



BiggleswadeAcademy

Attendance Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is the right of every young person to receive full-time education. Young people who fail to attend school regularly cannot receive a coherent education programme as absence disturbs the continuity of the curriculum and also damages social relationships. Absence from lessons also causes difficulties for teachers who may have to respond by providing individual programmes of work.
- 1.2 Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at Biggleswade Academy and to establish positive life habits necessary for future success. They also minimise the risks of pupils conducting anti-social behaviour or becoming victims or perpetrators of crime or abuse. Regular attendance also encourages children to build friendships and develop social groups, working together as a whole team, sharing ideas and developing life skills. They will also inevitably miss out on essential learning and on events taking place such as school visits.
- 1.3 The Academy displays a positive and pro-active ethos that places high value on attendance and punctuality, as well as valuing its partnership with parents/carers to promote good attendance. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children and therefore this policy advocates close working relationships with all stakeholders to provide a cohesive approach to tackling attendance.

2. Aims of this Policy

- 2.1 To share the responsibility for promoting school attendance amongst everyone at Biggleswade Academy and to develop and implement an effective attendance policy that touches all aspects of the Academy's life, and relates directly to the Academy's values, ethos and curriculum;
- 2.2 Staff particularly strive;
 - a. To encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners who value learning with and from others; to have a positive attitude to life-long learning;
 - b. To value application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and action, as well as co-operative endeavours;
- 2.3 This attendance policy is designed to encourage pupils to attend school regularly by the implementation of specific measures eg:
 - a. Registering pupils accurately and efficiently;
 - b. Contacting parents the same day when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised;
 - c. At least monthly monitoring of pupil attendance and punctuality;
 - d. Regularly reporting school attendance statistics to parents, Academy directors and the DfE as appropriate.

3. Attendance and the Law

- 3.1 It is a legal obligation of all parents/carers to ensure their child attends school regularly; by law all children of compulsory school age must receive a proper full time education.
- 3.2 The 1996 Education Act states;
 - *"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".*
 - *"If a child of compulsory school age who is registered pupil at the school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence."*
- 3.3 The legal framework for this policy is:
 - Education Act 1996, section 444
 - Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
 - Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Academy Governing Committee is legally responsible for many aspects of Academy management including the attendance register. It is therefore registered with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. However, the Principal manages the day-to-day running of the Academy and in doing so takes responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The Principal will regularly update the Directors about attendance data and issues and the Directors will review this policy annually.

5. The Academy Will:

- 5.1 Maintain two registers:
 - a) An Admissions register (known as the school roll).
 - b) An Attendance register for all pupils, including those that are not of compulsory age.
- 5.2 Contact parents/carers if a call is not received by 10.00am on the first day of absence.
- 5.3 Monitor attendance and punctuality at least on a monthly basis;
- 5.4 Submit the details of the level of absence within the Academy through the termly School Census;
- 5.5 Report attendance data to parents/carers and all other appropriate bodies such as the Directors and School Attendance Improvement Officer;
- 5.6 Ensure all staff are aware of, and know how to implement care, guidance and support policies, in order to recognise where there may be issues affecting pupil attendance and to be pro-active in dealing with issues in the appropriate way;
- 5.7 Implement strategies to support pupils and their families who have difficulties in attending school regularly and do not reach the attendance targets set;
- 5.8 Ensure form teachers are aware of their class's attendance percentage and are pro-active in addressing issues;
 - a) Ensure Progress Leaders are aware of their Year Group's attendance percentage and are pro-active in addressing issues with individual pupils; Reward good attendance; Ensure class and subject teachers contribute to the reduction of absences by delivering interesting and engaging lessons and insist on good attendance and punctuality for themselves, colleagues and pupils;
 - b) Follow the procedures regarding attendance and absence, as outlined in this policy.

6. Teachers Will:

- 6.1 Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately;
- 6.2 Liaise with Progress Leaders and the attendance lead on matters of absence and punctuality;
- 6.3 Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a pupil's absence;
- 6.4 Communicate with, and support parents and carers, in addressing concerns about a pupil's attendance;
- 6.5 Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

7. Parents

- 7.1 Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 7 Education Act 1996) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.
- 7.2 A 'parent' is defined in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 and is defined as follows;
 - all natural parents, whether they are married or not
 - any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
 - any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of what their relationship is).
- 7.3 To help fulfil their important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents/carers are requested and encouraged:

- a. To ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and to support the Academy in aiming for 100% attendance each academic year;
- b. To make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or email on the first day and subsequent days of absence.
- c. To provide written confirmation of the reason for an absence on their child's return to school;
- d. To only request authorisation for 'leave of absence' in school time if it is for an exceptional circumstance;
- e. To avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments;
- f. To work with the Academy and Attendance Officer to resolve/alleviate any attendance problems or protracted absence;
- g. To attend meetings as required in relation to their child's attendance.

8. Pupils

- 8.1 Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and to arrive punctually at school and to the start of lessons;
- 8.2 If late, pupils must sign in at the appropriate office;
- 8.3 If pupils are required to leave the premises during the school day they must sign in and out at the appropriate Academy office. (This is for their safety as well as administrative purposes);
- 8.4 Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence eg bullying, racism etc;
- 8.5 Pupils should use their best endeavours to pass on absence notes from parents to their class teacher and to pass correspondence to their parents/carers;
- 8.6 If requested, pupils must attend a return to school meeting with the appropriate staff member.
- 8.7 Pupils should understand that only 'real' illnesses can be a reason for absence.

9. Taking the Register

- 9.1 Registers are legal documents – indeed they may be used as evidence in court cases. For this reason they are retained for a minimum of three years.
- 9.2 The Legal register is held on our MIS (Management Information System);
- 9.3 The register will be taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and again at the end of the afternoon session;
- 9.4 For each pupil, the register must be marked either as present or absent;
 - / - is entered to show the pupil is present in the morning session.
 - \ - is entered to show the pupil is present in the afternoon session.
 - N - is entered to show the pupils is absent until the reason is known;
- 9.5 Once the Academy has been officially notified of the reason for the absence, the appropriate registration code will be inserted by the appropriate Academy office.
- 9.6 The register must clearly differentiate between whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised by the Academy;
- 9.7 It is the policy of the Academy that no absences are unaccounted for.

10. Authorised Absence

- 10.1 Authorised absence is when the Academy has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for an absence; absence with permission from the principal or other authorised representative of the Academy.
- 10.2 Even when pupils are engaged in an Approved Educational Activity off-site, they must not be marked as present, as good Health and Safety practice requires that the Academy needs to know who is on the premises in the case of a fire drill or real emergency;
- 10.3 The Academy **may** authorise absence in the following circumstances;
 - a. Personal illness (Excessive or extended absences **will require medical evidence**).
 - b. Medical Appointment (Copy of appointment to be seen and copied)

- c. Family bereavement
 - d. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to a child's health and safety.
 - e. Religious observance (Limitations apply)
 - f. A travelling child's absence
 - g. Involvement in a public performance
 - h. Approved sporting activity
 - i. Entrance exams
- 10.4 For periods of extended absence because of illness, the Academy will seek the advice of the school nurse and HPA (Health Protection Agency) and will only authorise the number of days that have been advised by the Health Authority for the illness;

11. Unauthorised Absence

- 11.1 Unauthorised absence is when the Academy has not received a justified reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request.
- 11.2 The Academy is unlikely to authorise absence in the following circumstances;
- a. No explanation is offered by the parent/carer.
 - b. The Academy views the explanation offered as unsatisfactory (e.g. shopping, minding the house, refusing to attend etc)
 - c. If a pupil's attendance percentage is below 96% and no medical evidence has been supplied.
 - d. Leave of absence which is taken without the Academy's prior consent or knowledge and/or is in excess of the time agreed by the Academy.
 - e. Special occasions such as birthdays.
 - f. Minding siblings
 - g. Parent/carer / sibling illness or appointments.
 - h. Treatment of head lice.
 - i. Family holidays in term time.
- 11.3 Unauthorised absence from school is considered truancy. This can take the form of absence from school for complete days, lateness and absenteeism from individual lessons. Each of these is a serious as the other, but the strategies for effecting change may need to be different;
- 11.4 When parents are unaware of such absences there may be a significant danger to the young person's safety as it is likely that their whereabouts are unknown by a responsible adult;
- 11.5 Unfortunately, there may be occasions when truancy is condoned by parents. If such collusion occurs it is the duty of the Academy to work with the pupil and family to change their attitudes towards school, thus encouraging full attendance.
- 11.6 If a pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absences during a 12 week period (equivalent to five days), the parents/carers can be issued with a Fixed Penalty notice by the Local Authority.

12. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

- 12.1 Government guidelines define persistent absentees as pupils whose attendance falls below 90%;
- 12.2 While discretion may be deployed (e.g. in cases of long term illness), Biggleswade Academy will refer any individual child whose attendance is 90% or below to the School Attendance Improvement Officer. At this point legal proceedings could follow;
- 12.3 **No absence below 90% will be authorised** unless there are extenuating circumstances such as long term illness;
- 12.4 All PAs are tracked and reported to the Academy Directors.

13. Temporary Academy Closures

- 13.1 Where a school has to close due to severe weather conditions, problems with amenities such as water or heating, fire, structural damage or in-service training, no attendance registers are needed. This will be coded appropriately.

14. Punctuality and Lateness

- 14.1 It is vital that pupils are on time at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions and also to lessons. The start of school/lessons is used for activities such as phonics and morning work, to give out instructions or messages or to organise work. If a child is late they can miss time with their form teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be embarrassing leading to possible further absence.
- 14.2 The school day begins at 8.45am and all pupils are expected to be in school at this time. Morning registration closes at 8.55am;
- 14.3 A child will be registered as late in the morning if they arrive more than 10 minutes later than the scheduled start of the day;
- 14.4 The 'Late' will be recorded on our electronic management system and on the register as an 'L';
- 14.5 Arrival after 20 minutes after the register closes, unless there has been an authorised medical reason, is automatically coded as 'U' in line with the Department of Education guidance.' This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an unauthorised absence;
- 14.6 All lateness is recorded daily as this information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary;
- 14.7 Children who arrive late to school without an adult will have a note/sticker put in their home/school books by a member of the office staff;
- 14.8 Lateness can be an indication of more serious problems as well as poor time management. Pupils who travel to school independent of an adult, may not be coming here directly. We have a duty to ensure every child's safety and therefore will telephone home after 4 recorded lates;
- 14.9 Our level of contact will be increased if lateness continues until after 10 lates when the School Attendance Officer may be informed and parents/carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered;
- 14.10 If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 12 week period, the school may ask Central Bedfordshire Council to issue parents with a Penalty Notice.

15. Leavers

- 15.1 If a child is leaving the Academy, (other than when transferring to secondary school) the Academy is required by law to register this with the local authority within 5 days of the pupil's departure.
- 15.2 In order to facilitate this process, prior to the leaving date, parents are requested to:
- a. Inform the Academy in writing that the pupil will be leaving.
 - b. Give the attendance officer, via the 'Leaver's Form', comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move, new address and telephone numbers, the child's new school and the start date when known.
- 15.3 If pupils leave and the Academy does not have the above information, then the pupil is considered to be a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate the child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

16. Holidays within Term Time

- 16.1 Latest amendments to education law (September 2013) make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether the absence is authorised at all. The purpose of this change in the regulations is doubtless to highlight the crucial link between pupil's attendance and their success within school and to ensure Headteachers take a firmer approach towards parents who remove their children from school during term time in order to go on holiday. Holidays in term time can only be agreed by the Principal or nominated person.

- 16.2 The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are; rare, significant or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.
- 16.3 There is no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases, holiday will not be authorised. The Academy will however consider every absence application individually.
- 16.4 The Principal will use discretion to grant authorised Leave of Absence in a school year **if both the following apply:**
- a. The parent/carer the child normally lives with, applies to the Academy in writing, **with appropriate evidence**, at least 4 weeks advance of the intended holiday.
 - b. There are **'exceptional circumstances'** for the holiday.
- 16.5 Special reasons or exceptional circumstances that may be agreed to are;
- a. A dying relative in a different country;
 - b. A family funeral in another country/ part of the country;
 - c. Holidays for fostering or adoption purposes;
 - d. Recognised religious observance;
 - e. Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during normal school holiday times. (Evidence must be provided to this effect.)
 - f. When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- 16.6 The Academy is unable to authorise absence because of:
- a. Availability of cheap holidays;
 - b. Availability of desired accommodation;
 - c. Poor weather experienced in school holidays periods;
 - d. Overlap with the beginning or end of term;
 - e. Another sibling in another school where the holidays do not coincide;
 - f. A special treat for the child;
- 16.7 In the unlikelihood of Leave of Absence for a holiday being authorised, it will be for a maximum of 10 sessions (5 school days).
- 16.8 Authorisation will not be considered during assessment times for Yr 1, Yr 2 and Yr 6 (End of Key Stage Examinations and Phonics testing). This may also include during the preparation period leading up to the exams;
- 16.9 If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the Academy, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions of absence reaches the thresholds in Central Bedfordshire Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 12 school weeks), parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice or other legal action in accordance with the code.

17. Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling

- 17.1 A parent can seek leave of absence from the Academy for their child to take part in a performance. They must however contact the Principal to discuss the nature and frequency of this, the impact that this may have on their child's education, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence.
- 17.2 However it remains down to the Principal's discretion as to whether to authorise this. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

18. Absence through competing at county, regional or national level for sport

- 18.1 Parents can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in county, regional, national and international events and competitions. However it remains the Principal's discretion as to whether to authorise this or not and they may wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs.

- 18.2 Permission for pupils to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Principal and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.
- 18.3 The regulations related to children participating in public performances and sporting events are separate to those around authorising leave of absence. Principals can authorise this absence. Further advice and guidance on Child Employment and Performance Licenses is available at Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 4953.

19. Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families

- 19.1 The absence of a child from a Traveller family who has left the area can be authorised if the absence is for the parent's work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return.
- 19.2 A school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll whilst they are travelling. When the child is travelling the school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised by using the *T* code.
- 19.3 To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration at two schools is allowed.
- 19.4 Please note that pupils must have attended 200 sessions in a rolling 12-month period to be able to use travelling for work purposes as a defence against prosecution.

Further advice and guidance on attendance and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families is available at Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 4953.

20. External Appointments within Academy Hours

- 20.1 The Academy recognises that there are occasions when pupils need to go out of school for an appointment (e.g. doctor, dentist, optician etc). Where possible, all appointments should be made outside of Academy hours or during the lunch break.
- 20.2 If an appointment is during the school day, a request for the absence to be authorised should be made at least **24 hours before** the appointment to allow for authorisation to be considered;
- 20.3 Evidence for the appointment should be provided with the request (e.g. appointment card/ hospital letter);
- 20.4 The request can be made verbally or in writing through the Academy office or class teacher who will place the request in the register folder which is sent to the office during morning registration; if it is through the home/school book, the child will be asked to take it to the office to be copied.
- 20.5 Without this evidence, the absence **will not be authorised**;
- 20.6 The Academy acknowledges that there are occasions when requests cannot always be made in advance as appointments at doctors and dentists etc can sometimes be made on the actual day. Where this is the case, evidence must still be provided when the child returns to school or the absence will not be authorised. **Safe guarding issues require that we must be certain where a child has been, even if they are with their parent/carer:**
- 20.7 If the pupil returns during the school day they are also required to sign back in. We require all pupils leaving for an appointment to be collected by a parent/carer in person. We will not allow a child to leave alone. (Being told that a parent/carer is going to wait in the car park etc is not sufficient for our safeguarding procedures.)
- 20.8 **If a parent/carer needs to collect a child early for child care reasons as a result of their own, or a sibling's appointment, this will always be unauthorised.**

21. Education of Pupils with Medical Needs

- 21.1 In response to the guidance - Access to Education for Children & Young People with Medical Needs, DfES 0732/2001 – Biggleswade Academy recognises its responsibilities for all pupils unable to attend school for medical reasons. Young persons should be able to access education without stigma or exclusion. The Academy's aim is to ensure pupils have access to as much education as their medical condition allows.
- 21.2 Pupils covered by this may:

- a. Be recovering from an illness or injury;
 - b. Have a long term or recurring illness
 - c. Have an illness or clinically defined mental health disorder which causes them to be absent for a period in excess of 15 days, where medical opinion states they are still unable to access mainstream school.
- 21.3 The SENDCo in partnership with the Attendance Officer will be responsible for:
- a. Ensuring that Medical Needs Referral Forms (Request for Involvement and Request for Medical Information forms) are completed and passed to the relevant agencies as quickly as possible.
 - b. Ensuring that the pupil is transferred to School Action Plus of the Inclusion Register, and that, working with the relevant Year Leader and Class teacher, a Personal Education Plan is drawn up. Ensure that Individual Education Plans are written, in conjunction with the Inclusion Manager
 - c. Arrange for the relevant member of staff to meet with the Medical Needs Team to plan appropriate work and a programme of action and review.
 - d. Ensure details of whole school events and parents' evenings are communicated to parents
 - e. Ensure that all pupils covered by this policy have access to SATs and guidance on appropriate coursework.
 - f. The Academy will also be responsible for requesting special arrangements where necessary.
- 21.4 Parents/Carers are expected to be full collaborative partners in the process of ensuring all pupils maximise their attendance. Where difficulties arise parents/carers must be able to access information, advice and support during a pupil's illness. Opportunities to allow the pupil to be involved in decision making and choices will also be arranged.

22. Non-Compulsory Age Attendance

- 22.1 Nursery attendance is a vital foundation for a child's learning, but to get the most benefit a child must attend regularly and promptly. These also provide good habits for the future. Nevertheless, parents of non-compulsory school age (below the age of 5) children do not have a legal duty to ensure their children receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise than at a school (this includes home education). However, if a child is registered at a school, parents do have a responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly.
- 22.2 The school census now collects absence data in relation to pupils whom are aged 4; hence the need to ensure good attendance habits with non-compulsory aged pupils is now heightened for all schools.

All non-compulsory age pupils should be treated exactly the same as compulsory age pupils and the same protocol should be followed.

23. Reporting Absence

A child not arriving when the parents haven't informed the school is considered a **safeguarding** matter. Therefore information about the reason for any absence is always required. It is the policy of the Academy that no absence should be unaccounted for.

First Day Response

- 23.1 On the first day of absence parents/carers are expected to contact the Academy office, preferably by telephone, before 10.00am;
- The parent/carer reporting the absence should give the reason for the absence and the expected date of return;
 - If the date of the return is unknown, regular contact on a daily basis should be kept with the Academy;
- 23.2 If the Academy receives no contact a member of the office team will;
- Arrange to check if the child is in the lesson that they should be in. If present, the register will be marked accordingly. If absent, they will,
 - Telephone and email the parent/carers.
 - Make enquiries to siblings and/or peers at the Academy
 - Make enquiries to wider family members

- Further telephone calls to all registered contacts
- Inform Academy Safe-guarding team and Academy Attendance Officer
 - i. Safe-Guarding team and Academy Attendance Officer will use information gained to decide which of the following protocol is to be initiated:
 - Monitor following day
 - Home Visit
 - Inform Police

23.3 When the child returns to school, even if the absence has been reported verbally, the parent/carer is expected to confirm the reason for the absence in writing, within five school days. This can be through a signed note in the pupil's home/school book but a separate note or email is preferable.

23.4 The written confirmation will be placed on file;

23.5 If the note is in the home/school book, the form/class teacher will send the book to the office for it to be copied and then filed;

23.6 Reporting an absence, verbally or in writing, does not guarantee authorisation.

Third Day Response

23.7 If a child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers after three days of absence the school is required to consider implementing the *child missing in education* procedures as set down by Central Bedfordshire Council. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family members.

Ten days absence

23.8 The Academy has a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is missing in education.

23.9 Staff from the Access and Inclusion Service will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

23.10 Parents are therefore required to support us by making sure the Academy always has up-to-date contact numbers and home address.

24. Monitoring and Protocols for dealing with Absences

24.1 If a pupil has been absent their form teacher will discuss this with them on their return to school.

24.2 Progress Leaders will monitor their Year Group's attendance and absences via electronic registers on a weekly basis. This information will be shared with the relevant form teacher.

24.3 If a child's attendance falls below our Academy target of 96%, 'Trigger Point 1' will be activated as per our System Protocol.

24.4 If the pupil's attendance percentage continues to drop or falls below 90%, 'Trigger Point 2' will be activated.

24.5 If there is still no improvement, the Academy's attendance officer will activate 'Trigger point 3' and if necessary, 'Trigger Point 4'

24.6 The Academy's Attendance officer will monitor attendance at least once a month and will discuss those pupils whose attendances is below 96% with relevant Progress Leaders.

24.7 All actions will be recorded electronically by the appropriate person depending on the level of trigger point.

24.8 At the start of the Academic Year, any pupil whose attendance was below 90% in the previous academic Year, will be expected to attend an attendance meeting with their parents/ carers, form teacher and Progress Leader. An attendance contract will be to be completed. If attendance becomes an issue they will be fast tracked to Trigger Point 2 of the protocol;

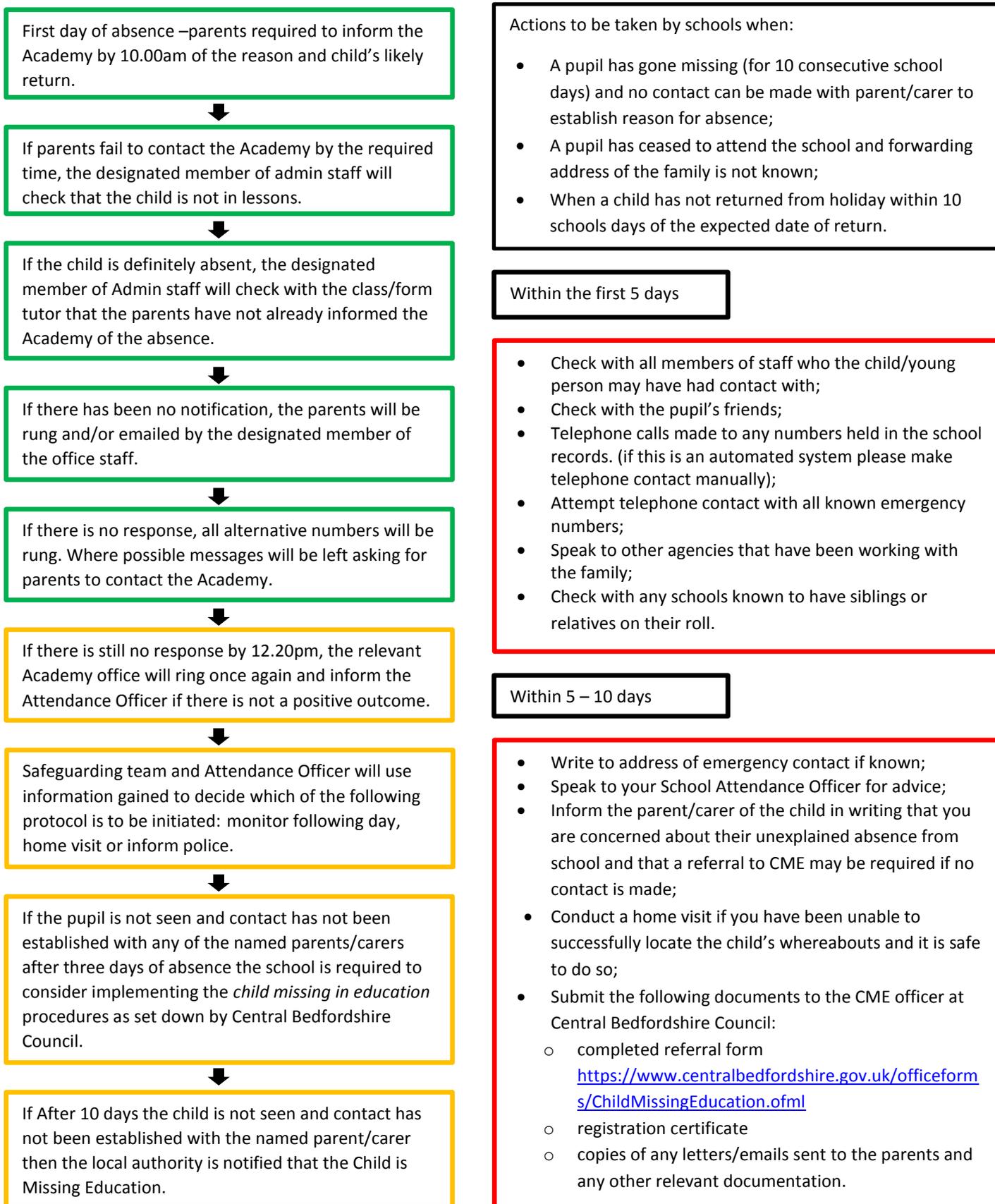
25. Penalty Notices and Legal Action

25.1 Central Bedfordshire Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices states that where a child has had 10 unauthorised absences in a 12 school week period, the school may request a penalty notice be issued.

The code of conduct is a statutory document that ensures that the powers for this legal sanction are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority.

- 25.2 Penalty Notices can be issued when:
- A pupil has 10 unauthorised absences (5 days) in a 12 week period;
 - A pupil has taken holiday during term-time and the absence has not been authorised by the school, providing the school has taken into account DfE guidance to inform its decision-making;
 - Where the school believes that the sanction will lead to an improvement in attendance, e.g. persistent late arrival at school; parents failure to attend/co-operate at a parenting contract meeting
- 25.3 Parents and carers will be alerted/warned about the possibility of a penalty notice being requested for unauthorised absence, via the Academy newsletter, or through the Academy's attendance policy and website.
- 25.4 If more than one parent has parental responsibility, both parents will receive a Penalty Notice. In situations where there is more than one pupil in a family with irregular school attendance, multiple penalty notices can be issued to the same parents during the year. However, this action must be subject to careful consideration and co-ordination.
- 25.5 Where the Academy has tried to address a pupil's unauthorised absences but the measures taken have been unsuccessful, it can then refer on to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer. If there is either no improvement in the attendance nor satisfactory evidence provided for the absences following their intervention, then it is likely legal action at Magistrates Court will be initiated.

26. Reporting Absence and Response to N Codes or Missing Children Flow Chart



27. School Attendance System Protocol for Dealing with Absence

When a pupil returns from an absence, the form teacher will discuss their absence with them.

Progress Leaders will produce a weekly attendance report on their Year group. This will be shared with form teachers in their Year.

As soon as a pupil's attendance reaches 96% or below, Trigger point 1 will be activated.

TRIGGER POINT 1

96% and below and First Point of Contact

The Form teacher will contact the parents/carers through an informal telephone call to discuss the absences and inform them that while absences are below 96% medical proof of all future absences may be required. Where this is not forthcoming, absences may be deemed as unauthorised.

After all absences, KS3 pupils whose attendance is 96% or below will complete a return to school form with their Form Teacher.

An attendance file will be opened and data and a record of the communication inputted onto a tracking spreadsheet. Actions to be recorded on this by the form tutor.

If the attendance rate does not improve or continues to fall, move to;

TRIGGER POINT 2 - Second Point of Contact

Progress Leader to activate 'Trigger Point 2' letter.

After all absences, KS3 pupils whose attendance is 96% or below to continue to complete a return to school form with their Form Teacher.

If the attendance rate fails to improve or continues to fall, move to:

TRIGGER POINT 3 - Third Point of Contact

Academy attendance Officer to activate 'Trigger Point 3' Letter inviting parents/ carers into school to discuss attendance and possible support.

TRIGGER POINT 4 – Fourth Point of Contact

Academy attendance Officer to activate 'Trigger Point 4' informing parents/carers that a referral has been made to the Local Authority.

28. Punctuality (Lateness) Protocol

All lates to be recorded as 'L' beyond ten minutes after the register closes. Arrival after 20 minutes, unless for an authorised medical appointment is automatically coded as 'U'.

Up to 3 lates	<p>Note to be put in planner by the office staff</p> <p>Action recorded on SIMS</p>
4 - 5 lates	<p>Office to inform Form Teacher</p> <p>Pupil to discuss punctuality with Form Teacher</p> <p>Form Teacher to telephone parent/carer</p> <p>Discussion recorded on tracking sheet</p>
6 - 8 lates	<p>Office to inform Progress Leader</p> <p>Pupil to discuss punctuality with Progress Leader</p> <p>Progress Leader to telephone parent/carer</p> <p>Discussion recorded on tracking sheet</p>
9 - 10 lates	<p>Office to inform Progress Leader</p> <p>Progress Leader to action 1st punctuality letter</p> <p>Letter recorded on tracking sheet</p>
10 + lates	<p>Office to inform Associate Principal with responsibility for attendance, who will activate 2nd punctuality letter inviting parents in for a meeting</p> <p>Letter and meeting recorded on tracking sheet</p>
Further lates	<p>Office to inform Associate Principal with responsibility for attendance, who will activate 3rd punctuality letter informing parents that a referral has been made to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice.</p> <p>Recorded on tracking sheet</p>