



FINHAM PARK SCHOOL

A Mathematics and STEM College

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY



SECTION ONE – FOR YEARS 7 TO 11

Aims

Regular attendance and punctuality are vital if students are to benefit fully from the opportunities offered by the School and to have continuity and progress in their learning. The School aims to ensure that each student has a full and punctual attendance.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.

We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Parents

Section 444 of the Education Act states:

“If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence”.

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude

(b) to any special educational needs **[F1]**(in the case of a child who is in the area of a local authority in England) or additional learning needs (in the case of a child who is in the area of a local authority in Wales)**]** he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

If a student is unable to attend school through sickness or other authorised absences (see below) parents must notify the school of the student's absence *on the first day of absence*.



Parents should avoid, if at all possible making non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

Authorised absences include: - illness, emergency medical appointments.

Unauthorised absences include: - looking after brothers and sisters, birthdays, general trips such as shopping, holidays during term time.

Parents **do not** have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. The school will make the final decision on whether to authorise exceptional leave in term time (see exceptional leave in term time policy).

Students

Students are responsible for making sure their attendance and punctuality is maintained at the highest level.

They should attend all of their lessons on time, equipped and ready to learn.

Students have a responsibility to follow school procedures should they arrive late for registration.

Students who experience difficulties which may prevent them from attending school regularly should speak initially to their Mentor, Well-Being Officer or College Leader. Students will then be offered appropriate support.

Staff

Staff should demonstrate a positive pro-active ethos which places high value on attendance and punctuality. They should ensure that all procedures are followed correctly.

Registration Procedures

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at morning registration or in the afternoon session must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as



an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised (N).

Period 1 and registration begins at 8.45am each morning, although students are required in school by 8.40am.

The Mentor will call the register recording a mark for each student. Registers must be taken by 9.00am at the latest. No blanks should be left.

Any student who is absent when the register is called, but who subsequently arrives before 10.30am should be recorded as late. This will be coded by the Attendance Clerk.

The Attendance Clerk will text parents on the first day of absence for any student who is not in school. If a reason is not provided a follow up telephone call is made on the first day.

In the afternoon the register will be called during period 5- the same procedures apply when taking the register: The teacher will call the register recording a mark for each student. No blanks should be left.

The marks indicated in Appendix 1 should be used to record absence when registering on PARS (an in school management information system).

If for any reason PARS is not working, paper registers must be taken- these should be kept by the Mentor for this eventuality. Paper registers should be returned to the Attendance Clerk immediately after the end of morning and afternoon registration sessions. PAPER REGISTERS SHOULD ONLY BE USED ON THE RARE OCCASIONS WHEN SIMS (School Information Management System) IS NOT WORKING.

On the morning of an assembly registers should be taken as normal using PARS.

For students in the PLC all registers will be taken by the staff working with the student(s) On the rare occasion that the staff member is unable to record the register, the list will be taken by a sensible student to the Inclusion Coordinator for recording on SIMS during the first 10 minutes of the lesson.

Categorisation of Absence

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:



1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays, unauthorised holidays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

This would include:

- Work Experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Courses taken at college or other schools, or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration.

Note: Students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. Their attendance and punctuality will be checked by the Inclusion Coordinator every week and by the College Leader on a fortnightly basis.

Punctuality

Students arriving late and up until 9.15am should go straight to their period 1 Personal Development lesson.

They will be marked late once the register has been called. A Late Gate system is in operation recording students who arrive after 8.40am. The College Leaders and Well-Being Officers will collate the information and contact home accordingly. In cases of



persistent lateness parents will be invited to school by the Well-Being Officer, College Leader or Attendance Team to discuss the problem.

Those arriving after 8.40am should report to the Gatehouse Reception and give their names to the College Leader or Well-Being Officer who will give the student a late slip. The student must show the late slip to the class teacher once they arrive, then the class teacher should mark the student late on the register. Students should not be allowed into class without a late slip if they are late to school. These students will be given a detention.

If the student does not have a late slip they must be sent back by the class teacher to the Gatehouse Reception to sign in.

Those arriving after 10.30 will be regarded as absent and a parental note will be required before the absence can be indicated as authorised.

Any student who is persistently late to school will face further sanctions and parents will be invited in to the school by the College Leader to discuss next steps.

Attendance to School: Procedures

Attendance figures for each student will appear on the annual report sent to parents and will be available at any parental interview that takes place during the school year. This information can be located at any time on SIMS under the individual child's records, and is visible to parents on Insight.

The Attendance Team will email attendance data for each college to AHT i/c attendance and College Leaders weekly. Appropriate interventions will be taken including referral to the EWO. (Refer also to Persistent Absence below.)

Half- termly and termly figures will also be analysed by the AHT i/c attendance, College Leaders and EWO to ensure action is taken with individuals or groups of students. Any sudden or gradual changes in a students' pattern of attendance can indicate a **safeguarding issue**. It is essential that the school procedures and systems for identifying individuals and or groups of students for whom attendance is an issue, take this into account.

Absence should be reported using the Studybugs App or communicated with the attendance clerk via 'School Comms' e-mail or text. Any absence mark left without communication as to an explanation of absence will be classified as an unauthorised absence.



The Mentor will establish the reason for every absence including having personal contact with parents. The Attendance Team and EWO will chase up and establish a reason for all unauthorised absences.

The Mentor must monitor attendance of his/her Mentor group and refer to the College Leader any patterns of absence causing concern or any unauthorised absence that they have not been able to resolve themselves. College Leaders should monitor student absence with the AHT/DHT i/c attendance and EWO using weekly wellbeing meetings.

College Leaders will work to resolve patterns of absence causing concern or unauthorised absence with AHT i/c Attendance and EWO.

Attendance data is presented to governors three times a year via the Headteacher's Data Report.

Attendance data will be discussed with parents at Parents' Evenings, *and any unauthorised absences should be accounted for*. Any concerns after Parents' Evenings should be referred to College Leaders in the first instance.

Staff/support interventions

The aim of all staff is to ensure that students' attendance is excellent, and no learning time is missed.

- The EWO will focus mainly, but not solely, on students with attendance below 90%.
- College leaders will assist by supporting those with 75-85% and Well Being officers those between 85-90%.
- Mentors will focus on students with attendance between 90-100%.
- Parents of students who have had low attendance will be sent a letter highlighting the link between good attendance and good attainment. An attendance target will be set where appropriate. Their attendance will be reviewed and further personalised letters of praise or concern will be sent. The EWO will focus on students who are still concerns, in liaison with College Leaders and AHT/DHT as appropriate.



Welcoming back

Where a child is absent from school the following procedure should be followed for welcoming them back:

- If student has been absent for one day, the Mentor welcomes them back and checks they are okay.
- If student is absent for two days, further communication by the Mentor with parents and student will take place and provision made for the student catching up with work.
- If a student is absent for more than two days the Attendance Team will contact home to ascertain reason for absence and student's likely date of return to school.
- If a student is absent for three days, a home visit will be carried out by the EWO.
- For longer term absences a meeting with the College Leader will take place and a more formal reintegration be implemented with a plan to catch up lost learning, possibly involving support from the PLC.
- For persistent absence AHT I/C attendance and the EWO will be involved and support as necessary.

Truancy

Truancy from school is dealt with as a high priority and must be dealt with immediately.

Parents will be invited by the College Leader to school to discuss the matter, arrangements for monitoring future attendance established and 'catch up time' organised by the College Leader for making up lost learning. If an entire day is missed the student will serve one day in the Refocus Room.

Any recurrent problems with truancy from school should be referred by the College Leader/Well Being Officer to the AHT/DHT Attendance who may involve the EWO.

Persistent Absence (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for authorised or unauthorised absence.



PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system (see above) and we also combine this with academic Mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/ carers and the student. In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absence, the EWO will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s/ carers by contacting home and arranging a meeting as soon as possible. Clear targets will be set and support will be offered to the parents/ carers and student. If it is not possible to contact home, the EWO may carry out a Home Visit.

College Leader i/c transition will identify potential PA students as they transfer to Finham from primary school in liaison with the EWO and inform AHT i/c Attendance.

Exceptional Leave in Term Time

Parents do not have any rights or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purpose of a term time holiday. In exceptional circumstance the headteacher may authorise leave. Taking a child out of school without permission could result in the issue of a Penalty Notice that could lead to a fine of £60 per child per parent. In some instances, children who take holidays in term time could risk losing their school place.

When making a request parents should fill in an 'Exceptional Leave in term time request' form. This should be accompanied by an 'Exceptional Leave in term time' leaflet. Parents need to fill the form in and return to school for the attention of the EWO. A decision will be made by the EWO, on behalf of the Headteacher, and returned to parents in writing within 7 days.

See Exceptional Leave in term time policy.

Attendance to Lessons

- Attendance to lessons should be recorded on SIMS at the start of every lesson.
- Only N or / should be entered (N= absence not know) in the first instance
- Once a register is taken, count the number of students present to ensure the register is correct
- **NO BLANKS SHOULD BE LEFT IN THE REGISTER**
- Registers must be completed within the first 10 minutes of the lesson
- The Attendance Team will prompt staff to take registers if they are not taken after the first 10 minutes of the lesson.



- Staff will inform the attendance team of any missing students after they have taken their register.
- If a register is not taken the Attendance Clerk will request the appropriate Subject Leader to ensure the teacher takes the register as soon as possible and before the end of the day.

Truancy from lessons should be reported to parents by the subject teacher through the Subject or Faculty Leader.

Missed learning must be made up. It will be the responsibility of the subject teacher to arrange to make up the missed learning time, and to ensure the student is set the work to be covered. If a student is repeatedly late to lessons over the course of a week, they will be put on report by the Subject Teacher or Subject/ Faculty leader. If there is a pattern across the board, then students may be put on report to their College or Deputy College Leader (or Mentor).

Students should not be allowed out of the classroom during a lesson unless it is an emergency or medical condition. In this case, the member of staff must provide the student with a pass/note.

Lateness to Lessons

Any student arriving more than 5 minutes late for the lesson should be recorded as arriving late on PARS and the number of minutes recorded. If the time they are late exceeds 5 minutes this should be entered as a separate behaviour incident on PARS to inform the College Leader of any patterns. It is the responsibility of the Mentor to check the behaviour log of their Mentor group in PARS and to ensure that suitable action is taken to deal with such lateness, which will normally be to discuss this issue with students. For persistent lateness to lessons College Leaders will liaise with Subject/ Faculty Leaders to ensure action is taken or will take direct action which may involve a meeting with parents if an improvement is not seen.

Where there is a general pattern of lateness it is the responsibility of the Mentor with the College Leader to discuss the problem with the student concerned and set clear targets for improvement.

At the end of each week the Attendance Team/DHT will provide Mentors and College Leaders with details of students who have accrued lates to lessons. Mentors and College Leaders will issue break time and after school detentions to catch up with missed learning.



The school's arrangements to monitor the attendance of any students who attend provision off site such as vocational courses, extended work experience or college

CLM (online central register) is used by federation schools to record attendance of students studying off site. The Inclusion Coordinator will access CLM which will alert them to any absences of students studying off site. She will notify the Attendance Team of any absences of these students. The Inclusion Coordinator will make phone calls to the parents, host school or college where necessary, to ensure excellent attendance and punctuality is maintained. This information will be recorded by the Attendance Team.

Children In Care

Children in Care should also be monitored closely and the Local Authority representative or Social Worker informed on a daily basis if the child is not in school. The Attendance Team will inform the Inclusion Coordinator to ensure that that this happens.

Children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan

If a child who is subject to a Child Protection plan or a Child in Need plan is absent from school, the Attendance Team will inform the Inclusion Coordinator to ensure the relevant social care officer is informed.

Recognition, Celebration and Rewards

Ways of rewarding good attendance:

- At the end of every half term students with 100% attendance will
 - receive an excellent attendance certificate
 - be awarded a Star Sticker
- All students will be set a target of 95% attendance- which will then be personalised as necessary
- Attendance Shield- this will be given to the college with the best attendance at the end of every year- a regularly updated display (weekly in the bulletin) will show current attendance figures for each college
- the Mentor group with the best attendance in each college will be given the Attendance Cup for their Mentor room and a Star Sticker each in assembly every week
- Annual reports will display attendance alongside details of our expectations, what constitutes good attendance and the link between good attendance and good attainment.



- Students who receive 100% attendance each week will receive a positive message home via Studubugs.

Clarification of General Roles (this list is not exhaustive)

Attendance Team -

- ✓ Sends first day contact via SchoolComms by 11.30am
- ✓ Sends PARS message to staff who haven't taken their register after 15 minutes
- ✓ Provides attendance data to relevant staff as required

AHT (Support) -

- ✓ Ensures policy is reviewed regularly
- ✓ Will bring attendance data to Leadership Team termly
- ✓ Will ensure PA figure and attendance data is closely monitored and interventions happen as required
- ✓ Liaise with and support College Leaders (and DCLs as appropriate), Attendance Clerk, EWO and other relevant staff to ensure attendance is high priority and exceeds school targets

DHT -

- ✓ Support AHT (Support)

College Leaders -

- ✓ Support and liaise with Mentors, AHT (Support), EWO, Attendance Team and Deputy College Leaders to ensure timely interventions regarding attendance and punctuality take place

Mentors -

- ✓ Take accurate register daily
- ✓ Inform college leader/ EWO/ attendance team of attendance and punctuality problems
- ✓ Follow up any unexplained absences or lateness

EWO -

- ✓ Work with students below 90% attendance and others requested by staff as appropriate
- ✓ Record interventions and referrals on CPOMS

Subject staff -

- ✓ Ensure accurate registers are taken within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson
- ✓ Challenge and record lateness to lesson

Subject/ Faculty Leader



- ✓ Support subject staff in keeping accurate registers

College leader i/c Transition

- ✓ Identify year 6 students with attendance problems and liaise with EWO, AHT (Support) and other relevant staff

Governors

- ✓ Governors panel to see students and parents with persistent poor attendance.

Monitoring and Evaluation

AHT i/c Attendance will feedback punctuality and attendance data to Governors and Leadership Team termly.

The policy and procedures will also be updated whenever necessary as a result of outcomes from consultations and/or in response to particular situations that have arisen.



SECTION TWO – FOR POST 16

Finham Park Sixth Form takes attendance very seriously; good school attendance plays an essential part in academic development for post 16 students, but also enables the school to support them pastorally. All post 16 courses are intensive and students cannot afford to miss valuable teaching and study time. As well as timetabled lessons students also have mentor periods, enrichment and study periods on their timetables for private study and homework. If students are granted the privilege of studying at home, we expect them to be spending their time effectively and this privilege may be withdrawn if a student is not meeting their work commitments. In such cases students will be scheduled to work within school. Students should aim for at least 95% attendance for the year. Good attendance plays an important part when applying to higher education establishments or employment and will be included on references given by the school.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure. All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality. To meet these objectives, Finham Park School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Partnership - What the school expects of students

- Attend regularly, on time and ready to learn
- Attend registration, mentor time and enrichment
- To sign in if they arrive after registration time
- To tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school
- Make every effort to make dental/medical appointments outside of school hours
- Complete an absence request form if they need to leave early or will be absent from school for a full/half day.



What the school expects of parents/carers

- To fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day
- To contact school on the first day their child is absent for any reason and then on all subsequent days if the student is unable to contact school him/herself.
- To avoid taking holidays in term time
- To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school
- To provide evidence to support absence such as an appointment card/letter, a copy of a prescription slip with name and date visible or medication.
- packaging with name and date visible. Alternatively if none of the above are available a note, signed by the parent/carers, school explaining the reason for absence.

What parents/carers and students can expect from the school

- A Sixth form education that is dependent upon regular attendance at school
- Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school, and regular encouragement and rewards
- Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of absence
- Prompt action when a problem has been identified
- Regular communication with students and parents/carers.

Absences

Acceptable reasons for being absent from school, set by the Department for Education:

- The student is too ill to leave the house
- The student has a hospital appointment
- The student has toothache and has an emergency appointment
- A day of religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carers belongs



- The student is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
 - There is a close family bereavement
 - Interviews for courses/employment that will begin after the end of their time in Sixth Form. Students should not miss lessons to attend interviews, shifts and inductions for part-time work
 - University and Employer Open Days – students may attend no more than two of these events in an academic year
 - Work experience – requests for term-time leave for essential work experience (e.g. medicine, law) will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. These requests should be submitted at least a month in advance
- Unacceptable reasons for keeping a child away from school are:
- To mind the house
 - To look after siblings
 - To go shopping
 - To celebrate a birthday
 - Sleeping in
 - One child is ill, so all are kept off school
 - Minor ailments such as a tummy ache or headache
 - Because it is the end of the week or term
 - Driving lessons or tests
 - Adverse weather conditions.

If a student is absent from school longer than a period of 5 days due to illness parents/carers will be asked to provide medical evidence to support the student's absence.

Leave of absence may not be given to enable a pupil to undertake employment during school hours unless it is to engage in work experience arranged through school.

Signing In and Out It is a legal requirement that we know who is on the school site at all times. Students must make sure that they sign in each time they are late to school then sign out each time they leave the school site.

In-school procedures

We are keen to identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity to give parents/carers, students and the school the ability to intervene early and prevent further decline. We will do this by following the procedures outlined below;



Unexplained absence process

If a student is absent from school and we have received no communication from either the student or a parent/carer a text message will be sent to the primary contact on the day of students' absence requesting a reason.

A reply is requested stating the reason for the students' absence to enable attendance records to be updated; if no reply is received, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Cause for concern process

Cause for concern letters will be sent home to parents/carers when attendance is between 90 & 95%. This early notification is intended to share our concerns with you and give you the opportunity to intervene/contact the school so that early support/intervention can be put in to place, if needed.

References

Even if authorised, an absence is still an absence and will affect a student's education. When asked for information of a student's attendance by future educational establishments/employers - it is often hard for a school to recommend one student who has had significant absences over another with excellent attendance.

STAGE 1 – Mentor Intervention

Attendance below 90%

- Should attendance decline to 90% or below students will be invited to attend a meeting with their mentor.
- This meeting is an opportunity to discuss in detail the issues/barriers that are impacting your child's attendance to school.
- A letter will be sent to parents/carers informing you that this meeting has taken place.

STAGE 2 – Assistant Head of Sixth Form Intervention

Continued poor attendance



- A letter will be sent to the parents/carers of the student informing them of the situation and inviting them into school for a meeting with the Assistant Head of Sixth form where we will address the main issues and agree targets and support actions to help improve your child's attendance.
- An Attendance Agreement will be issued and action points put into place that are agreed by the Assistant Head of Sixth Form and the student. We will monitor and review your child's attendance over the following weeks to identify any significant improvement in their attendance. If this has been achieved then no further intervention/action will be taken at this stage. Should attendance not improve, or decline further we will implement the next step, as agreed at the previous Attendance meeting.

STAGE 3 – Head of Sixth Form Intervention

Failure to meet the requirements set by the attendance agreement

- A letter will be sent to the parents/carers of the student informing them of the situation and inviting them to a meeting.
- The student will be asked to meet with the Head of Sixth Form with parents/carers. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) may also be invited.
- A written warning will be issued if appropriate.

STAGE 4 – Head Teacher Intervention

Continued failure to meet requirements of attendance agreement

- Possible request to leave Sixth Form if student is persistently absent from school and refuses to engage in intervention procedures.
- Appropriate disciplinary proceedings will be decided by the Head Teacher.
- The parents/carers of the student will be involved in the process.



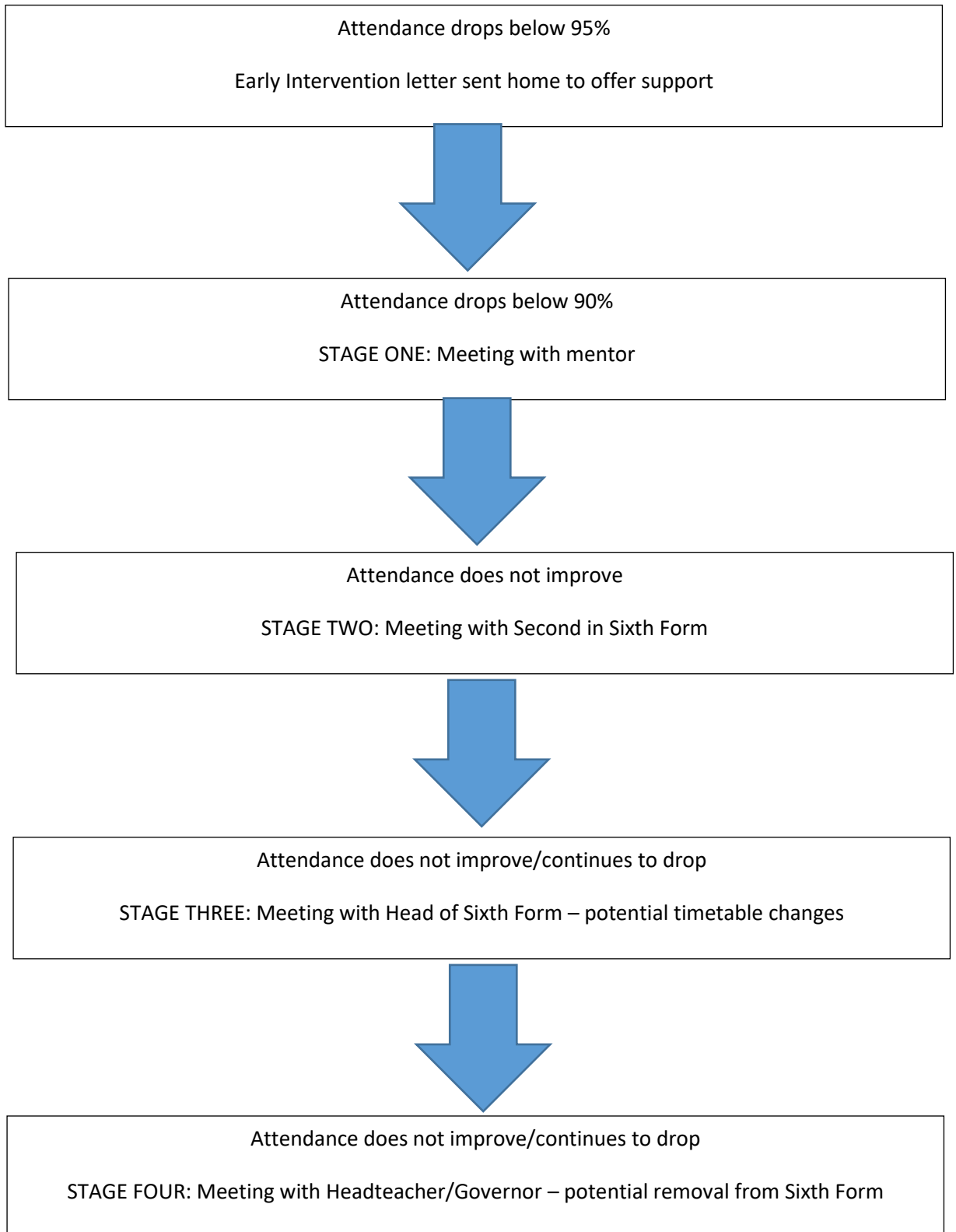
Holidays

Government legislation does not permit parents/carers to take their child/ren out of school during term time as this can have a detrimental effect on their academic progress.

Holidays will not be authorised in school time parents/carers wishing to apply for exceptional circumstances need to complete a Request for Exceptional Term Time Leave form at least 20 school days prior to the absence and give to your child's Pastoral Manager. Upon receipt of a Request for Exceptional Term Time Leave a decision will be made, (the Headteachers decision is final), and parents/carers will be notified either in writing/or verbally of our decision, course of action and how the absence will be recorded on our system. If this request is not agreed the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. A copy of this form can be found on the Finham Park School website.



Attendance Flow Chart





Appendix 1- Codes to be inputted when registering using SIMS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	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 or 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 students	Not counted in possible attendances



FINHAM PARK SCHOOL

A Mathematics and STEM College

1	Truancy	Unauthorised absence
2	Mental Health Absence	Authorised absence



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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Approved by Governors:

Signed:

Mr C Bishop
Headteacher
Date: January 2024

Signed:

Ms A Brennan
Chair of Governors
Date: January 2024