



Oakfield Community Primary & Nursery School

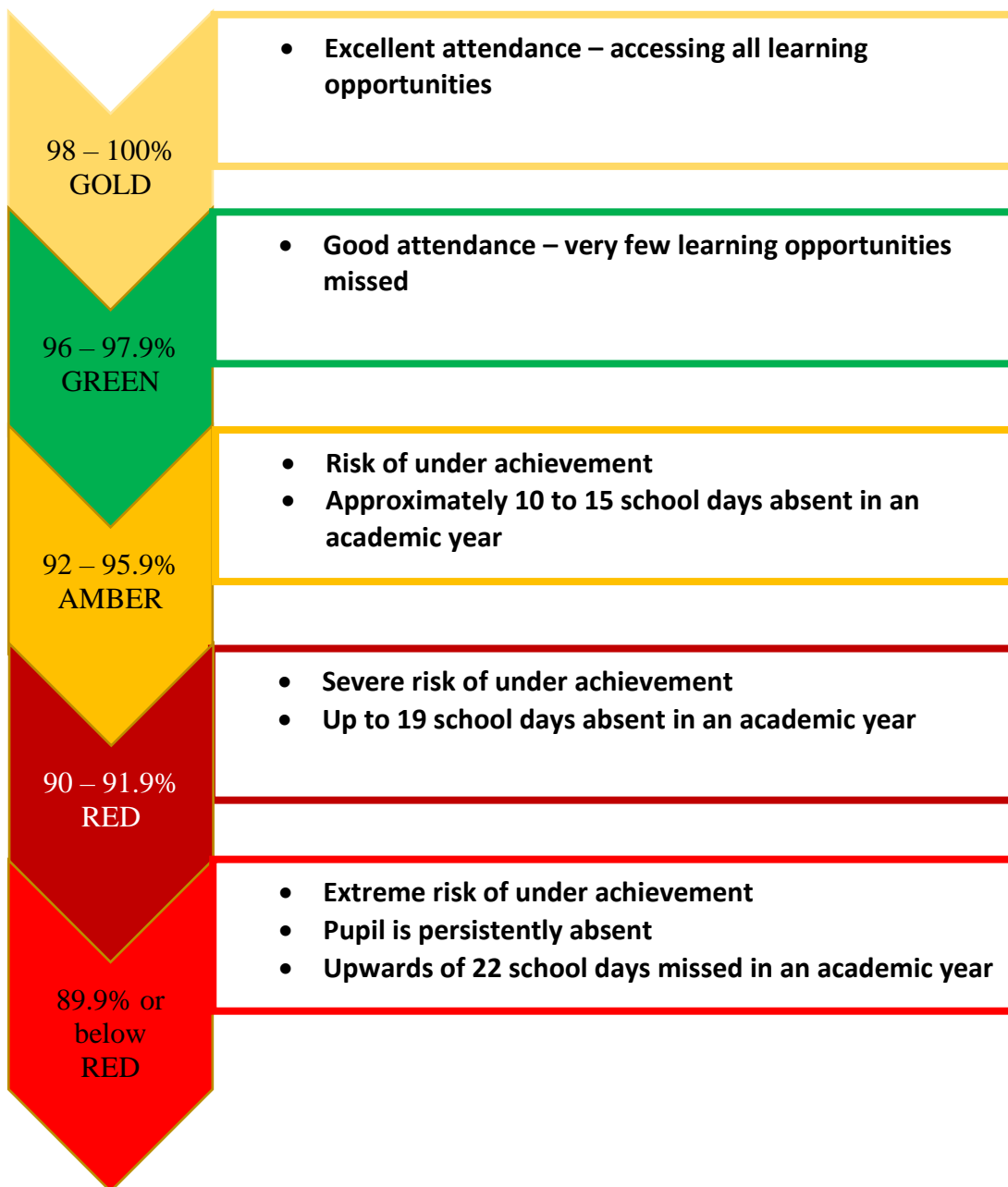
Attendance Policy

2023-2025



EVERY DAY COUNTS!

Children need to attend regularly to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success.





“Attend today and achieve tomorrow.” Anon

The staff and governors of Oakfield Community Primary School believe that all pupils benefit from, and are entitled to, regular and punctual daily attendance at school. This helps ensure that all pupils have the best chance to achieve their full potential. As part of this aspiration, we will monitor and respond to any instances of poor and/or irregular attendance and/or punctuality, and adopt a fair and consistent approach, working closely with parents/guardians and all relevant support agencies to promote this.

Rationale

This policy is as a result of consultation with the wider school community and an analysis of existing attendance data to establish current absence trends. This information is reported to the Department for Education and forms part of our Ofsted inspection. It aims to ensure the enjoyment and achievement for all pupils at Oakfield Community Primary School.

Principles

The Governors, Headteacher, and staff, wish to ensure every child has the opportunity to:

1. Fully participate in school life
2. Enjoy and achieve
3. Feel a valued member of the school community

Aims

- To reduce persistent absence (less than 90% absence) in line with the national average
- To improve attendance to be at least in line with the primary school national average of 96%
- To ensure there is a whole school, graduated response to improving punctuality and attendance
- To identify groups of pupils and individuals whose absence cause concern
- To identify pupils persistently absent from school
- To track pupils' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress
- To identify the main causes of absence and take action to address them

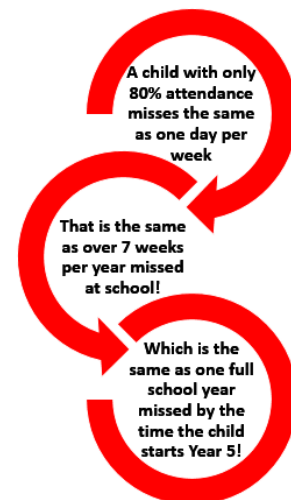
Legal Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, a parent/guardian is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability, and any special educational need a child might have.

This Attendance Policy has been drawn up with reference to the DfE 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' document, updated, March 2021.

From 1st September 2013 the new law by the DfE does not give any entitlement to allow parents to take their child on holiday during term time. A request for holidays in term time is not believed, by the current government, to be an 'exceptional circumstance'. Please refer to www.dfe.gov.uk.

Research shows that even missing a few days from school can have a significant impact on children's learning. Children who miss a substantial amount of school fall behind their peers, and struggle to catch up.



Most of the work they miss is never made up, which can lead to big gaps in their learning.

Poor attendance often starts at primary school, and children who fall into this pattern are likely to underachieve at secondary school. Pupils who miss between 10 and 20% of school (that's 19 to 38 days per year) stand only a 35% chance of achieving five or more good GCSEs, compared to 73% of those who miss fewer than 5% of school days.

Friendships can be affected by persistent absence, too: it can be hard for a child who misses lots of school to form relationships with their classmates.



Poor attendance also reflects badly on Oakfield Community Primary School & Nursery. Ofsted expect all schools to have good attendance rates, and they are marked down in inspections if their absence figures are too high.

Persistent Absence

We take a proactive approach to improving the attendance of individual children whose attendance falls below 90%. Children who have less than 90% attendance are classed by the Department for Education as being persistently absent.

If your child's absence falls below this, we will communicate concerns about poor attendance to parents/guardians and use an escalating approach including phone calls, Class Dojo messages, meetings in school and possibly a referral to the Education Welfare Officer at Halton Borough Council, to offer support to improve your child's attendance.

Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

As a parent, it's your responsibility to make sure your child is at school, unless you're home educating or they have a long-term health problem.

Parents must:

- Contact school on each day of absence to provide a reason for non-attendance before 9.15am
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance

School Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Mrs Makin is the school attendance leader. As the attendance leader of the school, she will ensure:

- Registers are accurately marked and maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- A whole school positive approach to reinforce good attendance, encouraging all pupils to attend and achieve
- Individuals or group attendance targets are set and understood by staff, parents, and pupils



- Staff, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe.

Registration

Parents should ensure pupils are in school for 8.55, for morning registration.

Nursery

Nursery (15 hours) starts at 8.30 am, finishing at 11.30am and then restarting at 12.15pm and finishing at 3.15 pm. Children in Nursery who attend 30 hours will start at 9.00am and finish at 3.00pm.

The school gates open at 8.00 am for breakfast clubs and to all children from 8.45 am to allow a smooth transition from home to school, each day.

Lates

A pupil arriving after that time (but before the close of register at 9.30 am will be marked late (Code L - Late arrival before the register has closed). Pupils arriving after the close of register (9.30am) will be marked U (arrived in school after registration closed).

Afternoon Registration

A pupil arriving after 1.15pm will be marked as late for afternoon registration, 12.30pm for Nursery children.

Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The parent/guardian must provide an explanation for any period of absence from school, and it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to decide whether the absence will be authorised.

School will usually authorise absences where a pupil:

- Is unable to attend school due to illness. This will be coded 'I'. However, school reserves the right to require medical evidence before authorising an absence for illness if there are on-going concerns about a child's attendance.
- Requires emergency dental/medical appointments. Wherever possible routine dental/medical appointments should be made after school or during school holidays. This will be coded 'M'.



- Is absent due to 'special' circumstances. This will be coded as a 'C' code, and an example of this may be to attend a funeral of a close family member, to visit a close family member who is seriously ill or there has been a death or significant trauma in the family.
- Consideration will be given for religious festivals.
- **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence** when the family is travelling for occupational purposes.
- **Offsite educational activities:** this could include music, dance or drama exams, or participation in a sporting event. Approval is at the school's discretion.

Leave of absence for a holiday will only be authorised for children whose parents are in the Armed Forces and are either going or returning from tour including breaks of leave during tours. This will be coded 'H'.

School will not authorise absence for:

- Holidays
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Days out
- Looking after siblings

If the holiday in term time is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'G' (family holiday not agreed), this will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised. The Local Authority Education Welfare Officer will be notified, and a prosecution may be considered.

Where a pupil's absence is above 3 occasions, school will request medical evidence to support the absence - please see below for School Protocol and the graduated approach.



School will:

- Contact parents on first day of a pupil's absence, where no notification has been received from the parent/carer by 9.15 a.m. to ensure the safety of the pupil. This may be in the form of either a phone call, Class dojo message or both. Home visits may be undertaken to ensure the safety and well-being of the child(ren) and parent if no contact has been made. For families of children who are vulnerable or working with Children's Social Care, social workers and family support workers will also be contacted to inform them of the child's unexplained absence.
- Analyse individual pupil attendance data to identify patterns of absence causing concern.
- Follow the graduated approach (see below)
- Invite parents to an Attendance Meeting with Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher and an Education Welfare Officer, where there are major concerns with persistent absence.
- Consider further actions with the Education Welfare Team when school action has failed to bring about an improvement in the pupil's attendance

The following are examples of the support which school can offer to increase a pupil's attendance:

- Implement a range of rewards for pupils/classes with high levels of attendance and those with improving attendance.
- Work proactively to engage with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties which may be affecting school attendance, through parents' evenings and meeting with Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.
- Provide a full and diverse curriculum to engage and motivate pupils to promote emotional well-being.
- Provide appropriate support to pupils to ensure successful reintegration following long term absence.



- Complete a Multi Assessment Plan (MAP) where complex and significant factors requiring a multi-agency response is identified.
- In partnership with the LA, use a full range of strategies, including legal interventions, to support improvement to attendance.
- Make parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on attainment.
- Use Parenting Contracts where exclusion or behavioural issues are affecting a pupil's attendance in school.

Celebrating good attendance and punctuality

we will:

- Reward children with 100% attendance via termly awards and certificates.
- Celebrate whole classes who have achieved high attendance.
- Encourage and praise those children who have made successful efforts to improve their attendance and /or punctuality.

Persons responsible for attendance in Oakfield Community Primary School

- Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher
- Education Welfare Officer
- Family Support Worker
- SENDCo/Inclusion Officer
- School Office
- All other members of staff

Review of Policy

- This policy will be formally reviewed every 2 years or as legislation changes
- This policy will be less formally reviewed on an annual basis
- A copy of this policy is available on the school website
- The policy is given in full to all parents of children who are starting at Oakfield Community Primary School

- The principles of this policy will be raised regularly throughout the year via Class Dojo or the school website
- Any complaints arising from the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Attendance Matters



School Protocol

How attendance at Oakfield Community Primary School will be monitored:

1. Attendance will be checked daily, and an initial phone call/ message sent to parents to ask about their child's absence made. If no response, a home visit may be made.
2. Reason for absence is recorded on CPOMS.
3. Attendance will be checked each half term on CPOMS, and information shared with the Headteacher. All children with 3 + occasions will be sent home a message on Class Dojo informing parents/carers of National Average expectations and that this will be monitored closely regardless of any reason. We will monitor closely attendance over the next month and if there is no significant improvement a meeting will be arranged with them to discuss the impact and offer support.
4. Parents of children who are on course to be classified as a 'persistent absentee' (whose attendance has fallen 3+ occasions)will be asked to provide medical evidence in the event of further absences through illness. See Appendix.
5. Parents/carers of any child who continues to be off school without sufficient medical evidence will be referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer for further investigation and may be prosecuted.



Punctuality - Late Children

Parents of children who are persistently late will be sent a message through Class Dojo explaining the impact of lost learning and the start of the day. Children who are late after the register closes will be recorded as absentees and will follow the process above.

School day starts at 8.45am and learning starts from the minute they step into the classroom, so if a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every-day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.

SEN and Disadvantaged children

Identified pupils with specific medical conditions who have a high level of absence, will be supported by the following strategies:

- Regular monitoring of attendance and absence
- Working with the Local Authority to record such absences as authorised to reflect attendance as good as can be expected for these pupils and the school
- Provide home visits where appropriate
- Recognise that some pupils are not 'available for learning' and work with the LA and other agencies to allocate appropriate provision which may not be within school

Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. We will follow our school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

All schools are required to make the Local Authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period



of not less than 10 school days education (Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12).

This attendance policy is part of a broader suite of safeguarding policies including the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

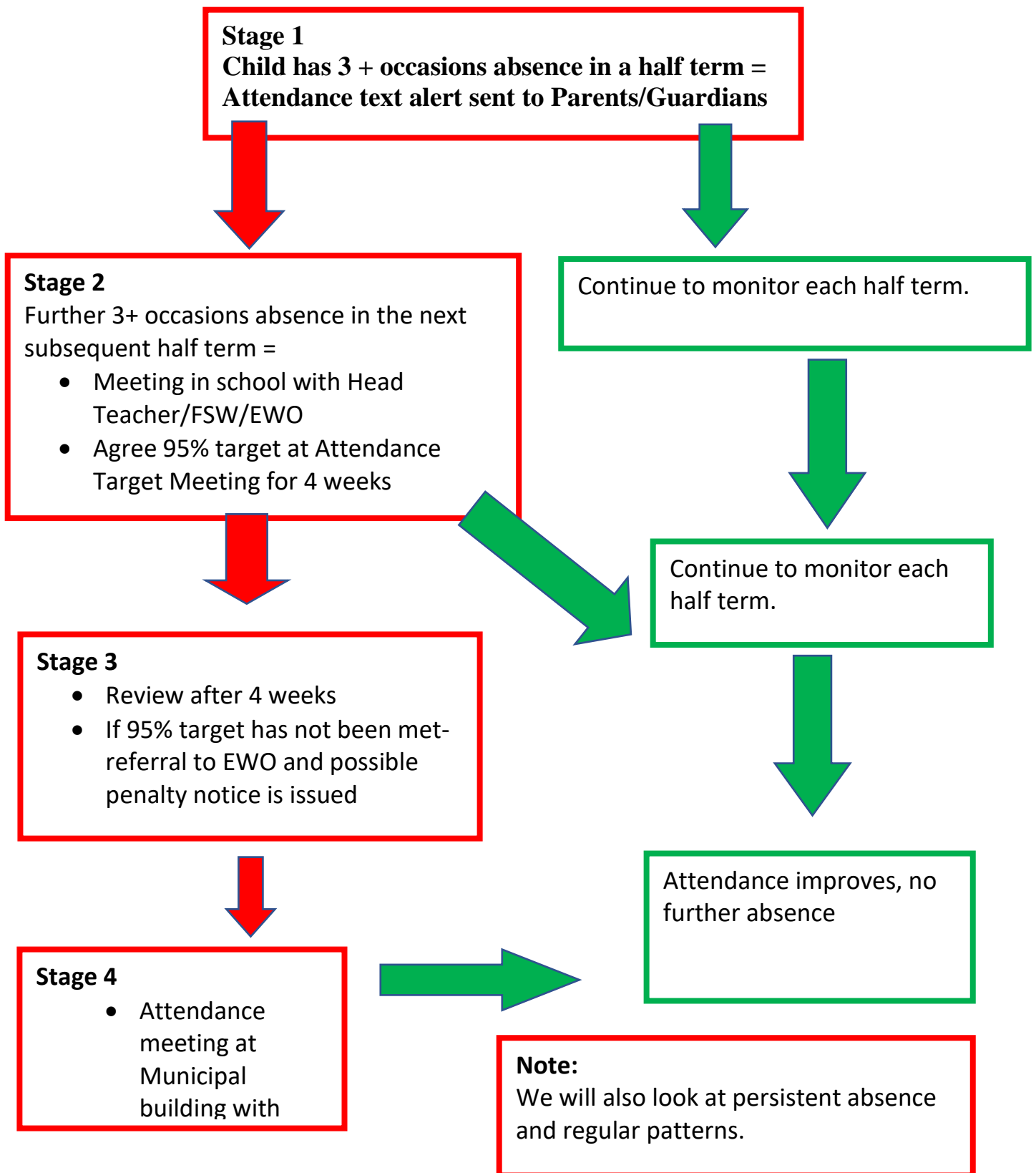
It is vital that your child attends school regularly and aims to be in school each and every day, on time, as everyday counts, and all absences soon add up as follows:

Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons are missed
100%	0 days	0 weeks	0 lessons
95%	10 days	2 weeks	40 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	80 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	160 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	230 lessons

Where attendance has deteriorated rapidly, there are concerning patterns of absence, several unauthorised absences have been recorded, or parents have not responded to concerns raised, a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Officer to consider the need to issue penalty notices, especially where pupils have 10 or more unauthorised absences recorded.

This graduated approach will work alongside the school's approach to reporting and recording absences.

The Graduated Approach





Attendance Target Meeting

Child's name: _____ Class: _____

Target period: _____ to _____

Target set : 95%

- I will talk to my child about how going to school every day will help my child do well and achieve their hopes and dreams.
- I will keep an attendance chart at home to track my child's absences.
- I will recognise my child's efforts and achievements for attending school every day with a suitable reward/ treat /outing etc...
- I will make sure that my child is in bed at an appropriate time and ready in the morning for the start of the day.
- I will arrange for my child to be taken to and from school if I am unable to.
- I will arrange for dental/medical appointments to be taken after school or during school holidays, wherever possible.
- If my child has a slight stomach-ache, headache, or another minor ailment, not a contagious illness, I will send my child into school. I will contact my child's GP or Care in the Chemist.
- If my child cannot avoid missing school, I will contact the school office or Dojo to inform them of my child's absence

We will review progress towards meeting these goals in 4 weeks

Signed:

Head/Deputy head teacher: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date: _____



Appendix B

Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian

Name:

Class:

Medical Evidence Request Letter

Your child's attendance is still a cause for concern and is currently at%. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, you are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance and punctuality of your child at school and your child has a right to an education.

Due to the significant number of absences, you are requested to provide medical evidence to support the reasons for your child's absence. This evidence may take the form of either a letter from your GP or an appointment card, date stamped and signed by staff at your GP's surgery as proof that your child has attended for treatment. It may also include a copy of a prescription or medication that has the child's name and date on it.

If your child is now absent from school and medical evidence has not been provided, their absence will be classed as unauthorised; an accumulation of unauthorised attendance will lead to legal action being taken against you.

If you are having any difficulties, we will work with you and the family to achieve your child's full potential.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Makin

Head Teacher



Further information

How long should my child stay off with an illness?

The NHS gives the following advice on how long children should stay off school if they're unwell.

Coronavirus (symptoms or a positive test) Follow current Government and NHS guidance on isolation and testing. This can differ between [Wales](#), [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Ireland](#).

Vomiting or diarrhoea 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped

[Chickenpox](#) When all the spots have crusted over – usually five days after they first appeared

Impetigo 48 hours after starting prescription medication, or when the patches have crusted over if they aren't taking medication

[Scarlet fever](#) 24 hours after starting antibiotics, or two weeks after the symptoms start, if they aren't taking medication

Hand, foot and mouth As long as your child is feeling unwell – there's no need to wait until the blisters heal

Measles At least four days after the rash develops

Scabies 24 hours after the first treatment

Shingles When the last blister has scabbed – usually 10 to 14 days after they first appear

[Flu](#) Five days



There's no need for your child to stay off school with these conditions, unless they're feeling unwell:

- Slapped cheek
- [Headlice](#)
- [Coughs and colds](#)
- [Threadworms](#)
- Ringworm
- Verrucas (although your child should cover them with a plaster for PE and swimming)

Headteacher Name: Mrs J Makin Signature:

Chair of Governors: Eric Burke Signature:

Policy Schedule

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Details:</u>	<u>Shared:</u>
May 2023	Policy Created	Staff:- May 2023 Gvs:- Summer 2023
December 2023	Graduated Approach Updated	Staff:- January 2024 Gvs:- Spring 2024