



# **Rosehill Junior School**

# Attendance Policy

2023



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## Statement of intent

At Rawmarsh Rosehill Junior School, we believe that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents. We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

Our attendance is closely monitored by Miss Charles, Miss Abbott, Mrs Pritchard and Mr Hayes. As a school, we follow Rotherham's Attendance Pathway.

### 1. Legal framework

Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age, who is registered at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.



This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>
- LA Pathway for Schools - Rotherham Early Help 'Attendance Matters' 2019  
<https://supportingfamilies.blog.gov.uk/2023/01/20/rotherham-local-authority-school-attendance-matters-pathway/>

This policy operates in conjunction with other school policies.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT or taking on the attendance lead role.



- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance leads are responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents regarding attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

### 3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

**Absence:**

- Not attending school for any reason

**Authorised absence:**

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave



- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

#### **Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

#### **Persistent absence (PA):**

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

## **4. Attendance expectations**

Rawmarsh Rosehill has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils. Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day.

The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – once for the morning session and once in the afternoon.

School starts at 8:45am. The register is taken at 8:50am and pupils are expected to be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time. If your children is not in school when the register is taken, they will be marked as Absent (N).

If your child arrives at school after the register has been taken, the absent mark will be changed to a late mark (L). The morning registers will be closed **by 10:15am**. Pupils will receive a late (after register closes) mark (U) if they are not in their classroom by this time. If children are late do to an pre-arranged appointment, they will be marked with an M.

Pupils attending after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark

Parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.



## 5. Absence procedures

Parents are required to contact the school office before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last.

Absence can be reported by;

- telephone 01709 710574 ext 1 (to leave a message)
- telephone 01709 710574 (hold to speak to reception)
- email on [info@rosehill.org.uk](mailto:info@rosehill.org.uk)

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, the attendance officer will contact the parent by email as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school. If parents do not respond to the email, a telephone call will be made.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to enter into Arbor (the school's census system)

Three school days in a row, or more than 10 school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s). The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. In the case of PA (persistent absence), arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance leads. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation. If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, we will follow the School Attendance Matters Pathway approach and inform the attendance leads. Parents will then be notified by letter.

## 6. Arbor

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers, to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities. Parents can log into the Arbor Parent Portal to check to keep track of their child's attendance.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session.



The register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent.
- Late.

The following codes are used to record absence:

- B = Educated Off Site
- C = Other Authorised Absence
- D = Dual Registration (at another educational establishment)
- E = Excluded
- G = Family Holiday (Not Agreed)
- H = Family Holiday (Agreed)
- I = Illness
- J = Interview
- M = Medical/Dental Appointments (proof of appointment needs to be obtained)
- N = No Reason
- O = Unauthorised Absence
- P = Sporting Activity (Approved in advance)
- R = Religious observance
- T = Traveller Absence
- V = Educational Trip
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil Not on Roll
- # = School Closed to Pupils

## **7. Authorising absence requests**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

### **Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. Any requests for leave



during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be considered. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school.

Amendments made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that from September 2013, no holidays will be authorised by the School in term-time. Holidays in term-time will be recorded as unauthorised and may incur a fine.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Medical/dental appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

### **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence.

This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:



- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Religious observance**

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance. The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set. Absence will be authorised for the day of the religious observance but any days before or after the religious holiday will be recorded as unauthorised. The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term 'Traveller' - Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at two schools (their main school and the temporary school).

## **8. SEND and Health-related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult. In



line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs and sign post
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.



- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs

## **9. Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as an absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence. Truancy implies that parents are not aware of the reason behind their child's absence and the age and stage of our children means this would become a safeguarding issue. All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning. The DSL will be involved where absence may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **10. Children Missing in Education**

All schools must monitor attendance through their daily register. We are in agreement with the Local Authority to inform them of children who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. We must also notify the authority if a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in certain circumstances. Children who remain on school roll may not necessarily be missing education but we should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor. It is also important that irregular attendance is referred to the authority. Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their children, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences.

If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer their child to another school, the Head Teacher must be informed in writing. Children cannot be removed from roll until we have been notified by another School that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending and who cannot be traced cannot be removed from roll. They are reported to the Local Authority Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform a member of the office staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate.



The pupil's records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority for follow up through the Children Missing in Education procedure.

## **11. Attendance Intervention**

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance leads, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by sending letters to parents, engaging with Rotherham Early Help and using fixed penalty notices.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Weekly attendance section in the whole school assembly using the 'Spin the Wheel' game
- Termly certificates for 100% attendance
- End of year 100% attendance awards.

The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

## **12. Working with Parents**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.



The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance leads will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance leads will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

### **13. PA (Persistent Absence)**

Children with an attendance of 90% or below are classed as persistent absentees. Persistent absenteeism is when a child misses 10% or more of the possible sessions in an academic year.

We monitor attendance on a weekly basis. When a child's attendance or punctuality begins to be a concern, parents will be informed and subsequently become involved as outlined below.

For PA, Rawmarsh Rosehill Junior School follows the Rotherham Early Help 'Attendance Matters' Local Authority Pathway for Schools and the flow chart for this can be found at the bottom of this policy.



**Stage 1:** If a student has 3 days absence, a letter (found at the bottom of this policy) will be sent to parents/carers. This is Letter 1. These children will be monitored and the Attendance Leader will contact parents/ carers directly for significant concerns. This will be monitored for 4 weeks. The student will continue to be monitored for one more week per day of additional absence.

**Stage 2:** If further unauthorised absence occurs (7 days or 4 broken weeks), a second letter will be sent (Letter 2) to parents/carers. A meeting will be arranged with the student and parent.

**Stage 3:** If further unauthorised absence occurs (15 days or 8 broken weeks), a third letter will be sent (Letter 3) to parents/carers. A further meeting will be arranged with the student and parent.

**Stage 4:** If further unauthorised absence occurs the School will make a referral to the EWO. This will involve an Attendance Support Plan (ASP) meeting taking place with parents/carers to issue an EPN warning letter and agree an action plan. This is the beginning of a six-week evidential period 9

**Stage 5:** If further unauthorised absence occurs within 15 school days of the evidential period, an FPN will be issued

**Stage 6:** Attendance will continue to be monitored and, if further unauthorised absence occurs, the process will be re-instigated from Stage 3 A second Fixed Penalty Notice could lead to automatic prosecution by the Local Authority under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

## 14. Monitoring and Analysing attendance

The attendance leads will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs. The school will collect data regarding punctuality, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.



The attendance leads will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly and yearly basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance leads will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance leads will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future. Poor attendance is considered a safeguarding concern which is discussed by staff at weekly CPD.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data. Where possible, the school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.



## Appendices

Attendance letters (as mentioned in section 13 PA). When school sends out the letters, the wording may differ slightly to allow the school to personalise the letters.

### Letter 1

#### IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

NAME OF CHILD:  
DATE OF BIRTH:  
REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

I am writing to you to share my concern regarding the attendance of your child, (insert child's name.)

(insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

Whilst occasionally, absence may have been due to illness, school are concerned that on occasion, there has been a lack of satisfactory evidence provided to explain the absence.

School and the Local Authority are keen that families who experience difficulties are supported in order to help make improvements with issues that are affecting family life and that can result in poor attendance. Support is available for families through the Early Help Assessment and Plan. This is a process that helps professionals understand the issues that may be affecting the child and family and plan appropriate support to help. We recognise that family life can at times be difficult and sometimes families' need a helping hand to assist.

It is, however, important to note that enforcement action may be taken if an improvement in attendance is not made. In light of this, we are keen to offer support and we hope that you take up this offer. If there is not a marked improvement in (insert child's name) attendance at school, the matter will be reported to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) with a view to seeking enforcement as per the provisions of the Education Act (1996.) If LASAP make the decision to issue a fixed penalty notice (fine) you will be informed by letter and will be given 21 days to pay. If LASAP make the decision that there will be an FPN (fine) and there are sufficient concerns that warrant further action, your child's case will be brought formally to LASAP, and you (and your child where appropriate) will be invited to attend.

It is important that you take this information seriously and act in the best interests of your child to ensure future good attendance.

If you need to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

### Letter 3

#### IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: FINAL WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

NAME OF CHILD:  
DATE OF BIRTH:  
REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

Despite writing to you twice previously (insert date of letter 1 and letter 2) I find it necessary to write to you a final letter to re-emphasise my concerns due to the ongoing, serious nature of your child's (insert child's name) poor attendance.

As previously stated, I must reaffirm the duty that is imposed by the Education Act (1996) upon parents/carers to ensure that children of school age attend school every time it is open, unless the children are prevented from doing so as a result of their own illness. In the case of illness, medical evidence should always be submitted.

(insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

Despite contacting you twice previously your child's attendance has remained concerning.

The explanations given by you, for your child's absences, are not considered to be reasonable within the provision of the Education Act. I must, therefore, advise you that I am now compelled to take further steps in this matter by referring this to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) it is my duty to bring to your attention the penalties which may be imposed via this route by the Magistrates Court in line with the Education Act (1996), namely:

*"Any person guilty of an offence against Section 444 of this Act" (these are the sections of the Act relating to compulsory school attendance) "shall be liable on summary conviction, in the case of a first or subsequent offence against that section, to a fine not exceeding £2,500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months."*

I must also point out that one of the actions from LASAP could be an Education Supervision Order imposed by the Family Court, which gives the Local Authority discretion to intervene with a family when attendance is very concerning. This means that you and your child will be required to follow directions that are outlined in the order imposed by Court and will be expected to work closely with a professional from the Local Authority.

It is extremely important to note that enforcement action will now be taken.

In the event of a fixed penalty notice (fine) being issued, the Local Authority will write to you with details of when and how to pay. This will be followed up with further contact to discuss how future attendance will be addressed swiftly.

If, in addition to the above, it is agreed that the case needs to be heard by LASAP the Local Authority will contact you with the date and time to attend LASAP.

I should be pleased if you would give your immediate attention to this matter, and if you have any queries regarding this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

### Letter 2

#### IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

NAME OF CHILD:  
DATE OF BIRTH:  
REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

I am writing to you to share my concern regarding the attendance of your child, (insert child's name.)

(insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

Whilst occasionally, absence may have been due to illness, school are concerned that on occasion, there has been a lack of satisfactory evidence provided to explain the absence.

School and the Local Authority are keen that families who experience difficulties are supported in order to help make improvements with issues that are affecting family life and that can result in poor attendance. Support is available for families through the Early Help Assessment and Plan. This is a process that helps professionals understand the issues that may be affecting the child and family and plan appropriate support to help. We recognise that family life can at times be difficult and sometimes families' need a helping hand to assist.

It is, however, important to note that enforcement action may be taken if an improvement in attendance is not made. In light of this, we are keen to offer support and we hope that you take up this offer. If there is not a marked improvement in (insert child's name) attendance at school, the matter will be reported to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) with a view to seeking enforcement as per the provisions of the Education Act (1996.) If LASAP make the decision to issue a fixed penalty notice (fine) you will be informed by letter and will be given 21 days to pay. If LASAP make the decision that there will be an FPN (fine) and there are sufficient concerns that warrant further action, your child's case will be brought formally to LASAP, and you (and your child where appropriate) will be invited to attend.

It is important that you take this information seriously and act in the best interests of your child to ensure future good attendance.

If you need to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

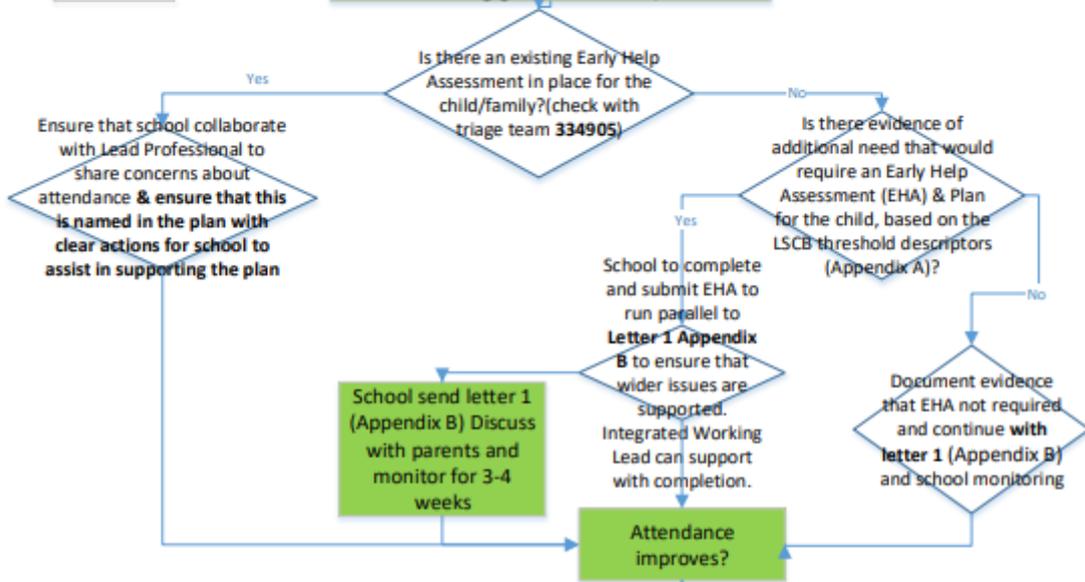
Yours sincerely,



# Rotherham Early Help 'Attendance Matters' Local Authority Pathway for Schools Part 1 of 2

August  
2019  
FINAL 1.6

School has concerns about attendance e.g. 92% or 10 sessions unauthorised absence- (threshold to be agreed internally by school using guidance above)



**IMPORTANT**  
NB for children and families with additional need, the Early Help Assessment **must be** the underpinning tool used throughout this process to ensure that adequate support and challenge is in place to enhance outcomes and support attendance. Some schools have replaced their pupil support plans with the EHA to ease this process. Integrated Working Leads are available to support the EHA process. The EHA is a shared responsibility across the wider children's workforce to ensure that issues are addressed early in the development of a problem. The definition of additional need can be seen in the threshold descriptor 'Levels of Need' document in Appendix A. **Children known to have additional need, that don't have an EHA in place will not progress to FPN.**

Continue with support package

LA to write to parents (& notify school) with either:  
A) FPN notification  
B) FPN plus notice of LASAP formal hearing  
C) LASAP formal hearing only