

# Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 1 March 2022

## Attendance Thematic Review

Item number  
Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 The Education Children and Families Committee is asked to:
  - 1.1.1 To note that an Integrated Attendance Strategy will follow.
  - 1.1.2 To note the service wide actions to improve attendance in schools.

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## Attendance Thematic Review

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 Overall attendance is good in Edinburgh, however many children suffer from persistently poor attendance. To better understand the issues, a thematic review took place earlier this session. This report provides an overview of the Attendance Thematic Review process including the scoping, fieldwork, results and recommendations. The development of an Integrated Attendance Strategy is required to ensure the necessary service wide actions to improve attendance in schools.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 In Edinburgh, each year there has been an increase in pupils with below 85% attendance across all sectors of education, with one exception(2018/19 secondary schools), since 2017.
- 3.2 Covid has unavoidably impacted on the attendance of children and young people. However, there has been a significant reduction in attendance over the last 20 months not all of which can be directly attributed to covid illness/isolation.
- 3.3 A short life working group made up of colleagues from the Quality Improvement Team, ASL services, a Depute Principal Educational Psychologist, the Education Welfare Service, Home Link team, the third sector and primary, secondary and special schools was set up to scope out the thematic review. The aim was to identify both good practice and the challenges schools face in relation to promoting pupils' attendance and to identify service recommendations to support schools to improve attendance.
- 3.4 Fieldwork was carried out in 10 schools; The Royal High School, Davidson's Mains Primary School, Portobello High School, Brunstane Primary School, Duddingston Primary School, St Augustine's High School, St David's Primary School, Gilmerton Primary School, Niddrie Mill Primary School and Rowanfield School.
- 3.5 The fieldwork team comprised; a QIEO, an assisting senior leader from a school and a member of the Education Welfare Service/Home Link Team. . Discussions took place with senior leaders, key attendance staff, general school staff, children/young people, parents/cares and partners. These focussed on 5 key areas critical to good attendance:-

- 3.5.1 policies and procedures
- 3.5.2 managing absence and attendance
- 3.5.3 promoting good attendance
- 3.5.4 family engagement
- 3.5.5 partnership working and ethos and culture.

3.6 The findings from these visits have informed the recommendations in this report.

## **4. Main report**

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- 4.1 The Thematic Review Scoping Paper gives a summary of the local and national picture in relation to attendance, the purpose of the review and what we expected to find.
- 4.2 Key areas of focus include; attendance data across all sectors, covid absence, low attendance, daily attendance patterns and comparisons across different demographics, local and national guidance in relation to managing absence and attendance, systems and process in place in City of Edinburgh and research on socio-economic background and attendance.
- 4.3 The results from the thematic review came primarily from the fieldwork, however, information from QIEO improvement activity and a review of the Home Link Team also provide information pertinent to this report.
- 4.4 Results from the review identified areas of good practice across all schools. Strong relationships and communication channels with families, and removing barriers to attendance, was critical to improving attendance rates. In addition, clarity around policies, procedures, roles and responsibilities, to ensure regular and rigorous monitoring of attendance, helped to ensure attendance was high on the agenda. Early intervention and partnership working were also key components to success in improving attendance.
- 4.5 A range of challenges was also identified including; capacity of teams – internal and external to deal with the volume of attendance concerns, the broader impact of covid on attendance, effectiveness and functionality of recording systems, entrenched generational attitudes to attendance, systems to deal with very poor attendance and the need to develop a whole community approach to tackle this issue.
- 4.6 The Attendance Thematic Review; Results and Recommendations gives details of the findings and proposed next steps.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 We will develop and Integrated Attendance Strategy to action the recommendations from the review.

- 5.2 We will monitor attendance levels across the authority and report to Council in one year.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There are no financial implications contained in this report.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 Engagement took place with senior leaders, staff in schools (teaching and non-teaching), children/young people, parents/carers and partners.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Included, engaged and involved part 1: promoting and managing school attendance Scottish Government 2019

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix 1 CEC Attendance and Absence Procedure  
9.2 Appendix 2 Edinburgh Learns Guidance for QIEOs

<b>Management Information</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Name:</b> Gillian Barclay/Kirsty Spence
	<b>Designation:</b> Depute Principal Psychologist/ Head of Inclusion Supports
	<b>Tel:</b> 0131 469 2832
<b>Lead Service Area</b>	Schools and Community Services
<b>Last Review Date</b>	March 2020
<b>Implementation Date</b>	November 2020
<b>Review Date</b>	March 2021
<b>Date Agreed</b>	
<b>Agreed by</b>	<p>SLWG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephen Kelly - Head Teacher Liberton High School</li> <li>• Karen Scott - DHT Foresters High school</li> <li>• Karen Coull - DHT Craigmount High School</li> <li>• Emma Dougan - Home Links Service Leader</li> <li>• Irene Watt - Senior Education Welfare Officer</li> </ul>
<b>Has <a href="#">Screening for Equality Impact</a> been undertaken for this procedure</b>	No Date
<b>Has <a href="#">Implementation and Monitoring</a> been considered for this procedure</b>	Yes Date
<b>If appropriate has Health and Safety section had oversight of this procedure</b> <b>Name of Health and Safety contact</b>	Yes/No: <i>(please specify)</i> Date

## 1. PURPOSE

This procedure sits alongside a number of related procedures which all promote a positive ethos of inclusion.

It provides a clear and consistent framework for all staff to promote attendance and manage absence in line with 'Getting it Right for every Child' and 'Included Engaged and Involved – part 1: a positive approach to the promotion and management of attendance in Scottish schools'(2019).

We recognise the strong link between school attendance and a positive and inclusive ethos where every child knows they belong. This procedure must be implemented within the context of a positive and supportive culture.

We aim to ensure children attend school or another learning environment for the recommended 25 hours at primary school and 27.5 hours for secondary school.

## 2. SCOPE

This procedure sits within and is informed by the Communities and Families Included, Engaged and Involved in Edinburgh Policy. It is implemented within the context of our local approach to Getting it Right for Every Child and our recognition that strong partnership working with parents and children is crucial in achieving positive outcomes.

The procedure applies to all Communities and Families Services staff, parents and pupils.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- **Child / children:** Describes any person under the age of 18.
- **CME:** Children Missing in Education
- **GIRFEC:** Getting it Right for Every Child, the Scottish national practice model.
- **Opening:** The school day is made up of two openings. The first until lunchtime and the second after lunchtime.
- **Parents:** Describes any person who has parental responsibilities and any person who has custody of a child, including foster carers and a parent who shares custody of a child.
- **Pupils:** Describes all children and young people who are enrolled or seeking to enroll in City of Edinburgh Council schools
- **Schools:** All local authority schools, mainstream and special schools, and all settings providing early learning and child care on behalf of City of Edinburgh Council
- **Staff:** describes all Children and Families staff.
- **S2S:** School 2 School transfer system facilitates the transfer of children's data when the receiving school is known

## 4. ACTIONS

### 4.1 Register of Admission

- 4.1.1 A register of admission and withdrawal must be kept for each school. Although SEEMIS holds all information required, an information sheet showing brief details of admission and withdrawals should be kept for back-up. **A pupil may only be entered on one school register at any one time. Every new pupil is provisionally enrolled until they have physically arrived in the school.**

NB

- To support this system, schools may find it helpful to update SEEMIS contact information for families more regularly than annually. 6 monthly is recommended.
- If there are siblings in catchment schools, it can be helpful to contact them as they may have the correct contact information for the family.
- P7-S1 transition can be key times to ensure handing over of accurate information.

4.1.2 In exceptional circumstance a school may be asked to enrol a child who may not actually attend the school.

See Appendix 1: Pupil Enrolment: Exceptional Circumstances

4.1.3 When a pupil has been admitted to the school, the register should be entered with the full name and date of birth of the pupil. Where a secondary pupil attends another school for certain classes, **they should appear only on the register of their base school.**

## 5 Withdrawal and Removals (School Roll)

5.1.1 A pupil should be entered on the register as “withdrawn” from school when:

- a) It has been confirmed that they have been enrolled in another school (this includes independent special schools but does not include school provision within secure services). This confirmation should be sought from others, e.g. the enrolling school, as well as from the parents.
- b) Confirmation has been sent from Headquarters to the school that permission has been granted for the pupil to be educated at home.
- c) If they have been absent for a period of four consecutive weeks. This action should be taken **only on the advice of the Education Welfare Service.** (see 6.5 for more information)
- d) They have reached 16 years of age and have decided to leave school;

5.1.1 Where a pupil has been withdrawn from the school, the register should be entered with the full name, date of birth and reason for withdrawal.

5.1.2 The School to School Transfer System [S2S] will facilitate the transfer of children’s data from school to school where the receiving school is known. However, there are a number of pupils for whom the destination is unknown. When a destination school is unknown the pupil should be recorded as Code A on SEEMIS until another school notifies S2S that they have enrolled the pupil. The pupil should be kept on the school register until they are found or the school is authorised by the department to remove them.

## 6 Children Missing from Education (CME)

6.1 The Education Welfare Service should be informed of all absences that appear to be for no satisfactory reason. It is the duty of the Education Welfare Service to assist in tracing the pupil. It is helpful to notify the Education Welfare Service at the earliest opportunity in these circumstances.

6.2 In this situation consideration should be made as to whether the absence constitutes a wellbeing concern that should also be raised with social care direct. If the child is known to social work they should always be alerted to any unexplained absence.

6.3 The Education Welfare Service will support schools to investigate unexplained absences. This is likely to include;

- a) making contact with those named in Emergency contact details held in the school
- b) enquiries with known friends or family
- c) enquiries with neighbours
- d) where appropriate enquiries with social work and housing

6.4 Following initial enquiries consideration should be given to a possible referral to ‘Children Missing from Education’ (CME).

6.5 In all instance if a pupil has been absent for four consecutive weeks and, despite vigorous checks by the school and the Education Welfare Service, it has not been possible to trace the family a referral should be made to Children Missing from Education (CME) in order to continue the search for the missing pupil on a national level.

- 6.6 Details of any child deemed as 'missing' from education should be passed to the relevant primary or secondary Senior Education Officers. A report should then be forwarded to the Head Teacher / EWS for completion. The report is then returned to the Local Authority Designated Officer for full referral to CME to be actioned.
- 6.7 Advice should be sought from the Senior Education Welfare Officer regarding removal from the school register in such cases.

## 7 Maintaining the Register of Attendance

- 7.1 A pupil attendance register will be kept on SEEMIS.
- 7.2 For each morning and afternoon of any day that the school is open to pupils, the attendance register must be completed. The correct code entry should be made against the name of each pupil (see Appendix 2). (Primary see 13.1)
- 7.3 In SEEMIS each high school should record the attendance of individual pupils on a period by period basis. This is to ensure a high level of safe-guarding and will help identify pupils who are absent from classes throughout the school day, allowing appropriate action to be taken at the earliest opportunity., All staff in schools involved in attendance monitoring should have SEEMIS access and must register pupils using this.

Recording unexplained absence in class – (dash) default setting. Teachers to change to TBC if not in class.

Office staff should record appropriate codes as and when received from home school communication. Teaching staff should not override anything already in SEEMIS and contact office staff for any anomalies.

- 7.4 Each school must have a clear procedure to follow up any non-attendance with the family at the earliest opportunity on the same day. The reasons for non-attendance and the code TBC / T should then be updated to confirm the reasons for the absence.
- 7.5 It is important to ensure that the correct code entry is made as quickly as possible as these codes determine the number of recorded absences. Following up absences in a timely manner is also a key element of our duty of care to all pupils. It is essential that anomalies are dealt with on a daily basis.
- 7.6 For secondary schools using period-by-period registration, where a child or young person is late but attends any period in the first half of the opening, this will be converted to an overall L1 code for the opening (even if a later period is missed). If the first class is in the second half of the opening, this will be converted to an overall L2 code for the opening (even if a later period is subsequently missed). (see 13.1)
- 7.7 There are a number of situations where a pupil will be credited with attendance but will not be in school. These situations should be recorded using the specific associated SEEMIS codes;
- An approved course of study at college or another school (OAT /O)
  - Alternative timetable opportunities (OAT /O) schools should refer to [Flexible and Alternative timetables procedure](#)
  - School camp / excursion (FLD)
  - Work experience (WRK)
  - Study leave (STY)

A pupil will not be credited with attendance when they are not in attendance and are:

- Excluded (EXL)
  - On holiday with parents unauthorised (UPH)
  - On holiday with parents authorised (PHL)
- 7.8 For eligible post 16 learners attendance must be accurately monitored to ensure proper entitlement to the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). The EMA is a weekly payment, paid directly to children or young people who stay on at school, and is designed to help overcome financial barriers which otherwise may prevent them from staying on.

Education providers will be required to record attendance of EMA recipients on days when the place of learning is open to young people. Where the place of learning is closed on days when it would normally be open, for example due to public holidays, extreme bad weather, polling days, in-service days, young people should be treated as having attended for the purpose of the EMA. Similarly, any medical or dental appointments should be recorded for EMA purposes as authorised absence as long as an appointment card or note is provided.

## 8 Absence from School – parent and school responsibilities and internal procedures

- 8.1 A pupil is considered absent if they fail to attend school for a period greater than half of the morning or afternoon session. This will affect their percentage attendance.
- 8.2 Schools should have a clear mechanism for all parents regarding how to contact the school to let them know if their child will be late or not attending and the reasons why.
- 8.3 Parents or carers should be contacted no later than 9.30am on the first day of absence. The register is updated as explanations are received. A clear and effective system must be in place in all schools. See appendix 3a Unexplained Pupil Absence – Primary. 3b – Secondary Period by Period Monitoring Flowchart; PSO support example

Schools are asked to share effective practice with their QIEO to be added to the folder below:

[Effective Practice in Attendance Monitoring \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

- 8.4 If no satisfactory explanation is received, or if the absence continues beyond a reasonable period, two weeks, then the Head Teacher (or whoever they have delegated responsibility) should consider a formal referral to the Education Welfare Service and/or whether to initiate the GIRFEC assessment and planning process. For schools who do not have ready access to the EWS, it may be beneficial to include the school's Home-Link support at this stage where available.
- 8.5 Home Link Support Staff should be used to target support for children whose attendance is between 85-90% as an early intervention support.
- 8.6 In all situations if a pupil's attendance drops below 85% and the school are not able to resolve this, the education welfare service should be alerted and consideration should be given to initiating the GIRFEC assessment and planning process.
- 8.7 The Education Welfare Officer should be given a computer printout of the pupil's attendance, a white record card and any notes or medical certificates as well as an Education Welfare Service Initial Referral Form.
- 8.8 Any absences which are explained as 'medical' shall be recorded using either:

D (Self Certified) – If a note of explanation is received which is written and signed by the parent or guardian of the pupil.

F (Medically Certified) – If a note of explanation is received which is written and signed by a General Practitioner or Hospital Doctor or equivalent medical professional.

## 9 Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Attendance

As Education Authorities under section 40 of the Standards in Scottish Schools 2000 Act we must ensure young people within their catchment areas do not miss out on their entitlement to an education.

- 9.1 Poor attendance can often be related to, or be an indication of, an additional support need. Schools should work with parents, pupils and partners to ensure that any barriers to learning are identified and appropriate support is provided. A useful starting point is the use of the primary or secondary CIRCLE resources.
- 9.2 It is important we understand the individual circumstances of children who are struggling to attend. Being a young carer, struggling to provide clean uniforms, payment for activities or a range of other family challenges can easily become barriers to attendance. Working together through our GIRFEC assessment and planning process can help us identify and overcome barriers together with families.
- 9.3 A solution must be found for the long-term educational needs of pupils with care responsibilities (Information on carers and young carers' entitlement to assessment can be found in the Health and Social Care Act 2001.)

If a pupil is unable to attend school due to such responsibilities, and their absence from education will not be long term and therefore categorised as Authorised Absence, there is an expectation that additional support services will be accessed to support the pupil. However, where additional services have not been accessed and care responsibilities become long term, the absence should be categorised as Unauthorised Absence (code R – considered unreasonable by EWO).

- 9.4 Unfortunately, in some situations a child's health needs may make attending school very challenging. As a local authority where appropriate we will provide outreach teaching during times of extended health absence. Research shows that maintained school contact can make a positive difference in enabling the child to settle in and make progress on their return to school. Schools should therefore maintain contact with children and young people and parents making arrangements to support learning such as the provision of curricular work, virtual teaching, research suggestions or advice and provision of relevant education programmes to outreach teaching teams as agreed appropriate by the team around the child.

Hospital teaching should be recorded for the duration of the session as SEP / B.

Outreach teaching should be recorded for the duration of the session as OAT / O if the session is out with the school building.

- 9.5 For some children they may be physically able to attend school but difficulties related to their emotional wellbeing and mental health are significant barriers to their attendance. For pupils with reported medical absences where Emotional Based School Refusal is suspected, every effort should be made to facilitate attendance. Schools should refer to the local authority resources for Emotionally Based School Refusal which can be found on the [Inclusion Hub](#).
- 9.6 Community issues can either result in reluctance to attend school for fear of repercussions or disengagement from school due to the pull of other activities. Schools should work with families and key partners through the GIRFEC assessment and planning process to understand the local context and the impact it might be having on individual pupil engagement with school.

- 9.7 The use of drugs and alcohol by children and young people can affect school attendance and achievement in a number of ways and is important to intervene and implement supports at the earliest opportunity.

Similarly it is also crucial that children and young people affected by a family member's substance misuse problem are effectively supported.

- 9.8 Difficulties with relationships can develop into anxieties that may impact on school attendance. Every school should implement clear strategies and supports in relation to bullying, pastoral support and developing positive relationships described locally as the 4 R's; Relationships, Rights Respecting, Resilience building, Restorative.
- 9.9 Promoting the attendance of care experienced children and young people is a local authority priority. Every school must have a system for tracking the attendance of care experienced learners. This must include a monthly update to any allocated social worker along with a summary of achievements. Allocated social workers should be alerted immediately to any unexplained absences.

## 10 Flexible (Part time) and Alternative Timetables

- 10.1 Schools should refer to the local authority [Flexible and Alternative Timetable procedure](#) for guidance on implementation and recording if consideration is being given to a flexible or alternative timetable.

## 11 Home Education and Flexi-Schooling

- 11.1 An application to seek permission to home educate must be made to the local authority. If authorised the child is entered as withdrawn from the school roll. Until such time as the application to home educate is agreed, any non-attendance should be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If home education is later agreed this recording can be changed retrospectively at the school's discretion.
- 11.2 The same application must be submitted if the parent is requesting to home educate part-time known as flexi-schooling. Until such time as the application is agreed any non-attendance should also be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- 11.3 If the flexi-schooling request is agreed. The times agreed for home education should thereafter be recorded as 'Other Attendance Out of School' (OAT / O).

## 12 Unauthorised Absence

12.1 There are several categories of unauthorised absence;

- Occasional absence with parental awareness (unauthorised absence from school for any period as a result of action on the part of the parent for example a preferred trip or during a period of difficulty with the school or partners.) OUA / N
- Occasional absence without parental awareness (unauthorised absence from school for any period as a result of action on the part of pupil) TRU / @
- Most family holidays during term time (see point 15.1 – UPH / G)
- Longer term absence – school related issues
- Longer term absence – home and wider community
- Absence relating to substance and alcohol misuse

## 13 Patterns of lateness

13.1 A pupil who arrives late for an opening will be recorded as an attendance under the following category:

Late Arrives during registration	attendance category	↔
Late 1 Arrives before 50% of opening	attendance	category J
Late 2 Arrives after 50% of opening	authorised absence	category K

A record should be kept of when pupils arrive late, or leave early, and this situation should be managed through the normal school procedures.

13.2 In circumstances where a pattern of lateness is emerging each case should be looked at on its own merit however further action is likely to be required;

- (a) In the first instance, the Head Teacher (or delegated other) should make every effort to obtain the parent's co-operation to ensure the pupil's punctuality. This will ordinarily involve a conversation with the parent to discuss the matter. The pupil should be included in this where possible in line with our local approach to GIRFEC.
- (b) Once contact has been established with the parent, the Head Teacher (or delegated other) should explain the concerns and procedure in relation to patterns of lateness and agree a way forward. For cases of persistent lateness, it may be appropriate to begin the child planning process with an Assessment of Need. If this has already been completed it may be appropriate to agree to arrange a child planning meeting.

## 14 Unresolved Unsatisfactory Attendance

14.1 Each school is allocated to an Area Attendance Advisory Group which deals with cases of non-attendance which have not been resolved. The Education Welfare Service prepares reports for and acts as Clerk to this Group. The Head Teacher (or delegated other) provides the Group with updated information on the pupil's attendance.

14.2 Cases are referred to the Area Attendance Advisory Group in liaison with the Education Welfare Service when all of the steps noted in section 8 above have insufficiently improved the non-attendance.

## 15 Application for Absence due to Exceptional Domestic Circumstances (EDC)

15.1 Applications for absence due to EDC refer to a parent or guardian requesting exemption from school attendance for a child. Each case should be looked at on its own merit in consultation with the EWS.

15.2 Absence related to EDC can be classified as either Authorised or Unauthorised. Authorised absence (code Q) must be subject to approval by the EWO and covers situations such as:

- The period immediately after an accident or illness
- A period of serious or critical illness of a close relative
- A domestic crisis which causes serious disruption to the family home, causing temporary relocation.

Unauthorised absence (code R) must also be subject to approval by the EWO and would be used in cases where the amount of time for such absences is deemed inappropriate or unnecessary by the EWO.<sup>1</sup>

## 16 Family Holidays during Term Time

- 16.1 The majority of family holidays taken during term time should be categorised as Unauthorised Absence (code G).
- 16.2 However, it is acceptable under exceptional circumstances, and provided the parent has made a written request to the Head Teacher, for schools to authorise a family holiday of not more than two weeks duration, during term time. Such circumstances are coded as (E) and only include:
- Constraints to parental annual leave due to the nature of employment of one or both parents eg. military, police.
  - A family holiday judged to be important to the wellbeing and cohesion of the family, following serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic events.
- 16.3 A family holiday classified under the 'Authorised Absence (code E)' category should **not** include such reasons as:
- The availability of cheap holidays
  - The availability of desired accommodation
  - Poor weather experienced during school holidays
  - Holidays which have overlap at the beginning or end of term
  - Parental difficulty obtaining leave (with local judgement applied in cases where evidence is provided by the employer that leave cannot be accommodated during school holidays without serious consequences).
- 16.4 Family holidays with the above or similar characteristics should be classified as Unauthorised Absence. The decision on recording absence as authorised and unauthorised, should be based simply on whether the school has given prior agreement to the absence or not, using the criteria outlined above. Where a school's prior agreement has **not** been sought, the absence should automatically be classed as unauthorised.

## 17 Other Authorised Absences

- 17.1 In some exceptional circumstances parents can request other authorised absences from school. These include:
- Parental work placement abroad
  - Cultural or heritage trip
  - Return to country of origin eg. to care for relative, bereavement, family wedding
  - Religious Observance
  - Arranged absence in relation to children in Gypsy/Traveller families
- Parents should make these requests in writing to the school.
- 17.2 The school can authorise requests for a maximum of 10 school days. Requests for longer than 10 school days must be authorised by the identified manager at the centre.
- 17.3 For requests over 10 days the parental letter should be submitted with appendix 4 and an attendance print out to the relevant primary or secondary Senior Education Officer at the centre. For requests of 10 days or less the school may find the checklist helpful for their own reference and records. (see 16.4)
- 17.4 It is important that the school and subsequently the centre consider any unreasonable risk the request might pose to the child. These include;
- Already poor attendance
  - Context of Child Protection or compulsory supervision – discuss with Social Work
  - Risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – see FGM guidance
  - Forced Marriage
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## 18 Information for Parents

Information on supporting and recording attendances and absences should be provided to parents in the school handbook.

## 19 Referral to the Reporter to the Children’s Panel

Non-attendance at school without reasonable excuse is a ground for referral to the Reporter. A referral will only be made if it is considered that the child is in need of a compulsory measure of supervision. This would mean that the child would attend a children’s hearing and may be placed on supervision requirement, which could include a condition of attendance at a named school.

A referral will only be made to the children’s reporter after there has been full discussion with other agencies including social work / social care direct. Non – attendance at school is likely to be indicative of other difficulties in the child’s life, which may also be grounds for referral to the Reporter (section 9). School can contact the Reporter for advice in this regard.

## 20 Responsibilities

20.1

Other Authorised Absence and codes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Illness where no learning provision is made (including ongoing mental health concerns) – Self certified – SEL / D Medically certified – MED / F</li><li>• Medical and dental appointments - PER / P</li><li>• Meetings prior to, and during court appearances and other legal processes – ABS / A</li><li>• Attendance at, or in connection with, a Children’s Hearing or Care Review, or appointment with another service provider, e.g. social worker – ABS / A</li><li>• Participation in non-school debates, sports, musical or drama activities agreed by the school – ABS / A</li><li>• Lack of transport – including due to bad weather – ABS / A</li><li>• Period of exclusion category – EXC / X</li><li>• Extended leave with parental consent including some young carer activities – EXL / Z</li></ul>

### 20.2 Communities and Families

Reviewing and maintaining a procedure and overall framework for the promotion of attendance at school. Establishing an overall framework of Area Attendance Advisory Groups for the consideration of cases of persistent non-attendance at school which advise the Chief Education Officer of any action required to be taken.

Monitoring levels of attendance at schools. Publishing data on school attendance and school leaver destinations as required by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). Taking legal action where necessary in cases of persistent non-attendance at school.

Information on attendances and absences in schools is to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 15 September each year.

### 20.3 School

Monitoring attendance of individual pupils at the school. Working collaborative through our GIRFEC framework with Education Welfare Service and other agencies in improving attendance and preventing patterns of non-attendance from developing.

Maintaining attendance records for all pupils enrolled at the school on behalf of the Director of Communities and Families; these records to be of sufficient accuracy and detail to enable the publication of data required by the SEED, via ScotXed data transfer, and for legal action to be taken where necessary.

School attendance is measured centrally and ragged to monitor improvements based on a school SIMD profile. Schools should set their own attendance target annually based on this data and monitor progress in relation to this regularly throughout the session. *See appendix 9*

**21 Education Welfare responsibilities**

The Education Welfare Service will work with schools and families to identify and address emerging attendance concerns. The welfare officer has a key role in linking between home and school to assist in re-engaging the child and parent with school. The Education Welfare Service will support schools and the local authority in investigating children missing from education. The welfare officer reports to and attends Attendance Committees and meetings with the Children’s Panel.

**22 Parental responsibilities**

The responsibility for a child’s education rests with their parent. Once a child/young person is enrolled at an authority school the law states that the child must attend school unless permission has been given by the authority to withdraw the child / young person from school.

**5 POLICY BASE**

This procedure has been developed to promote attendance and manage absence. It sits within the overarching Policy document Included, Engaged and Involved in Edinburgh . Schools should use the template in appendix 7 to update their own Attendance Management procedure relevant to their context.

**6 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- see Inclusion Policy and Procedures Prompt Sheet (Appendix 8)
- Included, Engaged and Involved 1, Scottish Government, 2019
- Home Education Guidance, Scottish Government

**7 RECORD KEEPING**

When a procedure has been followed there are often outputs such as decisions made or events occurred that need to be recorded. These outputs are considered Council records. Please list all Records, including completed forms, generated by this procedure. For each record, list its title, location, responsible officer and minimum retention period

Record Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period

## Pupil Enrolment – Exceptional circumstances.

This only happens when there is no expectation of YP attending school.

Young Person arrives out of authority with a lead profession already identified.

Lead profession to contact catchment school and ask for enrolment under exceptional circumstances – barriers that prevent young person attending school. Roll cap to be breached if required to enrol.

School to enrol young person in school, within calendar month. Enrolment forms can be completed in person, via email or post.

Head Teacher to become named person, holds the child's records and responsible for recording SQA results.

Lead professional is responsible for organising GIRFEC meetings and communicating with school.

SEEMIS code, ABS, or OAT if young person is engaging with flexible pathways communicated weekly from lead professional.  
If young person does not attend flexible pathway lead professional is responsible for locating young person in line with included, engaged and involved requirement.

**Appendix 2– SEEMIS codes**

SEEMIS Codes				
SEEMIS Code	SEEMIS Short Code	Description	Counted by SEED as	Comments
---	-	Present	Attendance	
TRU	@	Truancy	Unauthorised Absence	Parents are unaware of absence
SCH	~	In school but not in class	Attendance	e.g. Secondary pupils in Support Base
LRG	¬	Late During Registration	Attendance	
PTH	=	Part-time (Health Related)	Authorised Absence	
ABS	A	Other Authorised Absence	Authorised Absence	
SEP	B	Sickness with educational provision	Attendance	
CLO	C	Closed (e.g. FRI pm for Primary and Secondary pupils)		Also used for Heating Failure, Industrial Action or Election for the <b>whole</b> school
SEL	D	Self Certified	Authorised Absence	Confirmed by parent
PHL	E	Authorised Parental Holiday	Authorised Absence	Exceptional circumstances - Applied for in advance - Maximum 2 weeks only
MED	F	Medically Certified	Authorised Absence	Confirmed by Medical Practitioner/Hospital
UPH	G	Unauthorised Parental Holiday	Unauthorised Absence	
SNA	H	Should Not Attend		e.g. AM sessions for PM Nursery Pupils
HOL	H	Holiday		Input through Calendar at SEEMIS turnaround
INS	I	In-Service		Input through Calendar at SEEMIS turnaround
LAT	J	Late (arrives before mid-point)	Attendance	
LT2	K	Late (arrives after mid-point)	Authorised Absence	
MIS	M	Missing	Attendance	Automatically generated by SEEMIS when anomaly in daily attendance occurs and requires further investigation
OUA	N	Other Unauthorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	e.g. parent refuses to send child to school following a dispute with the school, or when parent refuses to sign a behaviour agreement following an exclusion
OAT	O	Other attendance out of school	Attendance	Used after final appeal against exclusion turned down - awaiting alternative placement
PER	P	Medical or Dental Appointment	Attendance	
DCA	Q	Exceptional domestic circumstances (auth)	Authorised Absence	Includes short-term caring responsibility. Approved by EWO.
DCU	R	Exceptional domestic circumstances (unauth)	Unauthorised Absence	Ongoing caring responsibility. Considered unreasonable by EWO.
STY	S	Study Leave	Attendance	
TBC	T	To be Confirmed	Unauthorised Absence	

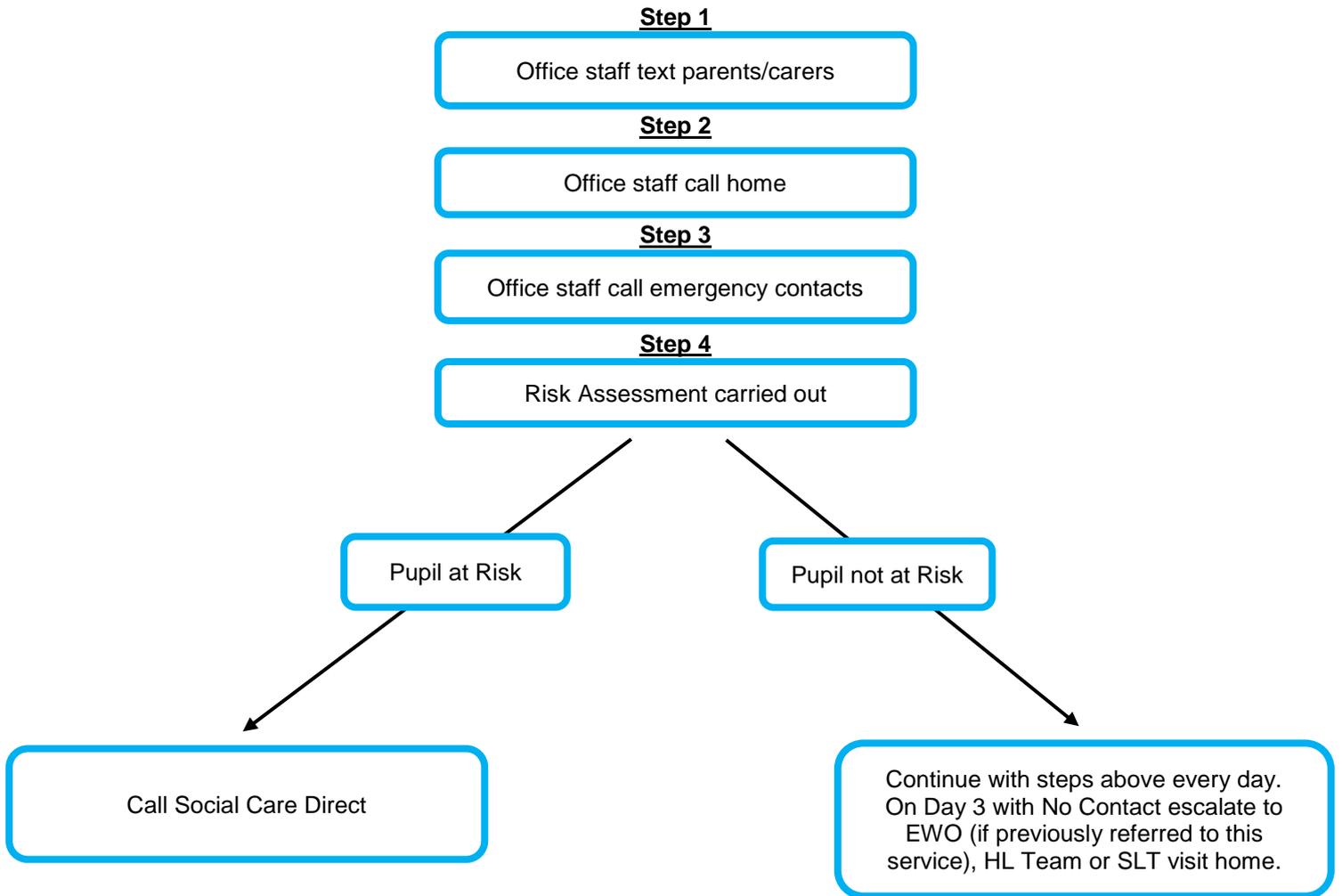
**Definition: Procedure – An agreed method or approach to comply with Policy, Legislation and Departmental Decisions.**

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<b>UNA</b>	<b>U</b>	Unauthorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	<b>Do Not Use Code</b>
<b>FLD</b>	<b>V</b>	Field Trip	Attendance	
<b>VIS</b>	<b>V</b>	School Visit	Attendance	
<b>WRK</b>	<b>W</b>	Work Placement	Attendance	includes volunteering
<b>EXC</b>	<b>X</b>	Exclusion	Authorised Absence	
<b>PTX</b>	<b>Y</b>	Part-time (Exclusion Related)	Authorised Absence	
<b>EXL</b>	<b>Z</b>	Extended leave with parental consent		Extended absence for Traveller Children (maximum 6 months). Extended Overseas visits to relatives (minimum 4 weeks). Confirmed by parent,

Appendix 3

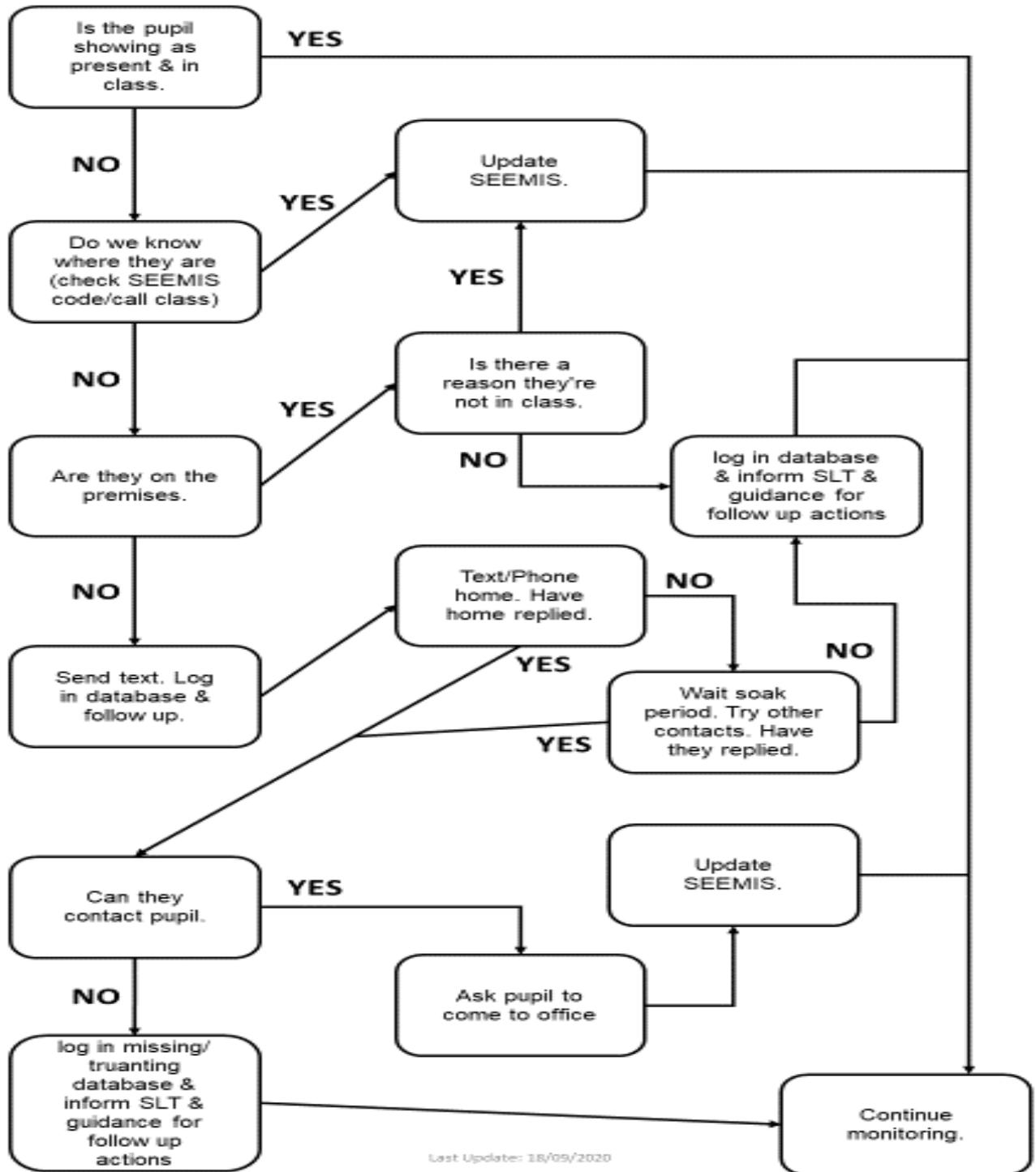
**Unexplained Pupil Absence in Primary School**



**Definition: Procedure – An agreed method or approach to comply with Policy, Legislation and Departmental Decisions.**

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Appendix 3b – Secondary Period by Period Monitoring Flowchart: PSO support Example





**School:**

**Headteacher:**

**Date request received:**

From:

To:

Total school days:

**Grounds for Authorisation:**

**Exceptional Holiday Leave (code E if authorised in advance, code G if un-authorised)**

Parental Work Constraints  Confirmed by school or letter from employer

Family Cohesion (eg. following bereavement)

**Extended Leave (over 4 weeks code Z, under 4 weeks code A)**

Religious Observance  Bereavement  Close Family Wedding

Gypsy / Traveller family

**Extended Leave with Parental Consent (over 4 weeks code Z, under 4 weeks code A)**

*Note maximum 12 school weeks*

Extended overseas educational trips not organised by the school

Short-term parental placement abroad

Family returning to its country of origin (to care for relative, or for heritage trip)

**Exceptional Domestic Circumstances (Q - authorised, R - un-authorised) discuss with EWO**

Period immediately after an accident or illness

Period of serious or critical illness of a close relative

Domestic crisis which causes serious disruption to the family home, causing temporary relocation

**Consideration of Risks**

	Yes	No	Comments
Attendance			
Previous requests			
Female Genital Mutilation			
Forced Marriage			
Other welfare / CP: Click or tap here to enter text.			

**Recommendation from school:**

Do not authorise  Authorise  Further advice requested

**Attach:** Individual attendance summary  Request

## Appendix 5 Staged Support to Promote Attendance and Manage Absence



Identifying and responding to concerns about attendance	
Pathways to Support	Action to be taken/ Who and How
<b>Stage 5</b> Complex/ Intensive/ Acute	<b>Direct Referral to Reporter/ Attendance Order (served on parent through AAAG only)</b>
<b>Stage 4</b>	<b>Area Attendance Advisory Group (AAAG only in consultation with EWO after appropriate work being carried out)</b>
<b>Stage 3</b> Unexplained absence persists	<b>Multi-agency assessment, planning and review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information gathering - use of GIRFEC tools and profile of attendance difficulties</li> <li>• Solution-focused planning meeting involving pupil and parents</li> <li>• Identify and implement appropriate intervention</li> <li>• Review progress and update action plan</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 2</b> Unexplained absence <85% attendance rate Persistent lates without parental support	<b>Referral to EWO/ On-going involvement of Pupil Support Staff</b> Individualised planning
<b>Stage 1</b> Lates and occasional unexplained absence	<b>Action taken by Head Teacher/Pupil Support Staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor attendance data regularly</li> <li>• Discuss concerns with pupil and parent at earliest opportunity</li> <li>• Unexplained absence should result in absence enquiry letter to parents with contact details of member of staff who can offer support. <i>NB Standard letters are available on SEEMIS which can be adapted by schools.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Promoting School Attendance for all pupils to ensure they are included, engaged and involved</b> Promoting positive parental involvement    Pastoral support    health and well-being Positive behaviour approaches – restorative practice, solution-orientated schools    Reward systems Learner engagement    curricular flexibility    links with FE and voluntary organisations Playground supervision    Buddying and mentoring systems	

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## Appendix 6 SCHOOL LEAVING DATES

### 1. Definition of School Leaving Age

1.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1976 has revised the former school leaving arrangements. In future 31 May and the first day of the Christmas holiday period shall be the statutory summer and winter leaving dates in each year.

1.2 The arrangements will apply to pupils as follows:-

(a) Summer Leaving Date

(i) A pupil whose 16th birthday falls in or after 1 March and before 31 May is deemed not to have attained school leaving age until 31 May (i.e. the summer leaving date).

(ii) A pupil whose 16th birthday falls after 31 May but before 1 October is deemed to attain school leaving age on 31 May (i.e. the summer leaving date).

(b) Winter Leaving Date

(i) A pupil whose 16th birthday falls on or after 1 October but before the first day of the Christmas holiday period is deemed not to have attained the school leaving age until the first day of the Christmas holidays (i.e. the winter leaving date).

(ii) A pupil whose 16th birthday falls after the winter leaving date but before 1 March is deemed to have attained 16 on the first day of the Christmas holidays (i.e. the winter leaving date).

**Note:** Children whose 16th birthday falls on a leaving date cease to be of school age on their birthday in terms of Section 32 of the 1962 Act.

### 2. Entry to Employment

2.1 Under the new legislation, pupils who have attained school leaving age are free to enter full-time employment even though they may not have reached their 16th birthday, except in certain industries where a minimum age for entry may apply.

2.2 Under no circumstances can a pupil of school age be allowed to leave school to enter full-time employment. Section 28 of the Children and Young Persons

2.3 (Scotland) Act 1937 contains statutory restrictions on part-time employment of children, as defined in appropriate local bye-laws. Apprenticeship is regarded as full-time employment.

### 3. Entry to Further Education

3.1 The legislation permits the Authority discretion to allow exemption from school attendance to those still of school age to allow a pupil to begin a full time course of formal education. Such cases will be considered on their merit in relation to the educational needs of the pupil who will remain of school age until the statutory leaving date is reached. Pupils should normally have completed 4 years of secondary education before they are withdrawn from school and will not normally be admitted to courses at the expense of those who have already attained leaving age.

- 3.2 Head Teachers should seek the approval of Head of Schools and Community Services for those pupils still of school age wishing to begin a full-time course of vocational further education - after prior agreement with the pupil's parents and the Principal of the College of Further Education.

#### **4. Non attendance at School**

- 4.1 Discretion is also still allowed to authorities to grant non attendance at school to attendance to a child over 14 years of age for the specific purpose of allowing the child to give assistance at home if a situation of exceptional domestic circumstances is proved.
- 4.2 Applications for such non attendance should be dealt with as described in the Guidelines (Paragraph 4.9).

#### **5. Social Security Implications**

- 5.1 Any young person legally employed is covered by industrial injuries legislation whether or not he has attained the age of 16 years. Liability for National Insurance Contributions does not however, begin until he attains that age. Entitlement to unemployment, sickness and related benefits is assessed in relation to earnings and contributions from the age of 16 years. A young person is not entitled to supplementary benefit in his own right until he becomes 16 although, if his family is in receipt of benefit, he could qualify as a dependant until the age 16 years.
- 5.2 Child Benefit is payable at least until a child attains the age of 16 years, whether or not he has ceased to be of school age. Benefit continues subject to appropriate regulations after the age of 16 years if a person continues in full-time education.

## Appendix 7:

### Template for promoting attendance and managing absence school procedure

#### 1. Aims and Targets

- Specific, realistic targets for improving attendance
- Resources available and how they will be used
- How communication between all partners in the process will be implemented

#### 2. Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

- Details of school partnership with Education Welfare Service/Home -Link Support.
- The legal responsibility of the authority, Children and families Department, school, parents and pupils
- Partnership approach to promote attendance and manage absence

#### 3. Procedures

- The stages, processes and staff involved
- Lateness procedures
- How and when attendance concerns are communicated to parents
- What processes are used to reintegrate pupils returning to school after an absence

#### 4. Strategies for promoting attendance and manage absence

- Incentives/rewards
- Reintegration
- Building Relationships
- The school environment
- Curriculum

#### 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- How will the effectiveness of the strategies used be evaluated.
- When will monitoring and evaluation take place
- Who will be involved and how will they contribute

## Appendix 7 – school checklist, promoting attendance and managing absence

Attendance and absence are recorded per half day session in primary and period by period in secondary, including the attendance of pupils who are late.	
There is a system to monitor attendance in every period and absence “hotspots” effectively. (Secondary)	
Information recorded is followed up immediately to ensure pupils are safe and well	
System in place to contact parents or carers as soon as an absence is noted at key points in the school day to help ensure that immediate action can be taken to find any pupils ‘missing’ from school. If attempts to contact the parent are unsuccessful then emergency contacts are used.	
The SEEMIS system is effectively used to record absence..	
Social Work are notified immediately by telephone of the absence of any child who is on the Council’s Child Protection Register. It will be for the Duty or case Social Worker to decide on the required subsequent course of action and to inform the school of that decision.	
School are aware of early signs of concern which may lead to absenteeism and allow preventative support to be arranged.	
GIRFEC child planning is effectively identify and address barriers to attendance.	
School staff develop positive relationships with pupils and parents to ensure difficulties are discussed and resolved. There is a collaborative approach with families in line with local GIRFEC approaches.	
There is a whole school approach to positive relationships and the 4 R’s including approaches to promote equity and value diversity.	

**Scottish Government and Education Scotland Self-Reflection Questions to support improved attendance.**

**Relationships and Behaviour**

[Promoting Attendance: self-reflection questions for educational settings](#) This resource which supports the implementation of IEI 1 has now been updated.

## Appendix 8 - Inclusion Policy and Procedures Prompt Sheet

All procedures below sit underneath and within the context of our [Included, Engaged and Involved in Edinburgh policy](#) and our [Edinburgh Learns Inclusion Framework](#). The policy describes our one service approach;

Collaborative GIRFEC	Strengths based	Doing with not to	Relationships	Rights Respecting	Resilience Building	Restorative	Voice of the child and family
----------------------	-----------------	-------------------	---------------	-------------------	---------------------	-------------	-------------------------------

Procedure	Prompts	Targets	Key questions
<a href="#">Improving Outcomes for Learners at Risk of Exclusion</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aiming for max 3 days</li> <li>• Teaching post 3 days</li> <li>• Must be reasonable adjustments for ASN</li> <li>• Meeting offered within 7 days (should not be called re-admission meeting)</li> <li>• Meeting is best practice not mandatory</li> <li>• Removal from the roll agreed by director</li> <li>• Flowchart and Checklist for exclusion in appendix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce repeat exclusions</li> <li>• Reduce prolonged exclusions</li> <li>• Zero exclusion target for LAC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are exclusions effective?</li> <li>• Are they  or  ?</li> <li>• Are they ever prolonged ?</li> <li>• What are alternatives?</li> <li>• <u>Is there a GIRFEC plan</u> with partners for learners at risk of exclusion?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Managing and Reducing Risk</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioural analysis to identify triggers</li> <li>• <u>Recording of harm and weapons on SHE</u></li> <li>• Planning and evidencing measures to reduce risk</li> <li>• Safety planning</li> <li>• Appendix specific guidance on weapons with flowchart</li> <li>• Template for Risk Management plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support resolution to exclusion</li> <li>• Reduce prolonged exclusions</li> <li>• Reduce likelihood of harm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are risk management plans being used to reduce risk and address stuck situations?</li> <li>• Who collaborates with school?</li> <li>• Are there any training needs?</li> <li>• Are incidents recorded on SHE?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Flexible and Alternative Timetables</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible is PT / Alternative is approx FT</li> <li>• <u>Flexible must be recorded on SEEMIS</u></li> <li>• Flexible only: to prevent exclusion / return from exclusion / phased rtn for health</li> <li>• Proper consideration of risks – prompts in appendix</li> <li>• Guidance on recording of reduced attendance</li> <li>• System for school tracking should be in place – optional template in appendix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately track</li> <li>• Reduce prolonged flexible timetables</li> <li>• Maximise positive school attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are flexible timetables successful in phasing children back?</li> <li>• Are they recorded accurately?</li> <li>• Do they have a clear purpose?</li> <li>• Are alternative timetables used appropriately?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Relationships, Learning and Behaviour</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole school ethos and culture</li> <li>• Core practice of the 4 Rs</li> <li>• Practical guidance for <u>all</u> staff eg. strategies for positive behaviour</li> <li>• Guidance on physical contact</li> <li>• Guidance on physical intervention and seclusion – <u>must be recorded on SHE</u></li> <li>• Guidance on support and debriefing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Template school policy in place within 3 years</li> <li>• All staff complete CECIL e-learning (preferably including whole school workshops)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is an ethos of +ive relationships grown?</li> <li>• Are all staff aware of procedure and using strategies described?</li> <li>• Appropriate recording on SHE?</li> <li>• Are there staff training needs eg. 4Rs?</li> </ul>

**Definition: Procedure – An agreed method or approach to comply with Policy, Legislation and Departmental Decisions.**

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Template for school policy/procedure to be implemented within 3 years.</li> <li>• Local authority inclusion statement in appendix</li> </ul>		
<a href="#">Hosting Flowchart</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing alternative to prolonged exclusions flow chart added to share point <a href="#">Managing Prolonged Exclusions flowchart.docx (sharepoint.com)</a></li> <li>• Hosting flow chart added to share point see <a href="#">Hosting Guidance</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff aware</li> <li>• Pathway three fully involved b4 hosting considered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this in the best interest of the pupil?</li> <li>• Have we explored all in school and community supports first?</li> <li>• What are the family and child or young person's views?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Attendance Procedure</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLWG Set Up to look at the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring and tracking to ensure safe guarding</li> <li>- Systems to support improved attendance</li> <li>- Clarification around admissions in expectations circumstance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Flow chart created admissions in expectations circumstance added to share point <a href="#">Pupil Enrolment – Exceptional Circumstance.docx(sharepoint.com)</a></li> <li>• SLWG Summary shared with Kirsty Spence</li> <li>• Examples of good practice uploaded to share point. <a href="#">Effective Practice in Attendance Monitoring (sharepoint.com)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools aware of their safe guarding role in line with included engaged and involved.</li> <li>• Schools aware of their role when admitting a pupil under exceptional circumstances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System in place for supply staff and new staff induction on SEEMIS use</li> <li>• Opportunities for SL to discuss how to manage attendance follow up in line with the safe guarding issue - included engaged and involved.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Management of Engagement in Remote Learning</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLWG set up</li> <li>• Guidance shared with HT at briefing 25.2.21</li> <li>• Added to share point <a href="#">Monitoring of Engagement in Remote Learning Guidance to share.docx (sharepoint.com)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency across schools with tracking engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools aware of the policy</li> <li>• Schools aware of their roles and responsibility</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Home Links Team Guidance</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Links working practice flow chart added to share point. <a href="#">Home Links working practice flow chart.docx(sharepoint.com)</a></li> <li>• Home Links to support city wide, Request for support available on share point <a href="#">Home Links – Request for Support Form.docx(sharepoint.com)</a></li> <li>• Working collaboratively EWS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve individual attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has individual attendance improved?</li> <li>• Are schools aware of the service and how to access it?</li> </ul>

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Attendance Data (below 85%)

School:

HT:

School Overall Attendance Target:

Appendix 9

Session	Session	Session	Session	Session	Session

Primary

Year Group	Session	Session	Session	Session	Session
P1					
P2					
P3					
P4					
P5					
P6					
P7					

Secondary

Year Group	Session	Session	Session	Session	Session
S1					
S2					
S3					
S4					
S5					
S6					

Data Interpretation:

Next steps to address any attendance challenges:

School Attendance Target for Following Session (agreed with QIEO):

# EDINBURGH LEARNS ATTENDANCE

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**QIEO Attendance Support and  
Challenge Guidance  
August 2021**



# Introduction

## Executive Summary

All children and young people are entitled to a full and meaningful education. Every day in school counts and Edinburgh are committed to improving outcomes and addressing the poverty related attainment gap. Covid has unavoidably impacted on our attendance data and as a city we are invested in improving attendance in all our schools.

Our Quality Improvement Team have a key role to play in supporting and challenging schools to address attendance and this guidance helps highlight your role.

Kirsty Spence is the key contact in relation to attendance and Sharon McGhee is lead contact for Care Experienced.

## Role of QIEO

The crucial role of the QIEO in supporting and challenging attendance:

- Ensuring the school has a clear and robust attendance procedure in place
- Having an overview of the school's attendance rates
- With the HT, monitoring attendance, noting trends and patterns and planning next steps
- Unpicking the % data that is shared into numbers of pupils, who they are and why their attendance is low. Prioritising need
- Agreeing support required
- Reporting back and informing the Attendance Strategy

All schools should have an initial discussion with QIEOs focusing on attendance. The purpose of this meeting is to reinforce the City of Edinburgh Council's focus on attendance and plan for the year. As part of this meeting QI team are asked to gather information and confirm where the school is at with their own attendance procedure and monitoring and tracking systems. This initial discussion should happen by the end of Sept for prioritized red schools. All other schools should have a discussion about attendance by the October break at the latest.

See appendix 1 for Initial Meeting Proforma (once completed these forms should be stored in the Attendance Teams file - [Attandanceteamlink](#) )

We are keen to find out where the good practice is and how this is evidenced as well as where the challenges are and next steps to address these.

The QI team are being asked to support and challenge their schools as follows:

RED	Monthly attendance meetings linking with wider partners as needed (see Pathways to Support Inclusion flowchart)
AMBER	Termly meetings as per above
GREEN	Two meetings per school year

## Sharing of Attendance Data

Attendance data will be shared with all schools on or around the 8<sup>th</sup> of each month beginning the 8th October. The data will RAG schools in relation to their low attendance information.

The attendance data shows low attendance, i.e. below 85% ,and uses a ragging system that shows two RAGs. The first RAG is based on the **A**ctual level of low attendance and uses the thresholds shown below to determine Red/Amber/Green. The second RAG is a **R**elative one with a formula based on the numbers of children and young people and their SIMD for each school. Schools are ragged based on the following:

### Primary

Red schools	>10% of total pupil population have attendance <85%
Amber schools	5-10% of total population have attendance <85%
Green schools	<5% of total population have attendance <85%

### Secondary

Red schools	>19% of total pupil population have attendance <85%
Amber schools	9-19% of total population have attendance <85%
Green schools	<9% of total population have attendance <85%

### Special

Red schools	>21% of total pupil population have attendance <85%
Amber schools	9-21% of total population have attendance <85%
Green schools	<9% of total population have attendance <85%

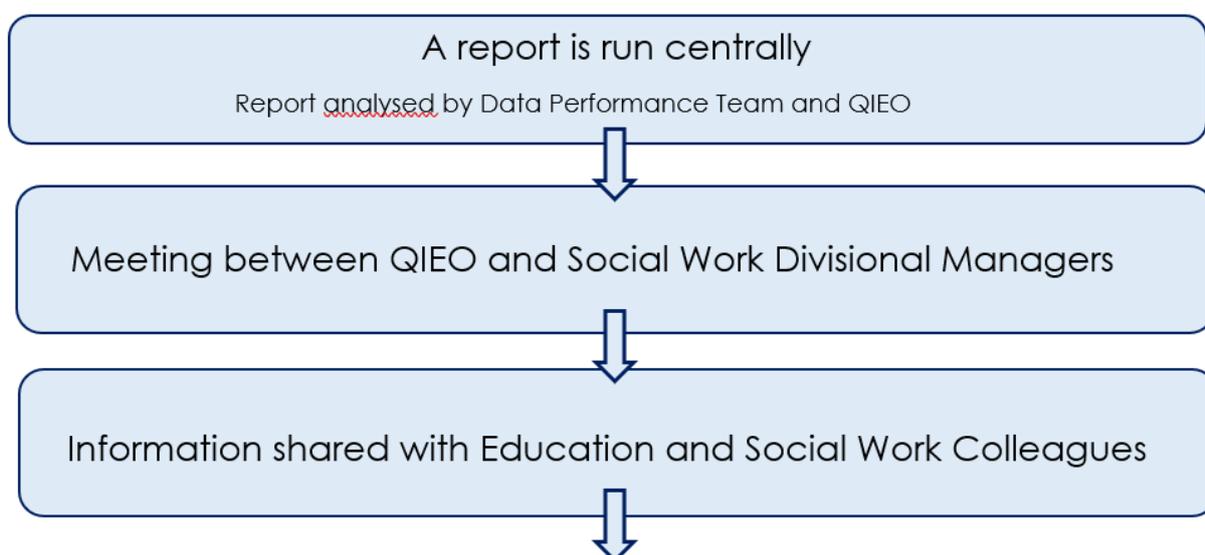
Over and above these attendance reports, monthly reports will be pulled centrally and shared with the QI team (Quality Improvement Managers to disseminate). This will show children and young people with attendance below 85% for your schools. To support us joining up support for persistently ongoing chronic attendance be mindful that some of these pupils may be in authority green ragged schools. Where there is such ongoing concern, it would be helpful for the QI Team to work with schools and partners where needed to ensure supports are in place for pupils.

Due to the impact of Covid, we will not set targets this session for the authority but we aim to improve upon where we are currently and reach as near to previous targets or better if we can. Please see appendix 2a (primary), 2b (secondary) and 2c (special).

## Care Experience Attendance

The attendance rates for Care Experienced Children and Young People are consistently lower than the rate for all pupils in Edinburgh. In **primary** attendance the rates for care experienced compared with the rates for all pupils are **24.5% and 12%** respectively (as at Nov 2020). The gap in **secondary** is more significant. Pupils looked after within the year compared with the rate for all pupils are **44.3% and 16.1%** (as at Nov 2020).

The QIEO for Care Experienced children and young people will produce monthly attendance reports which will be cascaded as follows



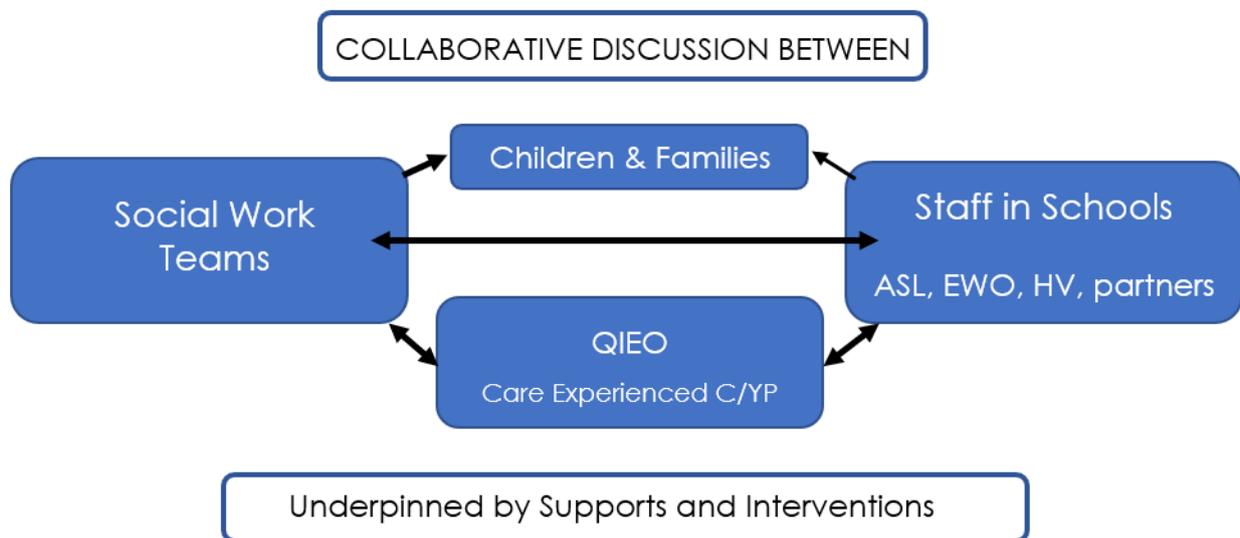
### STAFF IN EDUCATION

Attendance information shared with		
QIEOs	SCHOOLS	EDUCATION PARTNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City rates for currently looked after c/yp</li> <li>- Rates for each school the QIEO has responsibility for</li> <li>- Individual pupil rates for relevant schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City rates for currently looked after c/yp</li> <li>- Rates for their school</li> <li>- Individual pupil rates</li> </ul>	Including EPs, EWOs, homelink, ASL. Where appropriate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City rates for currently looked after c/yp</li> <li>- Individual pupil rates</li> </ul>

STAFF IN SOCIAL WORK

Attendance information shared with		
DIVISIONAL MANAGERS	TEAM LEADERS	SOCIAL WORKERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City rates for currently looked after c/yp</li> <li>- Rates for each school in their locality/specialism</li> <li>- Individual pupil rates for schools in their locality/specialism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City rates for currently looked after c/yp</li> <li>- Rates for each school in their locality/specialism</li> <li>- Individual pupil rates for schools in their locality/specialism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual pupil rates for the children they are directly working with</li> </ul>

Following the sharing of information, the expectation is that there will be a:



The We Matter team will monitor and follow up with schools and social workers where the attendance rate for currently looked after children and young people is below 90%. Monthly monitoring conversations will also occur with schools who have pupils on part time or flexi timetables.

# Attendance Tracking and Monitoring Calendar

## August - Sept

- **25 August** Attendance ASL Briefing with schools -KS/SM
- Initial Attendance discussions with all schools virtually or face to face where felt needed – QI Team

## September - October

- Initial Central data shared –confirm attendance targets for the session –QI Team
- **14 Sept** - sharing effective practice secondary - SLT only

## Between Sep - October

- **Red** schools monthly support and challenge– QI Team

## Oct - December

- **Thematic Review of Attendance - Janice Watson**
  - Focus groups
  - Survey out to schools
  - Review of city attendance
  - Baselines and clear strategies
  - QI Team feedback into this from their field work.
- KS meet monthly with QI team to review attendance strategy and plan next steps
- Monthly central data for children and young people with attendance below 85% shared – SEWO/QI Team
- **10 Nov** - sharing effective practice secondary/primary and special - break out rooms for guidance/admins/PSOs discussions – Emma Dougan ASL HL Coordinator.

## January - March

- **21 Jan** ASL Attendance Strategy Briefing
- Gather effective practice and confirm schools to share this at the Attendance Conference
- Data analysis meetings with all schools – QI Team
- Monthly attendance reports for children >85% attendance
- **17 March** Attendance Conference Draft plan
  - SW input
  - CEC Attendance Strategy updates/data shared
  - The Promise Shared and impact for schools
  - Workshops to share effective practice
  - Keynote speaker?
  - Out of authority - what can we learn from colleagues in other authorities
  - Celebrate success stories (red to green and how journeys)
  - EIP 22/23 plan for attendance shared

## April – June

- **18 May** - ASL briefing celebrate success showing impact of school measure – Emma Dougan/KS/SM
- Consider need for attendance as part of school IP for session 22/23

# Attendance Support

Please see the staged support chart for children and young people with low attendance below:

Identifying and responding to concerns about attendance	
Pathways to Support	Action to be taken/ Who and How
<b>Stage 5</b> Complex/ Intensive/ Acute	Direct Referral to Reporter/ Attendance Order (served on parent through AAAG only)
<b>Stage 4</b>	Area Attendance Advisory Group (AAAG only in consultation with EWO after appropriate work being carried out)
<b>Stage 3</b> Unexplained absence persists	Multi-agency assessment, planning and review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information gathering - use of GIRFEC tools and profile of attendance difficulties</li> <li>• Solution-focused planning meeting involving pupil and parents</li> <li>• Identify and implement appropriate intervention</li> <li>• Review progress and update action plan</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 2</b> Unexplained absence <85% attendance rate Persistent lates without parental support	Referral to EWO/ On-going involvement of Pupil Support Staff Individualised planning
<b>Stage 1</b> Lates and occasional unexplained absence	Action taken by Head Teacher/Pupil Support Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor attendance data regularly</li> <li>• Discuss concerns with pupil and parent at earliest opportunity</li> <li>• Unexplained absence should result in absence enquiry letter to parents with contact details of member of staff who can offer support. <i>NB Standard letters are available on SEEMIS which can be adapted by schools.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Promoting School Attendance for all pupils to ensure they are included, engaged and involved</b> Promoting positive parental involvement    Pastoral support    health and well-being Positive behaviour approaches – restorative practice, solution-orientated schools    Reward systems Learner engagement    curricular flexibility    links with FE and voluntary organisations Playground supervision    Buddying and mentoring systems	

## Managing difficult conversations:

We are a restorative authority and as such central staff are there to work with schools and wider colleagues to help improve outcomes.

A process to support central staff managing difficult conversations has been developed linking central teams where needed to support and challenge schools to improve attendance and attainment of our highest need children and young people.

Please see the 'Pathways to Support Inclusion' Flowchart below

Be curious not judgemental by Walt Whitman

## Pathways to Support Inclusion

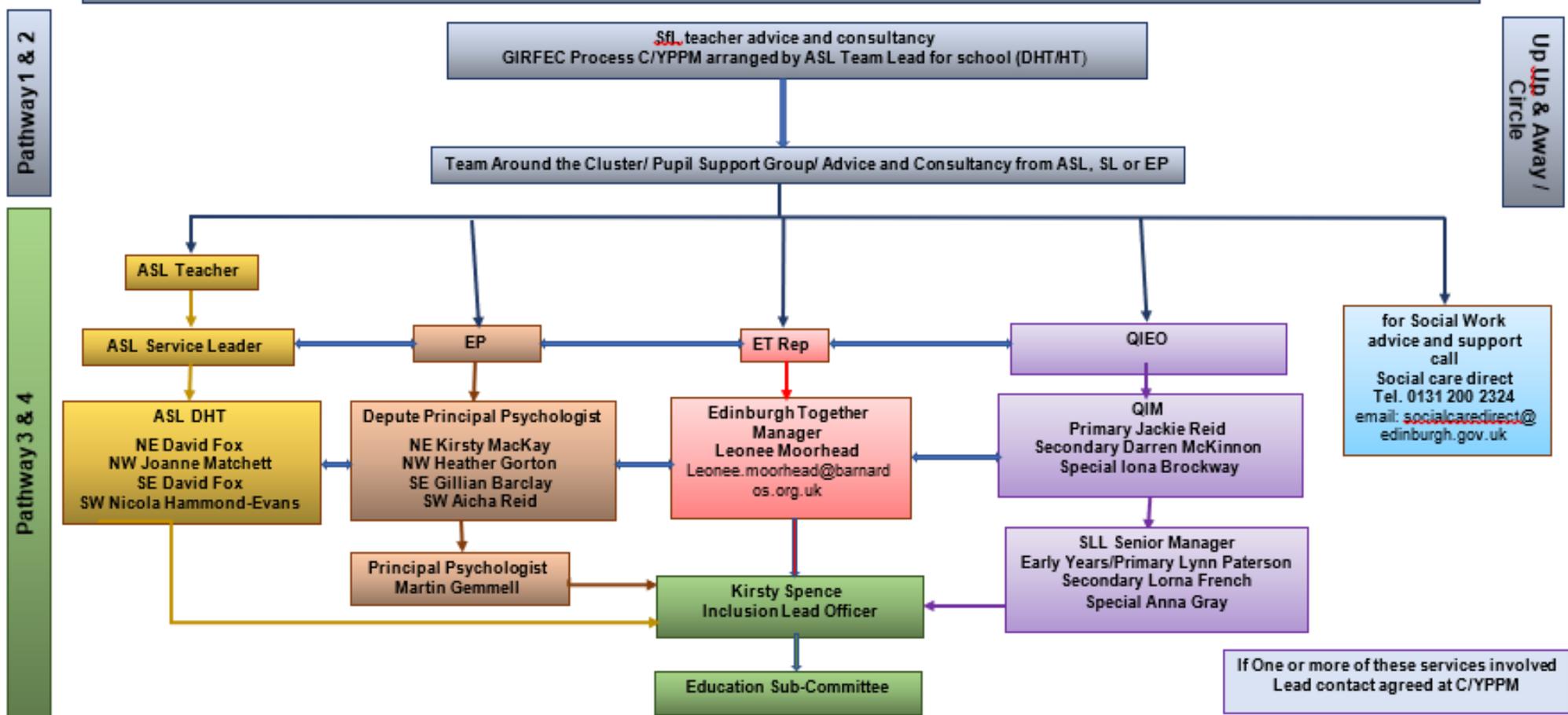
Education establishments are empowered to meet the need of our children with additional support needs using the following local authority policy and accompanying procedures.

Included, Engaged and Involved in Edinburgh policy:

- [Edinburgh Learns Inclusion Framework](#)
- [Edinburgh Learns Equity Framework](#)
- Flexible and Alternative Timetables Procedure
- Risk Management and Reduction Procedure
- Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Procedure
- Improving Outcomes for Learners at Risk of Exclusion
- Attendance Procedure

Sometimes education establishments need support and advice to meet the needs of a few learners. This is accessed through key partners such as the Additional Support for Learning Service, Psychological Service and Edinburgh Together. Every education establishment has a named EP and an ASL Service Leader. In exceptional circumstances, the team around the child and family feel they need support from service staff and managers. In such instances, please follow the pathways highlighted in the flowchart below.

The role of the QICS team is to support education establishments following this pathway to support, related policy and procedures.



# What else can we bring to support schools in need?

## Support for Schools in Need:

Schools requiring support and challenge to improve can access the following with QI teams joining wider team around class or school meetings:

- HT mentoring system with experienced Associate HTs
- Team around the school support with SW, CE team rep, wider partners as appropriate
- Team around the cluster can be offered for clusters prioritising this within their cluster IP or for Red cluster schools.
- Attendance Inclusive Practice Reviews
- Director engagement with red schools to support and challenge
- appendix 7 in the [Attendanceprocedure](#) should help with follow up meetings with red and amber schools

## Appendix 1 Initial Attendance Conversation Proforma

The purpose of the meeting is to

- share the authority focus and plan for attendance support and challenge,
- gather information on confirm where the school is at with their own attendance procedure and monitoring and tracking systems,
- identify and agree next steps and support required.

As part of the initial discussion schools can share

- their attendance procedure,
- their tracking system for attendance monitoring,
- their attendance data with any targets they may have provisionally set and
- attendance print outs for children with attendance on or below 90% and for children on flexible timetables.

School			
HT/Attendance Lead			
QIEO			
Date of meeting		Date of next meeting	

Is attendance part of the Improvement Plan for this year?	yes		no	
Has the school attendance procedure been updated in line with the authority Procedure?	yes		no	
If not, when will it be updated?	Date tbc			

What is working well? How are partners used to support engagement in attendance? What practice could be shared...?	
--	--

What do you feel the school needs to support improvements in attendance?	
--	--

What challenges are the school facing?	
--	--

What systems do you have in place to track and monitor attendance and how regularly is this looked at and by whom?	
	Next steps –

How do you track period by period attendance (secondary)/ Morning & afternoon attendance (primary)?	
	Next steps –

What systems are in place to follow up with individual children and young people and families?	
	Next steps – cchallenges/school solutions/wider potential solutions

How are you/how could the authority attendance tracking system be used to help track school improvement?	
	Next steps –

How will the updated procedure be shared with the school community?	
---	--

Next steps –

What systems are in place to support, track and monitor the CE community in the school with attendance on or below 90%?

Next steps – Involvement with social worker/CE QIEO/ASL

Discuss numbers of exclusions for last session why? challenges? Solutions? Ongoing needs?

Next steps - Raise concerns with ASL service leader and escalate via inclusion pathways if needed.

How many children are on flexible timetables? Discuss reasons for these and timescales for increasing access to education/ plans to enable this.

Next steps -

## Appendix 2a Primary Data at July 2021

### Illustrative changes to inform target setting discussions

A **5%** reduction, from the 2020 total, in the number of pupils (120) would give a city figure of **7.6%**

To achieve a city total of **7%** a reduction of **12%** (300 pupils) on the 2020 total would be required

To achieve the 2017/18 city figure of **6.7%** a reduction of **16%** (400 pupils) on the 2020 total would be required

To achieve a city total of **6%** a reduction of **25%** (600 pupils) on the 2020 total would be required

\*See page 3 for level of QIEO support and definition of Actual/Relative

School	<i>part</i>		<i>part</i>		2019/20		RAG for 2019/20	
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	pupils	<85%	Actual	Relative	
City - Primary	6.7%	6.9%	8.0%	31535	2516			
Abbeyhill Primary School	7.7%	10.5%	14.5%	166	24	R	R	
Balgreen Primary School	7.8%	7.9%	9.0%	377	34	A	A	
Blackhall Primary School	0.4%	0.4%	2.4%	452	11	G	A	
Bonaly Primary School	0.2%	0.7%	0.2%	431	1	G	G	
Broomhouse Primary School	10.7%	11.6%	12.2%	237	29	R	A	
Broughton Primary School	8.4%	9.9%	9.5%	391	37	A	R	
Brunstane Primary School	18.0%	23.2%	28.3%	237	67	R	R	
Bruntsfield Primary School	2.5%	2.8%	3.2%	633	20	G	A	
Buckstone Primary School	0.7%	0.7%	2.8%	435	12	G	A	
Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce ( Parkside Primary )	3.1%	2.6%	5.2%	425	22	A	R	
Canal View Primary School	17.2%	19.1%	21.9%	375	82	R	R	
Carrick Knowe Primary School	5.5%	4.8%	6.3%	350	22	A	R	
Castleview Primary School	15.5%	10.9%	13.9%	332	46	R	G	
Clermiston Primary School	8.3%	7.3%	7.5%	478	36	A	A	
Clovenstone Primary School	11.8%	12.2%	14.8%	244	36	R	A	
Colinton Primary School	3.6%	5.1%	5.0%	179	9	A	G	
Corstorphine Primary School	2.0%	1.2%	1.8%	550	10	G	G	
Craigentenny Primary School	4.6%	4.2%	9.0%	279	25	A	A	
Craiglockhart Primary School	3.0%	4.7%	3.3%	368	12	G	A	
Craigour Park Primary School	17.0%	15.9%	19.7%	529	104	R	A	
Craigroyston Primary School	24.5%	22.0%	25.8%	283	73	R	R	
Cramond Primary School	0.7%	0.0%	1.9%	426	8	G	G	
Currie Primary School	1.6%	2.6%	5.8%	504	29	A	R	
Dalmeny Primary School	3.4%	1.1%	4.6%	87	4	G	G	

Dalry Primary School	9.5%	10.5%	11.4%	271	31	R	R
Davidson's Mains Primary School	2.3%	1.9%	4.2%	568	24	G	A
Dean Park Primary School	1.7%	1.1%	2.7%	477	13	G	A
Duddingston Primary School	4.6%	5.7%	6.8%	380	26	A	R
East Craigs Primary School	4.1%	5.4%	4.8%	436	21	G	R
Echline Primary School	3.4%	1.4%	1.6%	308	5	G	G
Ferryhill Primary School	13.9%	15.8%	14.0%	363	51	R	A
Flora Stevenson Primary School	3.5%	3.7%	5.3%	588	31	A	R
Forthview Primary School	14.7%	18.8%	24.6%	426	105	R	R
Fox Covert ND Primary School	1.8%	1.7%	3.4%	290	10	G	A
Gilmerton Primary School	10.5%	13.3%	14.4%	480	69	R	R
Gracemount Primary School	13.2%	12.1%	14.1%	539	76	R	A
Granton Primary School	18.8%	15.4%	14.1%	490	69	R	A
Gylemuir Primary School	4.6%	4.4%	7.3%	522	38	A	R
Hermitage Park Primary School	9.3%	9.3%	9.4%	320	30	A	A
Hillwood Primary School	4.5%	3.2%	5.9%	68	4	A	G
Holy Cross Roman Catholic Primary School	9.5%	8.4%	10.8%	297	32	R	R
James Gillespie's Primary School	1.2%	1.8%	1.7%	632	11	G	G
Juniper Green Primary School	1.7%	1.5%	1.7%	416	7	G	G
Kirkliston Primary School	5.3%	4.5%	4.6%	630	29	G	A
Leith Primary School	10.6%	10.9%	12.3%	359	44	R	R
Leith Walk Primary School	6.2%	10.8%	9.2%	250	23	A	R
Liberton Primary School	6.9%	8.7%	11.7%	479	56	R	R
Longstone Primary School	7.3%	6.5%	6.7%	255	17	A	A
Lorne Primary School	15.1%	12.6%	11.6%	233	27	R	A
Murrayburn Primary School	8.4%	8.5%	10.4%	383	40	R	A
Nether Currie Primary School	3.0%	1.9%	2.8%	179	5	G	G
Newcraighall Primary School	7.0%	7.4%	9.2%	185	17	A	A
Niddrie Mill Primary School	15.0%	14.7%	14.8%	304	45	R	A
Oxgangs Primary School	6.7%	5.1%	5.1%	354	18	A	R
Parsons Green Primary School	4.4%	4.4%	5.2%	328	17	A	R
Pentland Primary School	3.8%	3.3%	7.8%	451	35	A	R
Pirniehall Primary School	13.1%	17.2%	17.5%	292	51	R	A
Preston Street Primary School	3.8%	4.7%	5.2%	308	16	A	R
Prestonfield Primary School	8.6%	10.3%	7.6%	197	15	A	A

Queensferry Primary School	1.6%	2.6%	2.8%	460	13	G	A
Ratho Primary School	3.8%	4.4%	1.8%	277	5	G	G
Roseburn Primary School	2.2%	2.5%	5.4%	257	14	A	R
Royal Mile Primary School	16.3%	19.0%	22.2%	158	35	R	R
Sciennes Primary School	2.5%	1.8%	1.4%	661	9	G	G
Sighthill Primary School	13.6%	13.0%	13.1%	251	33	R	G
South Morningside Primary School	1.1%	1.4%	1.9%	671	13	G	G
St Andrew's Fox Covert RC Primary School	6.0%	7.2%	5.8%	156	9	A	G
St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School	10.0%	7.6%	9.2%	217	20	A	G
St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Primary School	3.7%	3.6%	2.5%	202	5	G	G
St David's Roman Catholic Primary School	14.7%	17.1%	11.8%	321	38	R	A
St Francis' Roman Catholic Primary School	11.7%	13.1%	15.9%	271	43	R	A
St John Vianney Roman Catholic Primary School	11.1%	16.1%	10.8%	269	29	R	A
St John's Roman Catholic Primary School	7.8%	7.7%	10.3%	369	38	R	R
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School	3.8%	9.1%	13.8%	320	44	R	A
St Margaret's Roman Catholic Primary School	5.6%	1.6%	3.6%	112	4	G	G
St Mark's Roman Catholic Primary School	10.0%	5.0%	7.1%	156	11	A	A
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School (Edin.)	2.7%	3.3%	4.0%	346	14	G	A
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School (Leith)	8.0%	8.6%	5.5%	346	19	A	A
St Ninian's Roman Catholic Primary School	7.6%	11.9%	12.8%	257	33	R	A
St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School	1.2%	2.5%	2.4%	381	9	G	G
Stenhouse Primary School	14.9%	11.4%	14.0%	363	51	R	A
Stockbridge Primary School	4.3%	2.5%	4.7%	277	13	G	R
The Royal High Primary School	5.3%	5.4%	6.3%	333	21	A	R
Tollcross Primary School	10.2%	8.7%	14.2%	267	38	R	R
Towerbank Primary School	3.1%	3.3%	3.4%	623	21	G	A
Trinity Primary School	4.3%	5.5%	5.5%	583	32	A	A
Victoria Primary School	9.7%	8.8%	10.6%	284	30	R	R
Wardie Primary School	1.5%	1.1%	2.1%	521	11	G	A
City - Primary	6.7%	6.9%	8.0%	31535	2516		

Appendix 2b Secondary Data at July 2021

Illustrative changes to inform target setting discussions

A 5% reduction, from the 2020 total, in the number of pupils (110) would give a city figure of **14.4%**

To achieve a city total of **14%** a reduction of **8%** (180 pupils) on the 2020 total would be required

To achieve a city total of **13%** a reduction of **14%** (310 pupils) on the 2020 total would be required

To achieve a city total of **12%** a reduction of **21%** (470 pupils) on the 2020 total would be required

School	<i>part</i>		<i>part</i>		2019/20		RAG for 2019/20	
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	pupils	<85%	Actual	Relative	
City - Secondary	15.0%	14.2%	15.2%	14862	2258			
Balerno Community High School	10.4%	8.0%	7.8%	575	45	G	A	
Boroughmuir High School	3.2%	4.8%	6.2%	943	58	G	G	
Broughton High School	21.9%	20.2%	18.3%	851	156	A	A	
Castlebrae Community High School	20.1%	22.7%	33.2%	217	72	R	R	
Craigmount High School	9.9%	9.6%	8.4%	858	72	G	A	
Craigroyston Community High School	31.3%	25.8%	27.7%	459	127	R	R	
Currie Community High School	7.3%	6.1%	5.8%	534	31	G	G	
Drummond Community High School	23.5%	21.5%	19.3%	301	58	R	A	
Firrhill High School	7.6%	8.5%	11.4%	896	102	A	A	
Forrester High School	23.0%	21.8%	23.9%	574	137	R	R	
Gracemount High School	24.5%	24.3%	26.4%	443	117	R	R	
Holy Rood Roman Catholic High School	22.8%	19.4%	17.8%	819	146	A	G	
James Gillespie's High School	9.1%	7.2%	7.5%	953	71	G	A	
Leith Academy	18.6%	16.6%	18.1%	684	124	A	A	
Liberton High School	18.3%	18.8%	24.0%	541	130	R	R	
Portobello High School	17.3%	15.6%	16.7%	1038	173	A	R	
Queensferry Community High School	9.7%	8.4%	12.8%	670	86	A	A	
St Augustine's Roman Catholic High School	19.7%	19.1%	19.6%	607	119	R	A	
St Thomas of Aquin's Roman Catholic High School	9.2%	8.2%	12.5%	553	69	A	A	
The Royal High School	7.7%	8.2%	7.2%	907	65	G	A	
Trinity Academy	14.8%	15.0%	15.6%	642	100	A	A	
Tynecastle High School	21.6%	23.7%	22.8%	501	114	R	R	
Wester Hailes Education Centre	28.2%	27.3%	29.1%	296	86	R	R	
City - Secondary	15.0%	14.2%	15.2%	14862	2258			

## Appendix 2c: Special School Data Overview

### Low attendance (less than 85%) of Special Schools' pupils in Edinburgh's Local Authority schools (session 2020/21)

position at: 31/12/2020

	pupils	<85% attendance	as % of all pupils	A	R	T
	556	167	30.0%	●	●	●
			pupils <85% %			
Braidburn	106	52	49.1%	●	●	●
Gorgie Mills School	42	30	71.4%	●	●	●
Kaimes School	73	18	24.7%	●	●	●
Oaklands School	39	9	23.1%	●	●	●
Pilrig Park School	40	15	37.5%	●	●	●
Prospect Bank School	50	8	16.0%	●	●	●
Redhall School	68	5	7.4%	●	●	●
Rowanfield School	37	18	48.7%	●	●	●
St Crispin's School	46	6	13.0%	●	●	●
Woodlands School	53	6	11.3%	●	●	●

*Howdenhall & St. Katharines not shown as numbers too small*

Low attendance here is defined as less than 85%.

The pupils included are Primary P1-P7 & Secondary S1-S4.

Only pupils with more than 36 possible openings are included.

Leavers meeting the above criteria are included.

*NB To follow data on numbers of CYP with ASN with low attendance, on flexible timetables or exclusions.*