



St John's Walham Green CE Primary School

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|----------------------------------|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Policy Name | Attendance Policy | | | |
| Date | January 2018 | Review Date | January 2019 | |
| Responsibility | FGB | Resources | Curriculum | Headteacher |
| Committee agreed on: | Signed by: | | | |
| FGB agreed/ratified on: 08.03.17 |  Signed by: | | | |

St. John's Walham Green Church of England Primary School aspires to develop young people who are successful students, independent learners and confident individuals. We strive to ensure that our pupils become responsible citizens with a concern for the well-being of all God's creation.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

St John's School is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all pupils irrespective of race, religion, gender, language, disability or family background. We believe that equal opportunity is at the heart of good educational practice and challenge any form of discrimination. All staff and governors are responsible for ensuring that we implement this policy".

INTRODUCTION

School attendance is a priority for St John's Walham Green CE Primary School. Good attendance can contribute to achieving all five outcomes listed in Every Child Matters. Regular attendance also enables teaching staff to monitor pupils' welfare, thus contributing to the safeguarding agenda.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The aim of this policy is:

- To promote regular attendance and punctual arrival at school, thus offering all pupils equal access to learning.

The objectives of the policy are;

- To meet Government attendance targets set for the school.
- Create a clearly understood procedure for parents/carers/guardians.
- To make explicit the ways in which attendance and punctuality are monitored in the school
- To outline the link between poor attendance and pupil progress.

Pupils' achievement is seriously affected by poor attendance. The National Curriculum is designed to be delivered in a way that offers good continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Absence from school will adversely affect the pupils' ability to participate and benefit from the learning programme. Absenteeism by some pupils is also disruptive for the progress of others. For some pupils, poor attendance at school creates difficulties that result in disruptive behaviour which, in turn, damages the opportunities available to other pupils.

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents/carers 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.

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 parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. This responsibility is undertaken by Education Welfare. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, expect 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; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Categorising absence

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

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Illness

Sometimes, when a child complains of feeling unwell, parents/carers are not sure whether to bring their child to school. More often than not, once at school, the child settles and manages to get through the day. Should a parent/carer decide to bring their child to school and the child continues to feel unwell, the school will always contact parents/carers immediately.

Parents/carers must advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the School with an expected date of return. This must be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

The Headteacher can authorise absences through ill-health, but is not obliged to and should not do so when there is any doubt about the reason for the absence and further investigation might be necessary. Where there are repeated absences due to reported illness, parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc. or in some cases a doctor's note.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students should attend school for part of the day. Parents/carers should show the appointment card to school.

Other Authorised Circumstances

This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example, family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Excluded (No alternative provision made)

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Major religious observances

These will be in accordance with Local Authority guidelines.

Family Holidays and Extended Leave

Authorised leave will **not** be granted for holidays. The school holiday dates are published in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holiday during the school holidays.

Parents/carers should be aware that if their son/daughter is absent for 10 school days, they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year.

A Penalty Notice will be issued to parents/carers in instances where parents/carers take children out of school for holidays/leave in term time.

If a student fails to return and contact with the parents/carers has not been made or received, the school **may** take the student off the school's roll in compliance with **the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**. This means that the child will lose their school place.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter will state:

- The expected date of return
- That parents/carers must contact school should any delays occur
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer the school will endeavour to contact them on that day. If the family is not contactable on the telephone, an email and/or letter will be sent
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If, by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made (third day if waiting for a response to a letter), the school will make a referral to the ACE team (Attendance, Child employment and entertainment, Elective home education and children missing education) and/or Early Help/Localities team.
- A member of the ACE team will make repeated efforts to contact the parent/carer and establish why the pupil is not attending school. If the problem is quickly resolved and the pupil returns to school, or if a legitimate reason is provided for the absence, the ACE team will continue to monitor the situation.
- After the school has made contact with parents/carers and invited them into the school but no significant improvement has resulted or if the pupil is still absent without a proper explanation, school staff can refer to Locality /Early Help services for support. If the FLS accepts the request they will work with the family to achieve an improved pattern of attendance and to address the issues which lie behind the non-attendance.

The school day

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) the school day is 8.55am – 3.20pm. For Key Stage 1 the school day is 8.55am – 3.15pm and for Key Stage 2 the school day is 8.55am – 3.30pm.

Registration

The school uses an electronic (computerised) system of registration. The register is a legal document and as such can be used in a court of law (e.g. to establish a pupil's attendance or absence at a particular time on a precise day). The registers are marked at the beginning of each session, morning and afternoon.

Late Arrival

Registration begins at 8.55am. Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late (L). The register will close at 9.00am.

On arrival after the close of register, students must immediately report to the school office to sign in to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

As a school, we are aware lateness can severely affect achievement. We monitor punctuality closely and have strategies in place to address lateness.

Registration and entry to classes - Procedure

1. The black playground gate, Filmer Road, will open at 8.30am each morning. Parents/carers must stay with their child/ren until the school building opens at 8.45am when pupils are allowed into their class.
2. The 3 main entry doors will close at 8.55am.
3. If your child arrives after 8.55am you are requested to walk through to the school office and sign your child in late. Your child will receive a yellow late card which they must give to their class teacher. Pupils arriving after 8.55am will be marked late in the register.
It is vital that any pupil arriving late is signed in, in order to comply with Health and Safety procedures.
4. The black gates will close at 8.55am. We ask that parents/carers leave the playground by this time as the playground is required to be secured. **Any parent still in the playground at this time will be accompanied through the school to exit via the office reception area.**

The School's Approach to Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- Best class weekly attendance for Key Stage 1 and 2.
- Friday Celebration assembly is used as a means of promoting good attendance.
- Highest attendance of the week is displayed in the entrance hall.
- At the end of every **term**, every child achieving 100% attendance receives a certificate and their name read out in assembly. The children also receive an additional activity/reward.
- Attendance displays are clearly visible throughout the school, in the weekly newsletters and on the playground noticeboards.
- **Our target attendance is 96.3% Attendance is monitored on a half termly basis. Any pupils below this figure will receive a letter informing them of their child's attendance to date. Parents/carers will continue to receive letters on a half termly basis until the attendance reaches our target figure.**
- **If a child is absent from school for more than 5 days a Doctor's certificate will be requested.**

RESPONSIBILITIES

School Responsibilities

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere;

- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns;
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality;
- Contact parents/carers when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Follow up all uninformed absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. Although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In case of long term frequent absence due to medical conditions, verification from a GP or other relevant body may be requested;
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition;
- Regularly inform parents/carers of the % attendance of all pupils;
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly;
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the ACE team.

CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE A PENALTY NOTICE MAY BE ISSUED

The issue of a Penalty Notice may be considered in cases where a pupil is absent from school and the absence is unauthorised. Penalty Notices can be used by schools as an alternative to a referral to Localities Services and Early Help teams in LBHF, RBKC and WCC in cases of persistent non-attendance.

The issue of a Penalty Notice may be considered appropriate in any of the following circumstances:

- Cases of overt truancy
- Cases of parentally condoned absence, where this can be demonstrated.
- Instances where parents/carers take children out of school for holidays/leave in term time
- Persistent lateness (unauthorised)
- Where a child has been excluded from school and is found in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification within the first five days of the exclusion period.

The Headteacher and Governing Body Responsibilities

- The Headteacher will ensure that monitoring of punctuality is undertaken and appropriate action will be taken for frequent late comers including Social Services where appropriate.
- The authorised and unauthorised absences are monitored by the SAO (Senior Administrative Officer) and overseen by the Headteacher.
- The SAO and Senior Leadership Team monitor both attendance and punctuality on a half termly basis.
- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request a termly report from the Headteacher.
- The governing body has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out.
- The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

Parent responsibilities

The law states quite clearly that children between 5 and 16 years old must receive education.

- Children are of school age from the start of term after they are 5 years old until the last Friday in June in the academic year when they are 16 years old.
- As a parent or carer, **YOU** are responsible for ensuring your child gets full-time education.
- Are you certain your child is at school when he or she should be, and on time?
- If your children do not attend, you and they risk having to go to court to explain your actions.
- Children who work during school hours are being exploited. Both you and their employer could be prosecuted and fined heavily if this happens.

- (A leaflet about the by-laws is available from the ACE team).

St John's Walham Green CE Primary School makes use of the Authority's support in relation to poor attendance. This includes the ACE team, which can advise schools on policy and procedure and the Family Support Localities Service (FSLs) who work with pupils and families.

What can parents/carers and carers do?

Talking to your child about school **every day**, if possible. This means not only are you sure that your child has been to school that day, but you can also find out if your child is having problems at school such as bullying or difficulties with the work, and you can help deal with those problems. You can celebrate and reward any success your child has.

Children missing education (CME) or having elective home education (EHE)

We monitor the attendance of all pupils because persistent absence or pupils missing from school may be an indicator of welfare concerns.

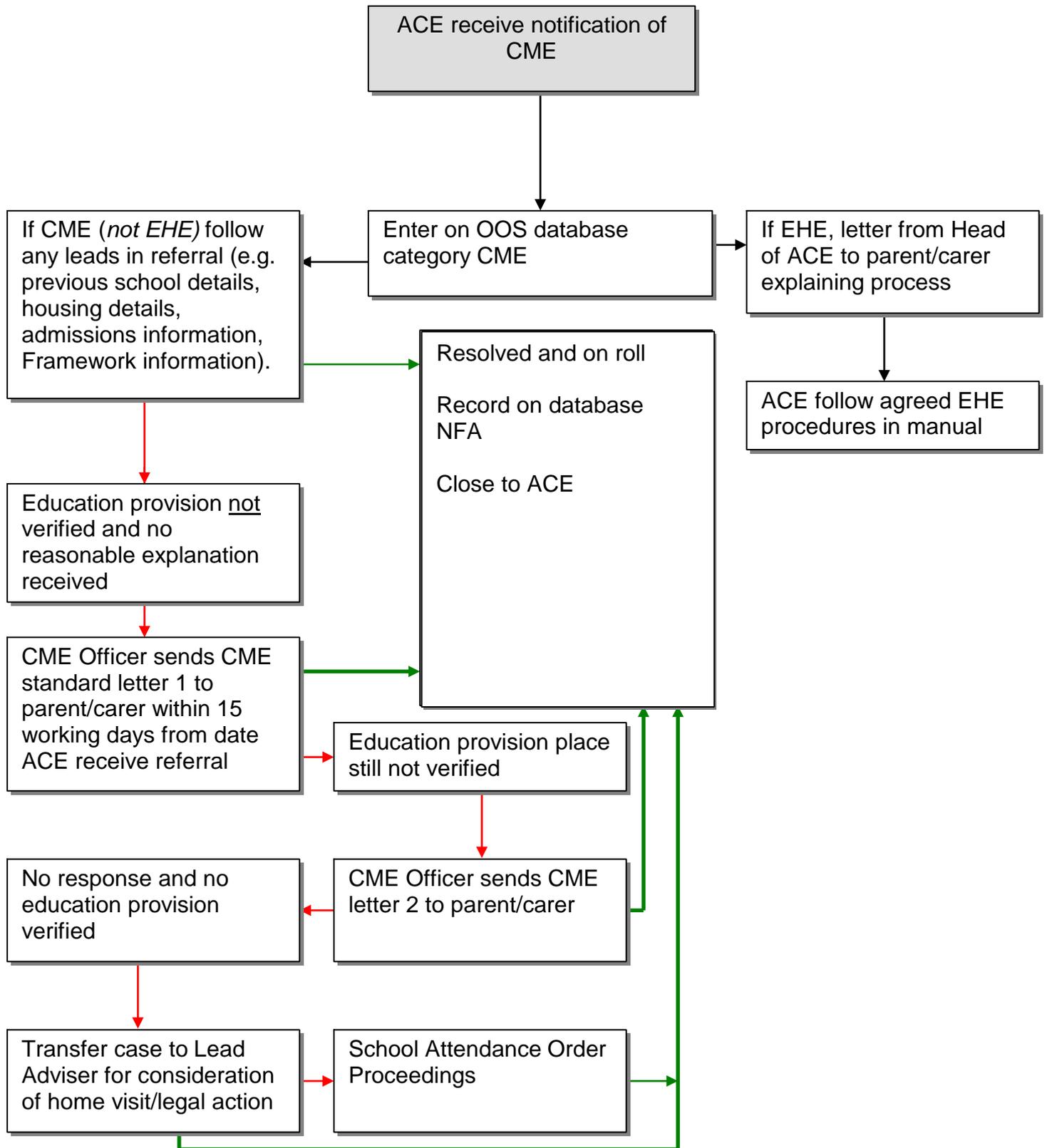
In the event of a pupil missing school or persistently absent we will make a referral to the Early Help team in the Local Authority and follow the LA protocol for children missing in education.

If a parent notifies the school that they are removing the child so they can be educated at home, we will notify the ACE team - Tri-borough Children's Services Attendance (statutory), Child Employment/Entertainment, Elective Home Education/ Children Missing Education (ACE). If the child is already known to Social Care, we will notify their allocated social worker immediately.

- CME are children who have no educational provision. They are *not* children who have provision but are poor attenders or those who are approved as electively home educated.
- Because all LAs have a statutory responsibility to all CME, ACE will be responsible for maintaining a Tri Borough register of all children notified to ACE as out of school (this register includes EHE children as well as CME children).
- Any professional who identifies a child he or she believes to be either CME or EHE is asked to inform ACE at once in writing, providing the child's name, address, d.o.b. and previous educational provision if known.
- ACE will then work with colleagues as appropriate to ensure CME are placed and EHE families are properly supported using agreed procedures.
- If any professional has wider concerns about a family whose child is CME or EHE, they will either complete the appropriate Locality/Early Help referral form (4c) or, if there are child protection concerns, an Interagency Referral Form (5d).

**Tri-borough Children's Services
Attendance (statutory), Child Employment/Entertainment, Elective Home
Education/ Children Missing Education (ACE)**

Children Missing Education Flow Chart



Keeping in contact with the school

Do not wait for a problem. Make an appointment to see your child's teacher if you have any concerns. Be part of the PTFA and support events. The more involved you are, the happier your child will be at school. Be involved in your child's homework. Ask what homework he or she has each night. Have a look at what is to be done and offer help if it is needed. Ask to see the work when finished and be positive about what your child has done. If in doubt, find out if you think your child might be missing school, talk to the staff. If you are not sure whether your child is allowed to miss school for any reason in particular, call and ask. Keep a note of term dates, holidays, teacher training days, etc.

ACE contact details

Postal address:

ACE Team Green Zone,
2nd Floor,
Kensington Town Hall,
Hornton Street,
London W8 7NX

Richie Adeyeye - Lead Adviser (entertainment, employment and PNs)

Richie.Adeyeye@rbkc.gov.uk

0207 745 6611

Kyria Parsons - Lead Adviser (CME and EHE)

Kyria.Parsons@rbkc.gov.uk

0207 745 6615

Paul Worts - Senior Exclusions Officer

Paul.Worts@rbkc.gov.uk

0207 745 6614

Elizabeth Spearman - Head of ACE –

elizabeth.spearman@lbhf.gov.uk

0207 745 6610

Requests for attendance support for individual pupils and their families should continue to be made to:

Locality service in Westminster acesstochildreancesservices@westminster.gov.uk

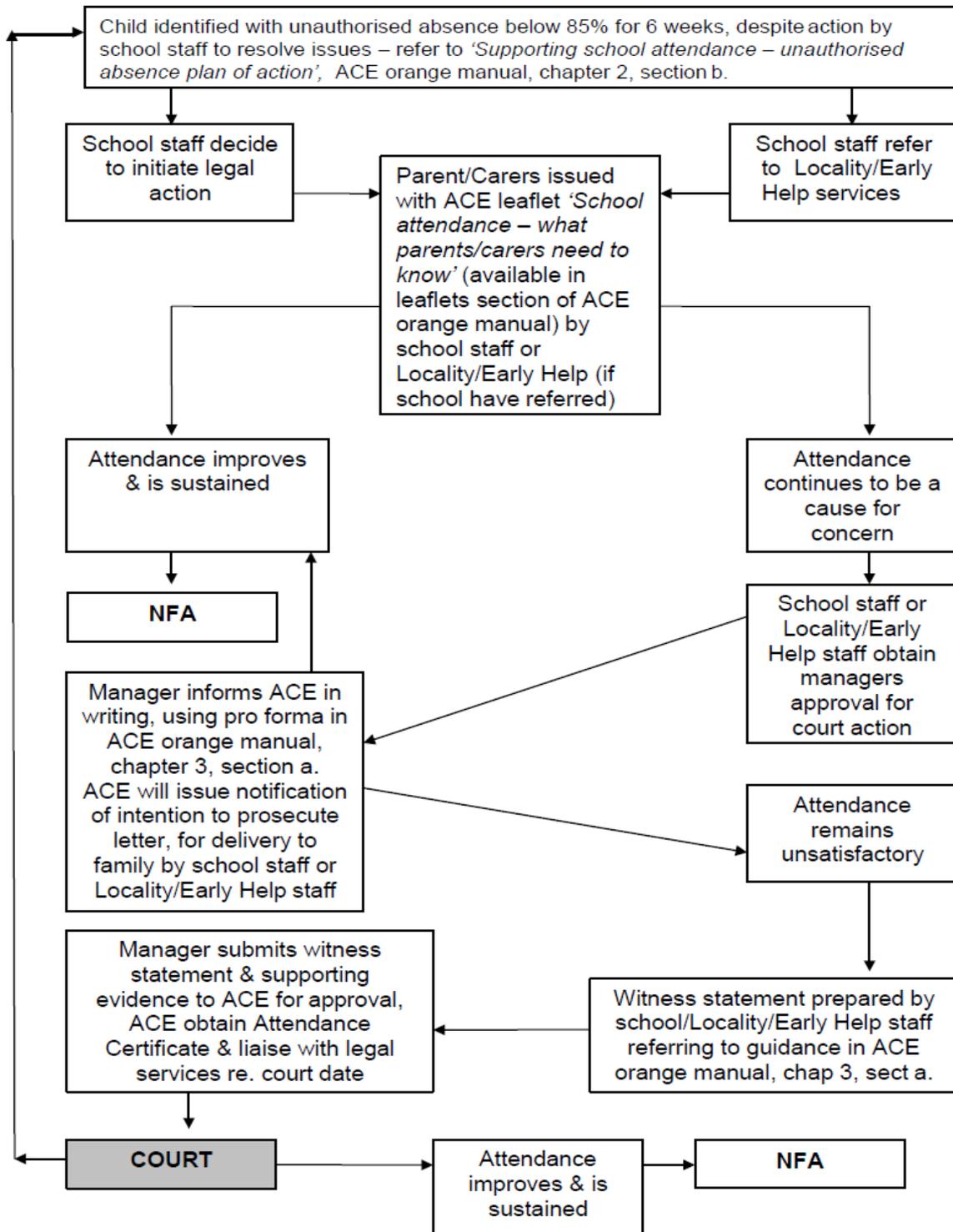
Early Help services in Hammersmith and Fulham familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk

Early Help team in Kensington and Chelsea earlyhelp@rbkc.gov.uk

Page last updated: 27/05/2015

Appendix A

Flow chart of actions to proceed to court in cases of pupil non attendance - for use by school staff OR Locality/Early Help services, if school staff have requested support from them (to be read in conjunction with 'Guidelines for proceedings in the Magistrates Court')



PENALTY NOTICE REFERRAL FORM

| | |
|---|--|
| NAME and DESIGNATION OF REFERRER | |
| SCHOOL | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| CHILD'S FULL NAME | | | |
| CHILD'S DATE OF BIRTH | | | |
| Ethnicity | | Year Group: | |
| ADDRESS | | | |
| FULL NAME OF MOTHER (OR CARER) | | | |
| FULL NAME OF FATHER (OR CARER) | | | |
| Parent(s) phone number | | | |

| | | |
|--|-------------|-----------|
| PERIOD OF ABSENCE FOR WHICH PENALTY NOTICE IS REQUESTED | From | To |
|--|-------------|-----------|

| Checklist of information for referral to ACE for consideration of the issuing of a penalty notice | Tick |
|--|-------------|
| Referral meets the threshold for consideration for issuing of a Penalty Notice in terms of Penalty Notice Code of Conduct? (Section 3) | |
| Attendance printout for previous & current years attached | |
| Referral for Penalty Notice is in relation to a persistent absence rate of below 85% unauthorised absence over a six week period | |
| Parent/carers has taken child out of school for leave in term time without the permission of school staff | |
| School considered history of previous leave taken in term-time and previous attendance rate | |
| Evidence of action undertaken by school staff to resolve the attendance issues to be attached – including copies of any communication to and from parents/carers, original application for exceptional leave from parent/carers where applicable, letters/documents from parents/carers, attendance contracts, etc.. | |
| Evidence attached of consultation with other professionals involved should be attached | |
| Attendance details of siblings- where appropriate. | |
| Please provide summary of action school took before & after pupil returned to school, e.g. phone conversation or meeting with family: | |
| Please provide summary of Parent/Guardian response: | |

Attendance Contract Template

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Date/time of meeting: | |
| Venue: | |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Pupil name: | |
| Date of birth: | |
| Address: | |
| | |
| | |
| School: | |
| | |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Present at meeting: | |
|----------------------------|--|

| |
|---|
| Action agreed |
| <p>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil will arrive at school by 8.55 a.m. every day. • Parent will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon pupil's return. • Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur. • Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly, school staff will be informed? |

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Attendance target: | 100% |
| Timescale for improvement: | |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Date for review meeting: | |
|--------------------------|--|

I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed:

..... Parent/carer

..... Pupil

..... School Representative

..... Other Agency

Working in Partnership:

ACE team, Locality Services (LBHF and WCC) and Early Help Team (RBKC)

Introduction

- a. From July 2013 all Education Welfare Officers across the Tri Borough have been transferred to Locality/Early Help services, multidisciplinary teams offering early intervention and preventive support to families and children.
- b. If a parent or carer, member of school staff or other professional is concerned about a child's school attendance, he or she should complete the relevant referral form for the respective boroughs Locality/Early Help services, (3b).
- c. The ACE team will retain responsibility for all whole-school statutory services (e.g. register inspections, Penalty Notices) and will also be available to answer school queries on policy and procedure in relation to school attendance.
- d. There are, however, some specific responsibilities for *individual* children that ACE will retain. This document is a guide to how ACE and Locality/Early Help staff will work together to support families and children in this borough.

Children with continuing poor attendance at school – legal action

- a. Locality/Early Help services can offer a range of support to families (e.g. parenting support or family support) which will in some cases include support with school attendance.
- b. As this support is intended to be preventative 'early intervention', if families are unwilling or unable to make good use of this support and children continue not to attend school satisfactorily, these cases will be referred to ACE, who will be responsible for starting legal action, either in Magistrates Court (prosecutions) or Family Proceedings Court (Education Supervision Orders).
- c. ACE will need to rely on evidence of interventions and work carried out by Locality/Early Help staff, as magistrates expect local authorities to have been proactive in supporting and working with families to solve attendance problems before starting legal action.
- d. ACE is available to liaise with Locality/Early Help staff on any case where attendance problems are proving intractable. Telephone or e-mail advice may be enough, but ACE input into meetings between Locality/Early Help staff, school staff, other professionals and families will also be available.
- e. If court action leads to magistrates imposing a Parenting Order or an Education Supervision Order, ACE will liaise with Locality/Early Help staff on the most effective way to discharge the local authority's responsibilities for the order.

Children in employment or entertainment

- a. ACE will continue to have oversight of the LA's legal requirements in both of these areas of work.
- b. Any professional working with a child should notify ACE if he or she believes the child to be working or taking part in an activity warranting an entertainment licence.

Conclusion

- a. These guidelines have been issued to facilitate consistent practice and good communication between the Locality/Early Help services and ACE.
- b. Individual cases may require a response from services not covered by these guidelines.

ACE will be flexible in support offered to schools and Locality/Early Help staff, and can be contacted on 020 8753 2877 with any queries.