



Attendance Policy

Approved Date	October 2025
Review Date	October 2028

Introduction and Background

At Shirley Heath Junior School, we recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential to raising standards in pupil attainment and to give every child the best educational experience possible. Good attendance is everyone's responsibility.

It is well documented that children who attend school regularly have better outcomes in their attainment as well as their well-being and positive life experiences. We know that pupils who attend school make significantly better progress in their learning. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and Maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% amongst those of the expected standard.

Children are expected to attend school everyday unless there is an acceptable reason for their absences (authorised absence).

The Education Act 1996 (section 444) states every child of compulsory school age is entitled to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education, either by attendance at a school, or by education otherwise than at a school.

When you register your child at school, you have a legal duty to ensure your child attends that school regularly. This means your child 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.

The Department for Education has produced guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: Working together to improve school attendance. Our Attendance Policy reflects the key principles of that guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improveschool-attendance>

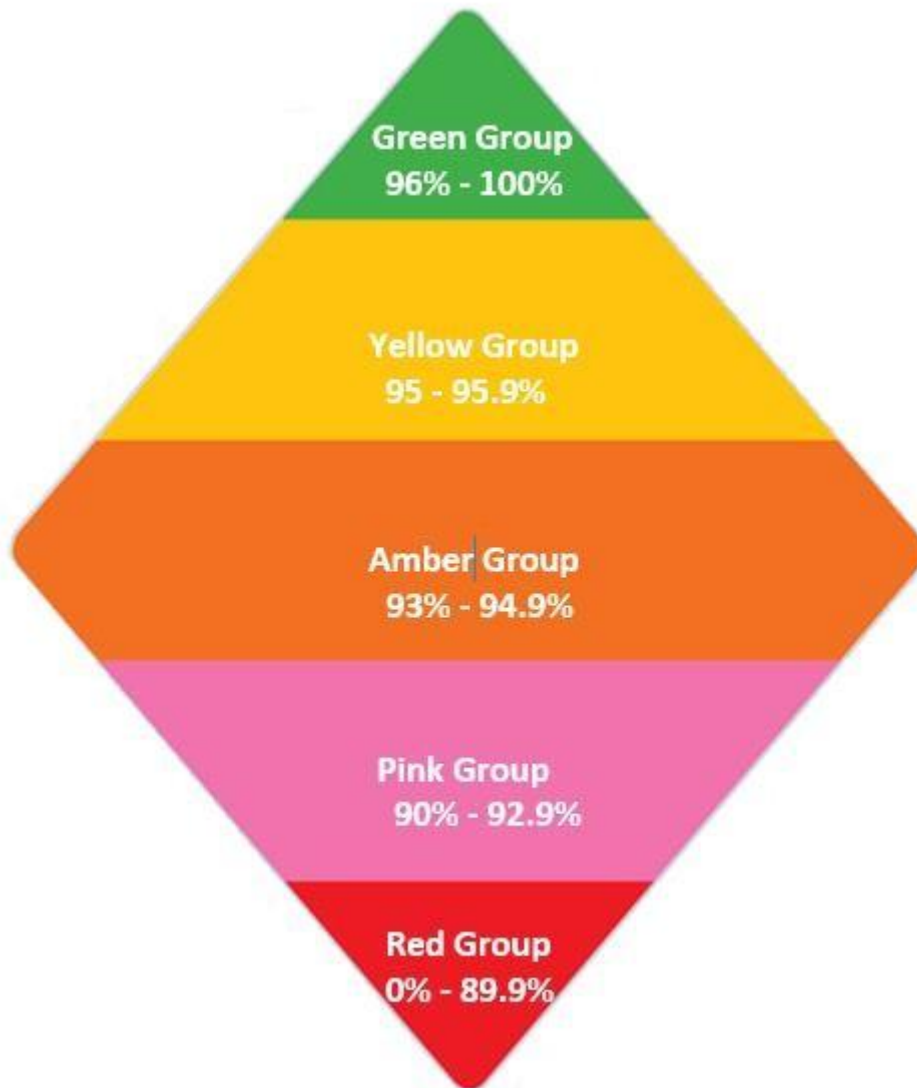
Promoting and maintaining excellent school attendance is a whole school responsibility and our policy details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved as well as the procedures that are in place to ensure and monitor regular pupil attendance. Our aim is to:

- Promote a positive and welcoming environment where children feel safe, secure and valued
- Promote and ensure children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled to enabling them to succeed both in school and in the future
- Raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality

- Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently
- Provide help and support for pupils and families where there are barriers to school attendance

Attendance Diamond

Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success. Our Attendance Diamond describes our expectations.



Attendance Groups	
Green	No risk
Yellow	Risk of underachievement
Amber	Serious risk of underachievement
Pink	Severe risk of underachievement
Red	Extreme risk - Court action

At Shirley Heath Junior School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing and work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for pupils at our school.

The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school is:

Mrs. K. Evans, Headteacher

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents/ carers should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

School office 0121 7441339 ore s46attendance@shirley-heath.solihull.sch.uk

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents/ carers should contact for more individual support with attendance:

Mrs. R. Richards, Pastoral Manager

Procedures and Registers

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial to ensure safeguarding procedures are in place for children, for data analysis and to support statutory intervention, if necessary.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately and in accordance with legislation.

Every half a day of absence from school (known as a session) is marked by the school as either authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence is where the head teacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of to be absent or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence.

Unauthorised absences are absences which the school does not consider reasonable, exceptional, or unavoidable. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

See Appendix 1 for School Absence Procedure.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will be likely to have a detrimental impact on your child's education and the school may follow attendance procedures if a child is classed as persistently absent.

Procedures

If your child is absent from school, you must:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 8.40am
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 8.40am
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence

If your child is absent, we will:

- Contact you on the first and every subsequent day of absence if we have not heard from you
- If we are unable to contact parents by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters/emails and a home visit may be made in the interests of safeguarding
- A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point your child will be "absent from education."

It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school.

Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child (KCSIE 2025). Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.

Requests for leave of absence (exceptional circumstances)

The law is very clear that you are not entitled to take your child on holiday during term time, and you are likely to be referred for legal action if you choose to do this.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances"

A leave of absence will not be granted in term time unless the reasons are deemed exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school. Where a parent/ carer removes a child when the application for leave was refused, or where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty notice may be requested by this school in accordance with the Solihull

Code of Conduct. A Penalty Notice may be issued where there have been at least 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence for the purpose of a holiday.

Procedure for Requesting a Planned Absence:

We will not authorise any leave of absence requests unless the circumstances are granted as exceptional. If you need to request this, complete an absence request form (available from school office) and submit this to the school at least two weeks prior to the date required to give the school sufficient time to consider the request and respond. If we are aware of any language difficulties that may preclude a request form being completed, appropriate support will be offered to the parent/carer. There is a requirement that parent/carers provide evidence of exceptional circumstances. A parent/carer should complete an absence request form (Appendix 2) and submit this to the school at least 20 days prior to the date required.

The headteacher will consider requests for leave of absences and either authorise or unauthorise the leave of absence request. A letter confirming this will be sent to the parent/carer.

Leave that was taken which had not been granted will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the pupil's register. We may refer these absences to the Education Inclusion Service, and this could result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice.

Deletion from School Roll

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 state that where a pupil has been granted extended leave of absence and subsequently fails to return to school within 10 school days of the expiry of the agreed period of absence, and the failure is not due to sickness or any other unavoidable cause, his/her name may, following consultation with the Local Authority, be deleted from the admission register.

Absence Data

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve. Persistently absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully.

We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Improving Attendance

If we are concerned about your child's attendance, we will:

- Write to you if your child's attendance is a concern and falls below 95%, or where punctuality is a concern.
- Invite you into school to discuss the situation with our School Attendance Officer or the Headteacher if absences persist.
- Create a personalised action/support plan to address any barriers to attendance.
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services if appropriate.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Our aim is to work with you to address any reason for the absence and address issues early. We hope this early intervention will ensure that any issues are addressed quickly and successfully.

As Parents, you can support regular school attendance by:

- Making sure your child leaves for school with plenty of time to ensure they are not late for school.
- Making medical appointments, such as dental/doctor's appointments, outside school hours where possible
- Supporting and encouraging your child by attending parents' evenings and other events
- Contacting the school to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance as soon as any issues arise.
- Working partnership with the school to resolve any issues that are impacting on your child's attendance.

Understanding Barriers to Attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, you as the parent/carer and the child. If as a parent /carer, you think their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with you and your family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use

outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain; however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners where appropriate.

Local Authority Attendance Support Services (EPAS)

As a school, we are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12.

The Local Authority has an Education Inclusion Team who work with schools, families, and other professionals, to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

As a parent/ carer, you are expected to work with the school and the Local Authority to address any attendance concerns. You should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice, prosecution in the Magistrates Court or the application of an Education Supervision Order, designed to strengthen parental responsibilities and ensure improved attendance. The school will endeavour, where possible, to solve attendance issues informally, before going down a formal / legal route.

CSAWS

School uses Central School Attendance and Welfare Services Ltd (CSAWS) to support our processes associated with children's attendance. School employ CSAWS to provide the legal monitoring services and support that will help reduce the number of persistent absent pupils and improve whole school attendance.

Lateness

It is important that pupils are punctual so that they do not miss out on the beginning of each school day. Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session.

If a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every-day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



(Over one academic year)

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can contribute to further absence. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

How we manage lateness:

- The school gates open at 8.20am when children can begin to come into school.
- Registers are taken **between 8.30am and 8.40am** and your child will receive a late mark 'L' if they are not in by that time.
- Children arriving after 8.40am are required to come into school via the school office. If accompanied by a parent/carer they must sign them into our 'Late Book' and provide a reason for their lateness which is recorded
- At **9am the registers will be closed**. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site - 'U', but this will **not** count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence (must not be more than 30 minutes after the register opens) (Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024)
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding lateness.
- From time to time a member of school staff will undertake a 'Late Gate' check, greeting late arrivals at the main entrance to the school.

Unauthorised lateness could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time.

Illness:

Not all illness requires an absence from school. For minor childhood ailments such as coughs, colds, ear aches we would not expect children to be absent. However, when a parent makes the assessment that their child is unfit for school, they should follow the above absence process.

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In most cases, a parent's explanation of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance or reason for absence, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

School will challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

Medical appointments

Parents should avoid making routine medical appointments and dental appointments during the school day. In many cases, appointments can be made outside of the school day/during the school holidays.

Where appointments must be taken during the school day, only the time for the appointment and travel to and from will be classed as an authorised absence. Pupils are expected to return to school for the remainder of the day/attend school prior to the appointment.

Parents are required to provide a copy of the appointment letter or card prior to the day of the appointment.

Other reasons for absences:

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on each occasion. Notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays or child minding.

Religious Observance

School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends, and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance

if recognised by the parent's religious body. However, parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. Religious bodies may be contacted to verify these occasions.

Traveller Absence

The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

School can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must advise school of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

School will authorise absence of Traveller children if their parent(s) are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place and has given indication that they intend to return.

Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Absent from Education

A child absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

All schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days' education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12).

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll on the limited grounds set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm. Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties.

In September 2016, the Department for Education updated the [statutory guidance](#) to reflect the 2016 amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006 Regulations.

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the 2006 regulations (as amended).

Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the CME officer, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii).

This attendance policy is part of a broader suite of safeguarding policies including the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Alternative Education Providers

On rare occasions, a small number of pupils may be accessing an alternative education provider or dual registered with another school, agreed by the school for all or part of their timetable. In this instance the pupil remains on roll at Shirley Heath Junior School. Attendance to approved alternative providers is monitored. When a pupil is Dual registered at another school or alternative provider their attendance will be recorded in the register as a D code (on days they are required to attend the other school/provision). The other school/provision will record the attendance of absence. For children who are Educated Off site but not dual registered their attendance will be recorded in the register as a B code if they are confirmed present or the appropriate absent code if absent. The responsibility of ensuring pupils are safeguarded and receiving appropriate education remains with Shirley Heath Junior School.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 states that:

“Schools should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address if the alternative provider and any other subcontracted provision or satellite sites that the child may attend. They should regularly review the alternative provision placements they make. Reviews should be frequent enough (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending, and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs.”

Registers

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations.

Every half day of absence from school must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence can be given only when the head teacher has either approved in advance for a pupil of compulsory school

age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the head teacher [see The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI No.2006/1751) – reg 7(1)].

There are procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks.

School complies with and uses the DFE Compulsory National Attendance Codes to categorise absence (Appendix 5).

Use of Attendance Data

All schools must provide their attendance data to the DFE, most schools use their management information systems to send their data via school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

We collect, use and store attendance information about our pupils and may receive information about you from your previous school. The information we keep regarding attendance includes name, contact details, attendance records, late records and any relevant medical information.

Attendance is reviewed at a minimum half termly, where there is cause for concern, this information is shared with CSAWS during regular attendance meetings held at school. CSAWS then follow up attendance concerns with parents and carers on school's behalf.

Information regarding attendance concerns may also be shared with the Local Authority as part of statutory processes and in Attendance Targeting Meetings at least termly in line with "Working together to Improve Attendance 2024".

Promoting good and improved attendance.

As a school we will reward good attendance and improved attendance regularly through reward schemes such as extra playtime.

Class Attendance is recorded in the weekly newsletter.

Individual pupil attendance is rewarded with Dojo points for children with 100%.

Good attendance is recognised in the pupil reports.

Good attendance is recognised with parents through regular letters home.

Children who have gained 100% attendance in one full term will receive a certificate at the end of that term.

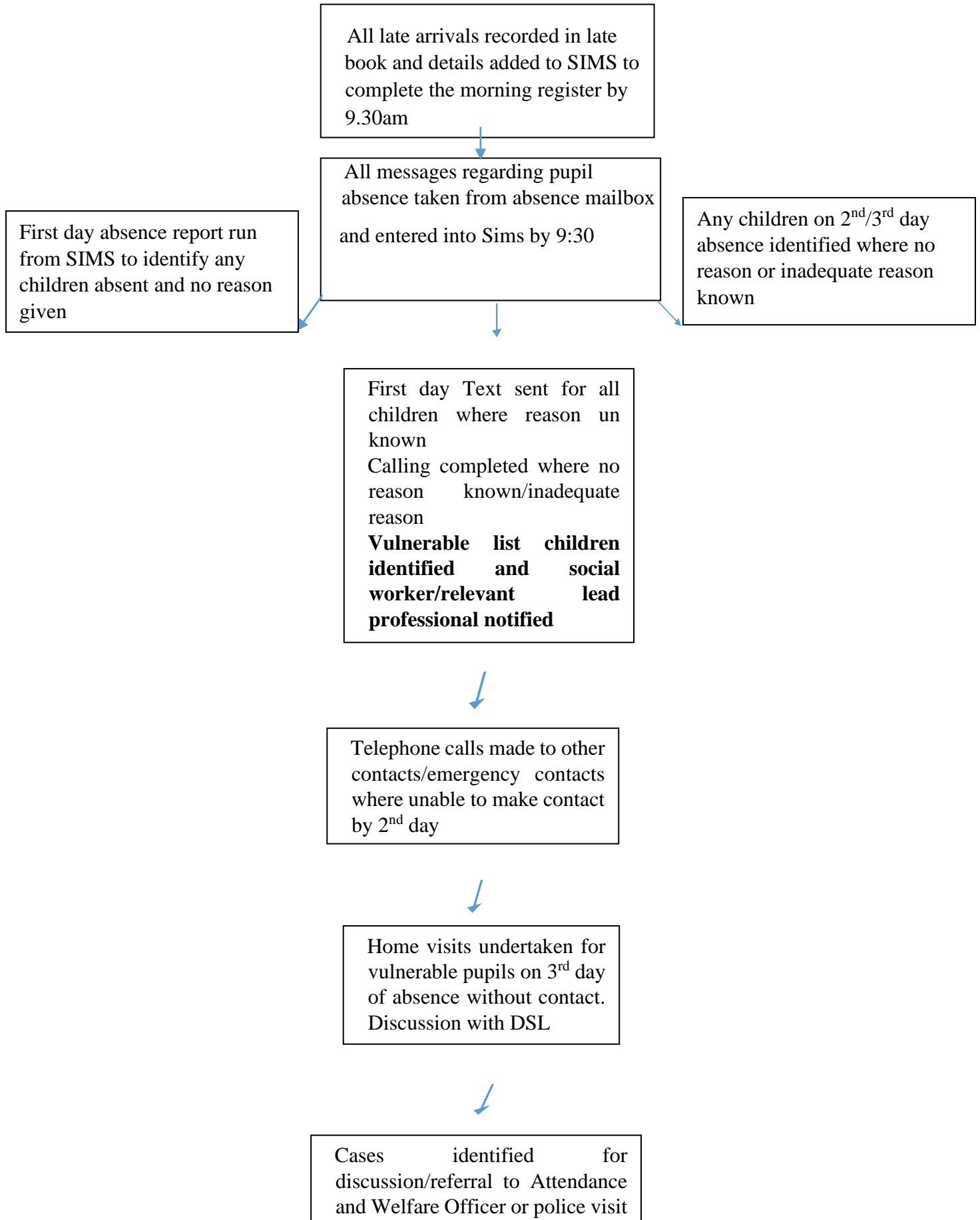
Improved attendance is recognised through.

- Individual rewards
- Letters sent home to parent.
- Postcards

If you would like to discuss anything in this policy, please contact us at school to discuss further. Good attendance is everyone's responsibility and working together means issues are identified and addressed quickly and effectively. Good attendance means your child will have their best educational outcome.

Appendix 1

School Absence Procedure



Appendix 2

**SHIRLEY HEATH JUNIOR SCHOOL
ABSENCE REQUEST FORM**

Form to be returned to the school office with a minimum of two weeks'
notice

Please note that there is no automatic right for pupils to be granted authorised leave of absence and requests will only be considered where there are exceptional circumstances.

Name	of	Pupil	Class
.....		birth
Date	of		
.....			

Please detail below the **exceptional circumstance** why you are requesting to take your child out of school. You may be invited into school to discuss your request with **Mrs K Evans**
(please attach your supporting evidence including travel documents such as flight, ferry and train tickets)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

If you are leaving the UK, please let us know which country you will be visiting:

.....
.....

Your home address:

.....
.....

Leave of absence from date:..... to date	
Number of school days that your child will be absent from school	
Does your child have a sibling in another school? If yes, please indicate which school(s) below:	
Signature Name of Parent/Carer	Date

Leave of absence which has not been agreed will be marked as unauthorised. These may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer for consideration which could result in a Penalty Notice.

For School Use:

Previous requests for leave of absence %	Yes / No	Attendance
Evidence provided for exceptional circumstance	Yes / No	
Arrange to meet with Parent/Carer	Yes / No	Date & time

Authorised

Unauthorised

By Headteacher

Appendix 3

Authorised Exceptional Leave of Absence Standard Letter

TO THE PARENTS OF: -

Dear Parents

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request form.

I write to confirm that on this occasion I am able to authorise your child's leave of absence.

Requests for leave of absence are never taken lightly and in making this decision I have accepted your reason and evidence for the exceptional circumstance.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

cc Class Teacher/File

Appendix 5

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

School Attendance Flowchart

