

Attendance Policy

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AUTHOR/ORIGINATOR:	Sarah Simmons
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Outstanding Achievement for All

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Here at Queen's Park Academy we believe it is of vital importance that our students have good attendance at school. This is a successful Academy and all students play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to be proud to belong and to achieve of their best. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and should be at Queen's Park Academy, on time, every day the Academy is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly, and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Regular attendance at school is of critical importance to a child's education. Evidence tells us that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment¹. Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts the learning of others in the same teaching groups by disrupting classroom routines. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at Queen's Park Academy is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from Queen's Park Academy without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Aims

An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. To ensure all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand these expectations, and how they apply at Queen's Park Academy this policy sets out:

- Section 1: the practical procedures to be followed at Queen's Park Academy in relation to attendance
- Section 2: the measures in place at Queen's Park Academy to promote regular attendance by its registered pupils
- Section 3: the responsibilities of particular members of staff in relation to attendance
- Section 4: the action to be taken by staff if a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly
- Section 5: the school's strategy for addressing any specific concerns identified in relation to attendance

Section 1: Practical Procedures

Appendix 1 sets out the practical procedures to be followed at Queen's Park Academy in relation to attendance are as follows:

There are clear links from this policy to our safeguarding and child protection duties as set out KCSIE.

The Admissions Register (or "school roll")

1. As a school, we are responsible for keeping the Admissions Register up to date. This contains specific personal details of every pupil along with the date of admission or readmission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the last school attended.
2. We also hold emergency contact numbers for each pupil. It is our policy to hold more than one such number, so that we have options to make contact with a responsible adult should the need arise.
3. A pupil's name can only be lawfully deleted from the admissions register in very limited circumstances.

The Attendance Register

4. The register will be taken at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion, the school will record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

¹ [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

5. These records will be kept electronically to ensure accuracy and the timely sharing and analysis of information – all of which is critical to ensure good attendance.

Punctuality and Regular Attendance

6. The School day starts at 8.45am and finishes at 3.15pm.

Lateness

7. If a pupil arrives in the Academy after 9.15 am, this will be recorded and will contribute towards their overall attendance percentage. All lateness will be addressed by the Attendance and Inclusion Leaders.

Absence

8. Parents² must contact the school when their child is absent to explain that absence. This can be done as follows, by calling 01202 526079 (option 1), by email to gpa@queenspark-academy.co.uk, giving the following details:
 - full name of pupil;
 - pupil's Year group or Form;
 - Full name of person reporting absence and relation to child;
 - Reason for absence.
9. Where a reason for the absence is not received by 9.15 on the day of the absence, the school will contact the parents on the same day by 10am to understand the reason for the absence.
10. Where further unexplained absences occur, the school will make further contact with the parent (including foster parents and/ or social workers where appropriate). This should be with the aim of understanding **why** the absence has occurred, and **when** the pupil will return.
11. The correct absence code will be inputted into the Attendance Register as soon as the reason is ascertained.
12. Granting a leave of absence will only be made in exceptional circumstances. Each application will be considered individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted it is for the Principal to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. It is extremely unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. To request a leave of absence please follow the procedures in Appendix 1.

Section 2: Promoting Regular Attendance

This section sets out the measures in place at Queen's Park Academy to **promote** regular attendance by its registered pupils.

100% - 98% Attendance – Excellent

As well as being an excellent attender, your child will almost certainly achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education or the world of work

- Certificates and Rewards for recognising this achievement

97% - 96% Attendance - Good

² Throughout this document, the terms 'parent' and 'parents' are interchangeable and apply equally to 'parents and carers' and includes foster parents and social workers where relevant.

Your child is likely to achieve their grades that will give them real opportunities to continue their studies or in the world of work.

- Teachers will monitor these pupils with support from Heads of Year. Some may have support from Inclusion & Attendance Leads where necessary.

95% - 92% Attendance – Unsatisfactory

Pupils are below the national government threshold of 96%. Your child will miss up to 18 days each school year and this will make it difficult for them to achieve their potential.

- Incentives / reward systems to increase attendance to target level of 96% or above
- Letter to parents encouraging Young People to improve their attendance towards the target of 96% or above
- Involvement from Vice Principal, Family Support Worker and possibly Inclusion and attendance Leads.
- School contracts may be brought in to encourage and improve school attendance

92%- 85% Attendance - Concern

Parents / Carers may face a fixed penalty notice (fine) as your child's attendance is below 90% and they are 'Persistent Absentees'. Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be difficult for them to keep up with work completed in lessons.

- Meetings with parents and young people to discuss reasons for poor attendance.
- Unscheduled home visits.
- Interventions / rewards systems designed to encourage pupils to want to be in lessons.
- Letter to parents encouraging improvement in attendance, reminding that attendance levels directly relate to achievement and informing them that if attendance does not improve, there is likely to be a referral to Inclusion Leads / Family Support Worker.
- School contracts may be brought in to encourage and improve school attendance.

85% - 0% Attendance - Serious Concern

Parents / Carers may face a fixed penalty notice (fine) as your child's attendance is significantly below 90% and they are 'Persistent Absentees'. Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be difficult for them to keep up with work completed in lessons.

- School Inclusion / Attendance Lead to work alongside Principal in regards to issue fixed penalty notices and likely to prosecute through the courts.
- Parents / Guardians to attend meeting in school with School Attendance/ Inclusion Lead / Principal to try to resolve.
- Persistent Absentees will receive unscheduled or scheduled home visits from Attendance / Inclusion Lead / Family support Work / Principal; some may have involvement with Social Care.
- School contracts may be brought in to encourage and improve school attendance.

Promoting and incentivising

13. The School will:

- a) Treat all pupils and parents with dignity. Our staff will always seek to model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance.
- b) Regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- c) Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.

- d) Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- e) Make the necessary statutory data returns to the local authority.
- f) Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

Data Strategy

14. The School understands that as poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early detection is crucial. We will therefore undertake regular data analysis to:
 - both identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils and/ or pupil cohorts that need it;
 - look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them.
15. The School will typically carry out the following analysis:
 - a) Monitoring and analysing weekly attendance (including punctuality) patterns and trends, including whether there are particular issues for some children on certain days;
 - b) Patterns of attendance within sessions, to ensure that all pupils are attending all timetabled lessons
 - c) Half-termly, termly and full-year data analysis of patterns and trends, including analysis of pupils and cohorts, identifying patterns in use of certain codes, days where attendance is typically poor and (where appropriate) subjects with low lesson attendance
 - d) Benchmarking attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against Trust-level, local, regional and national data.
16. We will use this analysis to identify pupils who need support so that we can focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those students and to identify any common themes to support improvement planning. We will use the data to inform us regarding the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented, to evaluate approaches or inform action. We will also provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and to school leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).

Absence reduction strategy

17. We will devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data. This may, for example, include pupils in a year group with higher-than-average absence or for specific groups of students.
18. Data and reports will be shared with the Local Governing Body. (Academy Advisory Committee)
19. As part of promoting regular attendance the school will consider the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (see paragraph 30).

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

20. The School recognises that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as they are for any other pupil.
 - a) That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, we will be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This will include:
 - b) Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed.
 - c) Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.

- d) Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, the school will work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Please see the School's SEN policy for further details on SEN support.
 - e) Establishing strategies for removing the in-school barriers pupils may face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
 - f) Ensuring joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance, recognising that such arrangements can be for a limited time only.
 - g) Ensuring data is regularly monitored for these groups including at SLT and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.
21. Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. Please see the School's policy on supporting pupils with medical conditions at school for further information.
22. In all cases, the school will be sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents; and talk to pupils and parents and understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance to develop individual approaches that meet an individual pupil's specific needs.

Part-time timetables

23. All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. Please note that a part-time cannot be used as a reasonable adjustment for SEND, unless this is on a temporary basis and as advised by an external agency e.g., Educational Psychologist.
24. A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. Formal arrangements will also be put in place for regularly reviewing it (minimum monthly) with the pupil and their parents. 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 will treat such absence as authorised. We will of course consider how best to support learning when a child is working on a part time timetable.

Section 3: Particular Responsibilities

This section outlines responsibilities of particular members of staff in relation to attendance.

Parents/carers/guardians should:

- See themselves and the school in partnership with respect to pupils' attendance.
- Understand they have the greatest influence and responsibility with regards to attendance.
- Communicate and reinforce to pupils the correlation between attendance and achievement.
- Telephone the School Office to report an absence on the first day a pupil is absent from school and update the same way each day of absence.
- When medical appointments cannot be made out of school hours, communicate with the school any upcoming medical appointments or absences that the student will have. Parents must provide written explanation for all Young People's absences from Academy. Any unexplained absences will be marked as unauthorised.

- Ensure that the Academy has the correct and current contact details for parents/carers in case of emergency situations. We cannot release a pupil from the Academy without permission from a parent.
- Communicate any concerns they may have that could be affecting their child's attendance to school.
- Attend any meetings that the school has arranged with regards to attendance.
- Ensure that Young People arrive in the Academy to register at 8.55am every term day.
- Support the Academy in motivating all pupils to achieve at least 96% attendance.
- Avoid taking pupils out of the Academy during term time except in special circumstances with permission from the Principal.

Pupils should:

- Understand that good attendance leads to the best chance of attaining and building a sound foundation for future success.
- Arrive at school on time every day (no later than 8.50 am)
- Ensure that they are personally supporting themselves to attend school to the best of their ability by:
- Feeling safe & secure
- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle – diet and adequate sleep
- Participating in spiritual, cultural and social development
- Feeling empowered and taking responsibility

Queen's Park Academy should:

- Remind parents/carers/guardians of the importance of ensuring their child's regular, uninterrupted school attendance.
- Update parents/carers/guardians on attendance regularly.
- Communicate regularly with parents/carers/guardians with regard attendance issues.
- Organise meetings, home visits and external meetings with families.
- Use legal means to enforce an improvement in attendance.
- Monitor closely those students with attendance percentages that cause concern, specifically those who are regularly below 96%.
- Offer additional support for students with more challenging attendance difficulties.
- Complete a CME (Child Missing in Education) form after any prolonged absence from school and refer to the local authority.
- Place all pupils with more challenging attendance on a Pastoral Support Plan and ensure we look for possible support and interventions to improve school attendance.
- Support pupils through additional provision when attendance issues are hindering inclusion. This will be through support groups in school, reduced timetables, additional rewards or different academic routes being offered.
- Ensure that all contact details are up-to-date for the students' families and emergency contact numbers.
- Work alongside the Attendance and Inclusion Leads to ensure that teachers are competing registers and also to complete any relevant register checks and class checks.

The Attendance and Inclusion Leaders should:

- Ensure that the whole school community is aware of this policy and works towards improving attendance using the available means.
- Ensure that staff are clear about their responsibility to keep registers up to date at all times and also be vigilant in reporting concerns over attendance
- Monitor attendance for all year groups and communicate these figures with the Vice Principal and Inclusion Lead. This will also include figures such as PA rates, yearly attendance, punctuality and individual pupil attendance.
- Support all pupils in school with their attendance, particularly the most vulnerable groups including those with mental health diagnoses, long term absentees due to illness, Pupil Premium students, Looked After Children, those on Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) etc.
- Aim for a year group attendance of 96%.
- Check weekly attendance report – decide on and action next steps and interventions for key pupils.
- Make regular contact (text/phone/letter/email/meetings) with parents for both positive reinforcement and for concerns relating to attendance.
- Carry out home visits when appropriate.
- To ensure parents/carers/guardians understand the importance of good attendance.

- To use, if necessary, any legal means to ensure parents/carers get their child(ren) to attend school regularly.
- To complete referrals to the SAW or any other external services to support an improvement in attendance.
- Monitor Integris and make adjustments to ensure accurate data such as medical appointments and absences.
- Communicate absences, lates and unauthorised absences to the Vice Principal on a daily basis.
- Provide regular attendance information
- Contact home to chase reasons for non-attendance and arrange meetings relating to attendance.

The Teaching Staff should:

- Be a good role model for pupils, by being punctual and prepared.
- Give positive praise for pupils for arriving on time.
- Keep an accurate register.
- Take prompt action where children are late or absent without explanation.

Section 4: Specific Action for Failure to Attend Regularly

This section sets out the action to be taken by staff if a registered pupil fails to attend the school regularly.

25. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, it is important that the best placed person in the school works with and supports the family. Wherever possible, we will keep this person consistent.
26. Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic the school will draw on these relationships and listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing. In doing so, the school will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support.
27. In the first instance, the school will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
28. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, we endeavour to work together with all partners to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need. As a minimum, this will include meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school, agreeing actions or interventions to address them and keeping those actions under regular review in discussion with pupils and families. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. For example, School Inclusion Services, SEND LA services, Children's Social Care, Targeted Response, MHST etc. Where absence intensifies, so will the support provided, which will require us to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners, as follows:
 - If the needs and barriers are individual to the pupil this may include provision of mentoring, 1-2-1 tuition, out of hours learning, or where appropriate an education, health and care plan or alternative provision.
 - Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary targeted support assessment.
 - Where engagement in support is proving challenging, the school will hold more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand). This is likely to be led by the senior leader responsible for attendance and may include the school's point of contact in the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team. The aim of these meetings will be to clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but will also be an opportunity to continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.
 - Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with the school will work with the local authority to:
 - Put formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or an education supervision order.
 - Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).

- Issue a fixed penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour.
- Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

29. In all cases, the school will monitor the impact of any intervention(s) and make adjustments where necessary in discussion with the pupil, parents and any other partners involved as part of any whole family plan or team around the family. Where interventions are failing, the school will work together with all parties to identify the reasons why and either adjust or change the approach.

30. Requests for Leave of Absence in Term Time.

If pupils are to reach their potential, they need to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Regular, uninterrupted school attendance is a key factor in helping students reach their potential. Every effort should always be made to avoid disruption to a pupil's education.

Any request should be made prior to the leave of absence and should be submitted to the school in writing using the school email – qpa@queenspark-academy.co.uk Parents/Carers may be asked to provide additional information/evidence or meet with the school to discuss the circumstances.

Leave of absence taken in term time and issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice to parents.

Following amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into effect 1st September 2013, Principals are only allowed to grant leave of absence from school in exceptional circumstances. The decision as to whether any request is considered as 'exceptional circumstances' rests solely with the Principal. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short; 'unavoidable' should be taken to mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

In considering whether or not to authorise a request for exceptional leave of absence in term time, the Principal will look at each individual case and only grant authorisation if the circumstances are truly exceptional.

No leave of absence should be agreed unless the Principal is satisfied that there are such exceptional circumstances. The school should make the parents aware of this possibility as far as possible and this possibility should also clearly be stated in the school's attendance policy and in other information the school provides for parents such as the school's handbook provided to parents, school website, newsletters, open day and newstarter information packs. The decision should be communicated to the parent / carer as soon as is reasonably possible.

When a leave of absence is taken and the school has not authorised the absence, the school may request that the Local Authority issues a Penalty Notice. Before requesting this, the school must ensure that, as far as possible, the parent was aware that this may occur. Requests for Penalty Notices should be made by the school and signed by the Principal or nominated Deputy as soon as possible after the holiday is taken. This should be no longer than 15 school days following the student's return.

Requests for Fixed Penalty Notices in relation to unauthorised leave of absence

A Penalty Notice may be issued:

- Where a parent has taken the pupil on a leave of absence during term-time without the school's authorisation and there are unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days).
- If a second leave of absence is taken during term-time within any 12 month period without the school's authorisation and there are unauthorised absences of at least 2 sessions (1 school day).
- Where the school has agreed to a specific number of sessions of leave during term-time due to exceptional circumstances, and any additional sessions of unauthorised leave have been taken outside of the agreed period.

Requests for Penalty Notices should be made by the school and signed by the Principal or nominated Deputy using the 'Unauthorised leave in term time Fixed Penalty Notice Request' template no longer than 15 school days following the pupil's return.

When submitting an 'Unauthorised Leave in Term Time Fixed Penalty Notice Request', schools should also provide the following:

- Copy of the parent's request and school's response (if no request was received, schools must provide evidence to support that the absence was due to an unauthorised leave of absence)
- An attendance printout for the pupil which includes the period of unauthorised leave of absence.
- Up to date contact details for parents if not provided on the parental request form.
- Details of siblings who also had an unauthorised leave of absence. Schools are responsible for completing sibling checks.

AAC Responsibilities:

31. The AAC recognises the importance of school attendance and will:
 - promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
 - Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
 - Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
 - Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
32. The AAC will also ensure:
 - that the attendance policy and its contents are generally made known within the school and to parents of registered pupils at the school, and
 - that steps are taken at least once in every school year to bring the attendance policy to the attention of all those parents and pupils and all persons who work at the school (whether or not for payment).

Daily Attendance Flowchart

7.30am – 8.30am

Office Staff check messages & record absences on Integris.

8.35am Gate Opens.



8.45am

Gate shuts. Attendance staff mark pupils arriving after 8.50am as late, using 'L' code. All pupils to enter school through the office. Once gate is unmanned, Office Staff to enquire as to reason for lateness as pupils arrive. Office inform Attendance Lead who then records this on Integris using the 'L' code and documents reason and arrival time.

Attendance Lead to check the registers in class using live Integris.



8.50am

Attendance staff to check the class registers using Integris.

Attendance staff check in each class for late arrivals.



9.15am

Attendance staff to telephone carers of pupils who are absent without reason and leave a message when contact is unsuccessful. Record any arrivals after this time as 'U' on Integris and document reason and arrival time.



9.30am

Attendance staff inform Safeguarding Leads of absence of vulnerable children.



By 10.00am

Day 1 – Follow Daily Attendance Flowchart

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Police contact or home visits. All concerns to be recorded on My Concern.



Day 2
1) Follow Daily Attendance Flowchart
2) If no contact made, Attendance staff to attempt contact via email asking parents to contact school urgently.



Day 3
Follow Daily Attendance Flowchart
If no response from Day 2 email, further phone call made. Enquiries made at siblings schools if appropriate.
If no contact made and deemed necessary by Inclusion Team, Safe & Well visit will happen with two members of staff
CSC/Police to be informed if necessary



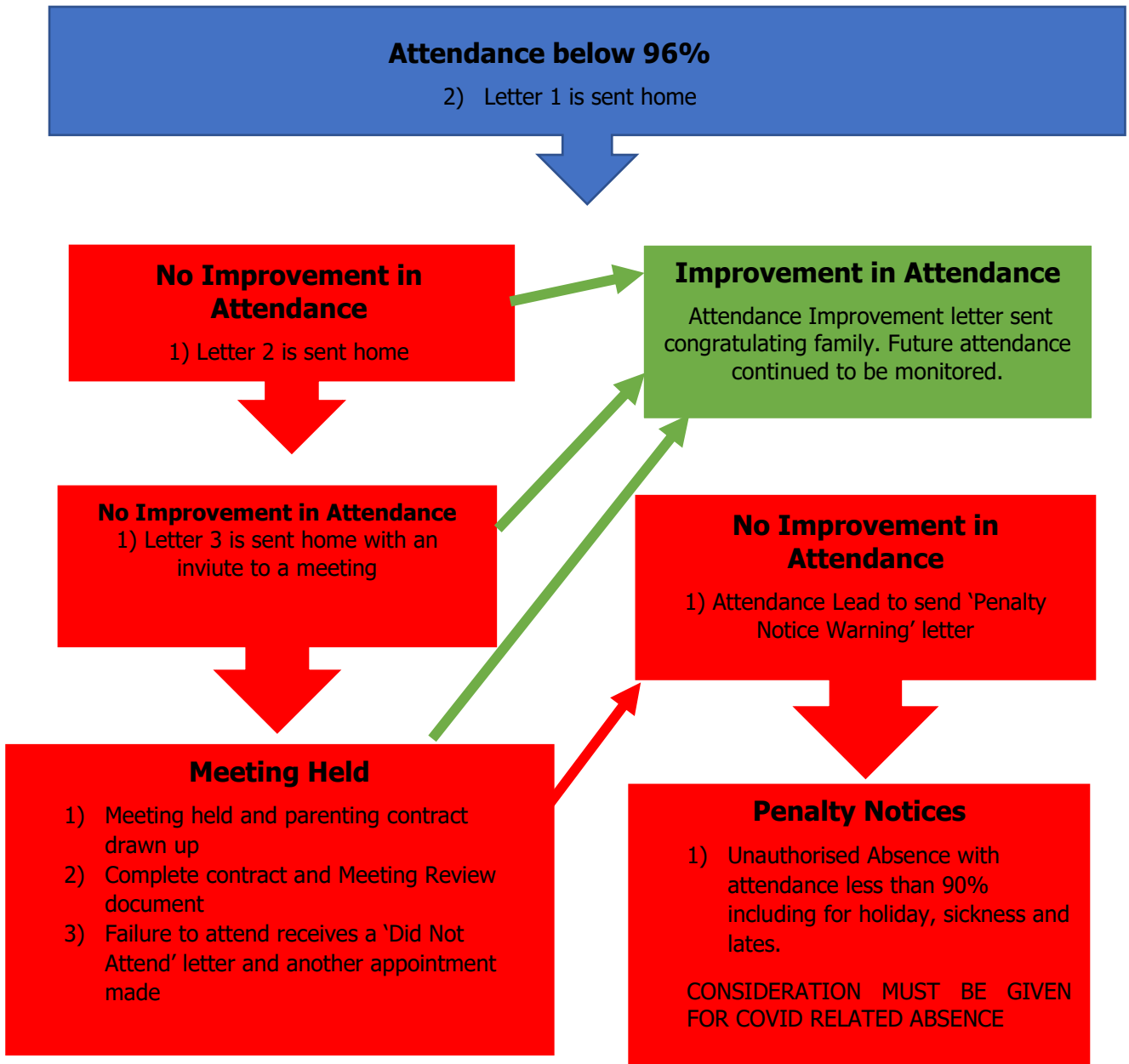
Days 4-10
1) Follow Daily Attendance Flowchart
2) Attendance staff to continue to attempt contact via email and phone asking parents to contact school urgently
3) If no response, or deemed necessary by Inclusion Team, Safe & Well visit will happen with two members of staff
4) Liaising with outside agencies and siblings schools as appropriate
5) CSC/Police to be informed if necessary



Day 10
1) Complete 'Child Missing Education' process

Attendance below 96%
1) Letter 1 is sent home





Letter Trigger Points – If past Letter 1, and some improvement seen, allow ½ a term for improvement. Letters and date sent to be logged by Attendance Lead.

Absence Requests Flowchart

