

# Attendance Policy

## BRITISH SECTION

### AFNORTH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

<b>Approved by</b>	
<b>Date</b>	November 2022
<b>Review Date</b>	May 2024
<b>Related Policy/Guidance</b>	<a href="#"><u>The Education Act 2002</u></a> <a href="#"><u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006</u></a> <a href="#"><u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010</u></a> <a href="#"><u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011</u></a> <a href="#"><u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013</u></a> <a href="#"><u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</u></a> <a href="#"><u>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013</u></a>
	Department for Education Statutory Guidance: School Attendance Department for Education Statutory Guidance: Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour Department for Education Advice: Behaviour and Discipline in schools

## Aim

1. Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
  - a. Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence. DCS considers “good” attendance is at least 96% (excluding post operational leave POL<sup>1</sup>)
  - b. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
  - c. Acting early to address patterns of absence
2. We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
3. Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by

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<sup>1</sup> Post Operational Leave is detailed at paragraph 22 of the DCS Directive 3.2.6 School Attendance.

law. AFNORTH fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

4. Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

## School Procedures

5. **Attendance register.** Adopting statutory requirements for school attendance (England), our school is required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

6. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- a. Present
- b. Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- c. Absent
- d. Authorised Absent (due to medical/dental appointments, exceptional circumstances or POL)

7. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- a. The original entry
- b. The amended entry
- c. The reason for the amendment
- d. The date on which the amendment was made
- e. The name and position of the person who made the amendment

8. Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

9. Pupils must arrive in school by 0900 on each school day.

10. The register for the first session will be taken at 0900 and will be kept open until 0905. The register for the second session will be taken at the start of the afternoon session after lunch.

## Unplanned Absence

11. Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 0900 or as soon as practically possible.

12. Parents should email the British Office [british.office@afnorth-is.com](mailto:british.office@afnorth-is.com) or call 045 5278241 to report an unplanned absence.

13. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

14. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

15. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified of this prior to recording.

### **Medical or Dental Appointments**

16. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

17. However, parents are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

18. Parents should email the British Office [british.office@afnorth-is.com](mailto:british.office@afnorth-is.com) to notify the school in advance of a medical or dental appointment.

### **Other Term Time Absence**

19. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

### **Lateness and Punctuality**

20. A pupil who arrives late but before registration has been taken will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

21. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

22. In cases where a pupil's attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve will be referred to the Unit Welfare Office/Senior National Representative.

### **Following up Absence**

23. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary (liaising with the district Educational Welfare Officer, if appropriate), identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

### **First Day Contact**

24. Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check BROMCON before 1000 on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

## Reporting to parents

25. In addition to the annual end-of-year report in June a pupil's attendance is reported to parents during Parent Teacher Meetings in October and February.

## Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

26. Head teachers (or designated deputy) may not grant leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Examples of 'exceptional circumstances' include:

- a. bereavement or serious illness of relatives.
- b. medical needs where treatment is required in the UK.
- c. where delivery of the Defence Mission by service parents employed in specific roles impacts on the ability to observe standard leave patterns.

27. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, current attendance figure, and relevant context behind the request. The head teacher may choose to discuss a request with their local Assistant Chief Education Officer (ACEO); however, a leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's (or designated deputy) discretion.

28. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- a. Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- b. Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- c. Post Operational Leave.

29. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

### **We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:**

- a) Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- b) Ensuring that parents understand of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- c) Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- d) Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- e) Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- f) Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.

- g) Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

### 30. Attendance Monitoring

We will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- a) Maintain appropriate registration processes.
- b) Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- c) Communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- d) Have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- e) Follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- f) Inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- g) Strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- h) Work with parents to improve individual pupil attendance and punctuality
- i) Refer to the Unit Welfare Office/Educational Welfare Officer/ Delegation SNR any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- j) Report attendance statistics to DCS where requested.
- k) All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for monitoring attendance.
- l) Sending out standard letters regarding attendance

### **Monitoring Attendance**

31. Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

32. Our office staff, have the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the BROMCON attendance software. Meetings are held with the Headteacher to discuss any attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as a phone call or letter sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns.

33. If a pupil's absence goes above the number of days indicated on first reporting we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### **Class Teacher**

Teachers record attendance using Bromcom by 0900 and start of the afternoon session.

Concerns with individual attendance/punctuality discussed with families at parent's evenings

### **Parents**

Parents ensure pupils arrive at school on time

Parents inform the school by 09:00 if their child is going to be absent that day

Parents to arrange medical appointment outside of the school day wherever possible

### **Office Staff**

Pupils arriving later to school are registered at the office.

First day absence phone calls are made to inform parents of their child's unexplained absence for that day

Absence codes recorded on Bromcom to show reason for absence

Analyse attendance/punctuality data to monitor trends and progress for discussion with Head Teacher

Provide attendance data termly for SGC Report

Provide HT with current attendance percentages when a parent requests Exceptional Term Time Leave.

Communicate with parents outcome of requests for exceptional leave.

Provide parents with Attendance Policy on arrival.

### **Head Teacher SGC (Safeguarding Lead)**

Analyse attendance/punctuality data to monitor trends and progress

Meeting to discuss individual cases, monitor progress and refer concerns to EWO

Discussions as required in response to specific attendance/punctuality concerns of a particular cohort of pupils

## Annex B Application for Term-Time Leave for Exceptional Circumstances

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to request permission for my child to be granted term time absence from school on the grounds of 'exceptional circumstances' for the following reasons and understand that family holidays are not a valid reason and that any absence may be detrimental to my child's education.

Explanation of exceptional circumstances

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ resulting in an absence of \_\_\_\_\_ school days.

I understand that I may be required to provide evidence of the above if required and that this may require this information to be discussed with the relevant Unit Welfare Office.

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Head Teacher (Designated Deputy) use only**

Thank you for your application for 'exceptional leave' for your child.

Your child's attendance record for the last term/academic year is: \_\_\_\_\_% attendance

a) I confirm that this exceptional absence has been agreed:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex C Application for Term-Time Absence for Post Operational Leave

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to request permission for my child to be granted term-time absence from school during term time due to my own post operational leave. I understand that any term time leave for children is discouraged and may be detrimental to my child's education.

Explanation for exceptional leave:

I understand that DCS MOD Schools expects that a maximum of ten days is applied for and that the Serving person must have returned from a minimum of a 3 months tour of duty.

I understand that permission for this exceptional term time leave from school can only be granted by my child's head teacher.

***Unit Declaration confirming entitlement to apply for term-time absence in support of POL:***

### UNIT DECLARATION

Name of Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Rank/Name of Unit representative \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is entitled to apply for term time absence from school for their child in support of post operational leave.

Signature of Unit representative \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Stamp

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ resulting in a total absence of \_\_\_\_\_ school days.

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Head teacher(designated deputy) use only:**

Thank you for your application for 'post-operational leave' for your child.

Your child's attendance record for the last term/academic year is: \_\_\_\_\_ % attendance  
and the number of sessions missed last term/year was \_\_\_\_\_

a) I confirm that this exceptional leave has been agreed:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

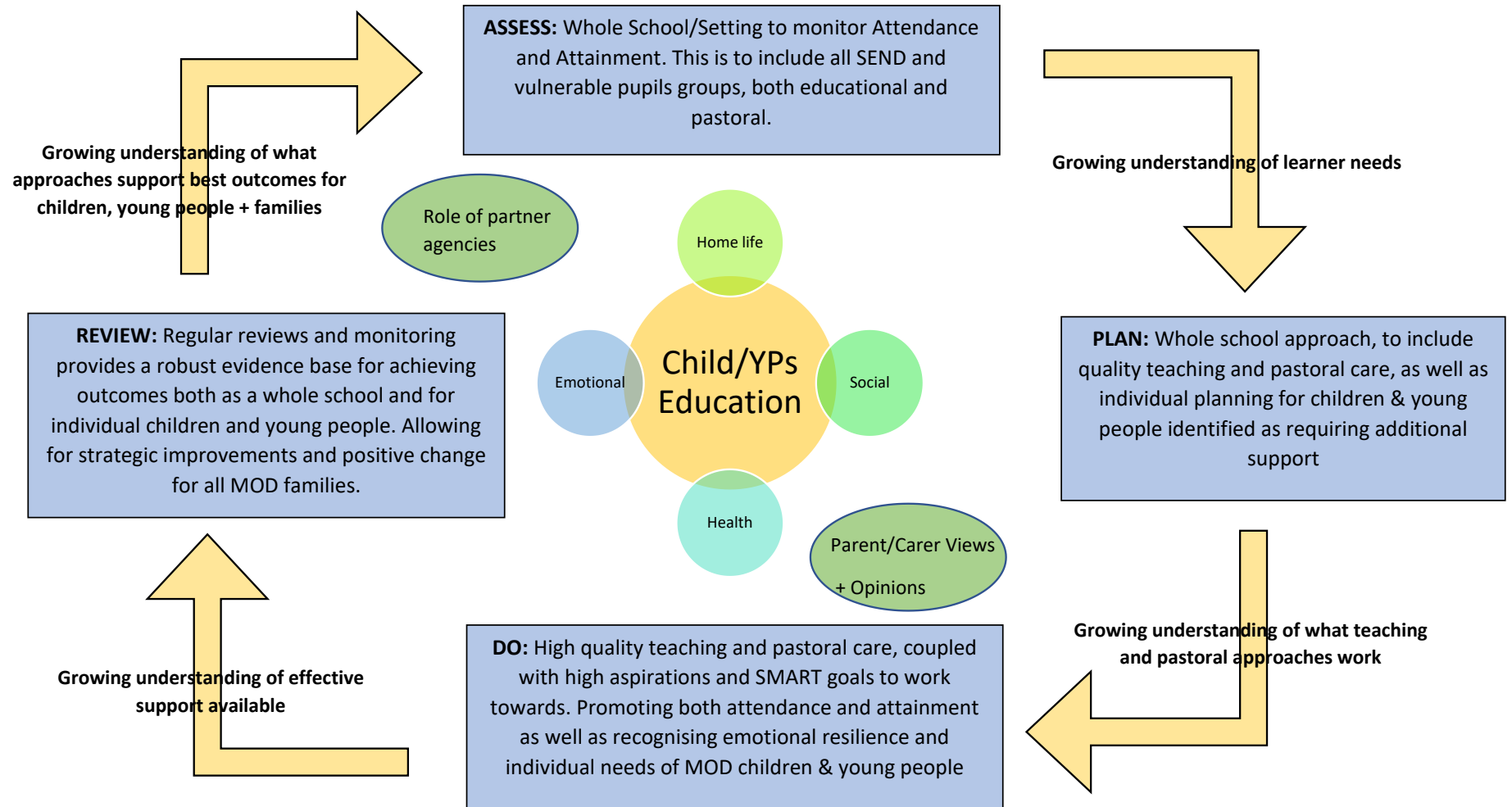
b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Annex D Attendance Graduated Response

## Attendance Graduated Response



# Annex E Unauthorised Attendance Flow Chart

## Stage 1

### First unauthorised absence recorded:

(day 1) 2 Sessions missed: Welfare T/C from school

(day 2) 4 Sessions missed: Further Welfare T/C from school

*If more than 4 sessions missed with the same illness, request medical evidence such as drs note.*

(day 3) If parents are not contactable after 6 missed sessions: Welfare visit to be undertaken *by school*. - *Offer of referral to informal EWO support*

(day 4) 8 Sessions missed: Depending on success of welfare visit, parents to be invited in for an informal attendance discussion.

(day 5) 10 sessions missed: If after 5 days, no attendance has been achieved and parents not contacted, child is reported as Missing from Education and reported to the EWO.

### Unauthorised Persistent Lates (UPLs).

(day 1) Late arrival: Welfare T/C from school

(day 2) Repeat Late arrival: Further Welfare T/C from school – *offer of referral to informal EWO support*

(day 3) Repeat Late arrival: Welfare visit school and EWO if possible.

(day 4) Prolific Late arrivals: Referral to EWO service for support. *After this point, UPLs are supported in the same way as Repeat Unauthorised Absences*

Attendance Letters from Head Teacher to be sent to parents/carers if by day 4, no contact with family has been made and child remains out of school.



## Stage 2



### Repeat Unauthorised Absences & Persistent Lates

If attendance is **above 98%** and pupil has two separate unauthorised absences: School to monitor attendance.

If attendance is **above 96%** and pupil has two separate unauthorised absences: T/C from schools to discuss absence and invite to informal meeting with EWO and school. *Letter to be sent as a follow up advising around good school attendance, importance etc.*

If attendance is **below 96%** or 3 separate unauthorised absences: Referral to EWO and parents/carers invited in for MOD Attendance Review (MOR) *EWO Flow chart to be followed moving forward.*

### Continued Unauthorised Absence – no contact

If a child is not in school for 5 or more days (10 sessions) the child is deemed **MISSING** from Education (**CME**) and must be reported to EWO for tracking.

School should make every effort within reason to contact the family and track the child's location and any updates should be shared directly with the EWO.

### Continued Unauthorised Absence – contact made

If a child is not in school for 5 or more days (10 sessions) but the family are in contact with the school, the child is deemed **MISSING OUT** on Education.

Referral to EWO formal support with parents/carers invited to MOD Attendance Review (MOR). *EWO Flow chart to be followed moving forward.*

Attendance Letters from Head Teacher to be sent to parents/carers at each stage, advising of next steps. *Letter template available*



## Stage 3



### Repeat Unauthorised Absence, Persistent Lates and Continued Unauthorised Absences.

If attendance continues **below 96%** despite formal support from EWO. **After 3 MOR's** (timescales individual to the needs of the family), consideration for initiating an assessment of supportability as the families needs may not be able to be met overseas.

Further EWO support can be provided if DCS, School and Command all in agreement, this will be agreed on individual circumstances.

### Continued Unauthorised Absence – no contact

If after **28 days**, school (with EWO support) unable to locate child, the child can be "off-rolled" from the setting and will remain with EWO for continued CME tracking.

Child **MUST** remain on-roll for 28 academic days before being off-rolled.

*\*red is optional at your discretion and DCS available to discuss and support as needed*

## Annex F Template Letter Persistence Absence

Dear PARENT/CARER

### Persistent Absence Letter 1/2/3

I am writing to you to inform you that your child's current school attendance is % with % of this being unauthorised.

Currently your child's attendance is at Stage 1/2/3.

I have attached a copy of our attendance flow chart for your reference.

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**Please delete depending on stage**

Stage 1: Your child has missed X sessions since X date. Our Education Welfare Office is able to provide informal support if you wish to access this please let us know. If your child's attendance does not improve by X date, we will move to stage 2 of our attendance process.

Stage 2: Your child has now missed further sessions despite support at stage 1. They have now missed X sessions. We would like to invite you in for a MOD Attendance Review (MOR) on X date/time/location. Our Education Welfare Officer will be available to attend this review to support you and your child moving forward.

Stage 3: Despite support at stage 1 and 2, your child's attendance has not improved. At this point we are requesting a review of your family's supportability overseas and further details will be provided to you. You were informed of this decision at your last MOR on X date.

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At X School, we strive to achieve the best outcomes for our children and young people and positive school attendance and attainment is at the forefront of our focus. Supported by Defence Children's Services our school is available to support you and your family at every stage of your child's education.

If you have any questions about the attendance process, please speak to us at the earliest possible opportunity.

*Yours sincerely*, [can be handwritten or typed]

Add signature or [Signed on original]

Name

Rank (if appropriate)

Job title, if not included in address

Copied to: List of copy addressees