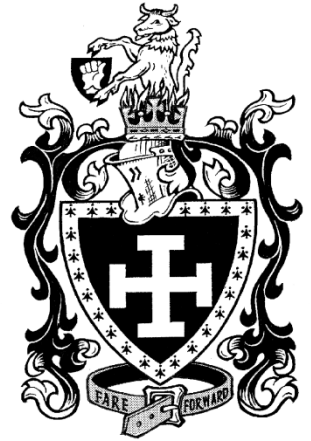



Buckler's Mead Academy



Policy Document

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

| | |
|--|---|
| Policy Title: | Student Attendance Policy |
| Responsible Person: | Deputy Head / Mark Lawrence |
| Document Reference: | NPOL/B&S0518/015 |
| Date Produced / Reviewed: | April 2019 |
| Recommended by (Advisory Group / Committee / SLT): | SLT |
| Date Adopted: | April 19 |
| Date published on website (if applicable): | April 19 |
| Signed By: |  Chair of Directors |
| Review Frequency: | Annually |
| Review Date: | Summer 2020 |
| <i>Please note: The version of this document contained within the 'Policy Documents' Folder on BMStaff (T:\Admin\Policies and Procedures) is the only version that is maintained.</i> | |

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

Good attendance underpins success. Students who attend regularly establish good working routines and relationships which lead to personal success and self-esteem. This policy reflects the county policy document 'Attendance Matters', commitment to the principles outlined within that document:

- Nurturing an ethos built on emotional health and well-being and the belief that everyone is valued.
- Enabling students to feel secure, both in terms of their physical environment and their emotional well-being.
- Ensuring learning is dynamic, interesting and challenging.
- Celebrating attendance, attainment and achievement.
- Building partnerships between schools or academies, students and parents/carers.
- Treating all students fairly and demonstrating commitment to their education.

A member of the Academy's Senior Leadership Team will have overall responsibility for attendance but this policy demonstrates the importance placed on all within the academy regarding attendance.

Annual targets are agreed between the Education Welfare Officer and the academy. These targets act as markers for our work to maximise every student's attendance at the academy. In addition the DFE's targets for Persistent Absence inform work with our most complex students.

Key actions to ensure high levels of attendance by all students:

- Close liaison with partner primary schools to ensure early identification of 'at risk' students. Attendance issues identified on transfer and through Learning Mentor, BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer Liaison.
- Involvement of parents in issues relating to attendance. Attendance practices are a key element of primary induction process for parents and regularly revisited in newsletters to all parents.
- Attendance data is shared with all staff via SIMs and the importance of good attendance is promoted across the academy.
- Termly reports to directors include attendance data and issues emerging.
- Registration of all students every session within the first 5 minutes of each session.
- Early identification of students 'causing concern' for close monitoring and agreed intervention.
- Personalised Intervention plans and targets set to improve attendance, through work of key staff. (Year Coordinators, Tutors and BMA Welfare & Attendance Officer)
- Close liaison with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Regular rewards for excellent attendance.
- Attendance is monitored on a 12 week basis and continuously throughout a student's time at Buckler's Mead.
- Referrals are made to the Education Welfare Service, where necessary, for either a Warning Penalty Notice or for Casework. (This is at the discretion of the Academy, or because of previous EWO involvement.)

ACADEMY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE OF RECEPTION STAFF

1. Telephone messages about absence are recorded by reception staff. Staff will record the full name of the caller, the student and the reason for absence and pass this to the BMA Welfare and Attendance Office.
2. Ensure up to date student addresses are recorded and maintained, supply the Year Coordinators with lists of students' details as requested.
3. Sign in students arriving late from appointments etc. and record the time and reason for late arrival (outside of a.m. and p.m. registrations slots).
4. When security gates are locked, make a note of all students who enter the academy site and report to BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer should that student then not arrive to sign in at reception and log this in SIMS.
5. Sign students in and out of the academy if they have permission to leave the site for an appointment during the academy day, using the EntrySign system.
6. Collect returned Term Time Leave Requests and pass to Attendance Lead on SLT, who will decide if the request can be granted, in accordance with exceptional circumstance criteria set by the Head teacher. BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer to file and send letter to inform of the academy's decision.
7. The Academy's First Aider will be responsible for recording of absence notes, correspondence and phone calls. BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer will then allocate appropriate codes.

ROLE OF THE BMA WELFARE AND ATTENDANCE OFFICER

1. Monitoring, supporting and tracking student attendance using SIMS.
2. Liaison with EWO to manage and plan intervention for students with poor attendance.
3. Report truancy and attendance issues to Year Coordinators, Tutors and Parents/Carers.
4. Work towards reducing unauthorised and persistent absence by working closely with those involved with a positive approach.
5. Assigning appropriate codes for absences into SIMS.
6. Send texts to all parents/carers of all absentees, where a telephone call has not been received. The Academy will aim to send this text by 10:15 am, however this cannot be guaranteed.
7. Meet regularly with Year Coordinators and Learning Mentors to inform them of attendance concerns and work with them on interventions to improve attendance.
8. Compile clear reports and collate information in a structured manner including information for Board of Directors, local authority and for Year Coordinators report to SLT.
9. Develop preventative and early intervention strategies in order to build good habits of attendance at the academy, working with other support agencies where necessary. Share/ Consult with Year Coordinators on this work.
10. Send appropriate letters requesting explanation of absences.
11. To track students with Persistent Absence.
12. Liaise with the First Aider to ensure monitored students are dealt with appropriately.
13. To liaise with parents and carers of students whose attendance is a concern through telephone calls, texts, letters, meetings and when appropriate home visits to support the improved attendance of the student.
14. Liaise with Assistant Head (KS Coordinator/ Inclusion) regarding students who are at risk of becoming 'Child Missing From Education'
15. Support LA data collection and analysis procedures as named contact.
16. Complete referral forms for the EWO.
17. Liaise with Year Coordinators to send letters to parents regarding attendance of identified students.
18. Provide attendance data for the Head's report to Directors.

19. Record on Attendance Monitor the participation of students in any trip or visit, plus any other large group activity of whole school scenario affecting registration.
20. Support the EWO following a referral and prepare documents as required.
21. Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer and any other appropriate outside agency to gain further support or action for those students who do not respond to in-academy measures for improving attendance. This might include requesting medical evidence to support alleged medical absence.
22. Ensure that the website is up to date with the latest policy and that parents are regularly informed of our attendance.
23. To complete Early Help Assessments to aid referral process to outside agencies, such as GetSet.
24. Attend Multi Agency meetings when required to support with information about regarding attendance.

ROLE OF THE LEARNING MENTOR

1. Report truancy and attendance issues to Year Coordinators, Tutors, Learning Mentor - Attendance and Parents/Carers.
2. Work towards reducing unauthorised and persistent absence.
3. Develop preventative and early intervention strategies in order to build good habits of attendance at the academy, working with other support agencies where necessary. Share/ Consult with Year Coordinators and BMA Educations and Welfare Officer on this work.
4. Liaise with First Aider over key students and their attendance.
5. Liaise with Year Coordinators to send letter to parents praising improved attendance of identified students.

THE ROLE OF THE FORM TUTOR (also see Appendix 2 Guidance for Tutors)

1. Take an accurate register every morning and afternoon using SIMS.
2. Be responsible for the collection of absence notes and liaising with Learning Mentor.
3. Collect absence notes from students, ensuring the student's full name is clear. Pass these to the Office, through register folders, who will update SIMS and then file these for the academic year.
4. Raise any concerns regarding student attendance patterns or issues with the parents/carers, and inform the Year Co-ordinator, Attendance & Welfare Officer or Learning Mentor.
5. Pass any Term Time Leave requests received to the BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer for processing.
6. Promote excellent attendance by encouraging all students to appreciate the importance of good attendance at the academy.
7. Review student attendance at Academic Monitoring Days.
8. To support the monitoring and intervention plan for individual students.
9. Celebrate excellent attendance or improving patterns with individual students.
10. To challenge and sanction poor punctuality as per academy B4L Policy.

THE ROLE OF THE YEAR COORDINATOR

1. To have overall responsibility for the attendance of students within their Year team.
2. Monitor the accuracy of registration procedures in the year group.
3. Liaise with the BMA Welfare Officer and Attendance and Learning Mentors to ensure identification of students with attendance problems.
4. Agree the appropriate intervention mechanisms for students identified.
5. Meet regularly with BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer and where appropriate Education Welfare Officers to discuss attendance concerns, including scrutiny of

- authorised absence if this puts a student at risk of PA, and work with them on interventions to improve attendance. Provide minutes of these meetings for SLT.
6. Meet and discuss student attendance and the actions taken with the appropriate Assistant Head, through the Line Management structure.
 7. Attend meetings with BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer (and EWO, where appropriate) to discuss intervention plans for complex cases.
 8. Attend attendance related case conferences as they are called by outside agencies if required.
 9. Make attendance a focus of assemblies throughout the year.
 10. Promote excellent attendance through the celebration of students with 100% attendance at key points throughout the academic year.
 11. Present to Assistant Headteacher KS3/KS4 a half termly review of attendance for individual Year group (including groups of learners).

THE ROLE OF THE SENCO

1. Emphasise excellent attendance with the LSB and Thrive base.
2. Be aware of students who are attendance concerns with SEN need.
3. Liaise with Learning Mentors and BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer over contact home.
4. Be involved in attendance meetings with SEN students.
5. To ensure Learning Mentors are aware of issues affecting each student.
6. To ensure accurate records are kept of students who are educated within the LSB.
7. Liaise with BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer regarding students with SEN needs.

THE ROLE OF Attendance Lead on SLT

1. Review the Attendance Policy annually, working with the Education Welfare Officer and Year Coordinators to ensure the document accurately reflects current practice and that procedures are effective and well managed.
2. Include attendance as a standing item on the Pastoral Management Group meetings.
3. Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer and any other appropriate outside agency to gain further support or action for those students who do not respond to in-academy measures for improving attendance. This might include requesting medical evidence to support alleged medical absence.
4. Ensure attendance has a high profile across the academy.
5. Oversee the preparation of attendance related materials for Year 6 parents/ carers.
6. To liaise directly with the Link Director Attendance on attendance issues.
7. Prepare regular reports for the Board of Directors on attendance issues in the academy.
8. Authorise requests for holiday during term time or communicate why these requests have been declined.
9. Line Management Responsibility for BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer.
10. To report back Attendance Overview for each Key Stage at SLT on a half termly basis.

OTHER ACADEMY RESPONSIBILITIES

CLASSROOM TEACHER

1. Take an accurate register every lesson every day, within the first five minutes.
2. Notice patterns of attendance and report to the main office and the learning mentors any irregularities, including students who may be missing from a lesson who have been present previously that day. The subject teacher may then need to take action as per the B4L policy.

3. Promote excellent attendance by encouraging all students to appreciate the importance of good attendance at the academy. (Role Modelling)
4. Celebrate excellent attendance or improving patterns with individual students.
5. To challenge and sanction poor punctuality to lessons as per Academy B4L Policy.

IEC STAFF

1. To inform reception and the BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer students who are internally excluded.
2. To maintain a lesson by lesson register for any student who is placed in the IEC during the day.
3. To report to reception and the BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer, if a student leaves the IEC without permission.

THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

1. Maintain an overview of attendance issues and support staff and procedures as appropriate.
2. Authorise requests for holiday during term time or communicate why these requests have been declined.
3. Refer students with attendance concerns to the Education Welfare Service, where appropriate.
4. To provide Head teacher statements for use in Court proceeding as and when required.

THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

1. To make every effort to maintain a good attendance and punctuality record so they can achieve their potential within the academy.
2. Encourage parents/ carers to follow the expectations regarding attendance contacts.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

1. To contact the academy on each day a student is ill or to advise any known absence - it is a parent's/ carer's responsibility to inform the academy should a student not be able to attend.
2. To provide written confirmation of the reason for the student's absence on their return to the academy.
3. To maintain regular contact with the Tutor, BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer or Year Coordinator in the case of a student's extended absence from the academy.
4. It is a parents/ carers responsibility to ensure their child attends regularly and punctually every day.

Term Time Leave

Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there to be "exceptional circumstances" for doing so.

The Headteacher decides what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'. Each request will be considered individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the reason for which leave is sought, the frequency of the request; whether the parent/carer gave advanced notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

If leave is granted, Headteacher should determine the number of days a child can be away from school.

'Exceptional circumstances' are unlikely to include family holidays. Therefore should any student be absent from school for a family holiday that is not agreed, the absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

If a student reaches more than 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence **and has a school attendance figure of 96% or under** on their return, then a Penalty Notice will be requested from the Local Authority. This may result in a fine. (See Appendix 4)

ATTENDANCE DATA ANALYSIS

Promotion of good attendance is the responsibility of all staff across the academy. To enable key staff to promote excellent attendance, identify areas of poor attendance and intervene where necessary. It will be the responsibility of the BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer to provide accurate attendance data of:

- Whole School Attendance
- Persistent Absence (10%)
- Each Year Group
- Cohorts within each Year group
- Unexplained absences
- Free School Meals and Pupil Premium (Disadvantaged Students)
- Child Looked After
- Gifted and Talented
- Vulnerable Pupils
- Boys/ Girls
- English as an additional language
- Mobile Students

APPENDIX 1 - ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

LETTERS SENT REGARDING ATTENDANCE

- 1. Letter 1: Attendance concerns raised.**
- 2. Letter 2: Meeting 1- Parent/ Carer Agreement (Medical Evidence needed)**
- 3. Parent/Carer Meeting follow up.**
- 4. Letter regarding parental/carer attendance at the meeting.**
- 5. Letter informing of EWO initial involvement.**
- 6. Letter informing of EWO referral.**
- 7. Lates - Concerns over late marks.**
- 8. Approval or refusal of term time absence.**
- 9. Praise Letter.**
- 10. LA Supportive and Legal Sanctions**

APPENDIX 2 - ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

GUIDANCE FOR TUTORS

REGISTERS

Please ensure students register with tutors promptly at 8.30 a.m. and 1.35 p.m.

A student not present by the end of the registration period should be marked absent.

An 'L' mark should be recorded for any student late to registration.

A 'U' mark will be recorded by the BMA Welfare and Attendance Officer if a student has not signed in at reception, or been registered by their tutor by 9:05 a.m.

REGISTRATION

Addresses, contact telephone numbers and Parents'/Carers' surnames must be regularly checked and up-dated. The academy office and the relevant Pastoral Manager **MUST** be notified of any changes. Absence notes should be signed and dated by the tutor and passed to the reception with the name of the pupil clearly written. If a tutor notices any issue or has a concern they should discuss this with the Learning Mentor or appropriate Year Coordinator.

If a student arrives after 8:50 a.m. they should sign in at the reception desk using the EntrySign System and go straight to their lesson.

ABSENCE

Since the key legal responsibility for attendance rests with parents/carers, it is important that attempts are made to encourage their involvement in all levels of the academy activity and particularly in relation to attendance.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Authorised absence can be summarised as including:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointment
- Family bereavement
- Work experience
- Students taking part in a public performance
- Exclusion
- Religious observance
- Dual registration
- Provision for transport not made by LA for a student who does not live within the statutory walking distance
- Travellers when travelling
- Approved sporting activity
- Alternative provision off-site, organised by the academy
- Link courses with college
- Interviews for Year 11 students
- Student pregnancy

(Evidence may be required for the above absences to be authorised, for example a named appointment card or letter, prescription or medication label.)

Please note: We never ask for 'doctor's notes' so please do not approach your GP asking for this.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Any absence that the academy considers to be unjustified, or if medical evidence has been requested and not provided.

TRUANCY

Students will be encouraged to consider absence without good reason as a serious breach of the academy rules. Parents/Carers will be informed of truancy by the Learning Mentors, or Year Coordinators as soon as possible.

Truancy will be sanctioned through the Behaviour 4 Learning Policy, and students will make up the time and work missed.

The Year Coordinators will involve the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team when dealing with persistent truants.

In all cases of unjustified absence, careful consideration should be given to individual student's circumstances and discretion used when deciding upon action to be taken. However, the difference between a student coping with a domestic difficulty and parentally condoned absence or lateness cannot be over-emphasized. Whilst we need to be aware of the domestic disadvantage in which some of our young people are placed, we are not helping them in the long term if we simply 'turn a blind eye'. Good attendance at the academy is the expectation for all.

ALL our students will need to be aware of the importance of punctuality and reliability when they leave the academy and move to the next stage of education or training.

LATENESS TO LESSONS

Subject teachers must take a register at the start of each lesson using SIMS. Any student late on 3+ occasions should be given a punishment agreed within the department. Persistent offenders should be referred to the Head of Department. (Form tutors and the Year Coordinators should also be notified). Students who have a reason to be absent for lessons will usually have a message attached to their name on the class register.

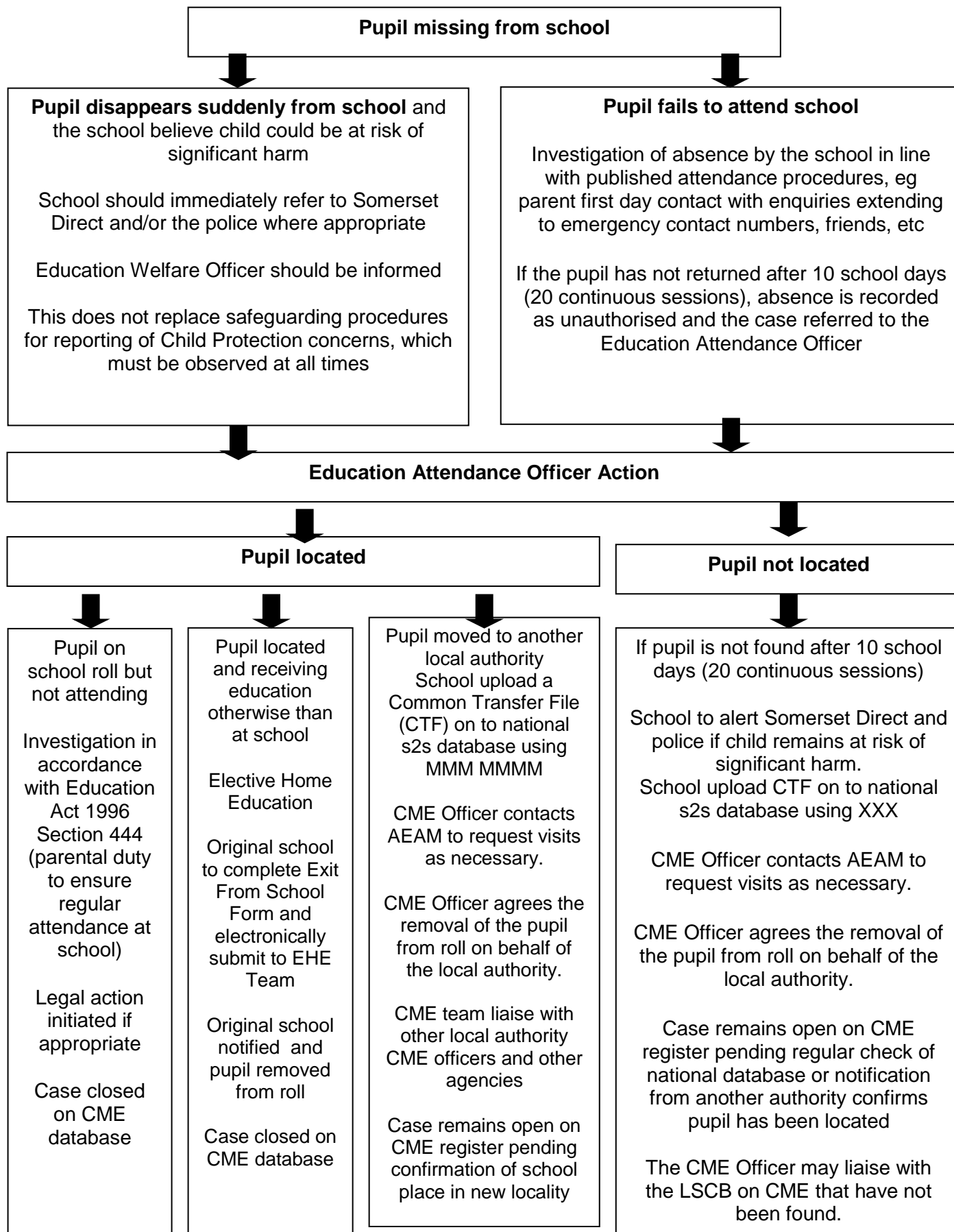
REWARDS FOR GOOD OR IMPROVED ATTENDANCE

1. Students will be rewarded with a 100% attendance certificate at regular intervals.
 - a. Bronze certificate for every month
 - b. Silver for every term,
 - c. Gold for two terms,
 - d. Platinum for the full year.
2. An Attendance prize is awarded at the Annual Year 11 Presentation Evening.
3. Spot prizes are awarded for good attendance where appropriate. (e.g. Post Card home)
4. Attendance records will be included in reports.
5. Students will be referred to the Year Coordinators and the Learning Mentors for improved attendance and the Learning Mentors, Year Coordinator or member of SLT will send appropriate letters of commendation to the parents/ carers.
6. Comments on improved attendance will be entered on the report by the tutor.
7. Students may be referred to senior staff for commendation of efforts made towards improved attendance as well as for full attendance.

**APPENDIX 3 - ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY
PROCEDURES FOR A CHILD MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

CHILDREN MISSING FROM SUITABLE EDUCATION (CME)

SCHOOL PROCESS FLOWCHART



APPENDIX 4

Supportive Processes

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order. Parenting Contracts (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003) In order to support families other processes are available and may be considered.

A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

Legal Sanctions

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

A student is absent from school and the absence has not been authorised by the school

A student has accrued unauthorised absence(s) following written warning to improve.

A Penalty Notice gives each parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £120 fine is paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the date the Notice was issued.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Somerset County Council's Penalty Notice Protocol.

Prosecution Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents 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 the 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.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to between £1000 and £2500 and or imprisonment may be considered.