

## North Mead Primary Academy Attendance Strategy

This document should be **read in conjunction** with the North Mead Primary Academy Attendance Policy and the North Mead Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

### Strategy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This Strategy is effective for North Mead Primary Academy.

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<b>Date created:</b>	September 2022
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### Revision History:

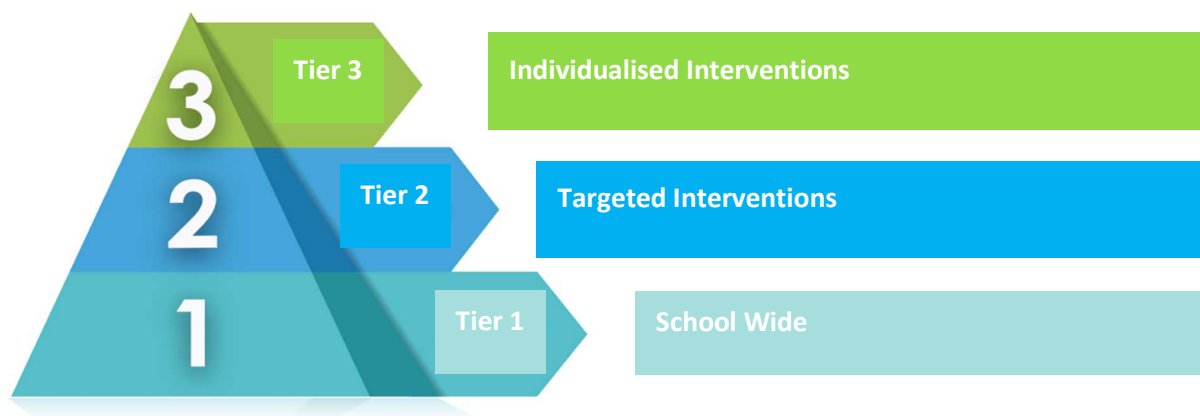
Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
1	September 2022	J.Wh	Document creation
1.1	November 2023	J.Wh	Updates for 2023-24: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to reflect removal of LA traded services</li> <li>• Clarification of First Response Protocol</li> <li>• Inclusion of Pastoral Team Meetings</li> </ul>

# North Mead Primary Academy Attendance Strategy 2022-23

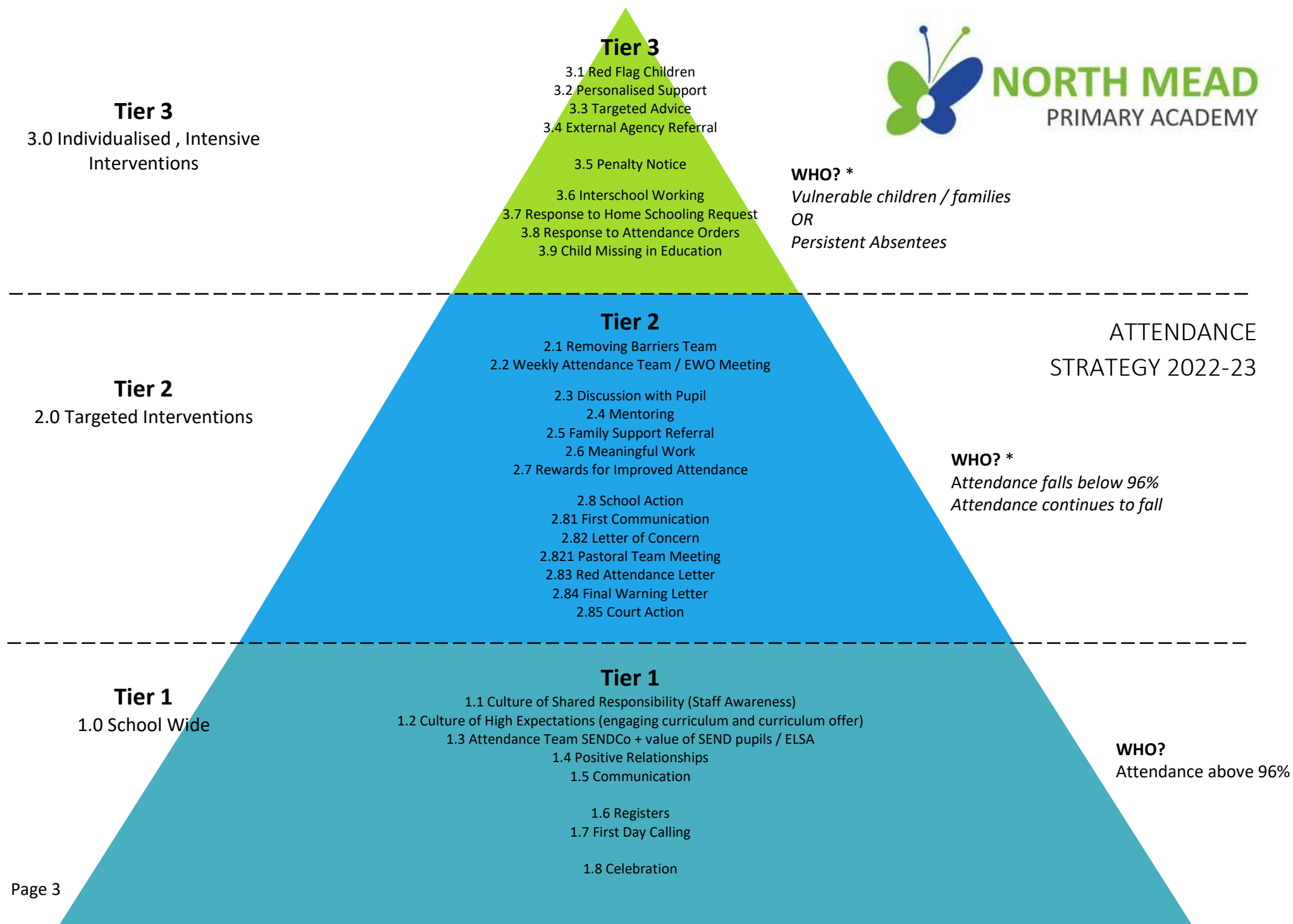
This strategy aims to set out the rational, measures, actions and intended outcomes for pupils' attendance at North Mead Primary Academy (NMPA). It should be read with out Attendance Policy.

## 0.1 Tiered Approach

The North Mead Attendance Strategy will adopt a multitiered system of support (MTSS) approach to improving attendance. The intensity of support needed can be tailored for individuals by moving up and down through the tiers.



The following page sets out the measures to be taken at each tier of the strategy.



\* Levels of support for children / families is highly individualised. Tier 2 and 3 strategies will be used as necessary to support children / improve attendance.

**1.0 Tier 1: School Wide:** School wide actions are the universal schoolwide systems which prevent poor attendance for the majority of pupils and families.

**1.1 Culture of Shared Responsibility:** As staff at North Mead Primary Academy (NMPA), we understand that attendance and punctuality are everyone's responsibility; we understand that attendance is not 'one person's responsibility'. Both the rules and importance of good attendance are set out in this strategy.

Every member of staff knows this strategy and takes their part seriously. All staff are aware of the reasons attendance and punctuality are so important and the negative effects caused by poor attendance namely: Globally consequences:

- the correlation between poverty and absenteeism
- children and families can quickly become entrenched in poor attendance and therefore early intervention by schools (including in the classroom) are vital
- absenteeism is more prevalent in specific minority groups (for NMPA: White British, White European and Pakistani – see analysis in section 0:0)

Consequences to the student:

- cumulative poorer student performance
- increased risk of dropping out of secondary and further education - children who are persistent absentees in the primary phase of education statistically continue this trend into the secondary phase
- fewer opportunities to build positive relationships
- inhibited development of social-emotional life skills
- safeguarding issues including higher risk of involvement in crime

Consequences for teachers:

- loss of preparation and instructional time
- frustration and anxiety

To other pupils:

- reduced academic progress for all pupils
- frustration and anxiety
- question why attendance matters

**1.2 Culture of High Expectations:** We set high expectations for pupil attendance and punctuality to **all** pupils. We recognise that **all** pupils have the same entitlement to quality first teaching, and it is our ambition for **all** pupils to receive this, knowing that some pupils will require more support than others to do this. This is in line with our school value of equity. We recognise that every part of our school design contributes to our attendance strategy. The North Mead Curriculum is bespoke, designed to meet the specific needs of our children. The curriculum is highly engaging and offers challenge for **all** pupils including SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Our behaviour policy is centred on equity, sense of team (belonging) and positive relationships all of which are research proven factors which influence pupil motivation to attend school.

**1.3 Attendance Team:** Because we value every pupil's entitlement to quality first teaching, we take a team approach to leading attendance. Our attendance team consists of:

- Senior Champion: James Wharin (Vice Principal)
- Removing Barriers Team Leader: Ben Bupirtt (Principal)
- Attendance Officer: Zainab Meman
- Family Support Worker (FSW): Jill Hirst (Julius Mikula – White European Family Support Worker)
- ELSA: Mariam Danesh
- SENDCo & Mental Health Coordinator (MHC): Kirsten Holland (Vice Principal)

- LA Education Welfare Officer: Moshin Khalifa

The Senior Champion (James Wharin – Vice Principal) oversees day to day processes and strategic thinking based on data.

**1.4 Positive Relationships:** We recognise the importance of positive relationships and their research-proven impact on attendance. They are included in our visions and values, reflected in policy and embodied by our staff from the moment our children enter our gates. Each morning, staff give a personal welcome to families and pupils. They are made to feel part of the team at North Mead.

**1.5 Communication:** We make use of communications channels between school and home (Dojo, email, face to face, phone calls, text messages, social media) to keep our whole school community informed of school attendance priorities. Dojo offers our families direct contact to teachers and school leaders and visa versa. These communication channels are vital to make sure parents and pupils know the value of good attendance and the negative effects of poor attendance set out in 1.1.

**1.6 Attendance Registers:** School begins at 8:30am. Children's attendance is recorded by class teachers using Bromcom (MIS system). Registers close in classrooms at 9:00am. Children arriving after this time are directed straight to the school office. Each class sends a delegate to the office to report their class attendance figure. (NOTE: the purpose of this delegate is to promote discussion about attendance and make class attendance visible. The 9:00am figure sent to the office does not form part of our safeguarding processes.)

**1.7 First Response Calls Protocol:** In line with our attendance policy, parents and carers of children marked as absent by 9:05 must be contacted if they have not already reported their child absent and given a reason for their child's absence. By 10am on the first day of a period of absence, they will have been:

1. sent a text message asking them to contact school to give a reason for their child's absence
2. called via telephone by the school Attendance Officer

Children arriving before 9:20 will be given a L code. Children arriving after 9:20 will be giving a U code. Following these actions, on subsequent days our First Response Calls Protocol will be followed. See Appendix A.

**1.8 Celebration:** Once a week, the classes with top three highest attendance percentages for the previous week will receive a class sticker. The purpose of this is to raise the visual profile and importance of attendance in school.

**2.0 Tier 2: Targeted Interventions:** Targeted interventions are aimed at pupils and families who do not respond to whole school strategies to improve attendance and punctuality. Tier 2 strategies are aimed at students who are identified through data analysis as having more resistant attendance problems.

**2.1 Removing Barriers Team (RBT):** The in school Removing Barriers Team meets formally fortnightly to discuss individual targeted children. The Senior Attendance Champion, RBT Leader, FSW, ELSA, MHC and SENDCo are present. The meetings allow the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement strategies to be addressed. Actions are pupil centred: vulnerable children are discussed, and actions are put in place to address barriers to learning, including attendance.

**2.2 Attendance Meeting:** The Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) and the Attendance Officer (AO) meet weekly. Pupils of concern are discussed, and robust actions are put in place to improve individual pupil's attendance. Actions are recorded in excel format.

**2.3 Discussion with Pupil:** Class Teachers, or members of the Attendance Team, meet with students to discuss attendance concerns. This is not an accusative meeting but rather means to look for ways to work together to solve a problem. With the student, we discuss ways that their parents and the school community could help them be in school regularly.

**2.4 Mentoring:** Mentoring is used to connect individual students with supportive and caring adults in school: usually the school ELSA. It may be a forum to discuss solutions to barriers to improving attendance (as 2.3) but is primarily to increase connectedness to the school and build positive relationships within the school team. The mentor will give an informal progress report to parents of guardians in person (playground) or via phone for an agreed intervention period.

**2.5 Family Support Referral:** Students or families may be referred to our Family Support Worker (FSW). Our FSW is able to provide bespoke support to pupils and families to tackle attendance barriers. Our FSW is well connected to external agencies, charities and community figures who may also be able to impact individual pupil attendance.

**2.6 Meaningful work:** Specific school based and purposeful jobs or roles in school will be given to children tailored to their interests to increase motivation to be in school.

**2.7 Rewards for Improved Attendance:** EEF research shows that rewarding improved attendance rather than rewarding 100% attendance is more effective in improving overall attendance. Therefore, we reward sustained or improved attendance of individuals on an bespoke, targeted basis. This reflects our goal to achieve a whole school attendance figure at least in line with national in 2023-24 and is in line with our school value of equity. We recognise that improving attendance is a continuous job – one which is never finished – as the barriers to children's attendance shift. In this sense, individual rewards will also shift for individuals and families as necessary.

**2.8 School Actions:** Tier 2 school actions are those that will be taken internally, followed by those in conjunction with the LA EWO if necessary.

**2.81 First Communication:** If a pupil's attendance falls **below 96%**, their parents / guardians will be telephoned. As teachers are the primary staff who interact with students, they take the lead in the earliest stages of addressing individual student's attendance problems and make this call (supported by a member of the Attendance Team if needed). Teachers will emphasise that the student is missed when they are not in school, that it is important they are in every day and state their current attendance figure. If a student's attendance improves, teachers will follow this up with a positive phone call. If a child's attendance does not improve, the Senior Attendance Champion will follow this up.

**2.82 Letter or Concern:** If a student's attendance falls **below 94%**, an Amber Letter of Concern will be sent to a pupil's parent / guardian. This letter will state the child's current attendance figure is below 94% and will nudge them to improve their child's attendance figure. The letter will also state that if their attendance percentage falls below 90% then their case will trigger a formal Pastoral Support Meeting.

**2.821 Pastoral Team Meeting:** If a student's attendance falls below 90% (or below 93% in combination with previous poor attendance) a formal Pastoral Team Meeting will be arranged. This meeting offers a forum for parents / carers and school staff to discuss possible barriers to a child's attendance, support the school can offer to remove these barriers and actions to be taken moving forward to aim to improve a child's attendance. A review period will be set. At review point, the child's attendance will be analysed. If improvements have been made, this will be communicated to the parent. If attendance has not improved, the case will be referred to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

**2.83 Red Attendance Letter:** If a student's attendance falls **below 90%**, a Red Attendance Letter will be sent to a pupil's parent / guardian. This letter will state the child's current attendance figure is 90% or lower and inform the parents that their child's case has now been referred to the LA EWO. The letter will also state that no further absence can be authorised without medical evidence. Finally, the letter will explain that legal processes are likely to begin if their child's attendance does not begin to improve. Attendance of children whose parents and guardians have received this letter, will be monitored for improvement. If it does not improve a panel meeting will be requested.

**2.84 Final Warning Letter:** A final warning letter will be issued by the LA EWO if attendance does not improve after a Pastoral Team Meeting. It is possible that a Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) letter will also be issued. The EWO will discuss the efforts parents / guardians make to improve attendance will be assessed by the LA EWO.

**2.85 Court Action:** If a child's attendance percentage still does not improve, court action may be taken and the parent / guardian fined up to £2500 and or face imprisonment up to for up to three months. This would be coordinated by the LA EWO.

**3.0 Tier 3: Individualised, Intensive Interventions:** Individualised, intensive interventions are aimed at pupils and families who need completely personalised interventions to improve attendance.

**3.1 Red Flag List Children:** A list of vulnerable children, which is under constant review, is held by the Attendance Officer. If these children are absent, the Attendance Officer will highlight this to the Principal, Vice Principal and Assistant Principal. If a satisfactory reason for absence cannot be ascertained over the phone, a home visit will be organised that day.

**3.2 Personalised Support:** Children (and families) requiring Tier 3 support may require specific actions to improve attendance. These may vary from help with transportation, alarm clocks or calls, peer support or the support of external agencies.

**3.3 Targeted Advice:** School attendance data analysis and our knowledge of the school catchment have highlighted specific barriers to attendance. Based on our own research, and by collaborating with external agencies, we have produced handouts on positive sleep routine, coping with anxiety and reducing stress in morning routines. We have also introduced a clear verbal protocol for our office staff on illness.

**3.4 External Agencies:** We signpost families struggling with poor attendance to external agencies which may be able to offer specific support and advice. This may be done at Tier 2 when working without Family Support Worker (see paragraph 2.5).

**3.5 Penalty Notice:** Penalty notices will be given for holiday taken in term time. No term time holiday requests will be authorised. Penalty notices will be issued in accordance with Leicester City Council's 'Penalty Notice for Unauthorised Absence Code of Conduct. If NMPA is notified in advance that a pupil / family is to take a holiday in term time, parents / guardians must provide the school with outward and return travel information for safeguarding purposes. If flights are planned, parents / guardians must include copies of booking information which includes flight dates, times, flight numbers and destinations.

**3.6 Interschool Working:** We use our MIS system and knowledge of families in school to collaborate with other local schools. Panel meetings may be arranged to discuss pupils at NMPA at the same time as

siblings at other schools. We work closely with our secondary schools on transition, and live attendance issues where siblings are known to attend other local schools.

**3.7 Response to Home Schooling Requests:** Parents / guardians who choose to Home Educate their must write to the Principal (Ben Burpitt) to inform the school of this decision. The NMPA office will inform the LA EWO of this decision and the LA EWO team will follow up.

**3.8 Response to Attendance Orders:** NMPA will always respond to attendance orders in accordance with our admissions policy.

**3.9 Children Missing Education (CME):** Measures will be taken to establish the whereabouts of children from the first day of their absence from school (See section 1.7). If contact on the first day cannot be made or a reasonable reason for absence cannot be established, then the First Response Protocol will be followed – see Appendix A.

If contact with a pupil or family cannot be made, the LA EWO will be informed by the Attendance Officer / Senior Attendance Champion. We recognise children missing education (CME) can be a vital **safeguarding issue**. This strategy should be read in conjunction with out safeguarding and attendance policies.



## Appendix A

### Attendance Checklist

### Daily/Weekly/Monthly

Latest Update: November 2023



Task	Timescale	Who
Pre-emptive phone calls based on previous day's 'On the Day Attendance Report'	8:00am	ZM
Gather all absence messages left in voice mailbox. Enter notes into Bromcom registers: exact details	8-9am onwards	ZM
Children arrive. Morning registers open	8.30am	Class Teachers
External school gates close promptly as part of our safeguarding protocol	8.55am	KR
Morning registers close on Bromcom	9am	Class Teachers
Late children are registered (L)	9.00am-9.20am	ZM
Late families challenged in person	9.00am-9.20am	ZM
Check status of vulnerable pupil list to check all children are in school.  Call parents of vulnerable pupils who are absent and no reason has been received as a priority	9.00am	ZM
<b>Pattern Check. Run daily absence list.</b> Check ALL absences for the day.  Any children 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> day absence: <i>Follow flow diagram in Annex A</i> Requires constant liaison with Office Staff.	9:00am <i>Whilst working in office or soon after</i>	ZM
Make absence phone calls	9.15-9.30am	ZM / LH / JN-M
Check each year group to ensure there are no mistakes with registers and absence texts are not missed. Check these in year groups at regular intervals for any discrepancies as calls are being made	9.30am onwards and throughout the day	ZM
Fire drill register printed and stored in blue folders. Ensure that the registers are all accurate and there are no N codes.	9.35-9.45am (or earlier if possible)	Office
Afternoon register opens	12:55pm	Class Teachers
Afternoon register closes	1:05pm	Class Teachers

Ensure that the registers are all accurate and there are no N codes after the PM session	<b>1.30pm</b>	<b>ZM (JH on Fridays)</b>
If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration for an appointment, they must be signed out of school.	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Office</b>
Alternative Provision Ensure that <b>CLM</b> is checked, and marks entered daily for children at Alternative Provisions/make phone calls and regular visits if not on CLM	<b>9.30am onwards</b>	<b>Office</b>
Holiday request:  Collect 'Request for Absence' forms. Note receipt of them in Excel sheet. Pass to JWh	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Office Staff</b>  <b>Scanned and added to files by Office Staff</b>
Arrange meeting with ZM / JWh Provide evidence- Returning flight ticket copy Unauthorised form given Attendance marks added to Bromcom Record in excel when form sent back. SCAN request form and add to Bromcom file. Also SCAN any evidence of flights (esp. prebooked return date).  Child returns Penalty paperwork submitted to LA	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>ZM / JWh</b>
PA attendance check 1) Check attendance <b>UP</b> or <b>DOWN</b> 2) Check previous actions 3) Check attendance of previously PTMed students – Is Appointed HV or Final warning letter needed? 4) Issue Amber / Red attendance letters 5) Identify further actions	<b>Weekly (Thursday)</b>	<b>ZM/JWh</b>
Below 93% Amber Attendance letters to be sent  Below 90% OR below 93% + previous poor attendance = arrange Pastoral Team Meetings and complete action plan  Below 90% Red Attendance letters to be sent	<b>Weekly to those students who fall into the threshold and had NOT had one previously. Consider the time of the year for this and whether one day of absence has resulted in this!</b>	<b>ZM</b>

Print attendance sheets in preparation for Pastoral Team Meetings	<b>Bi-weekly</b>	<b>ZM</b>
Moving off roll students starting new schools Check for any students that are due to be taken off roll and chase with new school/LA to confirm they have started at a new school before removing. <b>Only to take off roll once confirmed by LA</b> (request email confirmation) Moved to new city, abroad etc. Request new address, contact details, etc. Complete Annex B form is appropriate.	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>ZM to check (closely with JH)</b>  <b>JP to remove from roll</b>
New students: be aware of who they will be and which day they will be starting; ensuring that they have marks on the morning	<b>As and when required.</b>	<b>JP</b>
Medical evidence, letters, visa appointments to be scanned uploaded on to Bromcom and stored in pupil file	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Received by office</b>  <b>Scanned and added to files by Office Staff</b>

**ANY SAFEGARDING CONCERNS MUST BE PASSED ONTO THE SAFEGARDING TEAM IMMEDIATELY**

# First Response Calls Protocol

## Daily

Latest Update: November 2023

