



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



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<p>Related documents:</p> <p>All federation policies referred to are available on the federation website: https://thewintertonfederation.co.uk</p> <p>If English is not your first language, and you require assistance/translation, please contact the Junior school office.</p>	<p>The Education Act 1996; The Education Act 2002; The Education and Inspections Act 2006; The Education (Learner Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2020, 2021 amendments); The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013; Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024; Working together to Improve school attendance 2022 (updated August 2024); School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024; The DfE Children missing in Education 2016; The DfE’s guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.</p> <p>The following federation policies: Safeguarding and Child Protection; Behaviour; E-safety and computing; Complaints; Medical Needs; Data Protection.</p>
Strategic alignment:	<p>1.1 Objective: Achieve and maintain the best possible pupil outcomes. and 1.4 Objective: Continue to maintain a safe working and learning environment.</p>



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



Contents

Aims	3
Legislation and guidance	4
School Procedures	
Attendance Registers	4
Unplanned Absence	5
Medical or dental appointments	5
Lateness and punctuality	5
Pupils absent from school due to mental or physical health or pupils with SEND	5
Children Missing in Education	6
Part-time timetables	7
Following up absence	8
Reporting to parents/carers	8
Authorised and unauthorised absence	
Granting approval for term time leave of absence	8
Legal sanctions	9
Strategies for promoting attendance	9
Attendance monitoring	10
Persistent absence	10
Roles and responsibilities	
The governing board	10
The Executive Headteacher	10
The Attendance Champions/Attendance Officer/Attendance Team	11
Class teachers	11
Teaching assistants	11
Administration staff	11
Data Sharing	11
Appendices	
Appendix 1: Attendance codes	12
Appendix 2: Attendance strategy	15



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



At The Winterton Federation we endeavour to nurture unique individuals in a happy, safe, respectful and inclusive environment, where everyone is inspired to be the best they can be throughout their journey of life.

“Let us run with perseverance, the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1)

We are all proud to be united in faith, vision and ambition.

The senior leaders (Attendance Champions) responsible for the strategic approach to attendance across the federation are Mrs Dawn Lovatt and Mrs Cheryl Baxter. Both can be contacted via: adminwis@thewintertonfederation.co.uk or adminwjs@thewintertonfederation.co.uk

The attendance officer responsible for initial contact regarding attendance is Mrs Chloe Linton. She can be contacted via: adminwis@thewintertonfederation.co.uk or adminwjs@thewintertonfederation.co.uk

Aims

Our federation aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- having a whole federation culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance;
- having a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents/carers understand;
- accurately completing attendance registers and having effective day-to-day processes in place to follow up absence;
- promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
- building strong relationships and working jointly with families to understand barriers to attendance and in collaboration with families, give support to try and remove them;
- ensuring every pupil has access to full time education to which they are entitled;
- regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and putting effective strategies in place;
- being particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or SEND needs and provide them with additional support;
- sharing information and working collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other agencies where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

We also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

At The Winterton Federation, we strive to give each child in our care the best possible education, which addresses their individual needs and helps them to reach their full potential. We believe that it is crucial to encourage excellent attendance and we aim to foster a positive relationship with our families to find supportive routes to improve attendance.

Our overriding aim is that every child achieves a 100% attendance rate. This policy is applied fairly and consistently and we always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Working Together to Improve School Attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibilities measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996;
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002;
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Learner Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2020, 2021 amendments);
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

This policy also refers to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024;
- Working together to Improve school attendance 2022 (updated August 2024);
- The DfE Children missing in Education 2016;
- The DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following federation policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- Behaviour;
- E-safety and computing;
- Complaints;
- Medical Needs;
- Data Protection.

School Procedures

Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register and all pupils must be placed on this register. As of August 2024, there are a revised set of codes granting leaves of absence and access to, and sharing of, attendance information introduced through the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Attendance registers record the attendance of children who are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions each day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- present;
- attending an approved off-site educational activity;
- absent;
- attending a medical appointment;
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

At the Junior school, pupils have a soft start from 8.45am to 8.55am on each school day. Any children arriving after 8.55am will be marked as late; anyone arriving after 9.15am will be marked as an unauthorised late.

At the Infant school, pupils have a soft start from 8.40am to 8.50am on each school day. Any children arriving after 8.50am will be marked as late; anyone arriving after 9.10am will be marked as an unauthorised late.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.15am or as soon as practically possible. A valid reason must be given for this absence, via telephone, app or in person. The answer phone provides a 24-hour service, enabling parents to contact either school at any time.

Absence due to a genuine illness will be authorised unless the school has concerns about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school will ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment confirmation or another appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If either school are not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Medical or dental appointments

We ask that all parents/carers try to make any medical or dental appointments outside of school hours. However, where this is not possible, confirmation of this appointment is required and pupils should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parents/carers should notify either school in advance of a medical or dental appointment.

Lateness and punctuality

If a pupil arrives late, a staff member will receive the child via the main entrance, and if appropriate, escort them to class. Parents are expected to leave their child at this point and are required to sign their child in to school using the visitor management system; a valid reason for being late must be entered in to this system.

Classroom staff will ascertain whether or not the pupil has booked a school lunch or has brought their own packed lunch.

We identify and respond to ongoing punctuality issues in different stages, as shown in our attendance strategy. See appendix 2.

Pupils absent from school due to mental or physical health or pupils with SEND

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that may make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, school work, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly, and in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school may exacerbate the issue further; a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

School staff play a critical role in communicating this expectation to parents. They should also work alongside families to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance by mitigating anxious feelings in school as much as possible.

Pupils who face a more complex barrier to attendance, which may be pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions, or who have SEND, have a right to an education the same as any other pupil, so additional support may need to be provided. This will include:

- understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family;
- working in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place and working with external agencies for support if needed, e.g., school nursing services, mental health support team, GPs, Autism team, behaviour support or youth offending team;



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



- regularly review and update this support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs;
- making reasonable adjustments as and when needed, such as adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements. Any formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 (where a pupil has a disability) should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents/carers;
- ensuring pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time limited phase return to school would be appropriate;
- making a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded as absent using code I (unable to attend due to sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness (e.g., in hospital for more than 15 school days). In addition, if the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days a sickness return will be made.

If a pupil has an education health and care plan, federation staff:

- communicate with the local authority where a pupil's attendance falls or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupils needs;
- where possible agree adjustments to policies and procedures that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the EHCP in collaboration with parents;
- where needed work with the local authority to review and amend the EHCP to incorporate the additional or different attendance support identified.

Children Missing from Education

Safeguards in place to prevent children missing education at The Winterton Federation include:

- holding a minimum of two emergency contact numbers for each pupil, unless there is a genuine reason why this is not possible e.g., parent fleeing domestic violence;
- any child missing from education will always get immediate attention from the Attendance Officer, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). Staff are trained to be alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage;
- when a pupil is absent without notification, the absence is recorded and the attendance officer endeavours to contact the parents/carers and other emergency contacts in order to determine the reason for the absence. This happens for every day of non-attendance where no call has been received informing the school of absence and reasons why;
- any unexplained absence of a pupil with a Child Protection Plan is reported to the pupil's social worker within one day;
- where a pupil does not present for school as expected, we endeavour to ascertain that pupil's whereabouts and well-being without delay, using all available contact details. Where no contact can be made with either the pupil or any named emergency contacts, two members of federation staff attend the pupil's home address. If the pupil or a named contact still cannot be contacted, we report this to the Education Inclusion Service and, where deemed necessary, the police;
- staff always contact parents/carers of any child who has been newly registered to attend either federation school but does not arrive on the expected day. If no contact can be made, we telephone the previous school to confirm the child has not arrived there. If still unsuccessful the Education Inclusion Service is contacted;



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



- the Attendance Officer reports to the Education Inclusion Service the continued absence of a child known or thought to have been taken overseas if the child does not return to school on the expected return date;
- the Winterton Federation maintains accurate attendance and admissions registers (all pupils are on both), in line with statutory requirements;
- pupils are not deleted from the admissions register until advised by the Education Inclusion Service or we have confirmation that they are on roll at another school;
- the attendance officer contacts the Education Inclusion Service immediately if a pupil has been taken out of school by their parents/carers and is being educated outside the school system e.g., home education, the pupil has ceased to attend school, the pupil has been certified as medically unfit to attend school or is in custody.

In the circumstances of a child missing in Education who is not known to any other agencies, and there are no immediate safeguarding concerns, the Attendance Officer informs the Education Inclusion Service, and a CME form is completed for any child who has not attended any educational setting for 10 consecutive school days without provision of reasonable explanation.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school, in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Time away from school to receive education in other ways must be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes.

In very exceptional circumstances where it is in the pupil's best interest, there may be a need for the federation to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full time education through a temporary part time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school a part time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part time timetable will not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part time table should:

- have the agreement of both the federation and the parent/carer that the pupil normally lives with;
- have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or re-integration plan;
- have regular review dates which include the parent/carer to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary;
- have a proposed end date that takes in to account the circumstance of the pupil after which, the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or in an alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process, e.g., a pupil with a long-term health condition.

Where the pupil has a social worker, the federation is expected to keep them informed in the process.

If the pupil has an EHCP the part-time timetable should be discussed with the local authority so that any support package in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



In agreeing to a part-time timetable, the federation has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record the absence accordingly (normally using the code X or C2).

Following up absence

The federation schools follow up all absences that have no valid reason or indeed that we have concerns about, to ascertain the reason for absence, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Families who experience attendance difficulties are offered support from our Attendance Officer or in her absence, from another member of the federation attendance team. However, if there has been no improvement, further guidance of support/strategies are sought from the Education Inclusion Service.

All staff are aware that pupils absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods and children missing in education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual exploitation, exploitation, criminal exploitation including involvement in County Lines (refer to the federation safeguarding and child protection policy). It may indicate mental health problems, risk of parental substance abuse, Female genital mutilation and so called, 'honour-based abuse' and the risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and help prevent risk of a child going missing in the future. Staff are aware of the federation unauthorised absence procedure and children missing in education procedure.

Reporting to parents/carers

We inform parents/carers of their child's attendance in the written end-of-year report as well as during a child's parents evening meeting. If we have concerns about a child's attendance then the federation's Attendance Strategy is followed to monitor attendance. See Appendix 2.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Granting approval for term time leave of absence

The Executive Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be an 'exceptional circumstance'. Each application for a term-time absence is considered on an individual basis, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Executive Headteachers discretion.

Where parents/carers request term time leave of absence, a leave of absence request form must be completed and returned to school, even if this request is just for one school session. This form must be received by the school before the first day of the requested leave of absence; these cannot be completed and handed in retrospectively. Following the receipt of a completed application form, the Executive Headteacher notifies the parents/carers of their decision. Where the circumstance is exceptional and authorisation is given, the register will be marked with the appropriate coding for an authorised family holiday. Where the circumstances are not seen as exceptional, the register will be marked as an unauthorised family holiday. Where the leave is greater than 5 days, a referral will be made to the Education Inclusion Service.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



Valid reasons for an **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments;
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the federation will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart;
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground) and Circus people; Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes, and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

The Winterton Federation attendance team work closely in collaboration with the Winterton Community Academy Inclusion Officer around attendance and procedures, particularly if there are siblings in all of the Winterton schools. If a child is absent from a TWF school and it is known that there are siblings/a sibling at WCA, a phone call is made to correlate absences. When appropriate, a joint home visit will be made with personnel from both TWF and WCA to ascertain next steps in line with policy and procedures.

Legal Sanctions

The federation will fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child/ren from school, where the child/ren is of compulsory school age, as stated in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. From September 2024, the new framework for the increased amount of penalty for penalty notices issued under section 444a (1) of the Education Act 1996 are, each parent must pay £80 (early payment discount) for each child, which rises to £160 if not paid within 21 days and £160 without any early payment discount for a second notice issued to the same parent, in respect of the same child within any given three-year period. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Executive Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take in to account:

- a number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year;
- one-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission;
- where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for promoting attendance

At each federation school, class attendance is rewarded every week during the achievement assembly. At the Junior school the class with the highest attendance is awarded the attendance cup as well as a rosette. At the Infants' school the class with the highest attendance is awarded the attendance bear and a rosette. If a class achieves 100% attendance for the week, they are rewarded with an extra 5 minutes playtime. Weekly class attendance and overall attendance percentages are displayed in each school hall.

We send a termly attendance information letter to parents/carers via the federation apps, which is also displayed on the federation website.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



The federation works with parents to support regular attendance. Attendance data is monitored regularly to ensure any issues are addressed as early as possible. We acknowledge positive improvements in attendance.

Parents are informed about the importance of good attendance through:

- new parent/carer meetings;
- federation attendance leaflet;
- federation website;
- parents evenings;
- annual report;
- termly attendance letter;
- weekly class attendance data via both federation apps;
- positive postcards;
- verbal communication.

If parents/carers have any concerns they should initially contact the attendance officer, Mrs Chloe Linton. In her absence, Mrs Donna Goodhand, Mrs Nicky West, Mrs Dawn Lovatt or Mrs Cheryl Baxter can be contacted.

Attendance monitoring

The federation attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis in addition to weekly analysis of overall attendance data, in line with the federation attendance strategy, see appendix 2.

Persistent Absence

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistic releases. Relevant school staff also access national and local pupil-level absence data via fisher family trust (fft). We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

The Winterton Federation digitally stores attendance data. It is used to track the attendance of individual pupils, whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- monitoring attendance figures for the whole federation on at least a termly basis;
- holding the Executive Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- promoting good attendance;
- ensuring the policy is implemented consistently across the federation;
- monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors within the termly report;
- supporting other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issuing fixed penalty notices, where necessary.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



The Attendance Champions/Attendance Officer/Attendance Team

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Champions across the federation to facilitate and monitor the aims of this attendance policy. The attendance officer is supported by the attendance team, including the Attendance Champions, in all areas below and is responsible for:

- promoting good attendance;
- monitoring attendance data at the federation and individual pupil level;
- reporting attendance concerns to the Executive Headteacher;
- working with the Education Inclusion Service to tackle persistent absence;
- sending appropriate attendance letters in a timely manner;
- making calls and arranging meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues, as well as supporting parents/carers with the best course of action for improving attendance, such as implementing attendance contracts, issuing notices to improve and face to face meetings which may include completing the Attend Framework;
- advising the Executive Headteacher when to issue a fixed-penalty notice;
- keeping up to date with any changes in legislation and guidance regarding attendance;
- attending all relevant training and network meetings.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- promoting good attendance;
- recording attendance electronically on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information via Arbor to the school office;
- informing parents/carers about a child's absence at parent's evenings as well as in the child's annual report;
- speaking to parents/carers regarding attendance issues or celebrating improvement in attendance; this can be done at the school gate, over the telephone or by a positive postcard;
- informing the attendance officer should any concerns continue after the initial conversation with parents/carers.

Teaching assistants

- promoting good attendance;
- supporting the class teachers in their responsibilities;
- inform the attendance officer of any attendance concerns.

Administration staff

- promoting good attendance;
- taking calls from parents/carers regarding absence and recording this on Arbor and CPOMS.

Data Sharing

The Winterton Federation works collaboratively, and when appropriate, shares information with other schools in the area, local authorities and other agencies when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe. We share attendance information on a daily basis with the DfE through the school attendance monitoring tool and termly school census.

For further information on data sharing please see the Data Protection Policy or the Education (Information about individual pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil is participating in a regulated performance where a license is in place
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Temporary part-time timetable to meet the needs of the pupil
E	Excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision has been made



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



I	Illness, not medical or dental	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment; evidence will be asked for
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in the proceeding 12 months
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after 5 days)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Y1	Authorised absence	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided by the LA not being available
Y2	Authorised absence	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Authorised absence	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed, e.g. teacher strikes/damage to building etc.



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



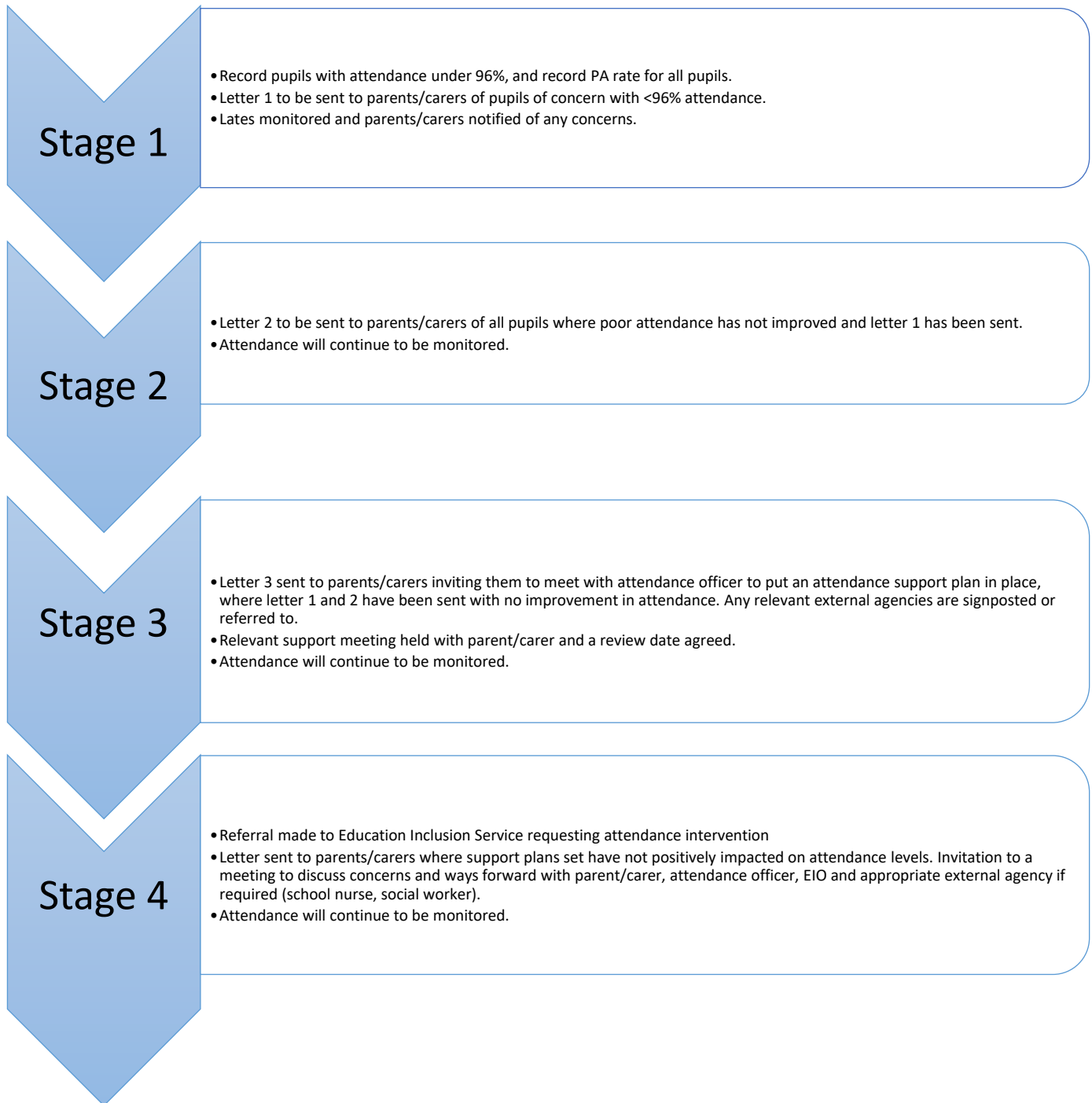
Y4	Authorised absence	Unable to attend due to whole school site being closed, e.g. extreme weather, damage, no hot water or heating etc.
Y5	Authorised absence	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Authorised absence	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. Contrary to or inhibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Authorised absence	Unable to attend because of an emergency situation only e.g. emergency care due to domestic incident and being moved to another area
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure known in advance	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



The Winterton Federation Attendance Policy



Appendix 2: Attendance Strategy



Note: Consideration is given to cases where a known medical issue is the cause of absence and each of these cases are judged on their own merit.
Parents/carers are notified of attendance rates for all pupils within annual school report highlighting good and poor attendance.
Parents/carers are notified of attendance rates for all pupils at their parent's evening meeting with the class teacher.
We provide information on persistent absentees to feeder schools for those pupils transitioning to Year 7.
We assess data termly and annually and report to the governing board.