referral will be made under *Section 19 of The Education Act 1996*, where the Local Authority will start to arrange education. If a pupil is away from school for 15 days or more because of their health needs, the Local Authority should arrange suitable alternative provision. *DfE - Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs*

Whilst the duty of care for the pupil's education will sit with the Local Authority, the Academy will work closely with all medical professionals to ensure that health needs are fully supported and educational needs are being met

9. Removing a Pupil from the Academy Roll

School Transfer

If parents/carers decide to transfer their child to another school or Academy, they should advise the school office as a matter of priority, providing all necessary details, including any new address (if relevant) and the school or Academy the child is transferring to.

When in the process of a school or Academy transfer the child must continue to attend Molehill Primary Academy until a start date has been agreed with the new school or Academy. If the Academy does not receive this information and a child stops attending, he or she becomes a 'Child Missing Education' (CME). Any child in this category is reported to the Child Missing Education Officer at the Local Authority, who will follow up the matter under safeguarding legislation.

As per The Education Regulations Act 2006 Section 8, when all possible actions have been taken we will remove the student from academy roll due to continued serious absence.

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy within 10 school days, immediately following an authorised leave of absence, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006)

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy for 20 school days or more and absence is unauthorised, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006)

Elective Home Education (EHE)

If parents or carers take the decision to educate a child at home, they must tell the Academy of this in writing – this letter or email should be addressed to the Principal and include the date of decision to home educate and a brief explanation of the reasons for EHE. Once this letter is received, the Academy will remove the pupil from the Academy roll and advise the Elective Home Education Officer of the Local Authority, who will make contact with parents or carers. If an EHE request letter or email is not received, the pupil remains on the Academy roll and action may be undertaken following irregular or non-Academy attendance procedures and could lead to prosecution or an instant fine under the Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2003 and under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Appendix 1 CODE DESCRIPTION

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