BISHOP HEBER HIGH SCHOOL

RESPECT · OPPORTUNITY · ACHIEVEMENT

Attendance & Punctuality Policy 2025/26
including Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN)

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1. PURPOSE

- To promote excellent attendance and punctuality through a clear framework of expectations in terms of attendance, that is accepted by parents/carers, students, staff and governors.
- To engage the support of parents and carers in ensuring that their child/ren attend school regularly and that they arrive on time.
- To ensure good electronic records of attendance are kept through school registers and to take prompt action to follow up absences.
- To investigate and act immediately where unauthorised absence is confirmed or suspected.
- To monitor closely students with attendance and punctuality issues and to work with parents and carers and, where appropriate, other agencies to bring about improvement.
- To recognise and reward good and improved attendance and punctuality.
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of students.

2. INTRODUCTION AND AIM

Bishop Heber High School recognises the importance of good attendance and the impact it has on students' progress, enjoyment of learning, academic qualifications gained, relationships within school, choices in life and success in the future. Good attendance helps a child to realise their potential and ensures they are motivated, confident and enjoy a diverse range of curricular opportunities and experiences. Our school policy and prospectus promote excellent attendance, which is recognised and rewarded as an achievement. We aim to ensure the highest levels of attendance and punctuality, in order that all students at Heber can take full advantage of the education provided to achieve their full potential. Irregular attendance undermines these opportunities and may place students at risk. The school monitors attendance to ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

We recognise that whole school preventative and proactive approaches are key to promoting children's wellbeing and attendance. A student must attend school every day that they are required to do so unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

Our policy is accessible to leaders, staff, students and parents, and is published on our school website. It will be sent to parents with any initial information when students join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated. As the barriers to attendance evolve quickly, the policy should be reviewed and updated as necessary. In doing so, we will seek the views of students and parents. The Attendance & Punctuality Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

3. LEGISLATION

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement. Regular attendance is essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainment, opportunities and further development.

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that, 'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'
- Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that, 'If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent is guilty of an offence.'
- Section 576 Education Act 1996 - meaning of 'parent'.
- This policy complies with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (effective August 2024). Attendance is now considered a safeguarding issue under KCSiE 2025.

For the purposes of Education Law, the definition of a 'parent' and who is responsible for ensuring regular attendance to school is:

- All biological parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a stepparent, guardian or other relative.
- Any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carer/s.

4. REGISTERS

Registers provide the daily record of attendance of all students. They are legal documents and must be marked twice daily. The register may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at Bishop Heber High School.

'Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006' (section 6):
Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, morning (a.m.) and once during the second session, afternoon (p.m.). The school shares daily attendance data electronically with the DfE and Local Authority as required by law.

At Bishop Heber High School, the attendance register is taken at the start of the morning session of each school day (8.55 a.m. to 9.05 a.m.) and again at the end of the afternoon session (3.10 p.m. to 3.20 p.m. PM registration is taken from 12.30 p.m. and consolidated at the end of day). One school day is marked as two sessions - morning and afternoon.

On each occasion it is recorded whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to Arbor as a priority and returned to the school office in a timely manner. This is used to download data to the School Census.
- Consider early identification, assessment, intervention and support processes that may need to be implemented.

Although it is the parent / carer's responsibility to notify Bishop Heber of any absence, it is at the School's discretion how this absence is coded in relation to authorised or unauthorised absence. The School will mark the register using the codes as advised by the Department for Education (DfE) 'Working together to improve School Attendance Guidance' (for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073616/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf **(See Appendix 1)**

Bishop Heber will follow the Cheshire West and Chester Council School Attendance Guidance for Schools – attendance care working **(See Appendix 4).**

5. PROCEDURE

Students are expected to attend Bishop Heber High School for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is good and approved reason for the absence.

There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves a student absence)
- Unauthorised (where school will not approve the absence)

The school has a duty to safeguard all its students. If a child is absent, the parents / carers should inform the school on the **first day of absence** and each following day of absence, stating the reason.

Students should return to school as soon as they feel well enough, even if this is less than 48 hours after being sick. The decision to return to school should be based on how well your child feels rather than a fixed timeframe, even if this is less than 48 hours after being sick.

If they are no longer displaying significant symptoms and they are fit to participate in regular school activities, there is no need for them to stay at home for a full 48 hours. This approach ensures that children do not miss out on important learning unnecessarily while still prioritising their health and readiness to return to school.

First Day Contact:
It is the parent / carer's responsibility to inform Bishop Heber High School of the reason for a student's absence as soon as possible on the day of absence.

Parents/carers should leave a message before 8.30 a.m. via the absence hotline (01948 860571 option 2) or by emailing attendance@heber.org.uk. Parents / carers must also inform Bishop Heber High School on every subsequent day of absence thereafter.

If no contact is received from a parent / carer on their child's first day of absence, Bishop Heber High School will send an absence text message, and parents / carers will be expected to respond by 10.30 a.m. at the latest. The Attendance Officer will attempt to make contact with home when a child is absent and the parent / carer has not notified the school of the absence. If no contact can be achieved by 12.30 p.m. or the reason for absence is not accepted, the absence will be unauthorised.

The School Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is Mrs N Hill: nhill@heber.org.uk and the designated senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school is Mr A Cummings, Assistant Headteacher: acummings@heber.org.uk. The designated senior leader, along with the EWO, is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

6. WHAT CAN PARENTS / CARERS DO TO HELP - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS / CARERS

- Let Bishop Heber High School know straight away why your child is absent by no later than 8.30 a.m. and before that time each subsequent day thereafter. Home/school communication is extremely important in supporting your child to achieve and feel settled in school.
- Try to make any dental/GP or other appointments outside of normal school hours.
- If an appointment during school hours is unavoidable where possible ensure your child attends AM reg, returns as soon as possible after the appointment or the appointment is made after 12.30 p.m. to reduce the impact upon your child's learning.
- Do not allow your child to stay off school unless it is unavoidable.

- Any medical will need evidence of the appointment time and date. Students will not be authorised to leave the school site unless evidence is provided.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE?

- Talk to your child, it may be a reason that is easy to address
- Talk to your child's Form Tutor
- Talk to your child's Year Leader
- Request a meeting with Bishop Heber High School's Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

It is pertinent that school and parents / carers work together with a shared plan and outcomes when supporting a child / young person's attendance and wellbeing. If, despite persistent attempts to work with parents, there continues to be a lack of engagement, then legal procedures will be followed to secure engagement and school attendance.

At Bishop Heber High School we recognise that building respectful relationships with families and working in collaboration is essential to ensuring the best outcomes for children and young people. We require all parents to actively support the work of the school, including promoting attendance and engagement. We are committed to ensuring that systems and processes are in place with regards to promoting attendance and would encourage parents to make contact if they have concerns about their child.

We will provide parents / carers with information about Emotionally Based School Non-attendance to discuss needs and strategies to support their child, as appropriate (see EBSN Parent Leaflet via EBSN website as found in Appendix 6).

7. ABSENCE MONITORING

Bishop Heber High School robustly monitors and analyses attendance data to promptly identify and address possible concerns and allow for early interventions to support the child / family's underlying needs.

This will include:

- Weekly attendance code analysis
- Specific cohort and group monitoring – particularly for vulnerable groups i.e. students who are disadvantaged, SEND, or have a social worker
- Monitoring of lesson attendance across all subjects
- 'Welcome back' meeting for all students that have been absent for 5 days – to check wellbeing and ensure there are no ongoing needs that will impact on attendance
- The use of data to target attendance improvement efforts to the students or student cohorts who need it most.
- The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

8. EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION: ASSESS, PLAN, DO AND REVIEW

Every student has a right to a full-time education and Bishop Heber High School sets high attendance expectations for all students. Bishop Heber High School will consider the individual needs of students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance and will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For any student who is absent from school it is essential to fully understand the reasons for this so that targeted, evidence-based interventions and support can be put into place. All staff have a part to play in promoting attendance. We recognise the importance of ensuring that key members of staff from across the school, including Form Tutors, members of the Attendance Team, pastoral and SEND staff work in collaboration to consider and identify the holistic needs of the child or young person and to overcome barriers to attendance. In accordance with the principles of early intervention, a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review will be followed utilising a range of school-based resources, evidence-based interventions and seeking advice and support from external services at an appropriate stage, when needed.

Appropriate assessments will be important to help understand the underlying reasons that may be contributing to attendance difficulties. This may be an assessment that focuses on the individual child's needs such as a Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), SEND assessments and wellbeing assessments or may include the holistic needs of the family, such as a TAF assessment.

Assessments will include the views of the young person as well as parents / carers and identify strengths (what is working well) and needs (what is working less well).

Information from assessments will inform an action plan with focussed targets developed in partnership with families and other services as appropriate. For example, Early Help and Prevention and Social Care may have a part to play in the delivery of support and intervention to promote engagement and attendance. Action plans should be personalised to effectively meet a young person's needs and improve attendance and wellbeing outcomes.

Regular reviews of support and attendance plans are essential to monitor the impact of interventions and to adjust these accordingly. If, despite targeted support and intervention, attendance and wellbeing concerns persist, we may seek further advice and support from external services including mental health services, as well as specialist teaching and education services.

Persistent absence (10%+) and severe absence (50%+) require multi-agency response. Attendance Hubs and mentors may be accessed for support.

9. MEDICAL ABSENCE

Absences for medical appointments must be supported by medical evidence prior to the appointment. Medical evidence can take the form of either a dated GP / Nurse / Hospital / Dentist / Orthodontist /

Opticians appointment card, a prescription or proof of prescribed medication relating to the current illness (which should reference the student's name and DoB).

Absence due to sickness should be reported to the school by phone via the absence hotline (01948 860571 option 2) before 8.30 a.m. on the first day of absence and each subsequent day thereafter. The school should be kept informed during longer periods of absence. School will contact parents during the first day if no satisfactory reason for absence has been received.

In the majority of cases, a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. We will not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness.

Only where we have a **genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity** of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. In instances of **long-term or repeated absences for the same reason**, however, seeking medical evidence may be appropriate to assist in assessing whether the child requires additional support to help them to attend more regularly, and whether the illness is likely to prevent the child from attending for extended periods. If a parent proactively seeks out a note from a GP, it does not imply a need for absence unless this is explicit in their letter.

If a medical absence is likely to be ongoing or long term, then we will offer support in accordance with the school's policies and statutory guidance relating to Children with health needs: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-students-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3.

As a school, we need to plan how children can access education and how and when the child will return to school. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the school must also demonstrate that reasonable adjustments are made to meet child's Educational Needs.

For children who have a medical condition and cannot attend school, the school will refer to the Cheshire West and Chester Council's Medical Needs Team:
https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/education-and-learning/medical-needs-service/medical-needs-policy-latest.pdf

Their policy states that referrals must come directly from the young person's school and must be supported by medical evidence from one of the following health professionals:

- consultant paediatrician or adolescent psychiatrist
- consultant child psychiatrist
- hospital consultant

Supporting evidence from a General Practitioner alone cannot be accepted.

As from 19th August 2024, schools must make a sickness return to the Local Authority and provide the full name and address of all students who have been recorded with the code I (Illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and Local Authority to agree any provisions needed to ensure continuity of education of students who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on Education for Children with health needs:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

LONG TERM ABSENCE

The SENDCo, with support from the Inclusion Manager, is responsible for co-ordinating the support of students with long-term absence (including those on a reduced timetable). The SENDCo and the Inclusion Manager will complete a Medical Needs Form to access appropriate local authority support where available. Year Leaders will liaise regularly with the SENDCo to support the reintegration and achievement of students with long-term absence, and the EWO will also assist with the reintegration process. Our aim in each case is to support a return to school. In addition, we will work closely with families and external agencies to remove barriers for students with SEND or mental health needs and provide tailored reintegration plans after prolonged absence.

10. LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY

School begins at 8.55 a.m. and all students are expected to be in school for registration at that time.

- Register taken at 8.55 a.m.
- Registers close at 9 a.m.

Any student who arrives after 8.55 a.m. and when the gates are closed must enter the school by the student entrance and report to the **Attendance Office** to sign in. Students who are late for registration, for example, arriving at AM registration after 8.55 a.m. when the register is taken, will be coded as 'L'. Lateness to AM and PM registration is monitored weekly by Form Tutors and Year Leaders. Students receive demerits for being late and any students who are persistently late will be required to pay back the time from their Liberty Time (break / lunch).

Any late arrivals after 9.30 a.m. will be coded as 'U' which is an unauthorised absence for that session.

In accordance with the 'Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006', if your child arrives after the registers close, they will receive a mark - code U - that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action if the problem persists.

Children and young people who are consistently late for school are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of the other students. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, you will be invited to a meeting to resolve the issues. If there is no improvement following this meeting, further action will be taken which may include referral to external agencies.

You may approach the school at any time for support and advice if you are having difficulty getting your child to school on time or maintaining regular attendance.

11. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE AND FIXED PENALTY NOTICE

An absence may be coded as 'unauthorised' if:

i. no reason for absence has been given
ii. medical evidence is not received when requested

iii. a request for a leave of absence has been unauthorised
iv. a student arrives at school after registration has closed at 9.30 a.m.

Parents/carers should be aware that Bishop Heber High School may contact the Local Authority if a student has 10 or more unauthorised sessions in a 10 week rolling period with a view to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action.

The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that student will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same student within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3 year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions. (see **Appendix 2**).

12. APPLICATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

As of 19th August 2024, the law ceases to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence should not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or a desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Headteachers are only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

The Headteacher and the Governing Body will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis. If parents/carers need to request Exceptional Leave of Absence, they must complete an 'Exceptional Leave of Absence' form available from the school website. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised days, then Bishop Heber High School will apply to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to be issued to each parent/carer.

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carer's working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member

A student's absence during term time seriously disrupts their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching on the days they are away but are less prepared for the lessons building on that teaching when they return to school. There is a consequent risk of under achievement, which we must seek to avoid.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring any attendance issues are dealt with in line with school policy.

13. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

We recognise that some students may need to participate in days of religious observance.
Where a day of religious observance:

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student belongs

We ask that parents/carers notify Bishop Heber High School in writing in advance where absence is required due to a religious observance.

14. ENFORCED SCHOOL CLOSURE

If Bishop Heber High School is forced to close for a period of time, we have the facility to operate an online virtual school through Microsoft® Teams. The expectation is students will still engage with ALL activities and work set. Procedures for online learning will be sent to parents as and when required.

15. IMPACT

All students will achieve well by developing knowledge and skills on their journey through school. Due to robust monitoring of attendance, all students, including vulnerable children and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), will have fair and equitable access to school in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. Students will leave Bishop Heber High School ready for a successful transition to further education, employment or training.

Bishop Heber works closely with CWAC Education Welfare Service and other outside agencies in an effort to improve attendance without the need for any legal intervention. As a final measure when the attendance of a student does not show any improvements without good reason, Bishop Heber will refer to the Local Authority regarding legal sanctions.

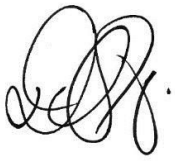
The Government have categorised those students who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' students (P.A.). Bishop Heber will be specifically targeting this cohort of students, in an effort to improve their attendance in the future.

See appendix 3 for a breakdown of missed sessions - What does 'percentage attendance' mean?

At Bishop Heber we believe students who achieve good attendance should be recognised and rewarded. This serves two purposes:

- It provides students with positive reinforcement.
- It provides other students with motivation to improve their attendance and it recognises that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself.

We will celebrate and promote good attendance through assemblies, certificates, and inclusive rewards and incentives designed with student input (e.g., School Council). The Year Leader will take responsibility for highlighting the benefits of good attendance through celebration and praise assemblies and other events, ensuring the positive message of regular attendance is always at the forefront of meetings with parents/carers. Students with regular attendance will be rewarded with merits, and certificates will be presented at celebration events and STEPS. Improvements, not just perfect attendance, will be recognised and celebrated.



Signed: (Chair of Governors) **Signed: (Headteacher)**

Administration Use	
Statutory/Non-Statutory:	Statutory
Website:	Yes
GB Committee:	SPA
Approval Level – Sub Committee or FGB	SPA
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To be Reviewed:	Every three years
Next Review Date:	January 2029

Appendices:

1. Attendance Codes
2. Code of Conduct for Education Fixed Penalty Notice (Unauthorised Leave of Absence & Irregular Attendance)
3. What does 'percentage attendance' mean?
4. Guidance for schools – attendance case working
5. Attendance Procedure Flowchart
6. Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN)
7. Attendance letters

LEGISLATIVE POWERS AT THE TIME OF APPROVAL

- The Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Information (England) Regulations 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

RELEVANT GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE AT THE TIME OF APPROVAL

School attendance parental responsibility measures - Statutory guidance for schools, local authorities and the police on dealing with poor attendance and behaviour in schools

'Working together to improve School Attendance Guidance' (for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities)

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Appendix 1

Absence Codes: According to the DfE guidance the following codes are used on the register**. New Attendance Codes from 19th August 2024**

Attending a place other than the school.
These codes are classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code V	Attending an educational visit or trip
Code P	Participating in a sporting activity
Code W	Attending work experience
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Code D	Dual registered at another school

Absent leave of absence - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code X	Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

Absent - other authorised reasons - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code R	Religious observance
Code I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause. - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance

Code Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Code Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Code Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5	Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Absent - unauthorised absence - Theses codes are classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code G	Leave of absence not granted by the school
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established
Code O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U	Arrived in school after registration closed

Appendix 2

Cheshire West & Chester

Cheshire West & Chester

Code of Conduct for Education Fixed Penalty Notice (Unauthorised Leave of Absence & Irregular Attendance)

1. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.

2. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that student will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.

3. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same student within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

4. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3 year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

5. A FPN may be issued per parent per child.

6. Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if:

Unauthorised absences of at least 10 consecutive school sessions (five school days).

Sessions either side of a weekend or school holiday will be counted as consecutive school days.

For poorly attending learners, at least 10 sessions (five school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during a school term. These do not need to be consecutive.

For poorly attending learners, persistent late arrive at school in a term. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of late arrival.

The presence of an excluded child in a public place in the child's first five days of exclusion (N.B. points 2 to 4 do not apply where a FPN is issued for an excluded student in a public place.)

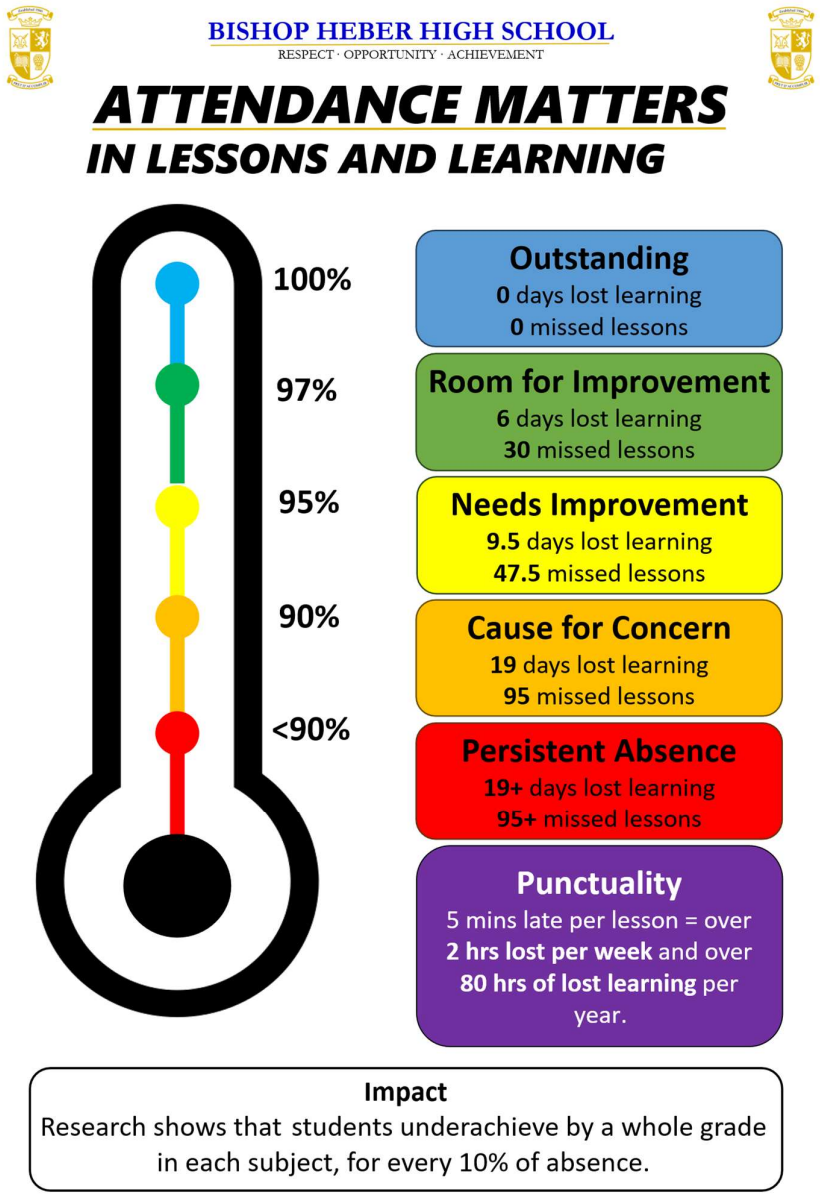
7. The school must notify parents of the Attendance Policy and clearly state that parents may receive an FPN for an unauthorised leave of absence relating to holiday in term time.

8. Schools and the Education Welfare Services will take into account any exceptional circumstances when determining whether to issue a FPN.

Appendix 3

What does 'percentage attendance' mean?

Parents/carers should be advised that from September 2015 the Government have categorised those students who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' students (P.A.). Bishop Heber High School will be specifically targeting this cohort of students, in an effort to improve their attendance in the future. The infographic below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.



Appendix 4

These stages should be followed once a student has reached 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and the school is considering the Education Welfare Service's involvement as current strategies are not improving attendance.

Stage 1 (within 30 days)

- Ensure usual attendance policy procedures are being followed
- Continue normal first day contact etc.
- Conduct investigative safeguarding home visits.
- Gather information from teaching and support staff regarding the student's strengths and needs – this may include a round robin
- Meet with student to elicit their views about school (eg. what is working well / working less well)
- Develop a shared action plan in collaboration with parents / carers, students and key staff (informed by assessments and to address specific factors underlying non-attendance)
- Continue to follow assess, plan, do and review cycles focussed on targeted intervention and support – eg. Support and Attendance Plan
- Make an initial single assessment (simplified TAF assessment)
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate (e.g iART)

If parent/carer does not engage with support offered

- Arrange an Attendance Panel Meeting to discuss barriers to attendance, record the voice of the child and complete and ESO checklist
- Consider a Notice to Improve monitoring period (10-20 sessions unauthorised)
- Consider a first warning letter for prosecution for more entrenched cases (20+ sessions)

Stage 2 (within 60 days)

- Continue with usual contact in line with attendance policy
- Conduct further home visits
- Discuss case with attendance lead in school
- Consider Attendance Planning Meeting if there is no improvement following the prosecution first warning letter
- Issue a final warning letter if no improvement following the Attendance Planning Meeting
- Consult with Education Welfare Officer to support in preparing witness statement and exhibits of evidence

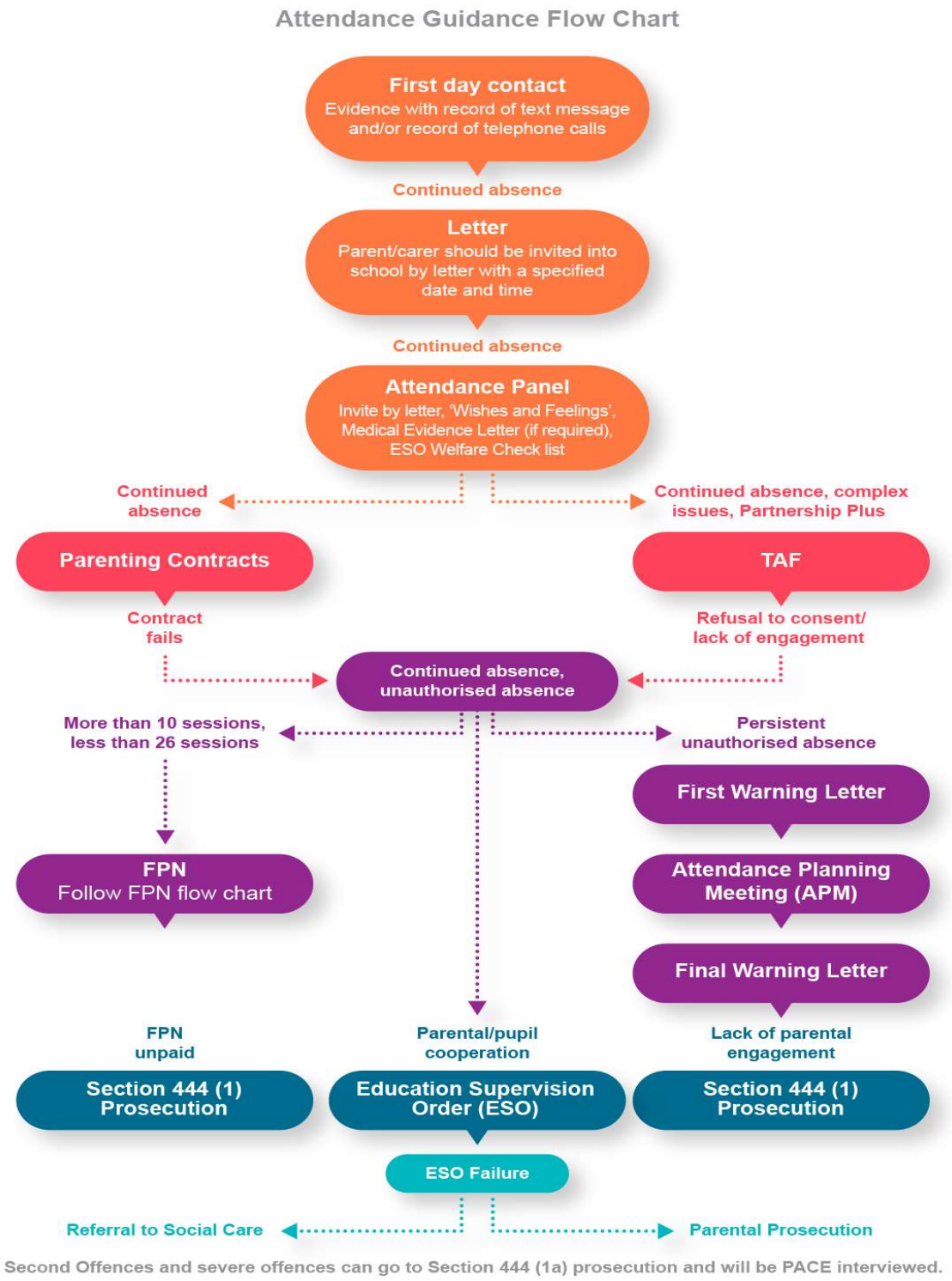
Stage 3 (within 90 days)

- EWO will support in setting up Court File as follows:

- ☐ Statement of evidence S9
- ☐ Exhibits (labelled and numbered)
- ☐ Head teacher certificate
- ☐ Recent registration certificate

Please note, each section says WITHIN the time scale, so you don't have to wait until 30 days have passed to take action.

Appendix 5: Attendance Procedure



Appendix 6

Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN)

Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN) is a term used to describe the needs of CYP who struggle to attend school due to underlying emotional based needs, such as anxiety, unhappiness and despair. These CYP may be reluctant to leave home and can present high levels of distress in response to parents' attempts to get them to school. This can result in prolonged absences from school.

EBSN is complex and multifaceted, requiring a holistic approach to assessment and intervention. Good practice guidance emphasises the importance of early identification and intervention to support the needs of CYP who may struggle to attend school, developing a SMART support plan, with timely review processes (CW&C, 2018).

The EBSN framework is embedded within the school's Attendance Policy and we use many of the tools and resources to underpin our early identification of need and targeted support and intervention approach.

Schools can access EBSN training and Guidance (EBSN: Good Practice Guidance for Schools) via: eCWIP for Education - Cheshire West Industry Professionals

Appendix 7

Concerning Attendance Letter (A)

Name
Address

Date

RE: CONCERNING ATTENDANCE

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding NAME's attendance at Bishop Heber High School for the current term.

To date, NAME has accumulated 'X' unauthorised/authorised absences, and it is crucial that we work to address this matter promptly. NAME's Registration Certificate is enclosed and shows the current percentage attendance.

It is important to note that regular school attendance is not only a legal requirement but also vital for your child's academic progress and personal development. Each day at school presents an opportunity for learning and growth, and consistent attendance is a fundamental aspect of achieving success in their education and plays a significant role in developing resilience after they leave school.

We are dedicated to ensuring that your child receives the support they need to overcome any barriers to attendance. If your child is facing any challenges that are affecting their attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to support in any way possible.

I will continue to monitor NAME's attendance closely and expect to see a sustained improvement in the immediate future.

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions, concerns, or if you would like to discuss strategies for improving your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Education Welfare Officer

Please Note:
It is our duty to inform you that ten or more unauthorised sessions, during a ten-week rolling period, may result in you receiving a Notice to Improve Letter. If unauthorised absences continue within the notice period following this letter, you may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice. These are issued per parent, per child. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that student will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same student within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period, and therefore another legal intervention will be considered, which may be prosecution.

Medical Evidence Letter (B)

Name
Address

Date

RE: Medical Evidence Letter

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

Bishop Heber High School places great emphasis upon every student achieving their full potential. It is important, therefore, that every student attends the school regularly and participates in the schooling that is offered if they are to make good progress and benefit from the opportunities that school offers.

It is expected that parents/carers support their child by complying with the law which imposes a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child is properly educated.

Your child has a high level of absence due to illness and/or medical appointments. It is the school's responsibility to authorise all absences and we need to be sure that we receive a satisfactory reason for each absence. I am aware that there have been reasons provided for your child's absences. **However, to enable us to authorise any future absences due to illness, medical evidence will be required.**

This can be in the form of:

- Copy of prescription relating to the illness
- A dated note from the GP's receptionist confirming your visit to the GP
- A medical appointment card
- Evidence of medicine prescribed by the GP - which should clearly state your child's name.

If there is anything that you feel the school should be aware of, or that I can help you with, I would be grateful if you could contact me by email <enter email address> or by phone 01948 860571. I have enclosed a copy of your child's attendance certificate for your information.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Education Welfare Officer

Please Note:
It is our duty to inform you that ten or more unauthorised sessions, during a ten-week rolling period, may result in you receiving a Notice to Improve Letter. If unauthorised absences continue within the notice period following this letter, you may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice. These are issued per parent, per child. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that student will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same student within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period, and therefore another legal intervention will be considered, which may be prosecution.

Attendance Meeting Invitation (C)

Name
Address

Date

RE: Attendance Meeting Invtiation

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

Following my previous letter sent on DATE, I am writing to you concerning NAME's attendance at school, which stands at PERCENTAGE%. I have enclosed a copy of your child's attendance certificate for your information.

As I cannot see any improvement and attendance continues to be of concern, I would like to invite you to meet with myself and your child's Year Leader / FORM TUTOR on DATE at TIME where we will discuss any concerns or issues affecting your child's attendance. We are dedicated to ensuring that your child receives the support they need to overcome any barriers to attendance. The meeting will last approximately 15 minutes.

During this meeting we will discuss any concerns that are preventing NAME's attendance to school and aim to create a support plan to help improve their attendance. We look forward to your co-operation in this matter and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school on 01948 860571.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Education Welfare Officer

Please Note:
It is our duty to inform you that ten or more unauthorised sessions, during a ten-week rolling period, may result in you receiving a Notice to Improve Letter. If unauthorised absences continue within the notice period following this letter, you may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice. These are issued per parent, per child. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that student will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same student within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period, and therefore another legal intervention will be considered, which may be prosecution.

Attendance Meeting – Outcomes Letter (Di)

Name
Address

Date

RE: Attendance Meeting – Outcomes Letter

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

Thank you for attending the meeting on …… to discuss FORENAME's attendance.

Please find enclosed a copy of the Action Plan which we hope will encourage and support FORENAME. The Action Plan will be reviewed regularly in school over the coming weeks.

It is our duty to inform you that ten or more unauthorised sessions, during a ten-week rolling period, may result in you receiving a Notice to Improve Letter. If unauthorised absences continue within the notice period following this letter, you may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice. These are issued per parent, per child. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that student will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same student within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period, and therefore another legal intervention will be considered, which may be prosecution.

If you wish to discuss the Plan or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact school on 01948 860571.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Education Welfare Officer

Non Attendance at Attendance Meeting - Outcomes Letter Dii

Name
Address

Date

RE: **Non Attendance at Attendance Meeting - Outcomes Letter**

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

Please find enclosed a copy of the Action Plan agreed in your absence for the meeting we had scheduled for DATE. I understand that unforeseen circumstances can arise, however I wanted to ensure you are kept informed about proceedings.

As a school, we are dedicated to ensuring that your child receives the support they need to overcome any barriers to attendance. Therefore, I met with CHILD's Head of Year, NAME, regarding CHILD's attendance and together, we devised the attached action plan to help support CHILD in school and improve his/her attendance.

Should you have any queries or wish to contribute additional insights, please do not hesitate to contact school on 01948 860571 and we can ensure the best possible outcomes for CHILD.

Yours sincerely,

Name

Education Welfare Officer

No Improvement after Attendance Meeting and Plan - First Warning Letter (Ei)

Name
Address

Date

RE: **No Improvement after Attendance Meeting and Plan - First Warning Letter**

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

Attendance: XX%

I am writing to express my concern regarding **NAME's** continued irregular attendance. According to their attendance certificate, between **DATE** and **DATE NAME** has been marked absent for **XX** sessions, of which **XX** were authorised and **XX** were unauthorised. **NAME** has completed **XX** full weeks in school out of a possible **XX** weeks. A copy of the attendance certificate is enclosed.

Bishop Heber High School has made efforts to engage with you in attempting to improve this situation but despite this there has been no improvement in **NAME's** attendance.

Such attendance is not acceptable and I must remind you that S.444, Education Act 1996 requires you to ensure that your child attends school, on time, every time the school is open. I am writing this letter to give you an opportunity to make sure that from now on and in future, your child attends school regularly.

Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority taking one of the following actions:

a) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1,000. BISHOP HEBER HIGH SCHOOL RESPECT · OPPORTUNITY · ACHIEVEMENT Attendance & Punctuality Policy including EBSN 2022/23 Page 25 of 27
b) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.

I look forward to your support and co-operation in ensuring an immediate and sustained improvement in your child's school attendance.

If you wish to discuss this matter, please contact via email or by phone 01948 860571 at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Education Welfare Officer

BISHOP HEBER HIGH SCHOOL

RESPECT · OPPORTUNITY · ACHIEVEMENT

Attendance Planning Meeting (Eii)

Name
Address

Date

RE: **Attendance Planning Meeting**

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

Attendance: XX%

As there has been no improvement in <insert student name>'s school attendance, you and <insert student name> are requested to attend an Attendance Planning Meeting at <day, date and time> at <venue>. .

It is extremely important that you attend this meeting, as <insert student name>'s attendance record is so poor that we now have to consider whether legal proceedings should be considered.

The meeting will provide you the opportunity to discuss your views with <insert senior leadership name> in attendance who is the Senior Leadership Team Link for <enter Year Group>.

Yours sincerely

Name
Education Welfare Officer

Final Warning Letter (Eiii)

Name
Address

Date

RE: **Final Warning Letter**

Dear
Student Name:
DOB:
Tutor Group:

Attendance: XX%

On <insert date>, we wrote to you concerning <insert student name>'s irregular attendance at Bishop Heber High School.

Unfortunately, I now have to contact you again as <insert student name> has continued to be absent from school during the last **XX** weeks.

Such an attendance record is not acceptable and I now have to warn you that unless there is an immediate improvement in <insert student name>'s school attendance, the Local Authority will have no option but to instigate one of the following options:

a) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1000.

b) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.

I would like to request that you contact me to discuss this important matter via email <enter email address> or by phone 01948 860571.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Education Welfare Officer