EMBARK FEDERATION

Love Learning, Love Life.

Attendance Policy

Our school is part of the Embark Federation.

The shared vision for our trust is to “create schools that ‘stand out’ at the heart of their communities.”

Our trust has four core beliefs; Family, Integrity, Teamwork and Success that are integral to everything we do. The purpose is to enable everyone to be able to ‘Love Learning, Love Life.’

Our policies are underpinned by our vision, beliefs and purpose.

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Contents:

Introduction

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Attendance expectations
5. Absence procedures
6. Attendance register
7. Authorising parental absence requests
8. SEND- and health-related absence
9. Part-time timetables
10. Leave during lunch times
11. Truancy
12. Missing children
13. Attendance intervention
14. Working with Families to improve attendance
15. PA
16. Legal intervention
17. Monitoring and analysing absence
18. Training of staff
19. Monitoring and review

Appendices

1. Summary of attendance Monitoring Procedures
2. Days off add up to lost learning.
3. Number of minutes late that add up to lost learning.

Introduction

Embark Federation schools offer all pupils a high standard of education through a varied curriculum delivered by a caring, talented team of staff. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. All pupils and their families should aim for 100% attendance. We work to ensure that all parents are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits for their pupils.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and families.

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is the duty of any person with day-to-day responsibility for the pupil. Pupils need to attend school regularly, in accordance with the rules of the school, if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Draycott Community Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours. We take a whole-school approach to achieve excellent attendance for all pupils.

Our policy applies to all pupils registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who attend our school on our website.

Data will be processed in line with the new GDPR Regulations UK, May 2018.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils, and families.
- 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 Trust and area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring families follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent/carer 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.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The Trust ensures each school has staff members responsible for attendance in each school. Riddings Junior School's has a team of staff who are involved, but our first point of contact is our attendance officer who can be contacted via info@riddings-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk Staff, families, and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance or absence.

1. 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)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Embark Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND and inclusion Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Lone Working Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust board and each individual local governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- 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 school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the **Senior Leadership Team** to oversee the attendance in school and an attendance officer (these maybe the same person in a small school) Both people must be trained as a **designated safeguarding lead**. Ensuring all families 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.
- Ensuring the correct recording, notification and reviewing of pupils on part-time timetables, temporary managed placements or at dual placements.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling and encouraging good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated and recorded on My Concern.
- 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 families regarding attendance and absence.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance or punctuality.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Families are responsible for:

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

- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent contacts the school to explain the absence.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave

Only the Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Even if absence is supported by parent/carer, an absence will be unauthorised if not agreed with the headteacher.

Unauthorised absence:

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without a legitimate reason.
- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the knowledge or authorisation of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent/carer.

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason authorised or unauthorised bringing their attendance to 90% or below.

4. Attendance expectations

The Trust and each individual school have high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated to families and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day and they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at **8:40am for Years 4 and 5** and **8:50am for Years 3 and 6**.

Pupils will have a morning break at 10:40am, which will last until 10:55am, and a lunch break at 12:00pm which will last until 1:00pm for years 3-6, 12:10pm until 1:10pm for year 6 – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- Pupils will receive a late mark (L) if they are not in their classroom by 9:00am.
- The morning register will close at 9:30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence (U) if they do not attend school before this time
- Pupils will receive a late mark (L) if they are not in their classroom by 1:05pm / 1:15pm.
- The afternoon register will close at 1:15pm/1:20pm. Pupils will receive a mark of absence (U) if they are not present

Pupils should communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

Lateness

Children who are persistently late after close of register will quickly fall behind with their learning and will have an unsettled start to the day as they will miss key information about the day and future events and the opportunity to speak to friends before school starts.

Any pupil who comes into school after 9:00am will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L).

Any child who arrives for school later than 9:30am will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9:00am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

Persistent Lateness

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child is punctual to school. Where a child is persistently late to school parents/carers will be invited to discuss the reasons behind this and to establish a plan so that their child arrives at school on time minimising the disruption to themselves and to their class.

5. Absence procedures

Families must contact the school office before 9:00am on the first day and every subsequent day of their child's absence – It is a legal requirement that they will be expected to provide an explanation for the reason for absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g., one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their family has not contacted the school to report the absence by the time the registers have been checked, staff will contact the family as soon as is practical on the first day and every subsequent day that they do not attend school without contact.

The school will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school system.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable concern about the authenticity or impact of the illness.

Where a child has been absent without explanation, we will contact the family requesting the reason for absence. If we are unable to obtain the reason, we will send an email or message through the school messaging service requesting the reason for absence to parents/carers to complete. If a response is not received by the specified date, then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O)

In the case of a persistent absentee (a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent) where there are concerns with the reasons for absence or informal voluntary support has not made an improvement, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting to write an attendance contract will be arranged with the pupil's parents/carers and the pupil (where appropriate).

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

6. Attendance register

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the Trust and appropriate authorities.

All absences are recorded in the register as either authorised or unauthorised. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used by the Headteacher to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to extremely, exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad.
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- S = Study leave
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews.
- B = Off-site education activity
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- W = Attending work experience
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g., induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

7. Authorising parental absence requests

Families are required to request a leave of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the attendance officer and the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the school, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The attendance officer and headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal.

Leave of absence

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are extremely exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively, therefore any absences that were not approved by the school in advance, will be marked as unauthorised.

Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office, at least 10 school days before the first day of requested absence for consideration, prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time and should only approve the leave if there are exceptional circumstances. If a request for leave is denied and the pupil is absent for 5 days or more, the school must refer the case to the Local Authority. The Local Authority will issue a penalty notice with no requirement for a formal warning to be issued. Penalty notices can also be issued where a pupil is absent for repeated incidents of unauthorised leave in term time that fall below the 5-day threshold. In every case, the request for the Penalty Notice comes in from the school to the Local Authority for the process to be completed.

Where a child is absent with no reason provided and the Headteacher and/or attendance officer has grounds to believe that the child is on holiday the Headteacher may wish to challenge this absence and apply for a penalty notice to be issued.

Repeated period of unauthorised leave and penalty notices

The Working Together to Improve Attendance Guidance now states that there is a two penalty notice limit over a rolling 3-year period.

If repeated penalty notices are being incurred, it is unlikely that they are having an impact on improving pupils' attendance. Therefore, from autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

-First Offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

-Second Offence (within 3 years) -The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

-Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years) - The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Families will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, families will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Families will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the Local Authority who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the Local Authority issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the Local Authority and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the Local Authority, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Families will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **10 school days** in advance.

The school will only accept requests from families for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define

this as a day where the pupil's families would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **10 school days** in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, families will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSLs and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the Local Authority if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 consecutive school days, are placed on a temporary part-time timetable or a dual placement.
- Provide the Local Authority with information, when necessary, about how the pupil's needs are being met.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding regular (at least termly) meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Using any internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a temporary reduced timetable if this is in the best interests of the pupil.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

9. Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Time away from school to receive education in other ways must be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes.

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable should:

• Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the pupil normally lives with.

• Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.

• Have regular review dates which include the pupil (where appropriate) and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.

• Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period.

Where the pupil has a social worker, the school is expected to keep them informed and involved in the process.

If the pupil has an Education Health and Care Plan, the school should discuss the part-time timetable with the Local Authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.

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 must record the absence accordingly (normally using code X or C2).

10. Leave during lunch times

Families may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times in exceptional circumstances or if it is in the best interests of the pupil with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Families must submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunchtime.

11. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence and parents/carers are not aware.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes for registration, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the School Office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

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

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Police will be contacted if the child's whereabouts are not known.

12. Missing children

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school and parent/carer. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
    - All classrooms
    - All toilets
    - Changing rooms
    - The library
    - Any outbuildings
    - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the families of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parent/carer using the emergency contact numbers provided.

- If the families have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- A member of staff will record the incident, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed, to include the Virtual school.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Families and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

13. Attendance intervention

The school expects pupils to aim for 100% attendance.

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
    - Having conversations and informal meetings with parents
    - Sending texts, emails, and letters to parents.
    - Having a **weekly** review.
    - Engaging with Local Authority attendance teams.
    - Using fixed penalty notices.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the **Monitoring and analysing absence** section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the individual needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

see Appendix 1 – Summary of Attendance monitoring procedures

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- In App messages to parents/carers
- Whole class extra playtime
- Rewards through assemblies

14. Working with Families to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents, carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will offer early help or liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g., social care and the school nurse.

We will support families by working together to improve attendance by building effective relationships with families.

These could include;

- Regular parent drop ins, coffee mornings
- A welcome for parents
- A positive environment for parents and an open-door policy for parents
- Celebration events and assemblies
- Attendance rewards for pupils and celebration messages for parents

The school will ensure that there are **three** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation. Both contact numbers will be used if necessary.

The school will ensure that parent/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – families will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, unless in certain circumstances, e.g., sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parent/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that they are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their families to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly and developing an attendance contact. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g., the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g., they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g., through an early help assessment, children's social care or the Local Authority, and will encourage families to access the support that they may need.

15. Persistent absentees

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and becoming a Persistent Absentee, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC

- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of becoming Persistent absentee to attend school. These include:

- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent and will work with the Local Authority and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of persistent absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g., social care, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe persistent absence following intervention may constitute neglect and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

16. Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for voluntary support to identify and tackle barriers for pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies have not had the desired effect, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team at the Local Authority to develop a formal attendance contract.
- Working with the Local Authority to put an education supervision order in place.
- Completing an early help with the family.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will request a fixed penalty notice in line with the Local Authority's code of conduct. A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution. It requires the parent to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's non-attendance and avoids court proceedings. It is intended to secure better attendance without taking legal action through the courts. **When two parents/carers are issued with a penalty notice for the same child both penalty notices must be paid. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly and punctually.**

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the Local Authority to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the Local Authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be help every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

17. Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school, as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Individual classes
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of Persistent absence.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a **half-termly, termly and full-year** basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will present this information to the headteacher or member of the senior leadership team **half-termly, termly and full-year** to celebrate success, identify trends and agree actions moving forward.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The local governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The Board of Trustees will also monitor attendance and ensure staff from different schools within the Trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and annual refresher training.

The Local Governing Team will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer (who should also be a designated safeguarding lead) and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know-how such concerns should be managed.

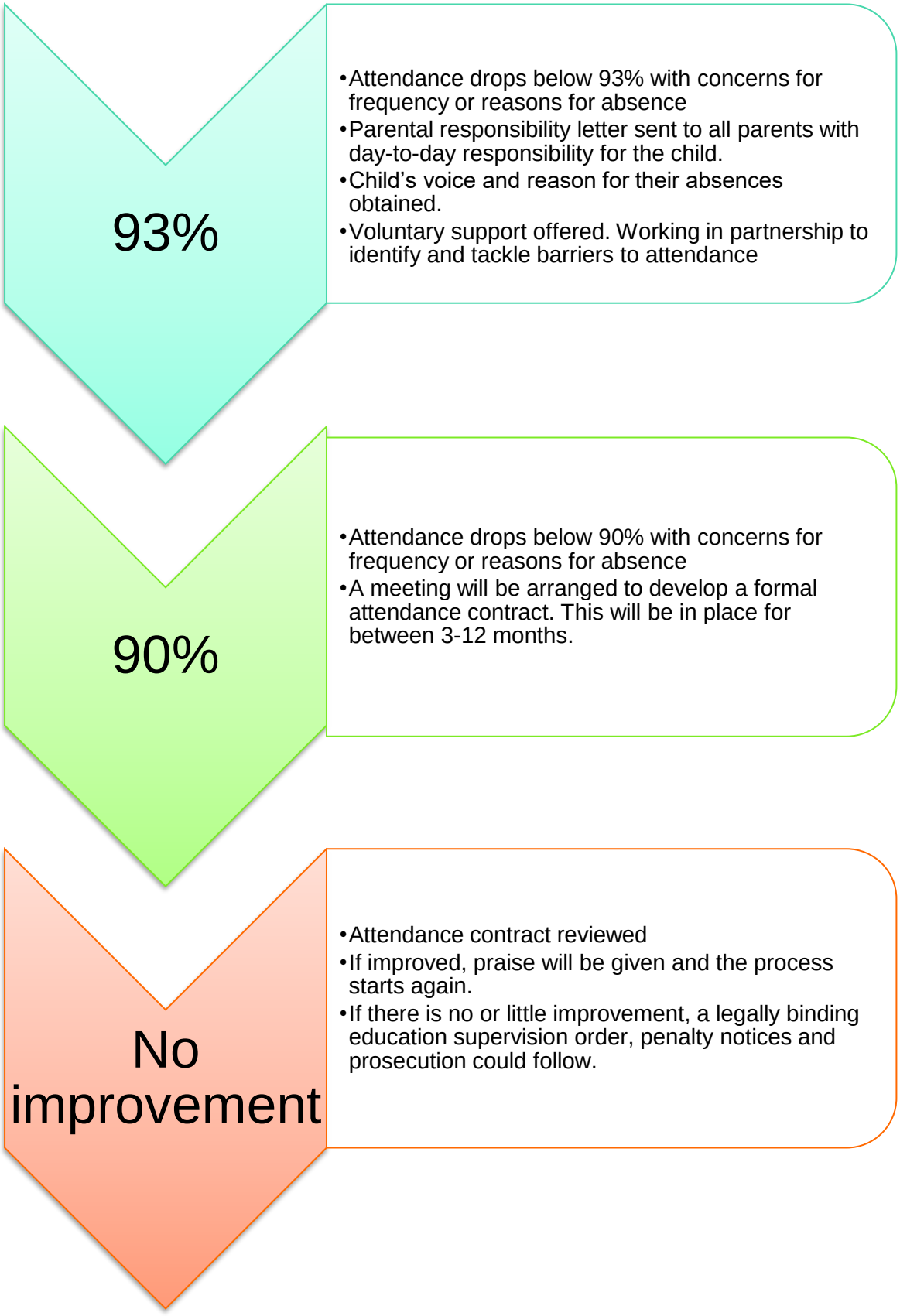
Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The whole school attendance target is **97 percent**.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by Embark and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1 Attendance Monitoring Procedures



Embark Federation has adopted the above attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

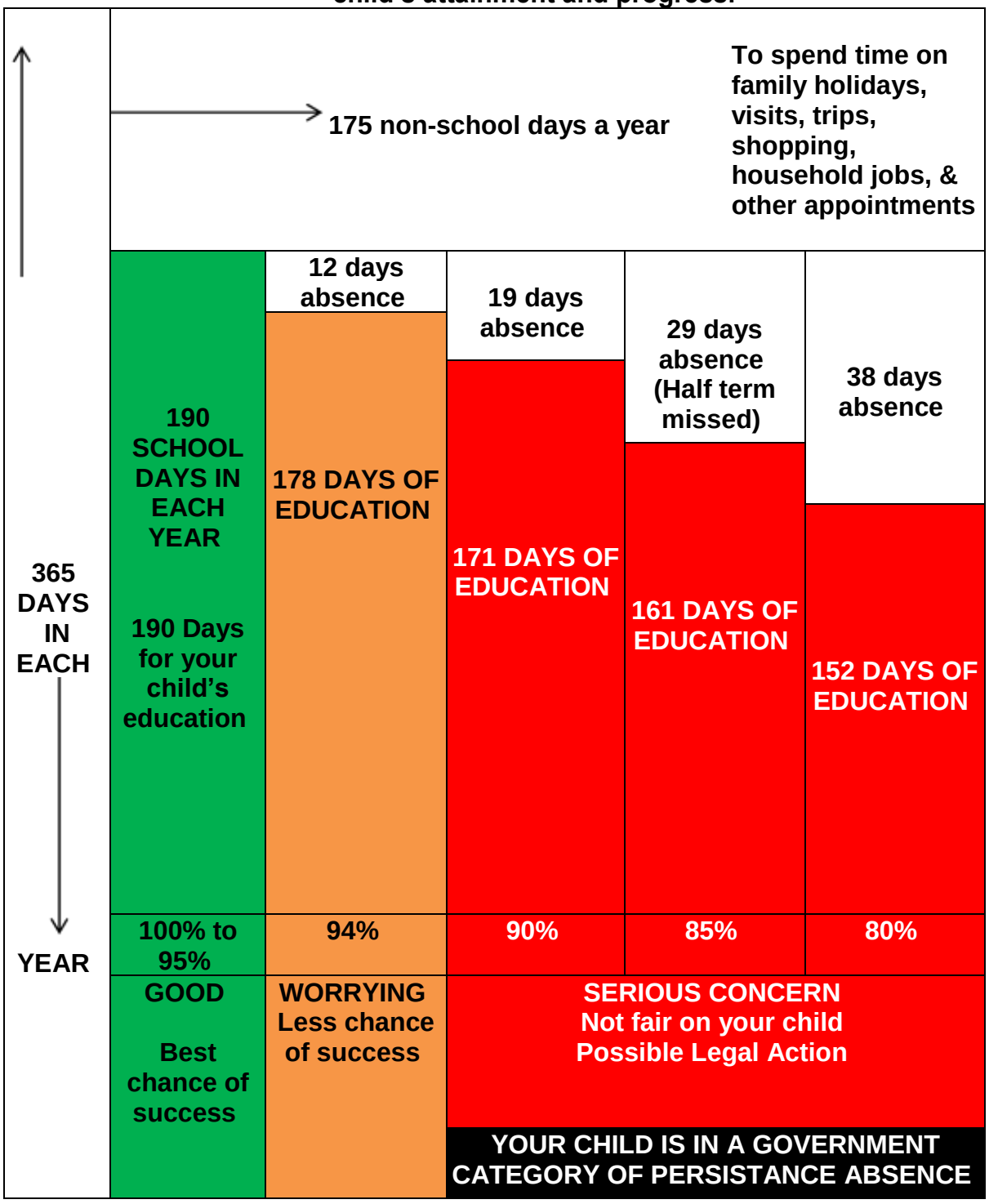
Processes that support this are:

1. A spreadsheet is created, maintained and reviewed by the SLT and attendance officer detailing **half-termly** and **annual** attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed regularly by classroom teachers and pupils record their attendance in their planners. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the attendance officer.
3. Contact is made to the Families of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence (o).
4. If a pupil's attendance falls to between **93 percent – 91 percent** where there are concerns for the reasons given or repeated absence, the attendance officer will speak to the pupil in school to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. The attendance officer will also discuss this with families. A parental responsibility letter is also sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent and there are concerns for the reasons given or repeated absence, an attendance meeting is arranged with both parents (where appropriate). The school, parents and pupil (where appropriate) will develop an attendance contract and a penalty warning letter will be given to both parents.
6. The pupil's attendance is monitored for the duration of the attendance contract (usually between 3 and 12 months) and if attendance does not improve after this time. A referral may be required to the school's Local Authority named contact for further action and advice.
7. After the attendance contract period and if targets are met, families will be contacted to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance.
8. If targets are not met, the attendance officer would speak to the Local Authority named contact to consider next steps and a fixed-penalty notice being issued.

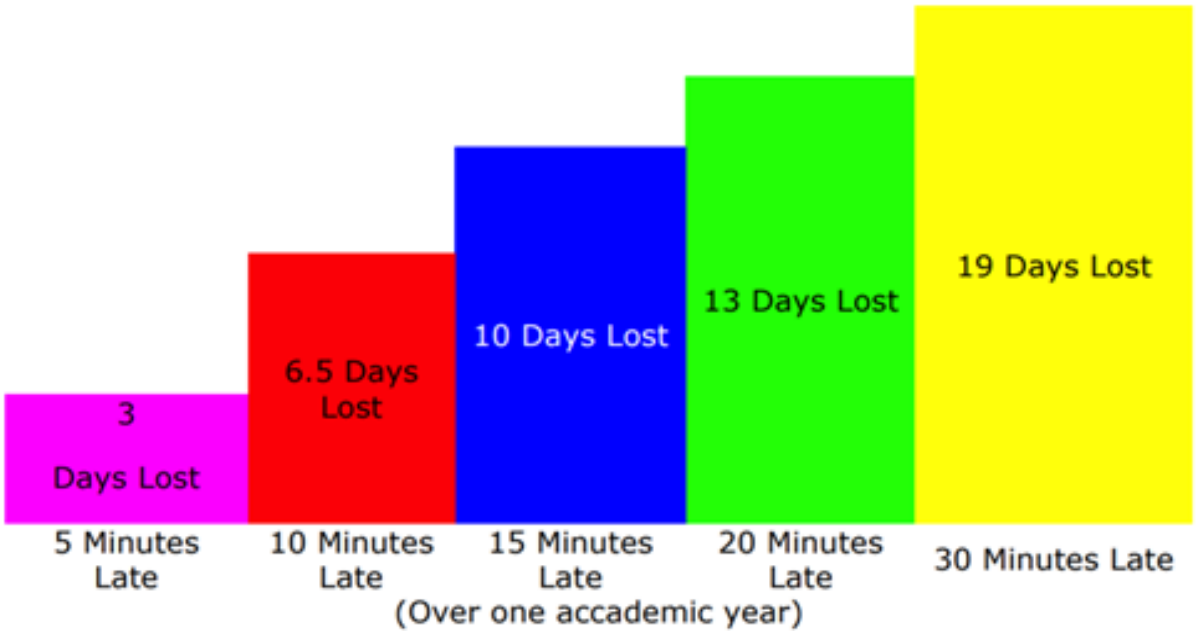
Appendix 2 – Days off add up to Lost Learning

DAYS OFF ADD UP TO LOST LEARNING

There is clear evidence to show that days off school impact on your child's attainment and progress.



Appendix 3 – Number of minutes late that add up to Lost Learning

Every Minute Counts

If you arrive late to school everyday your learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school everyday over a school year adds up to lost learning time.