



STAMFORD
PARK TRUST

Stamford Park Trust

Rayner Stephens High School
Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

September 2023

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1 Introduction

School attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential.

Rayner Stephens High School believes that school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. The foundation of securing good attendance is that our school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Rayner Stephens High School values all students. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties and remove barriers by building strong and trusting relationships.

Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all students and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school. The school has a strong culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

The school sets high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students and communicates these regularly to students and parents. Our school visibly demonstrates the benefits of good attendance throughout school life. This includes in displays, assemblies and in registration periods. This includes praising and rewarding improvements in attendance at year group, class/form and individual level.

Rayner Stephens High School recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, excellence and behaviour for learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

2 Key Contacts

Attendance Manager

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

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Deputy Head of School with responsibility for attendance (DSL)

Mrs T Marshall

Tameside Education Welfare Officer

Mrs A Gaunt adele.gaunt@tameside.gov.uk

3 Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that families must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. It is the legal responsibility of every parent / carer to make sure their child attends school regularly. This means they must attend every day that the school is open except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that families secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the student was:

- present
- absent
- present at approved educational activity
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We also record whether students are punctual to their lessons.

4 Using Attendance Data

Student attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a student's attendance is a cause for concern.

Rayner Stephens High School will share attendance data with the Department of Education and the Local Authority as required. All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

5 Categorising Absence

Where students of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the Head of School and cannot be authorised by families. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the student's absence has been received and when this is supported by medical evidence where requested.

Families must advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and any subsequent days of absence. Reporting absences should be completed before **8:00am**

Absence is categorised as follows:

The school may choose to use the following codes on the official register to record attendance or absence.

Attendance Codes

Code	Meaning
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late before register closes
B	Off-site educational activity
D	Dual registered – student attends another educational establishment
J	Interview with another educational establishment or prospective employer
P	Student is taking part in a school approved, supervised educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip organised by the school
W	Work experience

Authorised Absence Codes

Code	Meaning
C	Exceptional leave of absence authorised by the school
E	Suspended or excluded from the school but no alternative provision made
H	Holiday authorised by the school
I	Illness, not medical or dental appointments. Medical evidence may be required
M	Medical or dental appointments
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
W	Work experience

Unauthorised Absence Codes

Code	Meaning
G	Holiday absence not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Absent from school without authorisation
U	Arrived in school after registration closed (9.15am)

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Code	Meaning
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances e.g. a local or national emergency
Z	Prospective student not on admission register
#	Planned whole or partial school closure

6 Illness

Please encourage your child to attend school for minor ailments like a sore throat or a headache.

Parents must notify RSHS on the first day, and every subsequent day, the child is unable to attend due to illness.

Where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, medical evidence will be requested to support the absence. Absence evidence can be in the form of prescriptions, medication boxes and/or appointment cards. Medical evidence must contain the student’s full name and date prescribed.

An email and text message is sent to every family whose child has an ‘unexplained absence’ each morning asking them to contact school; if there is no contact a phone call will be made or a text message may be sent. In some cases, we may undertake a home visit.

7 Prolonged absences due to medical conditions or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

Students with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age

who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. The education must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. Local authorities should have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs.

In some cases, the school may refer to the School Nurse Service or Tameside Education Welfare Service for additional advice and support.

Some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other student and therefore the attendance ambition for these students should be the same as they are for any other student. That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, schools should be mindful of the barriers these students face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

8 Medical/Dental Appointments

Families are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, for pre-planned appointments, parents / carers should get school's agreement in advance by contacting the Attendance Officer. Students should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Families must show the appointment card to school. If a student is absent for a full day to attend a medical appointment then the student may incur half a day unauthorised absence.

9 Other Authorised Circumstances

This relates to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances

10 Leave of Absence During Term Time

Heads of School are not permitted to authorise holiday absence from school unless there are exceptional circumstances. Only a parent / carer the child normally lives with can apply for a leave of absence to the Head of School, leaving as long as possible before the requested date. It is up to the Head of School if the absence is granted and for what period.

The 'Leave of Absence Request Form' can be found on the school website and at the bottom of this policy.

Once the Head of School has received the request, they will decide whether to authorise the absence and will write to you with the outcome. Families can usually expect a written response within five school days. Families who then decide to take their child out of school during term time, without the Head of School's permission or when the Head of School has not authorised the absence, are likely to be issued with a Penalty Notice. Section 444(a) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to families if they take a leave of absence in term time without the school's authorisation.

Where a student has been granted a leave of absence and the student has not attended school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period granted, and:

- the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and
- the school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the student's location, but they have not succeeded then school may take the student off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2013. This could mean the student could lose their school place

11 Punctuality

We expect all students at Rayner Stephens High School to attend school on time, every day. **Students who arrive after 8:40am and before 9:15am should report to the Punctuality Desk where staff will mark them as late (L).** Students should then proceed to lesson 1. Students are strongly encouraged to be on time for school as any lateness will have an impact on their first lesson and their own learning, and the learning of others.

Students who arrive after 9:15am should report to student reception where staff will mark them as late (U) and are considered to have had an unauthorised absence. On arrival, students should proceed to lessons. **Any student who arrives late (after 8:40 am) will receive a Late 15-minute detention.**

If there is a last-minute legitimate reason for lateness, i.e. and emergency doctor's appointment, families should notify the school before 8:00am that their child will be late for this reason and on arrival at school should show their appointment card/letter at the student reception.

If a student arrives late to school on two or more occasions within a five-day period they will be given a C3 detention lasting 60 minutes. Persistent lateness will result in appropriate school consequences such as, punctuality report, attendance plan and/or additional consequences.

If a student arrives late after the close of registration (9:15am) they will be issued with a Late detention at break. If a student arrives late after the close of registration on two or more occasions within a five-day period they may be placed on a 4 week punctuality monitoring report.

Text messages are sent out informing families if their child is late. Poor punctuality can also have legal implications for families. Students who arrive after 9:15am without a valid reason will be marked as unauthorised late; 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, which includes unauthorised lates late may result in a Penalty Notice warning fine being issued.

If a student is late to a lesson they will be sanctioned in line with the school's behaviour policy which is a C2 Late to Lesson mark. Persistent lateness to lessons will result in an escalation of response by the school. This may include punctuality report or an increase in sanction.

12 Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where a student's absence is not one of the types of absence listed as authorised in regulation 6(2) or where the reason for a student's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

Absences will not be authorised unless families/carers have provided a satisfactory explanation, and that it has been accepted as such by the Head of School. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A student's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniform
- Visiting the hairdressers or rectifying hair cut/colours at home
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up" student's refusal to attend school
- Minor illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Family holidays which have not been approved by the Head of School
- Staying at home to care for siblings/families
- Attendance appointments which are not for the student
- Moving House
- Translating for families or other relatives

The Head of School *may* not authorise a student's absence if:

- The family/carer has not provided any or enough information

- The reason(s) that are given do not fall within those categories defined by the Education Act 1996 as legally permissible
- The reason(s) given would not normally involve an absence of that length
- There is doubt that the information has come from a family/carer or from someone unauthorised to act on their behalf.
- The validity of the information provided is being questioned
- Your child's attendance is below 95%.

13 Persistent and Severe Absence

An individual child is deemed by the government to be a persistent absentee if their attendance is less than 90% (regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised). The school takes all absence seriously and we have defined 'at risk of PA' as the equivalent of 95% attendance or below. In addition, students whose attendance falls below 97% become the focus of interest and monitoring. Sessions of absence are used to determine the Stage of Intervention required for each student according to the time of year, and appropriate follow up is put in place to make the required improvements upon review of data.

Where absence escalates and students miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), Rayner Stephens High School and the local authority will work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these students. In doing so, school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and will work together with families and additional partners to put interventions in place.

Particular focus will be given to all students who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). We will work with families, local authority and partners to offer a more intensive support package. This may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

Where all avenues of support have been facilitated by school, the local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an EHCP) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect.

14 Home visits

Members of staff from Rayner Stephens High School may visit your home if your child is absent regardless of whether a reason for absence has been received. Staff who may visit include the school's attendance officer, Heads of Year, Pastoral Support Workers, Teaching Assistants or the Senior Leadership Team.

Members of staff from Rayner Stephens High School may also contact the police and Children's Social Care if they are concerned for a student's welfare.

The school may carry out a home visit where an absence has exceeded three days. If required, the school will request to see the child during this home visit.

If a family has received a site and communication ban school staff will seek to obtain a reason for absence via the schools messaging system or liaise with the contact that the family have nominated.

The school may seek advice from partner agencies to support in ensuring the student is safe. This may include the Local Authority education welfare service, Greater Manchester Police and Children's Social Services.

15 Deletions from the Register

The only reasons a student's name shall be deleted from the admissions register are:

- A student has a School Attendance Order which has been changed to name another school or revoked
- A student has been registered at another school
- A student is also registered at one or more other schools and the other school has agreed the deletion
- The parent/carer of a student has notified school in writing that the student is receiving education otherwise than at school
- A student no longer lives a reasonable distance from the school
- A student has not returned following a leave of absence
- A student is unlikely to return to school before ceasing to be of compulsory legal age due to health reasons
- A student has been continually absent from school for 20 school days
- A student is in custody and detained for a period of more than 4 months
- A student has died
- A student will cease to be of compulsory school age
- A student has been permanently excluded from school

All schools are required to inform their LA in every circumstance when they are about to delete a student's name from the admission register.

Schools inform the LA of the student's destination school and home address if the student is moving to a new school (where they can reasonably obtain this information); and inform their LA of all new students, including their address and previous school (again where they can reasonably obtain this information).

16 Children Missing from Education (CME)

When a student fails to attend school for a fixed period with no contact from families, they are classified as a Child Missing from Education (CME). This may occur when a student does not attend for the first week of a new term with no contact from families or when a student, at any point during the school year, does not attend for 10 consecutive days with no contact from families.

In the event of a student, not attending school for 10 consecutive school days and there has been no contact from families, the school will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) to report the student as a Child Missing from Education. The CME tracking officer will then attempt to trace the family and will report to the school with an update and advise when the school can remove the student from the school roll.

17 Elective Home Education (EHE)

Whilst home education is not supported by Rayner Stephens High School because of the negative impacts that home education may have on educational outcomes, all families have the legal right to elect to home educate their child/children should they wish to do so.

Any family wishing to home educate their child should, in the first instance, arrange to meet with a senior member of staff at school to discuss this option and discuss the reasons for wanting to home educate. Should the families still wish to home educate their child/children after this meeting they should write to the Head of School notifying them of their decision.

Once the school is in receipt of this request, they will notify the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service and a parent will be invited to an intervention meeting, which a Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will attend.

The Education Welfare Service will carry out checks on any family who elects to home educate their child/children.

Following home education, should families wish for their child/children to return to school parents/carers should apply online.

If a family, reports a student has moved out of the area school staff may seek advice and share relevant information with partner agencies in ensuring the child is safe. This may include the Local Authority education welfare service, Police and Children's Social Services.

There is no automatic right of return to Rayner Stephens High School once a family has chosen to EHE their child.

18 Roles and Responsibilities

Rayner Stephens High School believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, families, students and the wider school community.

18.1 Stamford Park Trust will be responsible for:

- Ensuring academy leaders and staff receiving training on attendance
- Making certain that academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Reviewing the attendance policy annually in accordance with its own internal procedures
- Taking an active role in attendance improvement by monitoring attendance across the trust, particularly for the most vulnerable students and intervening systematically where appropriate via the executive team
- Providing the trust board with timely information so that performance can be scrutinised at the highest level.

18.2 The Local Governing Body will

- Ensure attendance is promoted to students and their families
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations England 2016 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead whole school attendance
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

18.3 The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Agree school attendance targets
- Actively promote the importance of attendance
- Form positive relationships with students and families
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations England 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead whole school attendance and allocate sufficient time and resources
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected, monitored and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated
- Be a good role model by setting a good example to students
- Give attendance and punctuality a high profile in assemblies, at parents' evenings and in school publications

18.4 Heads of Year/Pastoral Support Workers will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their families
- Form positive relationships with students and families
- Comply with the Registration Regulations England 2013 and other attendance related legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support students and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated
- Give attendance and punctuality a high profile in Year group assemblies
- Be a good role model by setting a good example to students
- Manage the cases of students on report for attendance and punctuality
- Conduct Attendance Panel Meetings, follow up with relevant action plans and monitor the action plans
- Reward students for 100% attendance and punctuality – reasonable consideration will be given for medical and Covid absence on a case by case basis
- Provide Emotional Based School Attendance interventions
- Carry out home visits as and when required
- Request to see your child if a home visit is carried out. If the child is not seen at the property this information may be passed to the Safeguarding Officer, Attendance Welfare Officer and/or the police
- Request Statutory Action where unauthorised absences have been accrued
- Send letters each half term to those families/carers whose child's attendance has fallen below 95%
- Transition visits will also be carried out in some cases.

18.5 Form Tutors will

- Actively promote and champion the importance and value of good attendance to students and their families
- Form positive relationships with students and families

- Act in a mentoring capacity and make contact with families to discuss initial concerns about attendance and record these conversations
- Make use of the information and systems provided to understand the current status and trends of attendance and punctuality of the students in their form
- Be a good role model by setting a good example to students
- Inform families when poor attendance or punctuality is adversely affecting progress
- Engage with the rewards process for attendance
- Issue consequences for poor punctuality to school and to lessons

18.6 Expectations of the Local Authority:

As a minimum, all local authorities are expected to, as per section 4 of 'Working Together to improve School Attendance, May 2022):

- Rigorously track local attendance data to devise a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises the students, student cohorts and schools on which to provide support and focus its efforts on
- to unblock area wide barriers to attendance
- Have a School Attendance Support Team which provides the following core functions:
 - Communication and advice
 - Targeting Support Meetings
 - Multi-disciplinary support for families
 - Legal intervention
 - Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker through their Virtual School

18.7 We request that Families:

- Talk to their child about school and reinforce the values of a good education
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of regular school attendance within the home environment
- **Contact the school by 8:00 am if their child is absent**
- **Contact is required on each day of absence**
- **Complete a 'Leave of Absence' request proforma**
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- **Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time. Where this is unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances send a written leave request to the Head of School.**
- Work with school to overcome any barriers.

18.8 We request that students will:

- **Arrive at school by 8.30am in full school uniform with the correct equipment, ready for form time and registration at 8:40am**
- Be punctual for all lessons
- Speak with the Attendance Officer if there is a need to leave the site at any time during the day (evidence required). In such cases, students must sign out at reception on leaving and sign in again on return.
- Not contact home directly if they feel ill during the school day. Students should speak to a member of staff first, if necessary the school will contact home. Failing to follow this procedure may result in these absences being unauthorised.

19 Support and Intervention

The school recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Families should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Rayner Stephens High School recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee students and looked after children.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance and remove barriers. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with families and students
- Attendance panels
- Attendance/Punctuality report cards
- Referrals / signpost to external support agencies
- Learning mentors
- Reward systems
- Supportive Timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Access to Aspire
- Access to mental health and wellbeing support
- Attendance Improvement Plan
- Attendance agreements between home and school
- Early Help referrals
- Referral for Educational Psychologist support which may lead to an application for an EHCP
- Parenting contracts
- Education Supervision Orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting Orders
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Prosecution may occur if families regularly remove their child from school for the purpose of unauthorised leave of absence.

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both families and students.

Where families fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Rayner Stephens will consider the use of legal sanctions.

20 Attendance Procedures

Rayner Stephens High School believes that all stakeholders should be clear with regards to what to expect should a student's attendance fall below our attendance thresholds.

Working together to improve school attendance (September 2022) makes clear that all parties; including schools, parents, multi-academy trusts and local authorities should place a strong emphasis on school attendance. At Rayner Stephens we consider each students' previous year's attendance before determining when to activate our attendance procedures (known as our 'tiers of activation and escalation')

All students are expected to attend every session but where a student’s attendance falls below our thresholds of 97%, or if anomalous patterns of attendance are discovered, our attendance procedures will be instigated according to the tiers of activation and escalation shown in the table below:

RSHS: Tiers of Activation and Escalation			
Attendance Category	Descriptor	When attendance procedures be activated	Stage at which the attendance procedures will be activated.
A – Good Attenders (GA) Students who attended the school well.	Those with 97%+ cumulative attendance the previous year.	After October half-term but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 97% attendance.	Stage 1 Attendance Manager/Officer
B – Regular Attenders (RA) Students who attended the school regularly.	Those with 90-97% cumulative attendance the previous year.	Immediately but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 97% attendance.	Stage 1 Attendance Manager/Officer
C – Persistently Absent (PA) Students who were persistently absent.	Those with attendance below 90% cumulative attendance for the previous year.	Immediately but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 97% attendance.	Stage 2 Head of House
D – Severely Absent (SA) Students who were severely absent.	Those with attendance below 50% cumulative attendance for the previous year.	Immediately but only if student attendance drops below our threshold of 97% attendance.	Stage 3 DHT / Education Welfare Officer

Once our policy is activated according to the table above, students are placed on a four-week attendance monitoring plan.

For students with above 97% attendance in the previous academic year our attendance procedures will not be used until after October half term (unless there are unusual patterns and/or repetitive absences). However, for students who had less than 97% attendance in the previous academic year, our procedures are activated immediately if there is an absence in September or October.

It should be noted that any session missed during an attendance monitoring plan will trigger the next response in our policy. At each stage, a four-week monitoring period is instigated, with a single day off in these periods triggering a further escalation through our policy.

As we strive for all students to get to good attenders, our escalation route is ordinarily as follows:

Students who previously attended the school well, whose attendance subsequently falls below 97% after October half term, will be placed on a four-week attendance monitoring plan with the attendance manager (or equivalent). A letter will be sent home to parents/carers.

Should the student attend every session within this monitoring period, a celebratory letter home will be sent and the attendance monitoring plan will cease. We will always endeavour to support letters with calls to parents to add relevant context too.

Any session missed during an attendance monitoring plan with the attendance manager will trigger the next response in our policy. At this point there will be an escalation to a 4-week support plan with a more senior colleague (e.g., the student's Head of House).

Should the student attend every session within the monitoring period with their Head of House then their cumulative attendance will normally be restored to above 97% and no further action will be taken. As in the scenario above, a celebratory letter will be sent home and the plan will cease. However, if the cumulative attendance subsequently drops back below 97% at any point in the near future then the student will move back to a period of monitoring and repeat this same stage and begin another 4-week support plan with their Head of House.

All stakeholders should be clear that should any session be missed during an attendance support plan with this senior colleague, then further escalation ensues, with the student moving to a final 4-week support plan. This formal attendance case conference with the Deputy Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is the final opportunity for the student to complete 4 full weeks of attendance. Students must not miss any sessions whilst on this plan. Again, a letter will be sent home to confirm the success of this stage if this is applicable. However, if the student is subsequently absent again in the near future a further 4-week support plan will commence and this stage will be repeated with the DHT and EWO again.

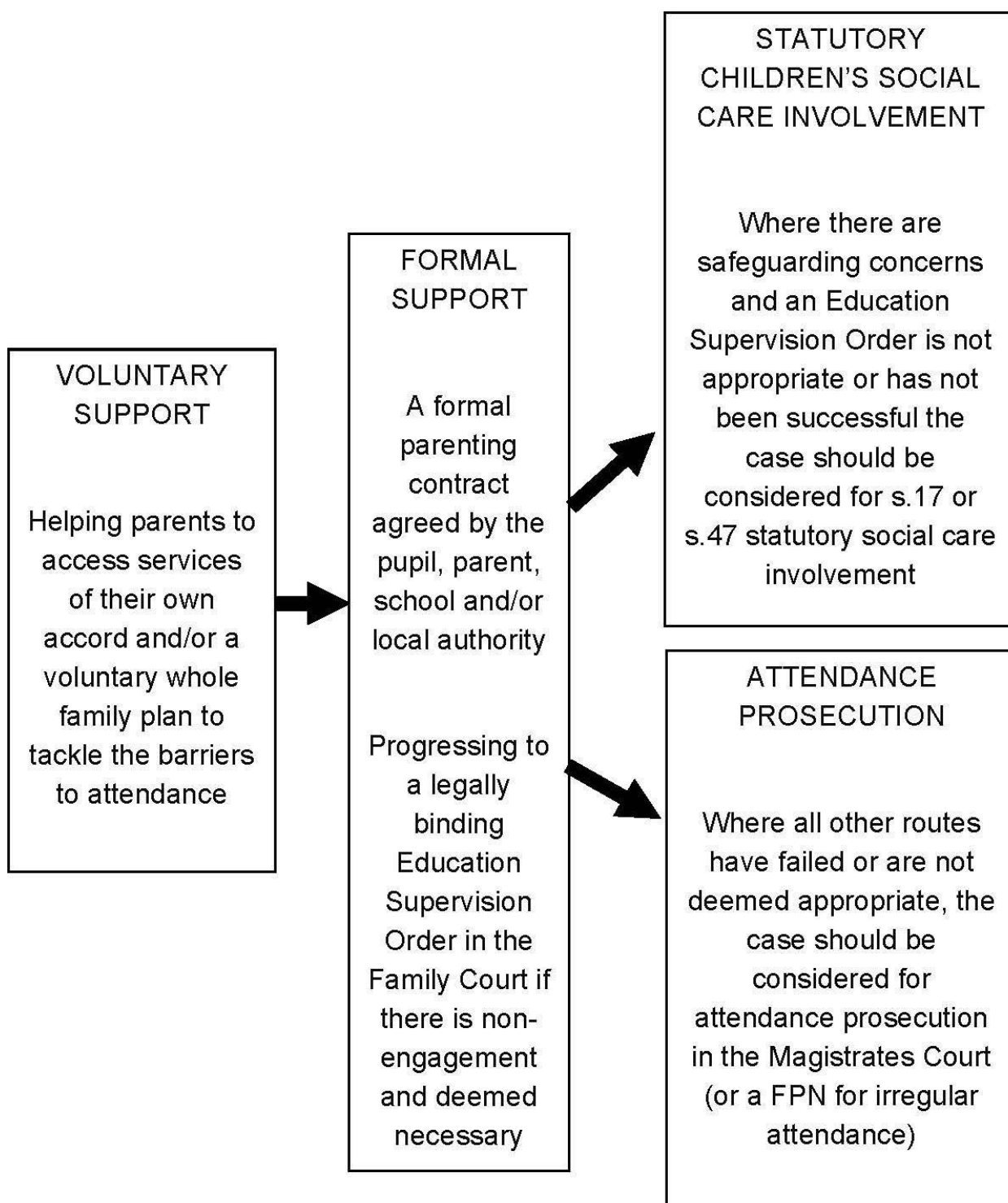
If sessions are missed whilst on a 4-week monitoring plan to a DHT and EWO then referrals will be made to the local authority, particularly if cumulative attendance is below 90%. The local authority could take action which includes, but is not limited to, issuing parenting contracts, issuing fixed penalty notices or pursuing prosecution towards potential educational supervision orders or other court sanctions.

The information presented above articulates the response for those students who previously attended the academy well (**Category A - Good Attenders**)

For those students who fall into attendance categories B, C or D, our policy is activated immediately if required and the previous table shows the stage at which the policy can be activated. The escalation pathway is the same, all that may differ is the stage at which some students enter our procedures; as determined by their attendance category.

Once again, and irrespective of the stage entered, any session missed during any attendance monitoring plan will trigger the next response in our policy. At each stage, a four-week monitoring period is instigated, with a single day off in these periods triggering a further escalation through our policy. Similarly, should the student attend every session within this monitoring period, a celebratory letter home will be made and the attendance monitoring plan will cease. We will always endeavour to support letters with calls to parents to add relevant context too.

21 Legal Interventions and Sanctions



21.1 Prosecution

Where intervention and sanctions fail to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that families realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if families fail to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered student at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A family found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2,500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

22 Key Documents

- Rayner Stephens High School Behaviour Policy
- Rayner Stephens High School Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping children safe in education 2022
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- School Attendance 2020
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- Elective Home Education
- Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement
- School attendance parental responsibility measures
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges
- Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying
- Children Missing Education

23 Key Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Data Protection Act (2018)

Appendix 1: Leave of Absence Form

Application for Exceptional Leave of Absence During Term-Time

If you would like to apply for permission for your child to be absent from school you must complete this form and return it to the school for authorisation **10 DAYS IN ADVANCE** of the proposed leave wherever possible.

Parents / carers do not have the right to take their child out of school during term-time. By law, you must ask permission for exceptional leave of absence during term-time. If you take your child out of school without authorisation you risk receiving a fixed penalty fine. **The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days, doubling to £120 if paid between 22 – 28 days and applies per parent per child for which permission has been refused or was not sought. If the fine is not paid, parents will be reported for prosecution.** All secondary schools in the Stamford Park Trust have agreed to follow a common policy on absence during term time. Good attendance leads to improved outcomes for your child.

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT / CARER					
Surname of child:		First name:			
Year Group:		D.O.B.:			
Surname of parent / carer:		First name of parent / carer:			
Address of child(ren):		Telephone number(s):			
Postcode:					
Please state the exceptional circumstances that require you to apply to take your child out of school during term-time instead of making arrangements for the proposed activity to take place during the school holidays. The cost, convenience or availability of a particular holiday will not be taken into consideration.					
Reason:				Information provided by parent / carer will be checked by school	
Would (s)he miss any national tests of examinations?				Yes	No
Is her / his attendance already below 97%?				Yes	No
Is the requested absence during the month of September?				Yes	No
Would (s)he be absent for more than 10 school days?				Yes	No
Has (s)he already had leave during term-time this academic year?				Yes	No
Has your son/daughter already had a leave of absence request authorised this academic year?				Yes	No
Does your child have any siblings at Rayner Stephens High School for which you are requesting leave of absence?				Yes	No
Does your child have any siblings at another school for which you are requesting leave of absence?				Yes	No
If you have answered 'yes' to the previous question, please state which school(s) your other children attend.				Yes	No
If this request is approved, will his / her absence exceed 10 days in this school year?				Yes	No
Is the request for a religious observance?				Yes	No
Length of absence requested (school days):		From (date):		To (date):	
Parent / carer signature:					
TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL					
Further information required:				Yes	No
Head of School's comment:					
Signed:	Name:	Designation:	Absence Approved:	Yes	No