

Attendance Policy and Procedures

1. INTRODUCTION

This school policy document has been produced for the whole school community in order that we are all clear with regard to the rights, responsibilities and rules relating to the attendance of students at this school.

Good attendance and punctuality are universally recognised as being vital factors in determining how well students progress academically and whether they achieve their potential in all areas of school life; including in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. They also impact on students' welfare and happiness at school. Therefore GREAT BADDOW HIGH SCHOOL has a clear policy for monitoring attendance, investigating and following up on absences and rewarding and promoting good attendance.

2. AIMS

- to achieve and maintain excellent attendance
- to achieve and maintain excellent punctuality
- to create a culture in which excellent attendance is accepted as the norm.
- to demonstrate that excellent attendance is valued by the school.
- to maintain effective communications regarding attendance between school, home and external agencies.

3. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School:

Great Baddow High School expects students to attend school every day, on time, properly equipped and ready to learn; unless there is a valid reason otherwise.

Great Baddow High School will encourage and reward excellent attendance and punctuality.

Great Baddow High School staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate and follow-up all absenteeism and lateness as promptly as is practical and appropriate.

Great Baddow High School will take all appropriate and necessary steps to investigate and follow up promptly any issues with or concerns over attendance or punctuality. This will include communicating with parents.

Great Baddow High School will work in partnership with parents and students to resolve issues which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible to ensure students' attendance and punctuality is the very best possible.

Great Baddow High School will include in reports to parents on achievement, each student's attendance at least annually.

Students:

Students will ensure that they attend every day and on time, unless there is a valid reason otherwise.

Students will attend all lessons punctually.

Students can expect to be welcomed and receive assistance following periods of absence in order to catch up.

Students will be listened to and respected although the school will sometimes also discuss issues with parents and will seek medical evidence where appropriate.

Students will have individual records of attendance/punctuality acknowledged by the school through a range of individual and collective rewards.

Parents (including all those with day to day responsibility for the care of the child):

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day, on time, properly dressed, equipped and in a fit condition to learn, unless there is a valid reason otherwise.

Parents are responsible for immediately informing school of the reason for any absence by telephone call to a member of staff on the morning of any absence; or a message should be left on the absence line by 9.15am. Any message needs to be specific and detailed when describing the reason for the absence and to give an estimated return date. If the message does not contain these details then the absence may not be authorised. Furthermore, upon a student's return to school the absence must be confirmed in writing. This is a standard statutory requirement.

If attendance problems do develop, the school expects parents to work actively with school staff and the Education Authority and external agencies to improve and sustain their child's attendance.

Parents do not have a right to take children on holiday in term time. Leave of absence may be granted in advance by the school in **exceptional circumstances only**. Any application will be considered against the student's attendance record, family circumstances and timing with regard to assessments and examinations. Penalty notices will be issued by the Education Authority when unauthorised absence is taken.

Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record.

4. REGISTRATION

Registration begins at 8.45 am each school day.

Each student should be called by name and should respond as prescribed, eg. 'present', 'here' etc.

If a student arrives after registration has closed they should report to the Student Administration office and sign in the late record book. They will be issued with a 30 minute late detention, to be sat the following day, unless parents contact the school to give a valid reason for their lateness and this reason is agreed by the school. Students will be given a late detention slip to take home to parents to give them a minimum of twenty four hours' notice of the detention.

Teachers will take a register each lesson.

5. LATENESS

Persistent lateness will be addressed via HOY/AHOY.

Students who are late for lessons will receive a strike on their expectations card. Persistent lateness may incur further sanctions such as C3 detention.

6. TRUANCY

Students who come to school but truant from lessons will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy and may be given sanctions, e.g. C3 or C4.

7. REGISTERS

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording a student's attendance or absence and in the latter case, if authorised or unauthorised. The registers should be marked in the prescribed manner (see Appendix 1).

Registers will be taken electronically where possible, manual paper registers, if used, for tutors must be returned to the office by 9.30 am and for lesson by lesson end.

The register is a legal document and a certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order in respect of a student.

Registers will be archived for 5 years in the form of an Official Register report and stored by the Network Managers on to the SIMS school network.

8. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE/UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Absence for the following reasons will be authorised where parents have confirmed the absence in writing on the child's return to school (consideration should be given to procedures where parents are not literate).

- Illness;
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments;
- Days of religious observance;
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement; the decision to authorise these is at the Headteacher's discretion
- If permission for absence has been granted in advance by the headteacher;
- Transport arranged by the LA has failed to arrive where the student lives beyond statutory walking distance.

N.B. The school reserves the right to request medical evidence where absences are prolonged or attendance is of concern.

Absence will not be recorded as authorised when due to:

- Shopping;
- Haircuts;
- Missed bus/problems with lifts
- Slept late;
- No uniform;
- Looking after other family members
- Minding the house;
- Birthdays;
- Holidays not approved.
- Illness without medical evidence where requested
- Illness without sufficient medical evidence

N.B. The school reserves the right to classify absence as unauthorised when this is judged to be the case, in accordance with Government guidelines.

CPG/JH Reviewed summer 2016

Adopted by the Governing Body Curriculum Committee: May 2016

To be reviewed Summer 2018

9. PROCEDURES FOR FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE

Refer to Appendix I and II

Absences which are unexplained will result in parents being contacted by text, email or telephone all asking for an explanation for the absence. The attendance officer or another member of staff will call parents and challenge absences when required.

Robust systems are in place to investigate attendance which causes concern, falling below 95% is a trigger as is a concerning pattern of absence, i.e. missing Fridays.

Where attendance issues cannot be resolved satisfactorily within an appropriate timeline, the school will follow statutory procedures regarding referral to MECES (Missing in Education and Child Employment Services.) These could eventually lead to statutory interventions, for example, penalty notices, prosecution.

See section 11

10. ONGOING ABSENCE OR LATENESS

Refer to Appendix I and II

Where a student is persistently late or absent the HOY/AHOY will take action in line with the Appendix I 'absence flow chart'.

All notes from parents/carers regarding a student's absence will be stored and retained for 5 years.

11. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY

The importance of attendance and punctuality are regularly promoted in tutor time and assembly.

There are competitions between tutor groups for the best collective attendance, rewards include non-uniform days and pizza parties.

Rewards for excellent individual attendance and punctuality include credits, post cards home, badges and an invitation to the end of year rewards event.

Refer to Appendix I and II

Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.

Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the home/school agreement, school prospectus, Magnus (school newsletter), and the school website.

Students whose attendance is a concern will be highlighted and brought to the attention of the HOY/AHOY, or attendance officer. All concerns will be investigated and thoroughly followed-up.

All students who have 'regular' patterns of absence will be investigated.

Parents will be kept informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Each student's attendance percentage will be reported on Interim and Yearly Student Reports. Students' attendance information is also available to parents via the Portal.

The issue of attendance will be reported regularly to the governing body through the School Development Plan, Headteacher's Report, etc.

Students who have been absent from school for a long period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme. The SSC may be used as part of this programme, as may the library.

HOY/AHOY's will have regular meetings with Attendance Officers in order to identify and support those students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.

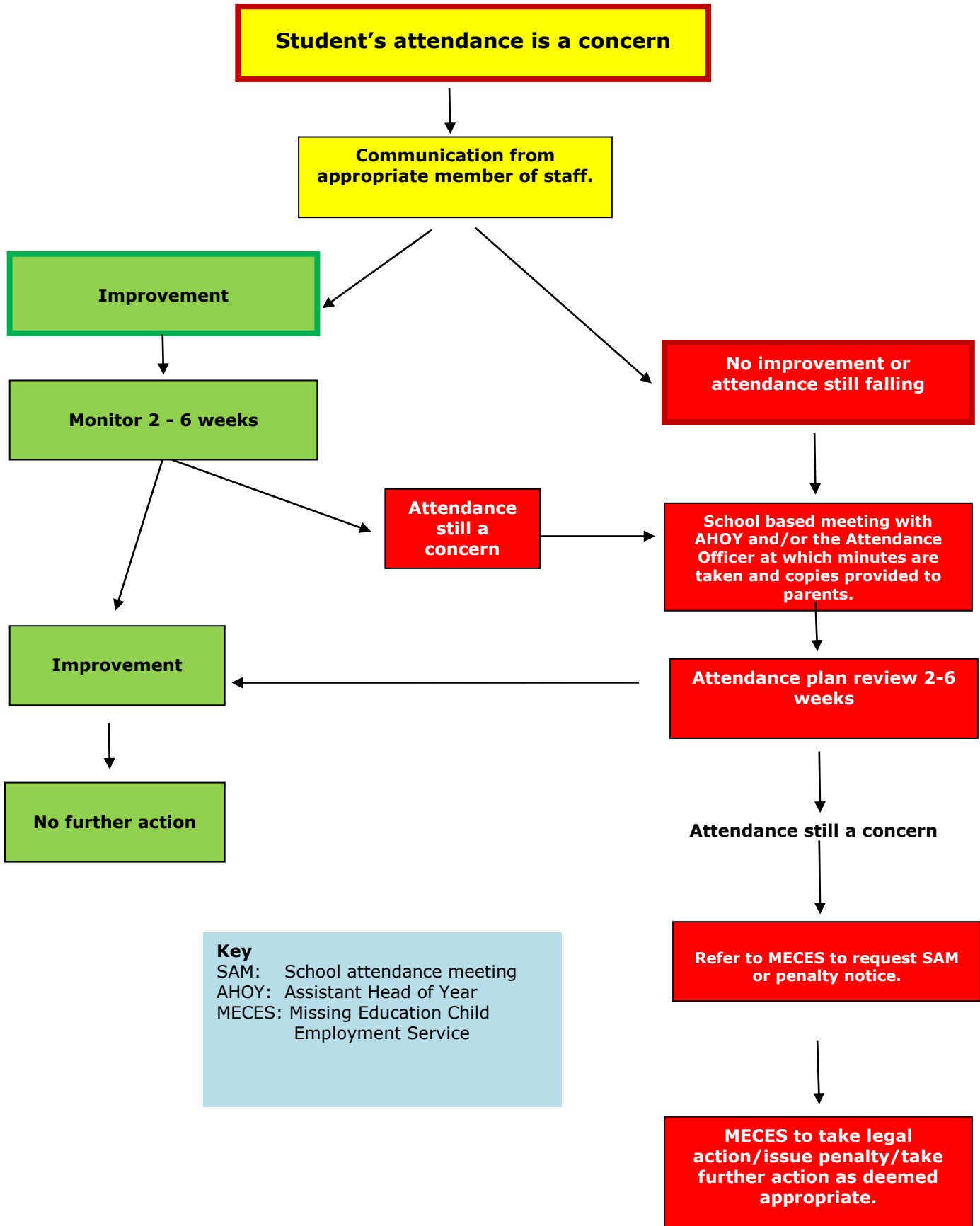
Absences for students on work related schemes will be scrutinised by the teacher in charge of work related courses and appropriate action taken.

Attachments

APPENDIX I – Attendance Procedures

APPENDIX II – Absence Flowchart

Great Baddow High School Attendance Procedures



Absence Flow Chart

AHOY may request form tutors call parents/speak to students and set Attendance Targets when there are initial concerns.



AHOY or Attendance Officer will initiate texts and calls to parent(s) on first day of unexplained absence and challenge prolonged absences



When absence is a concern the AHOY or Attendance Officer will make contact with the parent by calling/text/Email/letter/meeting



Where attendance continued to be a concern AHOY will take the following action



AHOY telephone call of concern to parent or carer



AHOY/Attendance Officer writes with concerns.
Where appropriate followed by school based meeting with parents or carer.
Attendance Improvement Plan agreed.



If no improvement, Weekly attendance review.



School makes referral to MECES for penalty notice or SAM when attendance is very low, or where there is a specific period of absence, e.g. holiday.



SAM held in school with EWO present – legal warning letter issued by MECES