BORDEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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Drawn up / Revised by:	**Rebecca Powell/ Sarah Murphy**
Leadership Group	**Rebecca Powell**
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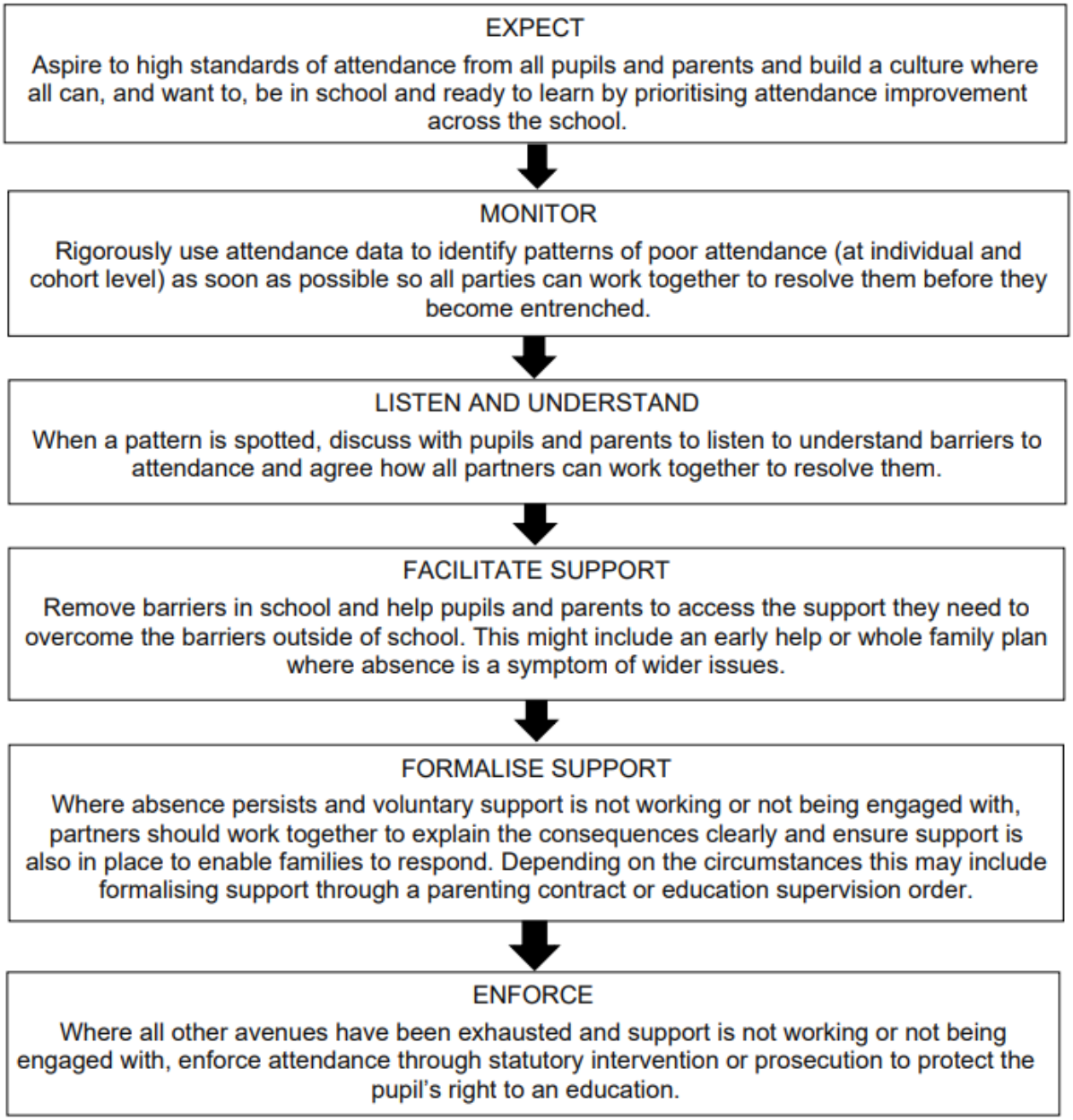
1.0 Statement of Intent

Borden is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our students. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our students and we use a variety of termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality, along with information on school noticeboards and assemblies.

The Trustees, Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Borden.

2.0 <u>The DFE Attendance Guidance (2022)</u> outlines school's responsibilities with regards to attendance below.



3.0 Timeline of School Action for Non-attendance

Percentage	School Action	Including
95-100%	Prevention	Assemblies, tutor time activities, displays
90-95%	Early Intervention	Monitoring by Head of Year, parental meetings, in-school intervention and external agencies
Less than 90%	Targetted	Monitoring by AHT Attendance and AHT Key Stage, attendance officer, external agencies (such as Local Authority School Liaison Officer, Pupil Referral Units, Inclusion and Attendance Service)

4.0 Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Poor attendance undermines their education and can put students at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue; all parties must know that your child is safe.

If a student is unable to attend school, parents should report this on Edulink before 8:00am or if Edulink is unavailable, a call must be made to 01795 424192 before 8.00am.

Information about the cause of each absence is always required, either in writing or via a telephone message. Parents should explain the nature of illness, not just say 'illness' or 'unwell' or a signed appointment card or prescription/medicine label can be provided where medical attention has been sought. Extended or repeated periods of absence may require a medical note or hospital discharge papers.

Parents are asked to keep to a minimum the occasions when students miss all or part of the school day (e.g. by endeavouring to arrange medical, dental, optician appointments outside school hours or during school holidays)

When medical and dental appointments cannot be arranged for outside school hours, permission for absence should be requested by letter in advance. The letter should be addressed to the student's Form Tutor. A note permitting absence will be given to the student, which can be shown to a teacher on leaving class and agencies checking for truancy during the school day. Students must sign out before leaving school premises.

Further advice for parents can be found on the school website.

5.0 The Role of the School Staff

It is recognised that school attendance and safeguarding are inextricably linked. Therefore, all staff members have a statutory and safeguarding duty to ensure their registers are completed on time. Alongside this, staff are required to edit marks for a student who is in their presence instead of where the registers suggest they should be.

Alongside this, it is understood that schools have a responsibility for investigating non-attendance (The Child Missing Education guidance, 2016).

Role	Responsibility	Including
Headteacher	Whole school	Data and reporting Accountability
Assistant Headteacher (Attendance)	Targeted Students	Data and reporting Accountability Liaising with Attendance Officer Liaising with internal and external agencies Home visits Parent meetings
Attendance Officer	All Students	Data and reporting Daily attendance calls Attendance coding Weekly attendance analysis Termly attendance analysis Parent letters Home visits (3 or more days of no contact, or extended periods of absence) Reporting of reduced timetables to LA Liaising with internal and external agencies
Assistant Headteacher (Key Stage)	Targeted Students	Liaising with Attendance Officer Liaising with internal agencies Organisation of reduced timetables Parent meetings
Head of Year	Early Intervention	Liaising with Attendance Officer Liaising with internal agencies Organisation of reduced timetables Parent meetings
Tutor	Prevention	Registering students in a timely manner Delivering key attendance messages Tracking tutee attendance weekly Attendance conversations Parent phone calls
Teacher	Prevention	Registering students in a timely manner Tracking student attendance to lessons Providing work for absent students where

		appropriate Parent phone calls
Support Staff	Prevention, Early Intervention, Targeted Students (role dependent)	Registering students in a timely manner Parent phone calls Providing support for students

6.0 Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence (leave) during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays

When a child has a sickness bug, we do not operate a 48 hour clear policy. This means that your child is expected back into school the next day provided they are well.

7.0 Leave of Absence/Holiday

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Pupil Registration Regulations, removing the Headteacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are guilty of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in “exceptional circumstances” but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher’s decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

This also applies to absence relating to sports. Authorisation will be at the Headteacher’s discretion, and will likely only relate to representing the county or country.

8.0 Children Missing from Education (CME)

No child will be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and the PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate.

Please see circumstances below:-

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:-

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

9.0 Lateness

Students are expected to arrive by 8.40am for registration at 8:45am. All students that arrive between 8.45am and 9.00am must report to their tutor for registration, and will be marked as late. Students arriving after 9.00 am must report to the main reception to be directed to the register where the reason for lateness is recorded.

Afternoon registration is from 1.55pm-2.00pm. Students late after this time will be marked as late by their lesson 4 teacher.

Frequent lateness after the morning register has closed will be discussed with parents and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice.

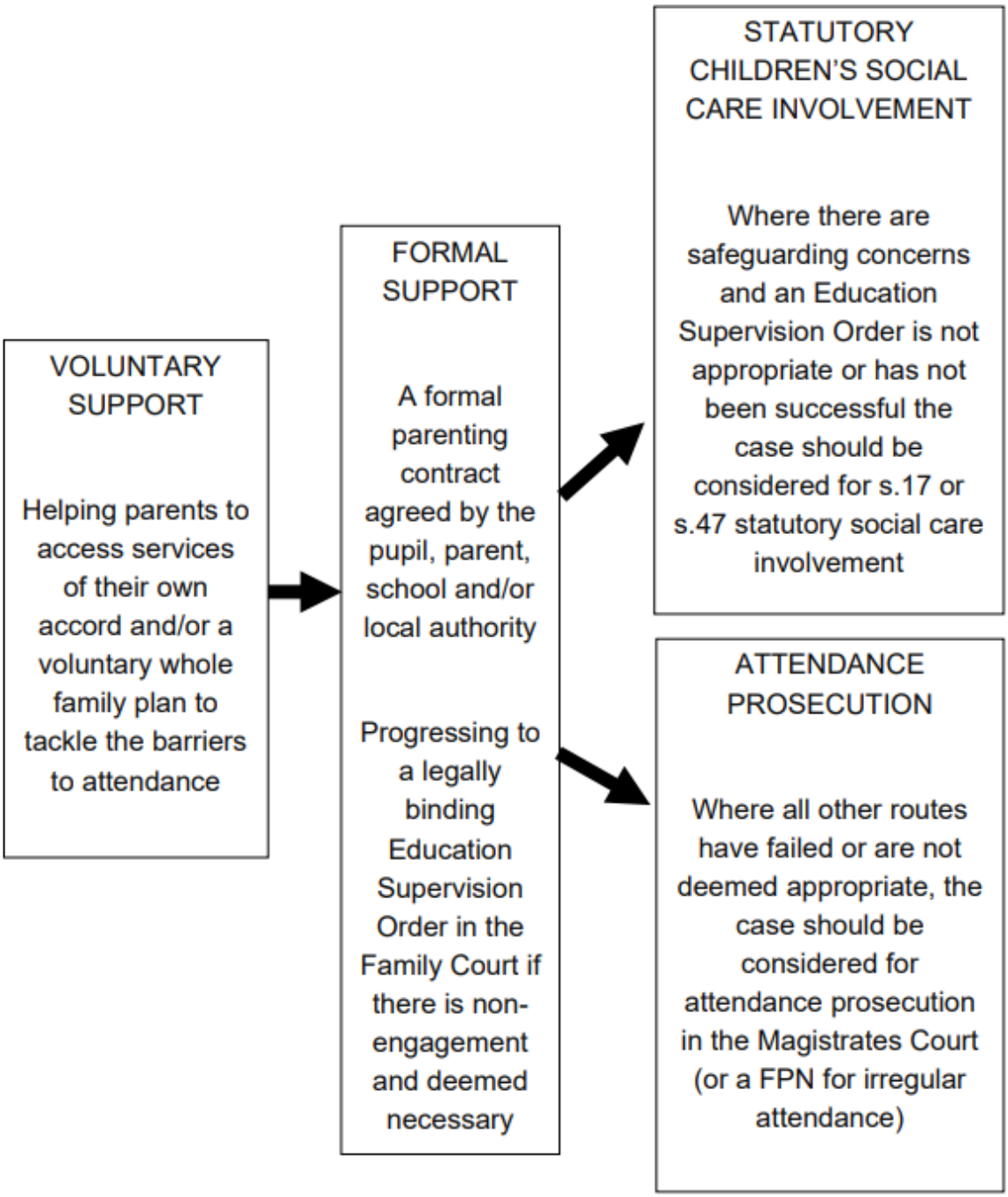
The register will close at 9:00am and 2:10pm. Students arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness – Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016.

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed during any possible 100 school sessions for a Penalty Notice Warning Letter.
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period, Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child)
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings

10.0 <u>Legal Intervention</u>

The DFE Attendance Guidance outlines the below Legal Action with regards to school attendance:



Persistent unauthorised absence may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing. When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and minutes of any meetings will be attached to the completed AS1 referral form with any other relevant information. Local Authority Action may include:

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of persistent unauthorised absence or where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours.
- Absence for 10 or more half day sessions (5 school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive.
- The PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Headteachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Appendix 1 - Covid-19 Absence Guidance

Borden Grammar School follows Government advice regarding absence due to Covid-19.

For the latest guidance please refer to this link:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19#Children