



Defence  
Children  
Services

# DCS Directive 3.2.6 School Attendance

Sep 24 v4.0

## General

<b>Authorisation</b>	Hd DCS
<b>Senior Responsible Owner</b>	DCS CEo
<b>Points of Contact</b>	SO1 Policy, Risk and Assurance
<b>Review Date</b>	Sep 2027
<b>Related Policy/Guidance</b>	<a href="#">Education Act 1996, Part 6</a> <a href="#">Education Act 2002, Part 3</a> <a href="#">Education and Inspections Act 2006, Part 7</a> Armed Forces Act 2006 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments) <a href="#">Dfe Working Together to Improve School Attendance August 2024</a> Dfe <a href="#">School Census Guidance</a> DfE <a href="#">Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024</a> DfE <a href="#">Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for Schools</a> JSP 342 Education of Service Children Overseas Part 1 JSP 760 Tri-Service Regulations For Leave And Other Types Of Absence JSP 770 Tri Service Operational And Non Operational Welfare Policy Part 1 JSP 834 Safeguarding Volume 1
Part A	DCS Attendance Policy Directive
Part B	School Attendance Policy
Annex A	Term Time Absence Request Form
Annex B	Application for Term-Time Absence for Post Operational Leave
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## Part A: DCS Attendance Directive

### Introduction

3. Good attendance at School is strongly linked to educational achievement and is the single most important factor to ensure that children and young people have optimal life chances.
4. DCS provided Schools are to ensure that all children gain maximum benefit from the educational opportunities available in order that they achieve their full potential.
5. DCS Schools recognise the DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024 (WTTISA 2024) definition of Unauthorised Absence: 'Unauthorised absence is where a pupil's absence is not one of the types of absence listed as authorised in regulation 6(2)<sup>1</sup> or where the reason for a pupil's absence has not been provided and cannot be established'.
6. **Part A:** DCS Attendance Directive provides the framework for promoting, encouraging and monitoring School attendance across DCS Schools and Settings.
7. **Part B:** The School Attendance Policy provides a clear guide to the different types of absences.

### Aim

8. This Policy Directive<sup>2</sup> provides the framework for the prioritisation of attendance in School, laying out DCS direction and guidance for managing School attendance and encouraging good attendance.

### Scope

9. This Policy Directive applies to the attendance of pupils of compulsory school age<sup>3</sup> who are on roll within a DCS provided School overseas.
10. The Queen Victoria School (Dunblane) will follow Scottish National statutory direction and guidance for School attendance and may make use of this Directive where it is complementary.
11. DCS Settings may use this Directive when developing their strategies for encouraging good attendance.

### Legal framework

12. DCS's School or Setting direction and guidance adopt, where reasonably practicable overseas, statutory guidance on WTTISA 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> The Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Consideration has been given as to whether this Policy Directive complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and it has been concluded that the duty has been complied with.

<sup>3</sup> Compulsory School age in England is 5 years old. As stipulated in JSP342, the MOD has adopted the principles of Raising the Participation Age (England), which means that Service children who are supportable overseas and are accompanying their Service parent or carer will be expected to participate in education or training that leads to nationally recognised qualifications, until their 18th birthday.

13. The MOD applies the statutory requirement for parents or carers to ensure that their children of compulsory School age receive an 'efficient and suitable<sup>4</sup>' education. Should parents or carers fail to do so there are mechanisms that can be brought to bear, if necessary, to enforce attendance for Defence personnel who come under scope of the Armed Forces Act 2006. If Defence Children's Services believe that a child's poor attendance is negatively impacting their attainment, this might indicate that educational supportability needs to be reassessed.

## Roles and Responsibilities

14. **Education Welfare Service (EWS):** does not operate as a local authority in England would, however, each DCS School and Setting has a dedicated Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to support them. The EWO seeks to replicate the responsibilities of Local Authority (UK) EWO, providing support to DCS School and Setting attendance leads by tracking and monitoring attendance and intervention through direct work with families and pupils to improve School and Setting attendance as part of the Staged Response at **Annex C**.

15. **DCS School Whole Staff:** The lead responsibility for monitoring and ensuring attendance is with the School staff. This makes it particularly important that all staff have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.

16. **School Improvement Team:** DCS Schools district School Improvement Advisor will conduct oversight of pupil attendance during their core visits and ensure Attendance is a focus during any internal or external assurance processes.

17. **DCS HQ:** provides the following support:

- a. development and monitoring of School procedures.
- b. contribution to in-service training of School staff.

18. **Local Commands:** It is essential that DCS Schools liaise with local Commands, in particular the Unit Welfare Officer/single Service equivalent. Where there is no designated Unit Welfare Officer or equivalent then the Commander/Commanding Officer/Head of Establishment assumes or delegates this function. It's important that Schools are aware of local arrangements for safeguarding and share attendance data, themes and trends with Commands and partner agencies when required.

## School Requirements

19. All DCS Schools are to have a School Attendance Policy which is to be published on the School website. Schools are to adapt **Part B: School Attendance Policy** and should include:

- a. Roles and responsibilities.
- b. How Schools will work in partnership with parents or carers and the local Command.

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<sup>4</sup> Education defined through case law: Mr Justice Woolf in the case of R v Secretary of State for Education and Science, ex parte Talmud Torah Machzikei Hadass School Trust, *The Times* (April 1985)

- c. How Schools will manage attendance.
  - d. How Schools will report absences.
  - e. Details of School calendar; School day timings; absence reporting.
20. DCS Schools should have a register of pupil attendance and use national attendance codes, as detailed in DfE statutory guidance for Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024.
21. DCS Schools are to have arrangements in place for attendance issues, including:
- a. Following up unexplained and unexpected absence.
  - b. Granting leave of absence.
  - c. Notifying of illness.
  - d. Making appointments during School hours.

### **Term Time Pupil Absence**

22. In line with statutory requirements laid out by the DfE, the granting of term time pupil absence can only be on the 'exceptional grounds' detailed below:
- a. **Exceptional circumstances.** Each DCS School and Setting will consider every application for term-time absence individually. Parents or carers will need to be directed to use the form at **Annex A** to apply for term-time absence on the grounds of exceptional circumstances. Definitions of exceptional circumstances are detailed in **Part B**. Examples of 'exceptional circumstances' should include bereavement or serious illness of relatives and medical needs where treatment is required in the UK.
23. Where delivery of the Defence Mission by Service parents or carers employed in specific roles impacts on the ability to observe standard leave patterns.
24. **Post Operational Leave (POL).** Children may be granted a maximum of ten days term time absence in support of a parent or carer's POL. Parents or carers must have confirmation from their Command that they are entitled to apply for this absence and will need to complete and submit the application form at **Annex B**.
25. The entitlement to and granting of POL to Service personnel is contained in JSP 760 (Ch11). Whilst it is recognised that families face unique circumstances in a military community given operational tours, it is important that parents or carers understand the potential risks of non-attendance at School to a child's education. The granting of POL to a Serving parent or carer is distinct from the granting of term-time absence for a pupil and it is important to highlight that families can and do enjoy the POL of the Serving parent or carer without going away and without therefore requesting that their child is absent from School during term time.

26. DCS acknowledges that, as directed in JSP 760 (Ch11, section 11.4) POL will be taken as soon as possible and at the latest within one month, after a Service person's return from qualifying Operations or Deployments<sup>5</sup> and will therefore coincide with academic terms. When deciding whether to grant such requests, Head Teachers will consider a range of issues, for example the individual pupils' previous attendance record as well as their age and stage within the academic cycle. Head Teachers are ultimately responsible for agreeing authorised absences to support POL.

27. **Non-compliance.** There may be occasions when a term time absence which has been applied for by a parent or carer, but not agreed to by the School, is taken anyway. For the purposes of School data, such absences should continue to be recorded as code G, defined as 'Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, not agreed'.

28. Where there is a concern over the welfare of the child the in-country contracted social care service may be contacted, in addition to the district EWO. For persistently non-compliant parents or carers, Head Teachers can work in partnership with the local Command to seek a solution.

## Attendance Data

29. A high proportion of children in DCS Schools are likely to experience a parent or carer deployed on an operational tour – this may generate a high number of requests for absence linked to POL which will impact on term-time leave and attendance data.

30. Whilst DCS School attendance data is bench marked against National (English) targets, the impact of POL is recognised by Ofsted, School Governance Committees (SGC) and by DCS Schools district School Improvement Advisors during their core visits.

31. To enable transparency in the data, DCS School attendance data is expressed through two figures, one overall School attendance figure and an additional School attendance figure to record absence agreed to by the Head Teacher for POL (code C).

32. DCS Schools are required to regularly analyse School attendance data in order to identify pupils with poor overall attendance and persistent absentees. This will be used to inform reviews of attendance and absence management conducted by DCS Schools district Education Welfare Officer.

33. DCS Schools district School Improvement Advisors, working with the district EWO will provide oversight of attendance and absence management during their core visits programme and will work with individual Schools to understand the factors that affect School attendance and identify appropriate strategies for improvement.

## Encouraging Attendance

34. Achieving favourable learning outcomes for children starts by children being at School. Regular attendance is a prerequisite to a good education and securing it must be a high priority for all.

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<sup>5</sup> POL is awarded solely as a result of time spent on qualifying Operations or deployments and does not apply to exercises and maritime deployments JSP 760 Chapter 12.1.

35. There are proven links between absence rates and pupil attainment. Being out of School can cause serious long-term harm to young people's lives and ruin their chances of success. By failing to attend School regularly, pupils diminish the value of the education provided for them. Schools need to monitor and support pupils to maintain regular School attendance principally because regular and punctual attendance at School is essential to the process of raising attainment and because young people not in School are more vulnerable, i.e., to drifting into crime or other anti-social activity.

36. DCS Schools Leaders are to encourage and promote good attendance in as many ways as possible and for as many pupils as they can. They will need to balance this with measures to address the needs of vulnerable children who, for whatever reason, find it difficult to attend.

37. DCS Schools are to have a whole School approach to attendance which focuses primarily on promoting attendance but also addresses such issues as truancy, condoned absences, exclusion and re-integration. It relates to a wide range of other School issues including punctuality, rewards and incentives, the quality of teaching and learning, curricular differentiation and home-School links.

38. The context of DCS Schools within a Defence environment and overseas locations presents a number of supporting conditions for good attendance:

- a. the close-knit nature of local communities means that truancy is less likely.
- b. parents or carers are usually supportive of attendance in School.
- c. there is an expectation within the military community that children will attend School regularly and that parents or carers will support their children's education.
- d. family circumstances (health, housing, employment) are usually favourable.
- e. there is organised transportation in most locations from home to School and back each day.
- f. The provision and access to a dedicated district Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

39. The list above should not distract from individual issues which can occur in any family, and which can result in poor attendance. Whilst some aspects of the Defence community overseas do support good attendance, others can impact on the continuity of education for children of Defence personnel, for example:

- a. frequent moves of School due to parent or carer postings can mask underlying issues regarding attendance and welfare.
- b. pupils can be absent from School due to a family requirement for compassionate leave.
- c. special consideration for additional leave has to be given to the return of a parent or carer from active duty.
- d. the stress of deployment can impact on families in many ways.

- e. gaps between postings can result in children being out of School and tracking children can be complex when families may move at short notice and without a destination address being available.
  - f. there can be added pressure on non-Serving parents or carers during times of service-related separation due to deployments, (for example, transporting children to School if the non-Serving parent or carer does not drive and no School transport is provided). This highlights the need for close liaison between the parents or carers, School and unit staff, all of whom have a close interest in identifying solutions to attendance issues.
40. DCS Schools will need to consider how these Service specific factors can be mitigated, in order to promote optimal attendance.

## **Partnership Working**

41. Improving attendance requires effective working relationships between DCS Schools, SGCs, local Commands, the community and parents or carers. To achieve successful outcomes for Service children it is essential that all partners work together within a creative framework, but also one that defines agreed expectations for all partners.
42. Joint action between partners is required in order to encourage and manage pupil attendance. Whilst DCS Schools may not always have access to the full range of services and agencies that might support attendance in the UK, it is important to recognise the support that is available, which includes:
- a. EWO's.
  - b. Unit Welfare (Families) Officers.
  - c. DCS personnel (DCS Schools district School Improvement Advisor and Education Welfare Officer).
  - d. Health and Welfare.
  - e. Service and Civil Police.
  - f. Single Service specialist welfare agencies.
  - g. MOD contracted social care services.
43. Where parents or carers are unaware of the impact that absences can have on their children's education, or are unsupportive of the School, then interventions may be ineffective. It is essential, therefore, that parents or carers are recognised as partners in any strategy to improve attendance. This can be achieved in a number of ways:
- a. Through Overseas Commands and DCS Schools via:
    - (i) the presence, guidance and support of a dedicated district EWO.
    - (ii) use of the local press and British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) for publicising the importance of attendance.



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- (iii) leaflets for parents or carers on attendance matters.
- (iv) supporting UWOs in their work with families.
- (v) identification and close monitoring of any vulnerable children and/or vulnerable groups.
- (vi) monitoring at key times e.g., transition between primary and secondary Schools.

b. At Schools through:

- (i) regular and timely communication to parents or carers.
- (ii) citizenship and Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE).
- (iii) parents or carers' evenings.
- (iv) award/reward systems.
- (v) specific reports on individual pupils.

## Part B: School Attendance Policy

Approved by		
Date		
Review Date		XXX 2026
Related Policy/Guidance		<p>Department for Education Statutory Guidance: <a href="#">Working Together to improve School attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)</a></p> <p>Part 6 of the Education Act 1996</p> <p>Part 3 of the Education Act 2002</p> <p>Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p> <p>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)</p> <p>School Census Guidance</p> <p>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023</p> <p>Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for Schools</p> <p>Armed Forces Act 2016</p> <p>JSP 342 Education of Service Children Overseas Part 1 V5.2 Jun 2024</p> <p>JSP 760 Tri-Service Regs for Leave V39.1 Jun 2024</p> <p>JSP 770 Tri-Service Welfare Policy Part 1 V16.0 Jun 2023</p> <p>JSP 834 Safeguarding Volume 1 V1.0 Jun 2023</p>

### Aim

1. **Part B** of this Policy Directive provides a clear guide to the different types of absences.
2. Our School aims to meet its obligations with regards to School attendance by:

- a. promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence. DCS considers good attendance to be at least 96% excluding POL.<sup>6</sup>
  - b. ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
  - c. acting early to address patterns of absence
3. We will also support parents or carers to perform their legal duty<sup>7</sup>, to ensure their children of compulsory School age attend School regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
4. DCS Schools and Settings, The Education Welfare Team and wider DCS organisation value education and understand the link between attendance, attainment, and wider wellbeing. We want all our children to thrive in each of our educational Settings. For this to be achieved, children require a sense of belonging and need to have a strong and enduring relationship with their teachers, families, and peers.
5. DCS define regular School attendance as children and young people attending every School day possible between the School term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the School year they turn 16. We also recognise the importance of the School or Setting attendance routines early on in a child's education journey from early years through to sixth form.

## School Procedures

6. The designated senior leader responsible for attendance in our School is the Head Teacher
7. **Attendance register.** Adopting statutory requirements for School attendance (England), our School is required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on it.
8. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each School day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:
- a. present
  - b. attending an approved off-site educational activity
  - c. unauthorised absent
  - d. authorised absent (due to medical/dental appointments, exceptional circumstances or POL).
9. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- a. the original entry

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<sup>6</sup> Guidance on POL is detailed in paragraphs 24-26 of the DCS Directive 3.2.6 School Attendance.

<sup>7</sup> Where parents or carers decide to have their child registered at School, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that School regularly. (DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024, p8.)

- b. the amended entry
  - c. the reason for the amendment
  - d. the date on which the amendment was made
  - e. the name and position of the person who made the amendment.
10. See **Annex F** for the DfE attendance codes.
11. Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for six years after the date on which the entry was made.
12. Pupils must arrive in School by the start of each School day. The register for the first session will be taken at the beginning and will be kept open for ten minutes. The register for the second session will be taken at the beginning and will also be kept open for ten minutes.

### **Unplanned Absence**

13. Parents or carers must notify the School on the first day of an unplanned absence. For example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health the School must be notified before the start of the first session or as soon as practically possible.
14. Parents or carers must contact the administrative team within the School's reception via a telephone call to inform them of their child's absence from School. This must occur on each day of the absence.
15. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the School has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
16. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the School may ask the parents or carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
17. If the School is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and the parents or carers will be notified of this prior to the recording.

### **Medical or Dental Appointments**

18. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.
19. Parents or carers are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments out of School hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of School for the minimum amount of time necessary.
20. Parents or carers must complete the form at **Annex A**: and submit it to the administrative team in reception if their child needs to attend a medical or dental appointment within School hours.

## Other Term Time Absence

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

## Lateness and Punctuality

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

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

24. Regular or repeat lateness where a pupil is regularly marked as absent will likely trigger a review of attendance and your School will work closely with the parents or carers, the child/young person and any other identified professional partner to address regular lateness.

25. If regular or repeated lateness leads to overall attendance percentage dropping below 96%, this may trigger Stage 1 of the attendance process. If attendance continues to fall and drops below 90%, this will likely lead to intervention and support from the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) (see **Annex C.**)

## Following up Absence

26. The School will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary (liaising with the allocated EWO, if appropriate), identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

27. Where the School has not been notified of a child's absence, parents or carers will be telephoned to confirm that the child is absent and the reasons for that absence. If it is not possible to speak directly with the parent or carer, we will then contact the nominated emergency contacts to try and establish the reason for the absence.

28. Where the School has not been notified and it is not possible to contact the parents or carers, or their nominated emergency contacts, to establish the reason for the absence, the School is obliged to mark the child's absence as 'unauthorised'.

## Reporting to parents or carers

29. *Explain when and how you report to parents or carers on their child's attendance record in the annual written end-of-year report.*

## Absence definitions

30. Head Teachers (or designated deputies) may not grant leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be exceptional circumstances.

31. **Exceptional Circumstances:** We define this as a one off, unavoidable event which may lead to a pupil being unable to attend School. Examples of these include:

- a. death or serious illness of a close relative

- b. medical needs where treatment is required in the UK.
- c. where delivery of the Defence Mission by Service parents or carers employed in specific roles impacts on the ability to observe standard leave patterns.
- d. the School site or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause at a time when pupils are due to attend.
- e. the transport provided by the School is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance.
- f. a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending School.

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

33. **Authorised Absences:** We define this as when a pupil is genuinely unable to attend School due to:

- a. Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- b. Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents or carers belong. If necessary, the School will seek advice from the parents or carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- c. POL<sup>8</sup>.

34. **Unauthorised Absences:** We define this as any other absence which falls outside of authorised absence or exceptional circumstances such as:

- a. forgetting School term dates
- b. oversleeping
- c. arriving at School after the register has closed (at least an hour late)
- d. leaving without good reason during the School day
- e. truancy during the School day
- f. keeping pupils off School unnecessarily or without explanation
- g. day trips or family holidays

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<sup>8</sup> As defined in Part A: DCS Policy Directive 3.2.6 School Attendance and JSP 760 Chapter 11.4

- h. problems with uniform/clothing (as the School will be able to help)
- i. birthdays/family events

35. **Persistent Absence:** We define this as when a pupil misses 10% or more of School sessions. If a child's absence drops to 50% or less, this would be classed as severely absent. Both persistent and severely absent rates may include both authorised and unauthorised absence. Absence at this level does considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

## Strategies for Promoting Attendance

36. DCS recognises that attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide-ranging and may be complex, both within and beyond the School gates.

37. The challenges faced are often specific to individual pupils and families and all DCS Schools are committed to recognising the unique factors which face our service community.

38. Good attendance begins at School. Where School becomes somewhere pupils want to be, it sets the foundation of securing good attendance. We want our Schools to be a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen, ready to learn and thriving.

39. For more complex cases, pupils and families will receive holistic, whole-family support to help them overcome the barriers to attendance they are facing. Our School staff are the experts and are best placed to lead with a 'support first' approach.

40. Where multiple issues or barriers to attendance are identified, requiring other service involvement, the School will work closely with our EWO and partner agencies to provide a more intensive targeted support package. All Schools are committed to multi-agency working to improve School attendance.

## Attendance Monitoring

41. Through our weekly monitoring of registers we will be able to identify pupils with low attendance and/or patterns of absences that may lead to persistent absence' which could be one or a combination of many forms of absence such as: regular absence on a particular day of the week, broken weeks, persistent lateness, or too many authorised or unauthorised absences.

42. The School is obliged to report any concerns regarding attendance (including persistent late arrival) and absence to the DCS Education Welfare Service and follow the staged response detailed at **Annex C**.

43. Early identification is crucial and communication with parents or carers needs to begin as soon as a problem is detected. Initial concerns will either be communicated in person, by telephone or by letter (if in person or by telephone this will be followed up by a letter), explaining the actions that might be taken should the problem persist and seeing if the School can offer any support to the parents or carers to resolve the problem.

44. We will make every effort to work constructively and sympathetically with parents or carers to respond to their individual circumstances.

45. Unless we have been notified of a specific time period of absence on the first day the pupil is absent, we will assume the pupil is returning to School the next day. It is therefore imperative that parents or carers contact the School every day that the pupil is absent, as we cannot assume that if a pupil is ill one day that is the case for the following day.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **46. School Governance Committee should:**

- a. recognise the importance of School attendance and promote it across the School's ethos and policies.
- b. ensure School leaders fulfil expectation and statutory duties.
- c. regularly review attendance data, discuss (and challenge) trends, and help School leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- d. ensure School staff receive adequate training on attendance.

### **47. The Head Teacher and/or the designated senior leader responsible for attendance must:**

- a. build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- b. develop and maintain a whole School culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- c. accurately check admission and attendance registers and have ensure the School has effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- d. regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- e. share information and work collaboratively with Commands, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- f. be particularly mindful of pupils absent from School due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support.

### **48. Class teachers/form tutors must:**

- a. actively support attendance by working with School leaders to prioritise attendance.
- b. attend all staff training provided which focuses on attendance.
- c. build awareness about the importance of attending School into their lessons.
- d. encourage students to attend even when it is difficult, providing help and support to solve barriers to attendance.



e. ensure that an accurate register is taken at the designated time.

f. challenge lateness and set high standards of punctuality themselves.

e. ensure accurate records are kept and copies placed on individual pupil records where any follow up action is taken.

## **Application Form for Term-Time Leave for Exceptional Circumstances**

Official-Sensitive-Personal when complete

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

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

Sibling(s) at other DCS Schools/Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Add explanation of exceptional circumstances here:*

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

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

Signature of parent or carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Head Teacher (or designated deputy) use only**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Application Form for Term-Time Absence for Post Operational Leave**

Official-Sensitive-Personal when complete

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

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

Sibling(s) at other DCS Schools/Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Add explanation for exceptional leave here:*

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

I understand that permission for this exceptional term time leave from School can only be granted by my child's Head Teacher.

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

**UNIT DECLARATION**

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

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

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is entitled to apply for term time absence from School for their child in support of Post Operational Leave.

Signature of Unit representative \_\_\_\_\_ *Unit stamp here:*

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

Signature of parent or carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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***For Head Teacher (or designated deputy) use only:***

Thank you for your application for Post-Operational Leave for your child.

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

and the number of sessions missed last term/year was \_\_\_\_\_.

a) I confirm that this exceptional leave has been agreed. *(delete as appropriate)*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

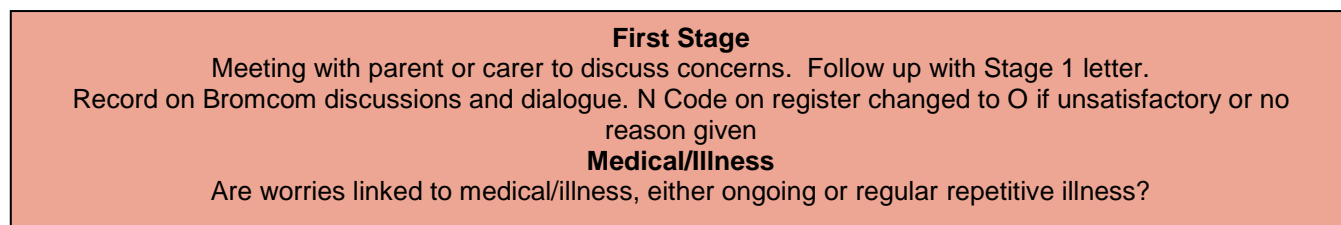
Date \_\_\_\_\_

b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason/s:*(delete as appropriate)*

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

## Statutory School Age Staged Response Flow Chart

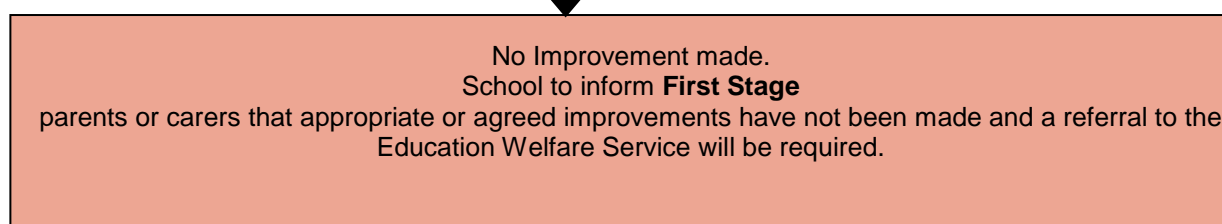
### Stage One



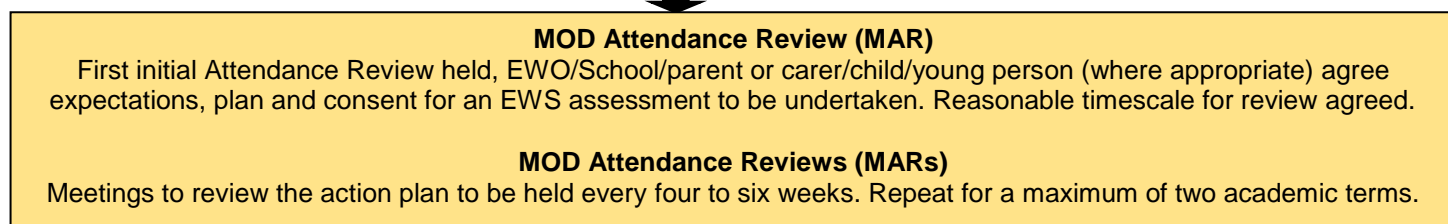
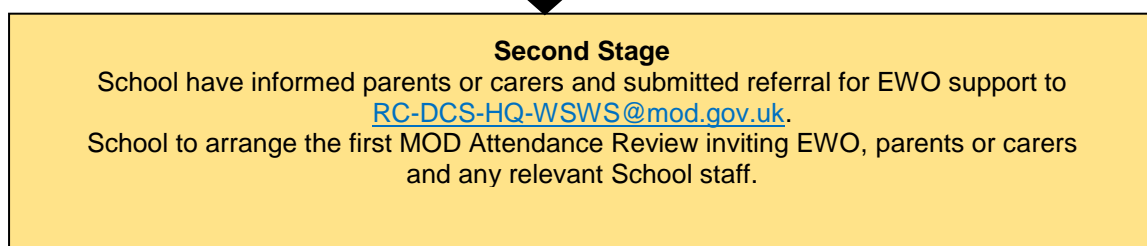
**Improvement or reason known**  
No further action  
School to monitor.

**Agreed monitoring time for improvement.**  
School to agree with parent or carer an age-appropriate time frame for improvements to be made. Request any external evidence if required.

**YES and there is clear medical evidence.**  
If School are satisfied, requested appropriate medical evidence and reasonable adjustments are in place. No further action. School to monitor.



### Stage Two

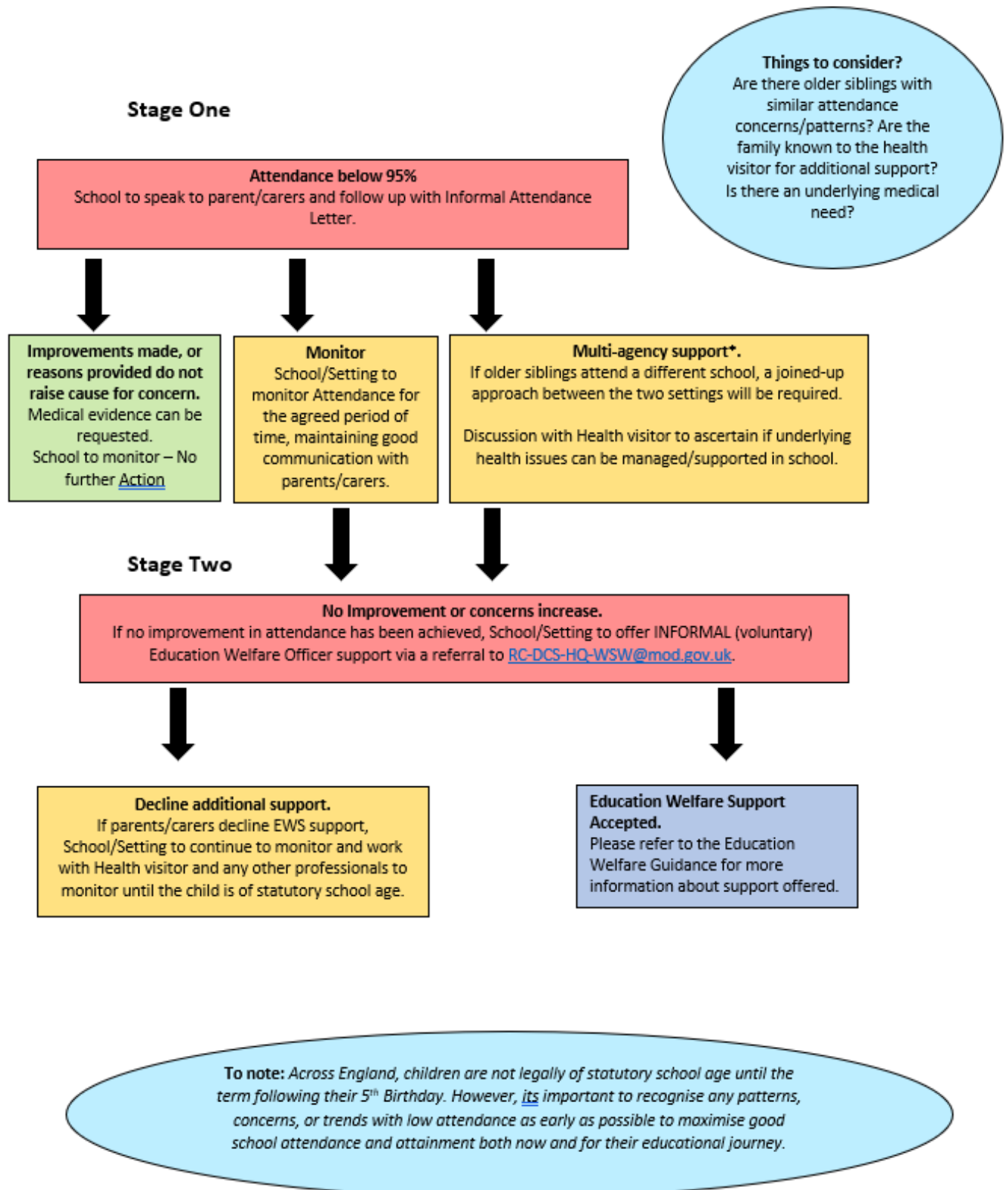


**Third stage-multi-agency**  
No improvements made. School to consider if threshold for Early Help met. If there are safeguarding concerns a referral to social care in location may be required and/or a request for an assessment of educational supportability. The Chain of Command and the Safeguarding Manager in location may need to be informed.

**Improvement Made**  
Once Attendance has improved to the agreed level, Stage 2 can be ended. EWO may remain involved informally and School will continue to monitor.

**Education Welfare Support Offered**  
Please refer to the Education Welfare Guidance for more information about support offered.

## EYFS (non statutory School age) Staged Response Flow Chart



## Absence Letter Template *(adapt to School/Setting)*

Official-Sensitive-Personal when complete



Defence  
Children  
Services

Full address of addressee *(or email)*

Dear ----- *(name of parent or carer)*

### Absence Letter 1/2/3

I am writing to you to inform you that your child's current School attendance is -----% with-----% of this being unauthorised. Currently your child's attendance is at Stage 1/2/3. *(Please delete depending on stage.)*

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

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

Stage 3: Despite support at Stage 1 and 2, your child's attendance has not improved. We are now requesting a review of your family's supportability overseas and further details will be provided to you. You were informed of this decision at your last MOR on ----- *(date)*.

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

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

Yours sincerely, *(can be handwritten or typed)*

*Add signature (or signed on original)*

**Name** *(and Rank if appropriate)*

## Attendance Codes – September 2024

<b>Attending the school</b>	
/\	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
<b>Absent – Leave of absence</b>	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>	
T	Parent or carer travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes</b>	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
<b>Administrative Codes</b>	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure