


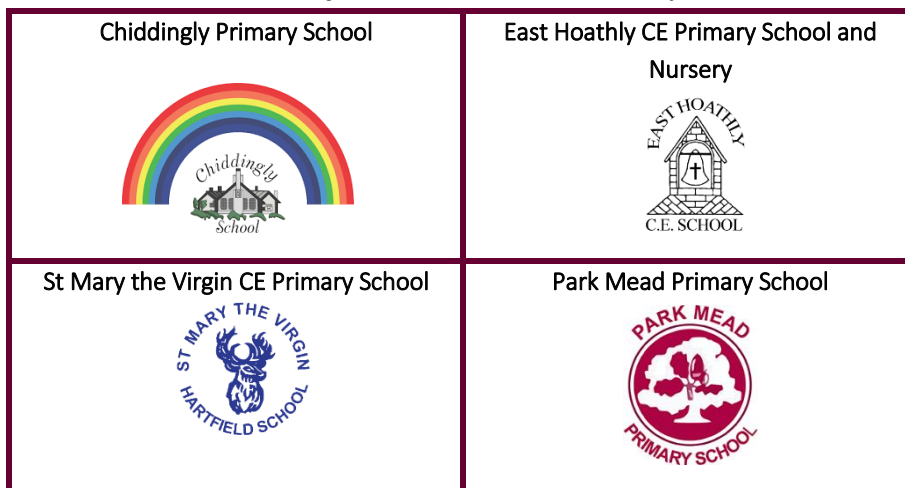
Attendance Policy

Review cycle	1 / 2 / 3 years	Date: January 2023
Approved by	Full Governing Body / Executive Headteacher	
Changes made in this review cycle	January 2023 Updated in line with ESBAS flow charts for request for support Updated information about when a Penalty Notice will be sought. All model letters and flowcharts included to ensure clarity of procedure for monitoring attendance for all stakeholders	
Linked policies	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Prevent Policy	
Signed		Date: January 2023
Position	Executive Headteacher	
Date of next Review	September 2026	

This policy reflects the vision and aims of The Pioneer Federation by:

- ✦ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- ✦ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Click on each School's badge to see the Vision and Values of individual schools



Principles

The Pioneer Federation has adopted the following attendance targets:

An acceptable rate of attendance is 96%, with a target of 97.5%.

Good school attendance is central to raising standards in education and ensuring the safeguarding of children and young people. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and if children are not in school, they are at greater risk of being exposed to, and taking part in, unsafe and risky behaviours.

- ✦ Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.
- ✦ Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.
- ✦ Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.
- ✦ Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- ✦ *parents keeping children off school unnecessarily*
- ✦ *truancy before or during the school day*
- ✦ *absences which have never been properly explained*
- ✦ *children who arrive at school too late to get a mark*

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service from the Local Authority. The Practitioner will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use Legal Interventions on parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- ✦ Pupils are required to arrive at school and enter their classroom between **8:40 and 8:50am**. Any child arriving after **8:50am** will need to be signed in via the office by their parent/carer. A reason for the late arrival will be required.
- ✦ Registers close at **9:00am**. Any child arriving after the closure of the registers will be marked as absent. The authorisation of such absences will follow the regular criteria.
- ✦ Afternoon registration is at 1:00pm.
- ✦ Early pick up of children is usually not authorised but will be dealt with on a case by case basis by the Head of School.
- ✦ Late pick up of children after school will be monitored and, if necessary, referred through safeguarding procedures.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- ✦ Sickness absence should be reported to the school office before 9.30am on the first day of absence and follow up calls made to keep the school informed if the absence is longer than one day.
- ✦ Planned absence during term time that is not medical should be requested in writing using the school form and parent should be issued with the "Request for leave of absence in term time" leaflet issued by ESCC.
- ✦ GP and dental appointments should be made out of school hours unless it is an emergency in which case the child may well not attend school that day for that reason.
- ✦ Hospital appointments which are arranged should be arranged for out of school hours or for the afternoons where possible.
- ✦ Hospital appointments which are given (e.g. for certain clinics which only run at given times) parents should request an appointment that will enable their child to be in school for as much of the day as possible. All children should be in school for the first part of the morning wherever possible.
- ✦ Pioneer Federation schools will not authorise absences for holidays, looking after other children, day trips, family birthdays etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement, weddings etc) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

Monitoring

Before starting our school:

- ✦ Parents are made aware at prospective parents' events, open days and home visits that the school take attendance seriously and about our expectations.
- ✦ Parents will also be made aware that by sending their child to school before they are 5, they are obliged to follow the policies of the school which includes not taking children on holiday in term time.

Absence & lateness from R-Y6:

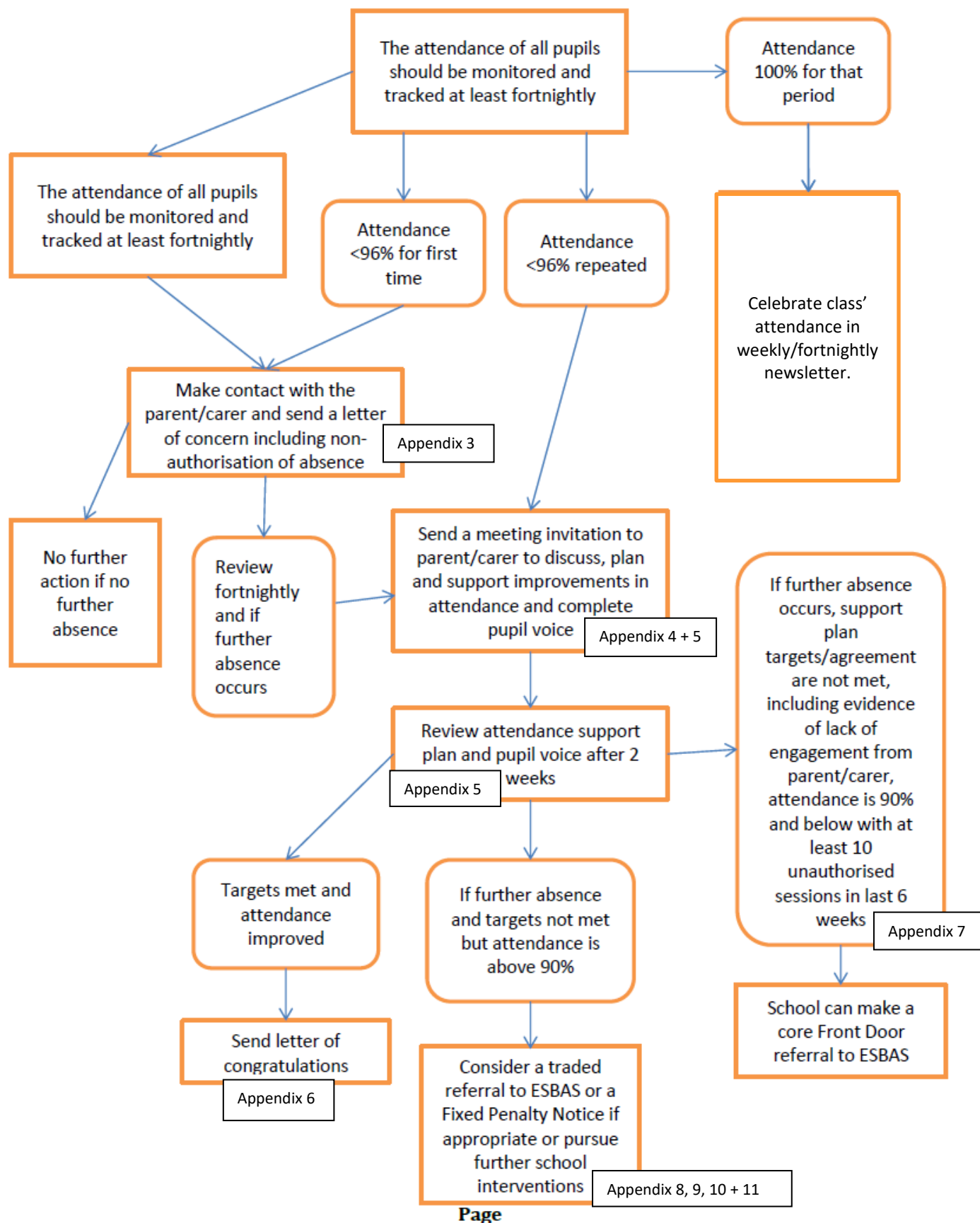
- ✦ Administrative staff at each site will phone all families of absent children daily at 9.30am if there has been no information received as to where the child is.
- ✦ Admin staff will publish the weekly attendance for each class in the weekly newsletter using a colour coded "traffic light" system: 100% - gold; 96.5- 99.9% green; 95-96.4% - amber; <94.9% - red.

Reports will be given to Head of School by admin staff fortnightly for each class and will show:

- ✦ Children with less than 96% attendance and their individual % for the term
- ✦ Children with less than 90% attendance and their individual % for the year
- ✦ Punctuality concerns
- ✦ Patterns or concerns within those individual children's reports for the academic year.

Pioneer Federation schools will report all children's annual attendance to all families at the end of every term (see Appendix 2).

When attendance falls below 96%, Senior Leaders will use the ESBAS flow charts – see below (or Appendix 1 for any children with an EHCP) to ensure attendance is a priority.



In cases where there are concerns over absence, parents will be contacted by one of the following:

- ✦ Class Teacher
- ✦ Inclusion Manager
- ✦ Head of School or Executive Headteacher
- ✦ Involvement of ESBAS (East Sussex Behaviour and Attendance Service at the Local Authority)

Governing Body

- ✦ Ensuring that regular attendance figures are made to the LA and DfE
- ✦ Requesting information from the Senior Leaders/Exec Head on any aspect of the school, including attendance
- ✦ Identify and attend relevant training regarding attendance matters
- ✦ Sit on the Governor’s Attendance Board to discuss issues with individual families.

Head of School

- ✦ Positively promoting good attendance within the school
- ✦ Overseeing the implementation of attendance policy and procedure
- ✦ Ensuring the collection of accurate statistical data
- ✦ Developing efficient monitoring and evaluation systems
- ✦ Forming positive links with ESBAS
- ✦ Reporting to Governing Body
- ✦ Meet with parents of children causing concern.

SENCO

- ✦ Liaise with SLT whether there is any additional SEND support that is needed to encourage attendance.

Class Teachers

- ✦ Accurate recording of the daily electronic registration list
- ✦ Communicating concerns to the Senior Leadership Team or DSL as appropriate
- ✦ Promoting good attendance and punctuality within the class
- ✦ Maintaining positive links with parents whilst communicating concerns
- ✦ Ensuring all notes and messages received are sent to the Admin team
- ✦ Share attendance data with parents at every Parent Consultation evening.

Administrative staff

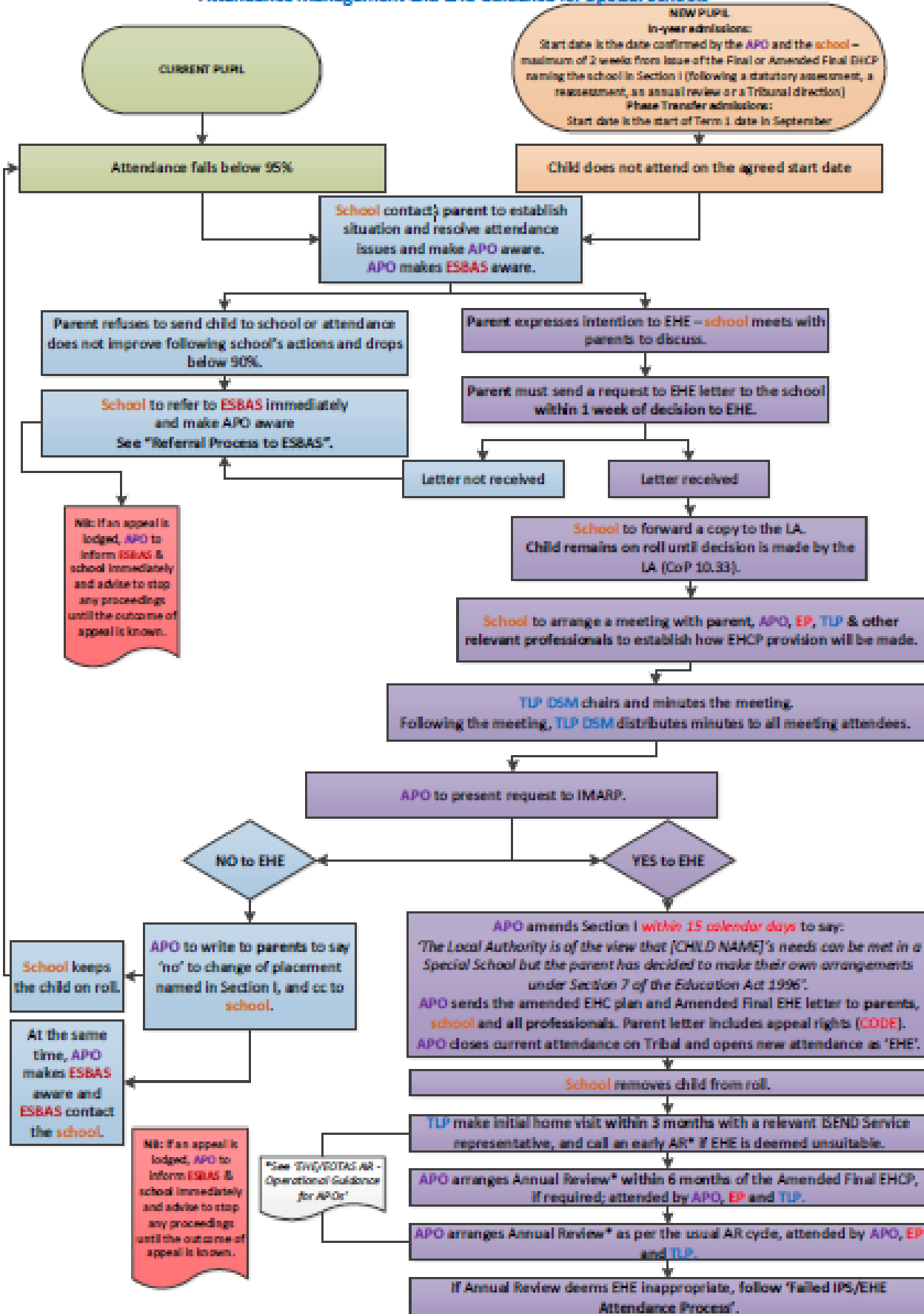
- ✦ Maintaining electronic registration system
- ✦ Receiving and recording telephone communication from parents.
- ✦ Assisting in the collection of data
- ✦ On and Off rolling procedures
- ✦ Dealing with casual admissions
- ✦ Maintaining pupil and staff attendance information using SMS.

All of the above is present in the job descriptions for these posts respectively (and in the case of governors, in their handbook).

Registration codes			
Present	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Administrative codes
/ - present AM	C- other authorised absence	G – unauthorised holiday	X – not required to attend due to non-compulsory school age
\ - present PM	E- exclusion	N – reason unknown	Y – unable to attend, exceptional circumstances
L – late during registration	H – authorised holiday	O – unauthorised reason	Z – not on roll
B – Off site activity	I – illness	U – late after registration closed	# - planned closure
D – dual registration	M – medical appointment		
P – sporting activity	R – religious observance		
J – interview	S – study leave		
V – educational visit	T – traveller absence		
W – work experience			

Appendix 1: ESBAS Flowchart for managing attendance of pupils with EHCPs

Attendance Management and EHE Guidance for Special Schools



Appendix 2: Whole school termly letter of attendance

[insert date]

Dear Parents/carers of [name's]

Termly attendance information for Parents

As you may be aware, schools have a duty of care with regard to pupils’ attendance at school. We want all children in our school to create good habits, maintain secure relationships with friends and staff, build self-esteem and ensure they are fulfilling their potential. This duty of care means that we are required to monitor and track pupils’ attendance regularly, as well as support attendance where there are concerns. The attendance policy can be found on the school website [here](#) and guidance for school attendance on the ESCC website [here](#).

Low attendance impacts hugely on attainment. When children miss days of school, they miss steps in sequences of carefully planned lessons. Children often find it difficult to catch up with missed learning, resulting in gaps in their knowledge.




[name’s] current attendance is [percentage] [?/???] sessions.

We acknowledge that each family’s circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child. We also recognise that there are usually cases of genuine illness which prevents children from being at school. Our pupils’ welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

If you would like to discuss your child’s attendance, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

Kind regards,

Head of School

WHAT IS GOOD ATTENDANCE?					
190 days		180 days		161 days	
100%		94%		85%	
180 days		163 days		143 days	
95%		86%		75%	
Good		Worrying		Serious Concern	
					
Only 1-2 day missed per term		Between 3-8 days missed per term		More than 9 days missed per term	

NB. AM = 1 session PM 1 session

Appendix 3: Letter of concern, including any non-authorized absences.

[insert date]

Dear Parents/carers of [name's]

Attendance below 96%

As you will be aware, good school attendance is vital in helping children to create good habits, maintain secure relationships with friends and staff, build self-esteem and ensure they are fulfilling their potential. Our duty of care to all children means that we are required to monitor and track pupils' attendance regularly, as well as support attendance where there are concerns.

We are writing to inform you that your child's attendance is below 96%. There have also been [insert specific details of any unauthorised or other concerning attendance information].

Low attendance impacts hugely on attainment. When children miss days of school, they miss steps in sequences of carefully planned lessons. Children often find it difficult to catch up with missed learning, resulting in gaps in their knowledge.

[name's] current attendance is [percentage] [?/???] sessions.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child. We also recognise that there are usually cases of genuine illness which prevents children from being at school. However, attendance below 96%, with no improvement, is a concern to us and one we would like you to be aware of.

We will be monitoring attendance again in two weeks' time and would expect to see your child(s)' attendance be 100% during this period. We will write to you again on [insert date] to update you.

In the meantime, if you would like to discuss your child's attendance, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Head of School

[Insert date]

Dear Parents/carers of [name's]

Attendance Meeting Invite on [insert date and time]

There are ongoing concerns regarding [insert pupil(s)' name] level of attendance at school. Despite this having previously been brought to your attention, there has been no improvement and, to date, he/she has had [insert details of specific attendance concerns here]

Under the Education Act 1996, parents have a duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and failure to do so is therefore an offence.

You are therefore invited to attend the above meeting where we can discuss and agree targets in an attempt to support you in fulfilling your legal responsibility to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

If you are unable to attend this meeting you should contact me on the above number and arrangements can be made to agree a more suitable date and time for you if this assists.

Failure to attend this meeting, without a valid reason, may be used as evidence if legal intervention were to be considered should [insert pupil(s)' name] attendance not improve.

We look forward to seeing you on [insert date and time]

Yours sincerely

Head of School

Appendix 5: Individual Attendance Improvement Plan



CYP name:	Click here to enter text.	Date of birth:	Click here to enter text.	LAC?	N/A
School name:	Click here to enter text.	Year group:	Click here to enter text.	GRT	N/A
Ethnicity	Choose an item.	Class Teacher/Form	Click here to enter text.	EHCP?	N/A
Parent / Carer	Click here to enter text.	Tutor:	Click here to enter text.	CP / CIN?	N/A
		Contact details	Click here to enter text.		

Attendance at date of form completion: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Perceived Reasons for Low / non-attendance post Covid-19 (select from list or enter your own);

		Order of significance
Home and Family Factors		
CYP Factors		

Planned Support (select from list or enter your own);

Provision / Strategy	Who?	When?	Date of Review

Review Point 1: [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Review Summary
Attendance at date of review: Click here to enter text.
Has the CYP's attendance improved? Choose an item.
Summary of progress:
Any additional intervention / strategies required;
Choose an item.
Choose an item.
Next Steps

No further action required	Further review required	Escalate to Enhanced Approach	ISEND Referral
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Review Point 2

Date of Review: Click or tap to enter a date.

Review Summary			
Attendance at date of review: Click here to enter text. Has the CYP's attendance improved? Choose an item.			
Summary of progress:			
Any additional intervention / strategies required;			
Choose an item.			
Choose an item.			
Next Steps			
No further action required	Further review required	Escalate to Enhanced Approach	ISEND Referral
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Review Point 3

Date of Review: Click or tap to enter a date.

Review Summary			
Attendance at date of review: Click here to enter text. Has the CYP's attendance improved? Choose an item.			
Summary of progress:			
Any additional intervention / strategies required;			
Choose an item.			
Choose an item.			
Next Steps			
No further action required	Further review required	Escalate to Enhanced Approach	ISEND Referral
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 6: Letter of thanks and congratulations

[Insert Date]

Dear Parents/carers of [name's]

Having reviewed [Student's Name] attendance, I am writing to inform you that during the last period, your child's attendance improved and has reached a satisfactory level. We would like to thank you for your support in ensuring that attendance continues to be a priority to allow your child to get the most out of their education and fulfil their potential.

We must inform you that your child's attendance percentage overall will have been affected by previous absences. I would advise that the current level of attendance needs to be maintained and your child's attendance will continue to be monitored by the school.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Head of School

Appendix 7: Lack of engagement letter or extended review period letter

[Insert date]

Dear Parents/carers of [name]

Warning of possible issue of penalty notice

You were invited by letter dated [date] to attend a meeting on [date]. This was to give you an opportunity to discuss any difficulties you may be experiencing in fulfilling your legal responsibility with regard to school attendance and to discuss how we could support you in this. You did not attend the meeting and no response was received to our invitation.

If you wish for a meeting to be re-scheduled, please contact me on the above number to rearrange at a mutually convenient date and time.

I confirm that I shall monitor [Student's Name] attendance and review this periodically.

This letter is a warning that should [student's name] accrue 10 sessions of unauthorised absence during the next 10 school week period we will be requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.

If you have any queries, please contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely

Head of School

[Insert date]

Dear Parents/carers of [name]

Extended review period - Warning of possible issue of penalty notice

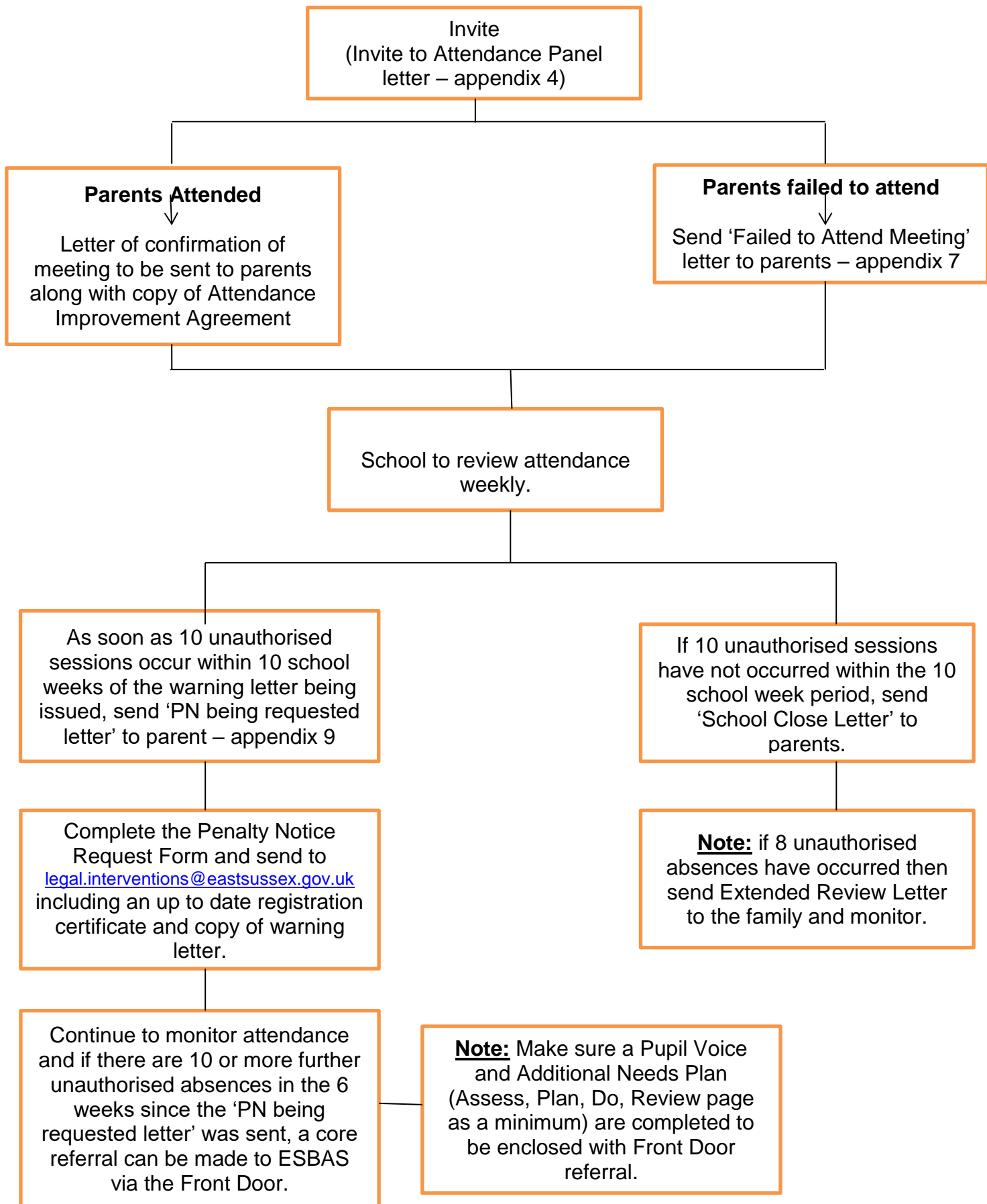
Having reviewed [Student's Name] attendance, I am writing to inform you that during the last period, your child's attendance continues to be a concern as s/he has had X number of unauthorised absences within the last 10 school weeks. Therefore, I am extending the review period for a further 3 weeks.

Should [Student's Name] accrue a further X unauthorised absences within this extended 3 school week period, we will be requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.

If you have any questions, please ensure that you contact us as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Head of School



Appendix 9: Attendance Improvement Agreement

ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT	
[insert school name]	
Date and time of meeting:	
Present at meeting:	
Pupil's Name:	
Date of Birth:	
Year group:	
<u>Parent/Carers (1)</u> Name Date of Birth Address	
<u>Parent/Carers (2)</u> Name Date of Birth Address (if different from above)	
<u>Absent Parent/Carer</u> Name Date of Birth Address	
Sibling Details:	
% Attendance and unauthorised sessions on invite	
Other Agencies involved with family	

Agreements made following discussion:

The SCHOOL will:

- (a) Not authorise illness without medical evidence.
- (b) Set an attendance % punctuality target of 100% to be reviewed on a weekly basis by the school.

The pupil's attendance will therefore initially be reviewed on:

Date: _____

The PARENT/S will:

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

The PUPIL will:

- (a)
- (b)

WARNING:

I/We understand that should [name] accrue a further 10 unauthorised absences over the next 10 school week period then the Education Support Behaviour & Attendance Service will be requested to issue a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice is issued to each parent; this is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days, but will increase to £120 if paid after this period. If this is not paid within 28 days, it will result in legal action.

Signed: _____ Parent/Carer

Signed: _____ Parent/Carer

Signed: _____ School (1)

Signed: _____ School (2)

Dated: _____

Appendix 10 – PN to be requested letter

[Insert date]

Dear Parents/Carers of [name]

Warning of issue of penalty notice

I am writing further to the letter dated [date] where you were informed that [student's name] attendance would be monitored and should s/he accrue 10 or more unauthorised absences within the next 10 school week period a penalty notice would be issued. I am writing to inform you that [student's name] has accrued [number] unauthorised absences during the review period as follows:-

[List dates of unauthorised absences]

The following support has been offered to [student's name] but their attendance is still a cause for concern:-

[List all support strategies offered to date]

If you have medical evidence to support the absence for any of the dates listed above, please provide this as a matter of urgency.

[Student's name] attendance will continue to be monitored and any further unauthorised absences may result in a referral to the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service (ESBAS).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head of School

*parent includes a step-parent or other carer and can include an absent parent	Parent 1	Parent 2
Parent/Carer Full Name:		
Address:		

Pupil Details

Pupil Name:	Year:
School:	
Date of Birth:	

Absence Details

Please complete one of the following sections:-

<u>Holiday in Term Time</u>	<u>Unauthorised Absence and/or Lates</u>
Date of Decision Letter:	Date of Warning Letter:
Number of unauthorised sessions:	Number of unauthorised sessions:
Period (dates) from: to	Period (dates) from: to
MINIMUM 10 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS (5 DAYS)	MINIMUM 10 SESSIONS OVER A 10 SCHOOL WEEK PERIOD FOLLOWING ISSUE OF WARNING LETTER

Evidence Attached

<u>Holiday in Term Time</u>	<u>Unauthorised Absence and/or Lates</u>
Withdrawal from Learning Form: <input type="checkbox"/>	Warning Letter(s): <input type="checkbox"/>
Unauthorised decision letter sent to parent: <input type="checkbox"/>	Registration Certificate: <input type="checkbox"/>
Registration Certificate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of support offered/provided: <input type="checkbox"/>
Any additional evidence: <input type="checkbox"/> Please specify:	Other, please specify:

Name:

Date:

Please email this form and all relevant paperwork to legal.interventions@eastsussex.gov.uk