

Emmanuel Holcombe C of E Primary

Attendance policy

Vision Statement

Jesus came to give us life in all its fullness. Our vision is that through faith, family and friendship, each of us can grow in love and learning, being tolerant, having resilience and developing enquiring minds, so that we can all experience the abundance Jesus came to give us.

Mission statement

In our small, friendly school, everyone respects and cares for one another
In our community, church, home and school we work together to grown in faith and friendship
In our learning we encourage each individual to reach their potential to grow through skills, knowledge and understanding

Policy written: July 2019

Reviewed- June 2021

Review date – July 2023

Aims and Targets

The Governing body of Emmanuel Holcombe places a high priority on achieving standards and feel that excellent pupil attendance and punctuality are essential. In order for children to achieve their potential, pupils must be highly motivated to learn and keen and eager to attend school. Regular, punctual attendance will establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives. To achieve this, the Governors and staff are committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that the school achieves a MINIMUM of 96% attendance throughout the school. We also uphold the principles show in appendix A.

The Government expects us to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (less than 90%);
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education, to which they are entitled; and,
- act early to address patterns of absence.

Procedures

PARENTS will:

- o Ensure that their children attend school regularly.
- o Notify school on the first day of absence before 9.30am by phone/email.
- o Complete a request form for absence in term time for exceptional circumstances.
- o Ensure when their child returns to school they bring in written confirmation of why they were absent.
- o Hand in medical evidence for 4 or more days absence due to illness.
- o Meet with the Head teacher and/or Deputy Head teacher to discuss their child's attendance when necessary.

CLASS TEACHERS will:

- o Complete e-portal register at the start of each session (morning and afternoon).
- o Monitor daily patterns of attendance and report any concerns that arise to the SLT.
- o Provide work for children to do at home if an absence is due to a long illness, disability or other circumstances.
- o Make the child feel welcomed back after an absence and helped to catch up on any information that has been passed to other pupils.

OFFICE STAFF will:

- o Input absence or late attendance data on Integris system.

- o Print off official reports for each half term for monitoring purposes.
- o Monitor alongside the Head Teacher, patterns of attendance and lateness.
- o Send first day absence texts if no notification has been received by 9.30 am. If no reply, make first day absence calls at 10.00am using the emergency contact details in order and record reasons for absence.

HEAD TEACHER will:

- o Monitor official registers and take actions where concerns have been identified.
- o Inform Governors of attendance records.
 - o Inform parents of individual pupils attendance record, each term at Parents' Evening and in the end of year schools report.
 - o Inform/Meet with parents whose children's attendance causes concern.
- o Make referrals to the Educational Welfare Service.
 - o Make referrals to the School Nurse team.

EDUCATIONAL WELFARE OFFICER will:

- o Support the school in achieving its targets and addressing concerns.
- o Support families in ensuring their child/ren attend school regularly.
- o Contact families by phone, letter or home visit to discuss the schools concerns and how attendance and punctuality can be improved

GOVERNING BODY will:

- o Monitor whole school attendance termly and take appropriate action should it affect standards.

Absence

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call/ email the school on the first day stating the reason for the absence. If we have not heard before 9:30 am a text message will be sent. If we have not heard by 10:00 am, a call will be made to parents. If there is no answer, calls will be made to all emergency contacts in order. If no answer is obtained, further action will be taken to ensure the safety of the child.

If, after the child returns to school, no explanation of absence is given by the parents/carers, the school will write to the parents/ carers. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 4 weeks if no explanation can be obtained.

Regular register checks are carried out by the Head teacher and/or EWO. If attendance falls below 95%, or three incidents of absence, a letter will be sent home by the Head Teacher requesting a meeting to seek improvement and offer support.

Persistent absence (defined as 10% or more absences)

A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment. The Head Teacher will liaise with the Education Welfare Officer who may contact the parents/carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.

Late Procedures

Children who arrive late (after the gate closes at 8.55am) and have gone to the office entrance, must be signed in by the office staff. A reason for the lateness is requested. The office staff will update the Integris system with their mark.

Children who frequently arrive late will be monitored; parents will be contacted and a referral to the Education Welfare Officer considered.

Children who arrive late after the registers have closed due to a medical appointment will be marked M (in). For regular (e.g. once a week) medical issues causing lateness the child will have their code moved from M to / (present).

Any child arriving after 9:30am for any reason other than medical will be marked U (late after registers closed).

Children who have to leave for any reason throughout the day should be signed out at the main office by the office staff. This is strongly discouraged. Parents are requested to make dental or medical appointments outside of school hours.

Holiday in Term Time Procedures

Children attending Bury schools, including Emmanuel Holcombe, are not allowed day's absence for holidays.

Any absence, other than for illness or emergency medical attention, will be coded as Unauthorised (G) – Family holiday not agreed or (O) Unauthorised.

Parents may choose to complete an 'Exceptional Circumstances Form' stating why they are removing their child during term time. This is given to the Head teacher. Only exceptional circumstances will be authorised. (For a list of examples of exceptional circumstances – See Appendix A).

If an 'exceptional circumstance form' is rejected, then the absence (should the parent still proceed with the removal of their child during term time) is dealt with under the Leave in Term Time process.

Illness

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parents' note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or

concern (we expect medical evidence to be provided for absences of more than 4 days).

In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA officers, Head teachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came in to force on 27th February 2004.

A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

- Overt Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Excessive holidays in term-time
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 9:30am)

School attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future (Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2018) and Children Missing in Education Nov 2013, updated Sept 2016)

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.

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

Strategies for Monitoring Good Attendance

- o Weekly attendance shared with all classes on class doors. The class with the highest attendance receives an extra playtime on Friday afternoon.
- o Monthly attendance shared on newsletter.
- o Head teacher will monitor attendance and any child with below 95% attendance (90% in the autumn term) will trigger concern and an action plan put in place.
- o Children with attendance below 90% (Persistent Absenteeism) will be monitored by the Head Teacher, Educational Welfare Officer and Court Section, as necessary.

Appendix A – Guidance from NAHT on authorised term time pupil absence

Guidance on authorised term-time pupil absence

A little background to term-time pupil absences. On matters relating to term-time pupil absences, the Education (pupil registration) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1 September 2013, removed all references to ‘family holidays’ and ‘extended leave’ as well as the ‘notional threshold of ten school days’.

The 2013 amendments made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless ‘exceptional circumstances’ prevail. The regulations also state that head teachers should determine the number of school days a pupil can be away from school in the event that leave is granted for ‘exceptional circumstances’.

We believe the guidelines in this document are compatible with the amendments and help to clarify the meaning of ‘exceptional circumstances’; they do not change it.

It’s generally held that head teachers can authorise a pupil’s absence during term time but the merits of such a request are now required to be exceptional.

NAHT’s approach and advice to managing term-time pupil absence requests

There continues to be some debate about what ‘exceptional circumstances’ mean when deciding whether to grant absence for pupils during term-time. We think we can help in this respect.

The NAHT believes it is valuable to have some guiding principles to back schools in their decisions to grant term-time pupil absences and to provide some consistency.

These guiding principles have no statutory authority; schools are at liberty to adopt them nonetheless as part of their overall approach to granting pupil term-time absence.

The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional circumstances’ are that they are ‘rare, significant, unavoidable and short.

Guiding principles

1. Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Head teachers will rightly prioritise attendance. The default school policy should be that absences will not be granted during term-time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
2. The decision to authorise a pupil’s absence is wholly at the head teacher’s discretion based on their assessment and merits of each request.
3. If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term-time then it would not be normal to authorise absence for such an event – holidays are therefore not considered ‘exceptional circumstances’.
4. Absences to visit seriously-ill relatives or for a bereavement of a close family member are usually considered to

amount to 'exceptional circumstances', but for the funeral service only, not for extended leave.

5. Absences for important religious observances are often taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time, again, not for extended leave. This is intended for one-off situations rather than regular or recurring events.

6. Schools may wish to take the needs of the families of service personnel into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.

7. Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

8. Families may need time together to recover from a trauma or a crisis.

9. It is acceptable to take a pupil's record of attendance into account when making absence related decisions.

10. It is important to note that head teachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether a particular absence is authorised. Where schools serve communities whose patterns of work create a regular barrier to attendance and family life, schools could consider changes to term times; we strongly recommend this approach is coordinated across schools in a designated area or region.

Appendix B – Codes

- Planned whole or partial school closure

* - Not Yet Marked

/ - Present

B - Educated off site (NOT Dual reg.)

C - Other Authorised Circumstances

D - Dual registration (attend elsewhere)

E - Excluded (no alternative provision)

G - Family holiday (NOT agreed)

H - Family holiday (agreed)

I - Illness (NOT medical or dental)

J - Interview

L - Late (before registers closed)

M - Medical/Dental appointments

N - No reason yet provided for absence

O - Unauthorised absence

P - Approved sporting activity

R - Religious observance

S - Study leave

T - Traveller absence

U - Late (after registers closed)

V - Educational visit or trip

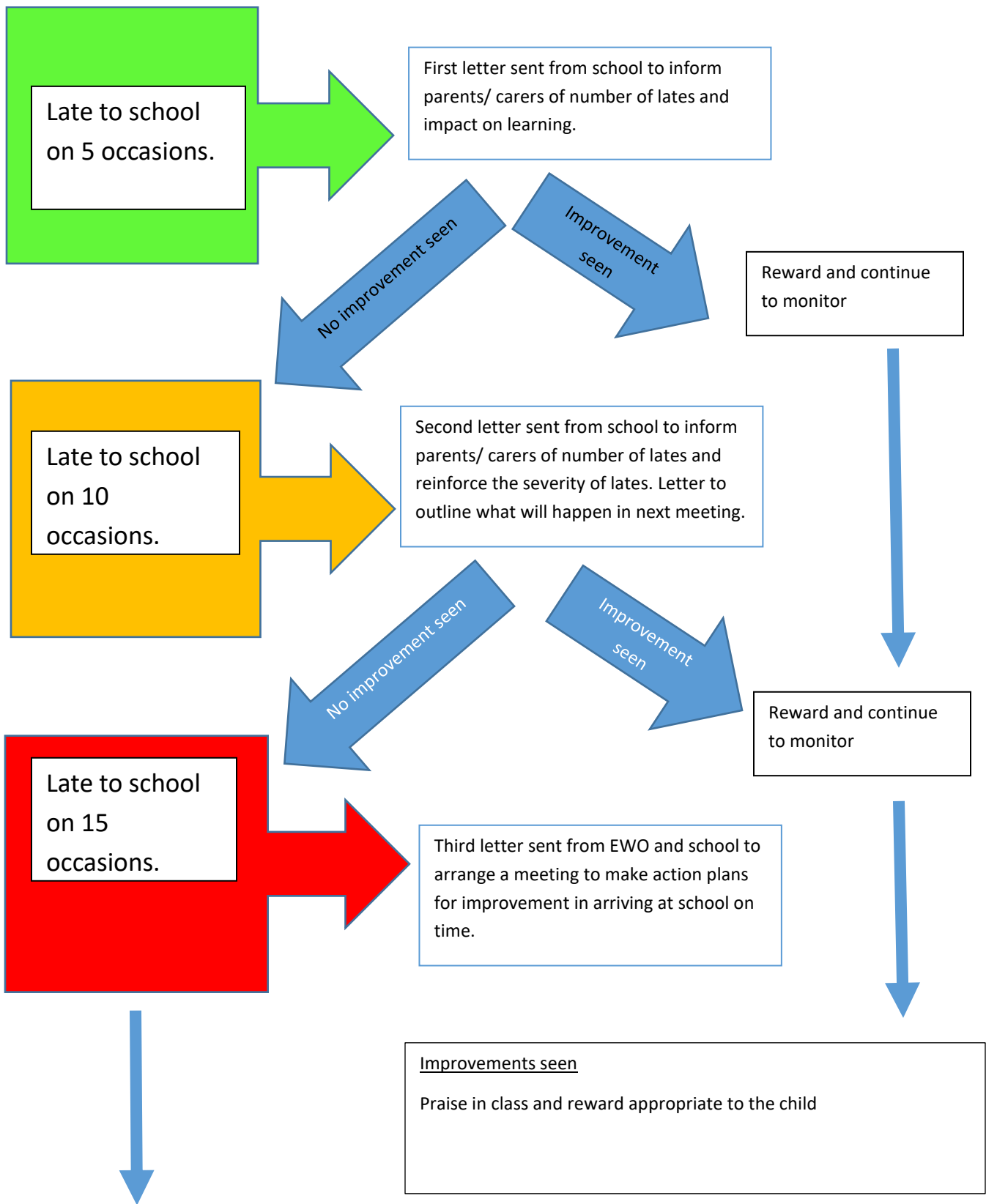
W - Work experience

X - Non-compulsory school age absence

Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Z - Pupil not on roll

Appendix C – Flow chart of late procedures



Action plan implemented and monitored regularly. If improvements seen – above process is followed

Appendix D – Late letters

Letter 1 and letter 2 Late Letter

Dear

Your child, XXXXXXXXX» has been identified as having poor punctuality with XXX lates this XXXX.

We are sure you are aware that XXXX can enter school from 08:45 am to enable them to be in class for registration when the bell sounds at 08:55 am.

Please note that children arriving between 8.55 and 9:30am will be recorded as an late for the morning session(this will affect your child’s attendance record) and children arriving after 9:30am will be marked as unauthorised absence. May we also remind you that if children arrive late a parent/carer should accompany them to the school office for a member of staff to sign them in.

As you may be aware, the law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

Poor punctuality can lead to your child...

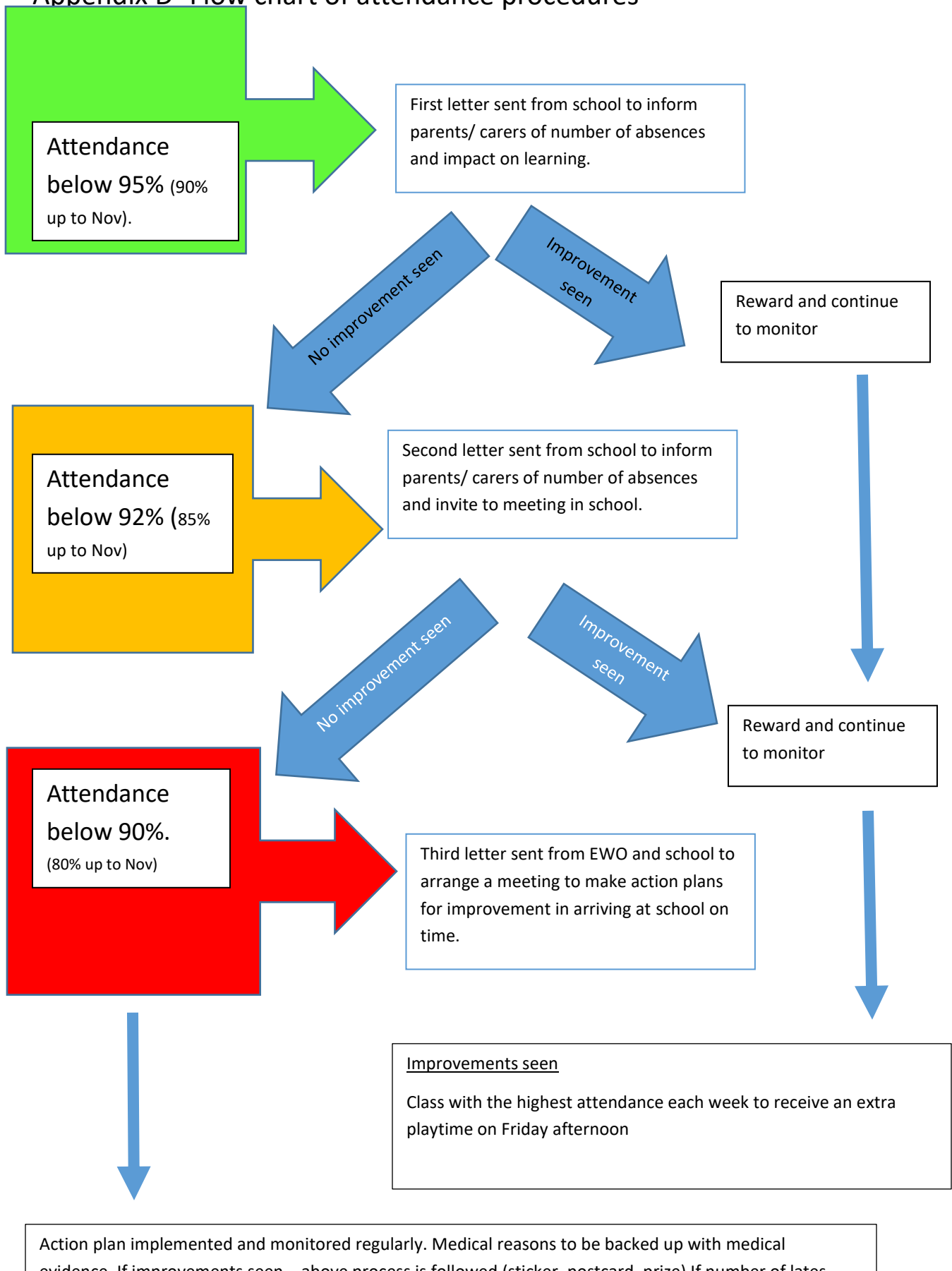
- Feeling embarrassed in front of their friends

- Missing the beginning of vital lessons
- Missing important instructions for the rest of the school day
- Learning bad habits which could affect their employability in the future

If your child is having any difficulties that you wish to discuss, contact me immediately. We are hopeful that now you are aware of the importance of being on time and the amount of learning lost by lateness, your child will arrive at school on time from now on.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix D- Flow chart of attendance procedures



Appendix E

Attendance Letter 1

Dear Parent/Carer,

Emmanuel Holcombe School is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of all of its pupils. As a parent, I am sure you will agree that your child must attend school regularly to ensure that the maximum benefit is obtained from the education provided.

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work?

How does your child compare? XXXX is currently at XXXX% attendance.

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006. Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue) are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with stability. The routine of school offers a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

I do hope, that by working together, we can ensure that any future absence is kept to a minimum. If there are other reasons why XXXX is not attending school – please discuss this with us.

If you would like to discuss the matter further or would like the support of the Education Welfare Officer or the school nurse, please do not hesitate to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C. Bennett Head teacher

Appendix F

Attendance letter 2

Dear

I am writing to you to express concern about XXXXX attendance in school. Their attendance record is now at XXX%

Good attendance is essential for your child to be able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class.

Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events
- are more likely to become involved in crime

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

We would like to invite you into school to discuss your child's attendance and I do hope, that by working together, we can ensure that any future absence is kept to a minimum. Please contact the school office to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Bennett
Head teacher

Appendix G

Letter 3 –Medical evidence/request letter

Dear

Re

Your child's poor attendance at school this year is causing serious concern as **he/she** has been absent for **number** of sessions out of a possible **number** of sessions and this will make it much harder for your child to achieve good results in their school work. Most/ all of the absence has been due to illness or for medical reasons.

It has been decided that due to the high level of your child's absence, the Head Teacher will no longer authorise any absence for medical reasons unless supported by medical evidence.

I have to advise you that we monitor all pupils with poor school attendance and will take action when absence is unauthorised; this may lead to prosecution.

Therefore, should **Pupil's name** have any further sessions of absence because of illness or medical reasons, you are strongly advised to provide one of the following which may enable the Head Teacher to authorise your child's absence:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
 - Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
- Medication prescribed by a GP
- Copy of prescription
- Print screen of medical notes
 - Letters concerning hospital appointments
- Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Doctors or GP 'sick' notes are not required. Please do not request these from your GP.

Please be aware that telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are **not** acceptable as medical evidence when attendance is of serious concern.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996 Section 444

Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class.

Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events

- are more likely to become involved in crime

If you feel that your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues you are advised to approach your doctor urgently.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child's attendance, please contact me via the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C. Bennett

Head teacher

We have enclosed a Doctors' Appointment Card for you to use when your child is poorly in the future. The card needs to be stamped by the Doctors' Surgery staff in order for an 'authorised absence' mark to be given to your child. If your child is unwell and the card has not been stamped by the Doctors' Surgery staff, then an unauthorised absence will be recorded.

Appendix H

Medical request form

APPOINTMENT/ MEDICAL CARD

To whom it may concern

The child named below needs proof of attendance of a doctor's appointment. Please would you date, sign or stamp the card.

Student name _____ D.O.B _____

Doctor's name _____

Surgery name/address _____

Telephone no. _____

Many Thanks

Mrs C. Bennett

Head teacher

Date	Surgery Stamp/Doctor's signature
Description of illness/medical issue	

Date	Surgery Stamp/Doctor's signature
Description of illness/medical issue	

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