

Attendance Policy

‘Growing Together’ into the very best versions of ourselves is our vision, underpinned by the Parable of the Mustard Seed. Children and adults are like the mustard seed as they join our community. Together we grow into a strong, grounded tree extending its branches to others to provide a place of safety and learning.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. It has been shown that children with the highest attendance at the end of KS2 and KS4 have higher rates of attendance (Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022). Furthermore, the approach to attendance is an integral part of the school’s demonstration of their wider ethos and values. To maintain the vital work that schools do in developing pupils learning attitudes, character and attainment and reflecting the wider importance of schools in the community, attendance at school must be at the forefront of a school’s priorities.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to education laws and this policy is written within that context.

Good Attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- In 2018/19 just 40% of persistently absent children in KS2 achieved an expected KS2 standard, compared with 84% of pupils who were regular attenders.
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transition into secondary school

100%	Excellent
Above 97%	Expected
Above 95% but below 97%	Satisfactory
Above 90%, but below 95%	A cause for concern
Below 90%	A serious cause for concern

If your child's attendance is...	Then your child has been absent...	Which equates to this many weeks...	And this much learning...	Over 5 years, this equates to...
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons	0.25 Year
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons	0.5 Year
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons	1 Year
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	288 lessons	1.25 Year



At Trinity All Saints CE Primary School we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Good attendance is essential if we are to provide an education that allows each individual, every opportunity, to succeed and grow into the very best version of themselves.

A Changing Landscape

Since Covid in 2019, evidence suggests that there has been a widespread shift in parental attitudes to attendance at school which will require a huge, multi-service effort to change. The old adage, that 'every day matters' is no longer the prevalent view among parents. This breakdown in the relationship to school appears to be across all socioeconomic groups; for example, term time holidays are now socially acceptable across all groups of parents. Other factors that have influenced attendance include the lack of mental health and SEND provision and cost of living crisis. Sanctions, such as Penalty Fines, do not seem to affect behaviour change in parents. This is why seeing attendance in the round and as a multi-faceted societal issue is important in addressing the problem.

The Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and 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.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 require 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 pupil was:
 - Present
 - Absent
 - Present at approved educational activity.
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, states that if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence.

The law states that:

'Families are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education.' (Section 7 of the Education act 1996).

Families/carers can only allow children to miss school if either:

They are too ill to attend

- Or advance permission is obtained from the school

- This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance -](#)



[GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996 [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002 [Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 [Education and Inspections Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Aims and Objectives:

- To achieve and maintain a target of **at least 95%** attendance for the whole school.
- To ensure that no individual pupil's attendance falls below the Government's persistent absence level of 90%.
- To reduce the percentage of lateness across the school
- Taking into consideration any serious medical conditions, for every child to achieve the best possible attendance.
- To tackle poor attendance rigorously with a consistent and transparent approach by being firm and fair.
- To support families where attendance is poor by removing any barriers that may contribute to poor attendance.
- To ensure excellence and enjoyment for every child by providing a meaningful, stimulating curriculum that meets the needs and interests of all our pupils and by offering extra-curricular activities that children want to attend.
- To safeguard all our children where there are safety concerns by working positively with external agencies.

Trinity All Saints CE Primary School believes that the foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents, and pupils.

As a parent, you can help us by:

- On the **first** and **fourth** day of absence please contact the school office **before 8.45 am** (either by telephone on 01274 564977 or email office@trinity.bradford.sch.uk) to provide an honest reason for absence.
- Arranging doctors and dental appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Keeping us updated by telephone or email.
- Attending attendance meetings when asked to do so.
- Providing medical evidence when asked to do so.

We will:

- Develop and maintain a culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Promote and celebrate good and improved attendance.

- Work in partnership with families and outside agencies to promote good attendance.
- Make first-day contact with families to obtain reasons for all pupil absence and where these cannot be provided/contact cannot be made, follow safeguarding procedures.
- Consider carrying out home visits where there are general safeguarding concerns, 3 consecutive unexplained absence, queries about a persistently absent child or to check that a child is too unwell to attend.
- Document and monitor all children with absences on a daily basis.
- Regular reports to Governors
- Close monitoring of attendance for pupils/cohorts who need it most, including pupils with SEND
- Hold regular meetings with families of pupils identified to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school in line with the agreed timeline and procedures in this policy. Issue warning letters (see Appendix 1) and/or issue fixed penalty notices in collaboration with the Local Authority as appropriate to support this mission.
- Offering Early Help to families in need or signpost to external agencies/support mechanisms as required
- Liaise with the Bradford school attendance team.
- Send out letters to support improved attendance (see appendix)
- Meet with families
- Publish children's attendance percentage on his/her annual school report
- Pass attendance figures on to secondary schools or new schools if children move to a new school during the year

Recognition of Improved Attendance

On a termly basis we will recognise children who were previously under 97% and are now above 97% attendance with a phone call or letter of recognition to celebrate that they have improved their attendance.

Supporting children with SEND

At Trinity All Saints, we understand that all children have different needs in accessing the curriculum and the school day and some children and families need more support to ensure attending school is a positive experience. Our SEND Attendance Procedure (see Appendix 2) indicates how the school will support children and families in these circumstances. Our SENCO and the Attendance Team work together to support children in these cases.

Types of Absences

There are two types of absence:

- **Authorised** (where the school approves the pupil's absence e.g., absence due to sickness, religious observance, funerals);



- **Unauthorised** (where the school will not approve absence e.g., holidays during term time, taking children out without permission i.e., birthdays, shopping, parents/carers or siblings attending medical appointments).

Only the school, and not parents / carers, can decide whether or not to authorise an absence. This is written down in the Education Registration Regulations 2006. We will let you know if we are not authorising your child's absence.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as 'authorised absences.' For example, if a child is ill, family bereavement or religious observance.

Trinity All Saints CE Primary School acknowledges that some pupils face greater barriers to their attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. However, their right to an education is the same as for any other pupil.

We will:

- Have sensitive conversations with pupils and families to develop good support for pupils with medical or health conditions, Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.
- Work with families to develop specific support approaches or make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability such as putting in place an Individual Health Care Plan where needed.
- Consider whether additional support from external partners would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with them to deliver any support.
- Ensure any provision outlined in an Education, Health and Care Plan is accessed as appropriate.
- Contact the local authority regarding any pupil who may need additional support, such as alternative provision.
- Be sensitive and consult pupils and families as to what they think would help to improve their attendance.

Types of authorised absence

Illness and Medical Appointments

We will:

- Encourage families to make all medical and dental appointments out of school time.
- Seek proof of appointments which cannot be made out of school hours.
- Ask families to provide medical evidence where there are attendance concerns.
- Follow Public Health England guidance regarding the recommended number of days absence for specific conditions.
- Regularly monitor levels of absence due to illness for individual pupils.
- Support families of children with regular illness absence through referrals and signposting to advice from health professionals.

Bereavement

We will:

- Understand bereavement may necessitate unavoidable absence due to the death of a close relative or the attendance at a funeral during term time. Such will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as travel distance and the closeness of the relative.

Religious Observance

We will:

- Only authorise 3 days authorised absence for religious observance in one school year.
- Only authorise religious leave for compulsory religious observance, i.e. Eid or Hajj. We understand that Umra is a highly recommended aspect of Islam, but it is a voluntary observance and leave will not be authorised.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are *not* permitted by law. These are known as 'unauthorised absences'.

Trinity All Saints will:

- Categorise attendance less than 90% but more than 50% as persistent absence in line with statutory guidance
- Categorise attendance of less than 50% as severely absent.
- Keep records of all requests for leave of absence for the duration of the child's time in school.
- In some cases, where there continues to be an issue with a child's attendance, school may decide to unauthorise all absences unless medical evidence is provided.
- School in the first instance and then the **Bradford Local Authority**, may contact parents/carers and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Holidays in term time

- The Education Pupil Registration Regulations 2013 removed all reference to "family holidays".
- In April 2017 the Supreme Court upheld the ban on parent / carers taking their children out of school for family holidays during term time. Delivering the verdict, Lady Hale said "Unauthorised absences have a disruptive effect, not only on the education of the individual child but also on the work of other pupils ... If one pupil can be taken out whenever it suits the parent/carers, then so can others ... Any education system expects people to keep to the rules. Not to do so is unfair to those obedient parent/ carers who do keep to the rules, whatever the costs or inconvenience to themselves."
- This means that the school will not authorise a child to take holidays during term time and parent/carers do not have the legal right to take children out of school for holidays.



- Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take pupils out of school for holidays during term time as there is no entitlement for them to be taken out of school for such a reason. Any holidays are expected to be taken as part of the 175 days available outside term time.

Reducing requests for Leave during Term Time

Trinity All Saints Primary School acknowledges all absences result in lost learning and directly affect a child's education and children will find it hard to catch up. This in turn will also have a considerable impact on the wider class, with teachers having to reshape learning to accommodate gaps for the individual child, taking valuable resources away from the remainder of the class. Thus, unauthorised absence has unintended consequences on all pupils. As such, applications for leave of absence in term time will, in the majority of cases be deemed as unauthorised; they will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and ultimately at the discretion of the headteacher.

What happens if parents take children out of school on unauthorised leave?

The law stipulates that the cost of a holiday is not reasonable grounds for claiming it as an exceptional circumstance. In line with the Bradford Code of Conduct for Attendance if a child has more than 10 sessions (or 5 days) unauthorised absence within a 10-week period then schools should pursue a Penalty Fine of £80 per day, per parent, and for each child. If not paid within 21 days this fine doubles to £160 which must be paid by 28 days, if not legal proceedings could commence. (E.g. For a family with 2 children this would be £160 per parent or £360 per family, doubling to £720 if not paid within 21 days).

If you still decide to request leave the following process will be followed by Trinity All Saints CE Primary School:

- All leave of absence requests must initially be made on an official 'Leave of Absence Request Form' and must be received by school at least 4 weeks before the date of the absence. **Please do not book any travel tickets before your request has been dealt with by the school.**
- Parents/carers may be asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher or other senior member of staff to discuss the application if the school feels that this is necessary. This is simply a record of our meeting for safeguarding reasons, this does NOT mean that your request will be authorised. A verbal decision that the leave will be unauthorised will be made at this meeting.
- You will be formally notified in writing on the Leave of Absence form that the leave is unauthorised and will be given the reason(s) why. You will also be advised that trips during term time will be referred to the local authority who may issue a fixed penalty notice. Good previous attendance does not guarantee that you will not be fined.

Legal Note

- Parents/carers have a legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) to ensure their child's attendance at school. Permitting an absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.
- Parents who fail to ensure their children attend school regularly without good reason could receive a penalty notice fine or be prosecuted and could be fined up to £1,000. In more serious offences, where parents have been previously prosecuted, they could be fined up to £2,500 or face imprisonment.

Safeguarding and Welfare Checks

3 days of unauthorised absence will mean a welfare check from the school attendance team which will be carried out in pairs. Should the headteacher deem it appropriate, a visit to the home will be carried out sooner. If there is a failure to establish contact with parents, police may be informed.

Medical Evidence

Where a child has an ongoing medical condition, which is impacting on their attendance at school, it is the parent/carers responsibility to provide medical evidence. In exceptional circumstances, the school will ask for medical evidence to be provided directly from the GP, with consent of parents/carers.

Evidence for illness marks

In the majority of cases parents' notification of illness is accepted without question and schools should not routinely request parents to provide medical evidence. If a school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Children Not Collected

The following procedure is followed when children are not collected by an appropriate adult at the end of the school day:

- If not collected at 3.15 pm children are kept safe with their Class Teacher/Teaching Assistant until 3.20 pm.
- At 3.20 pm the children are safely escorted by a member of staff to the school office where they will be supervised by a member of staff until they are collected by an appropriate adult. A record of the time they are collected is kept.
- If children are not collected by 3.30 pm, the school office will contact parents to collect them as soon as possible. Other emergency contact numbers will be called if parents/carers cannot be reached until an appropriate adult can collect them.
- If we do not have any contact, children will go to our after-school club (there will be a payment attached to this) Children's Social Care/Police will be contacted if no contact is made by 4.30 pm so that the appropriate actions can be taken.
- Children who go home alone at the end of the school day or after an extra-curricular activity/school visit, must have written consent from a parent/carer. It is the parents/carers responsibility to update this permission via the school office.



School Closure

School will remain open whenever possible. If it is necessary for the school to close we will notify parents at the earliest possible time via Arbor and on BSO. In severe weather conditions, the school may need to close all day, close early or it may be possible to open later in the day when weather conditions improve. Pupils who are unable to get to school owing to severe weather will be marked as a ‘Y’ an exceptional circumstance.

Punctuality

Morning registration is at 8.45 am. This is the time your child must be in the classroom. Your child should arrive at school for 8.40 am.

- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence in line with Local Authority Guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child’s punctuality.

Please note that a penalty notice as stated above could be issued if your child arrives at school after the registers have closed more than 10 times.

You may view our Attendance Policy on the school website; www.trinityallsaintsbingley.org.uk Please note that this policy is fully supported by our Governing Body which includes Parent Governors.

We always want the support of parents; this policy has been developed with the children’s very best interests at heart. As we are sure you will agree your child’s/children’s education must be the number one priority.

Please read in conjunction with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and Inclusion Policy.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1:** A guide to lost learning through absence
- Appendix 2:** SEND attendance support
- Appendix 3:** Bradford Graduated Approach

Linked Documents:

- **2024-2025 Attendance Strategy** outlining process of communication with parents
- **Statutory communication letters**

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Review Date: January 2027

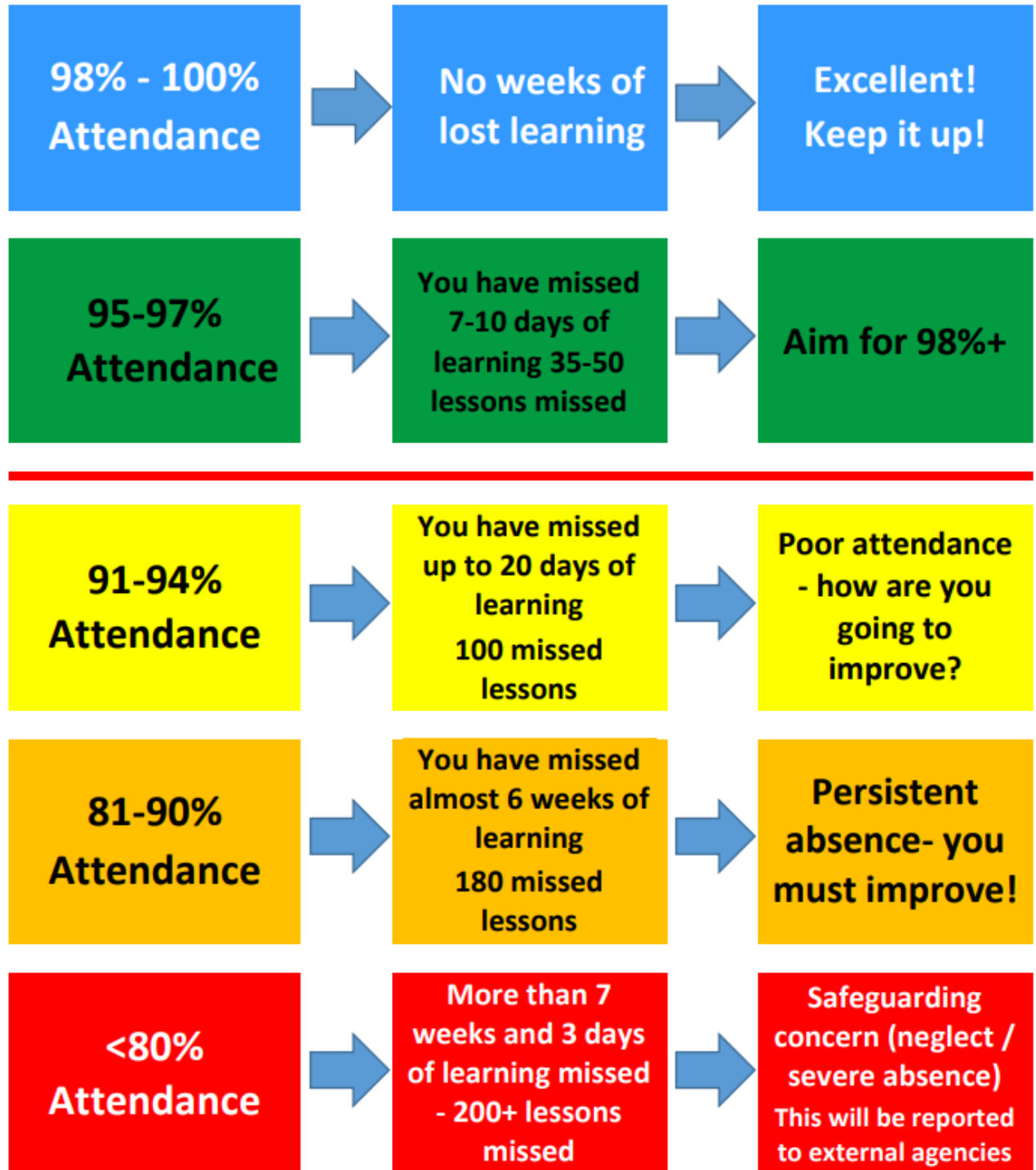
Signed..... (Headteacher)

Signed..... (on behalf of Governors)

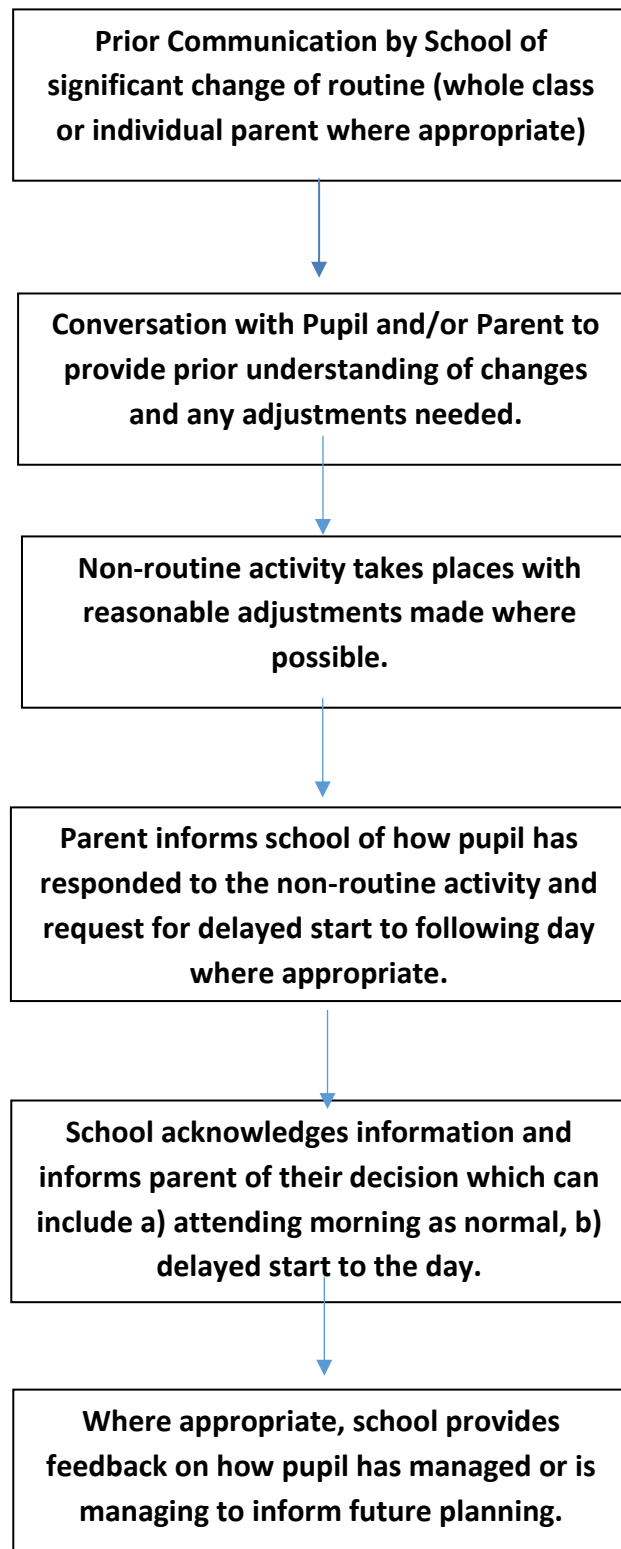
Appendix 1

A Guide to Lost Learning through Absence

Attendance Chart



Appendix 2 - SEND Attendance Support



Appendix 3 – The Bradford Graduated Approach

