



JANUARY 2024 EDITION 1

# ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER

HEADLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Introduction

As a school, we have a duty of care to closely monitor every child's attendance. Attending school is very important and the Government set a target that they expect all children of compulsory school age to attend school for at least 96%+ of the year. Good attendance is incredibly important for a child's academic success.

At Headlands Primary School, we have a dedicated team to specifically monitor and support children's attendance and we work closely with our external School Attendance Support Officer at West Northamptonshire Council, who we meet with on a termly basis. We want to help families, so please help us to help you and your child.

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**NEED HELP?**



**Do you need help with your child's punctuality or attendance?**

Contact us for support:

**Darren Smith - Head Teacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead**

[darren.smith@headlands.org.uk](mailto:darren.smith@headlands.org.uk)

**Lucy Clarke - Attendance Officer**

[lucy.clarke@headlands.org.uk](mailto:lucy.clarke@headlands.org.uk)

**Louise Fadal - Family Support Officer / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer**

[louise.fadal@headlands.org.uk](mailto:louise.fadal@headlands.org.uk)

**Class Teacher via email**

**School Office Team** 01604 407098 /  
[schooloffice@headlands.org.uk](mailto:schooloffice@headlands.org.uk)

## REGISTRATION TIME / PUNCTUALITY

The school day starts at 08:45am when the classroom doors open. Children should be ready to enter the classroom at this point and will promptly put their coats and bags away ready for morning registration.

The morning register is taken at 08:50am, children arriving after 08:50am need to be signed in as late at the school office. The reason for being late should be provided.

Receiving a late mark affects a child's overall attendance, and children who arrive late after the register has closed will receive an 'unauthorised absence'.



## PUPIL ABSENCE PROCEDURE

**Parents/carers are expected to inform the school on the first day of a child's absence before 08:50am when registers are completed.**

To report your child's absence you can:

- leave a brief message on our absence voicemail facility by calling 01604 407098 (option 1). Please confirm your child's name, class, reason for absence and how long you expect your child to be absent from school, if known. A voicemail should be made for every consecutive day of absence until a reason has been ascertained that can define the length of absence.
- Email the school office team at [schooloffice@headlands.org.uk](mailto:schooloffice@headlands.org.uk)
- Message via the School Comms Gateway App

The school will make every effort to contact parents/carers who do not contact the school, to check the child's welfare and clarify the reasons for absence. Where appropriate, home visits may take place.

## TERM TIME ABSENCE

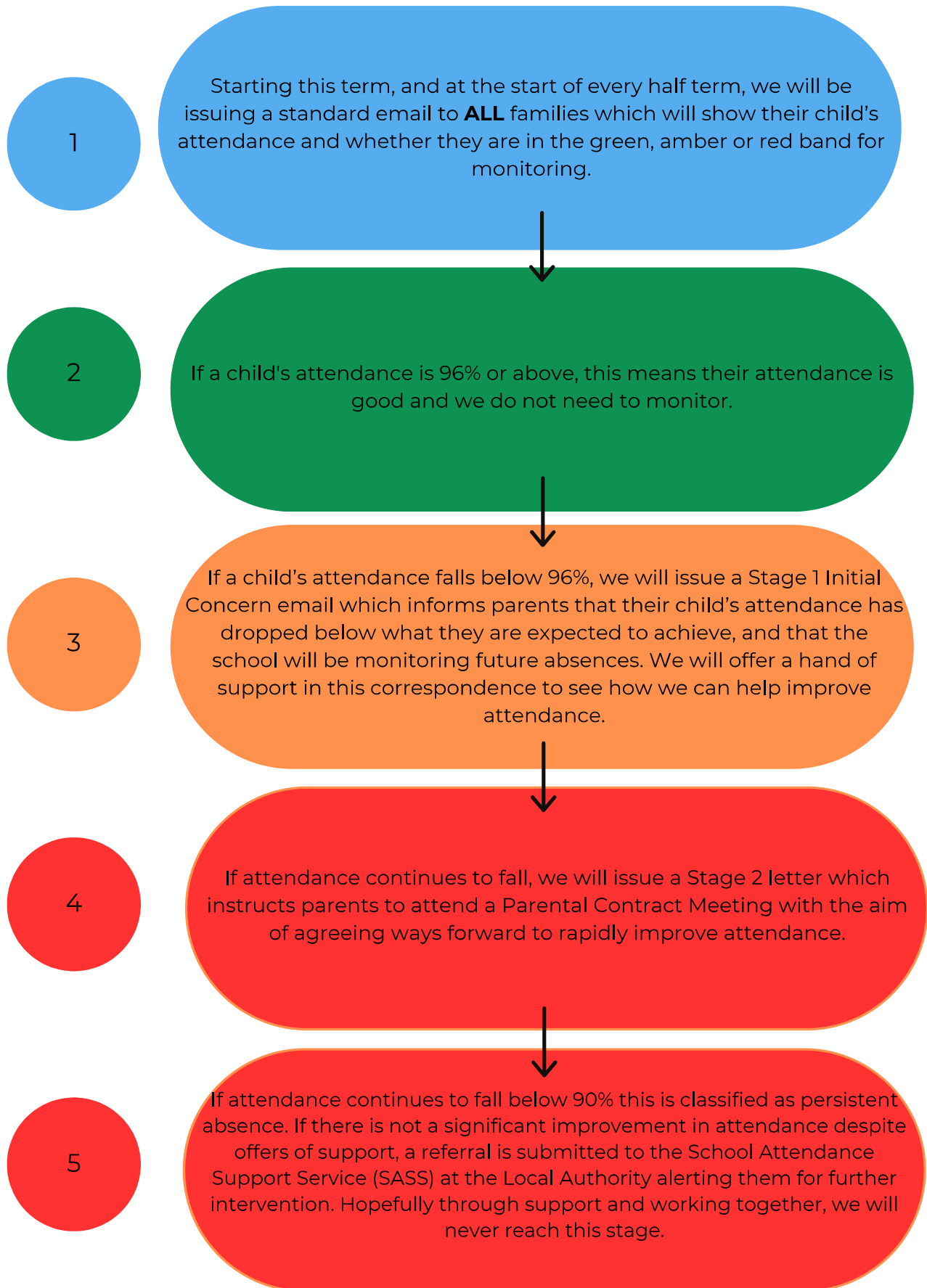
Government guidelines state that 'Headteachers should not grant any leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances'. Headlands Primary School will rightly prioritise attendance and holidays in term times will not be authorised.

Requests for term time absence should be made in writing at least two weeks prior to the absence. The school will notify you in writing of the decision and the implications of a term time absence. The school are obliged to notify the Local Authority of term time absences and as such you may be liable for a Penalty Notice payable directly to the Local Authority.

The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent per pupil. This rises to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

# WHAT STEPS WILL HEADLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL TAKE?



## WHAT IS A PARENTAL CONTRACT MEETING (PCM)?

This is a meeting for those involved with your child's attendance. It will consider why attendance is so low and set targets for improvement. The meeting will be followed by a review a few weeks later. From the date of the Parental Contract Meeting, all absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless medical documentation or other supporting evidence is provided and agreed by the Head Teacher. If upon review significant improvement has not been made, a referral will be made to the Local Authority for further intervention.

## Working together

Our aim is always to work with families to help improve a child's attendance. We know that there are many reasons why children do not attend school, so we want to support families on an individual basis. However, when we are not successful in supporting families, or they refuse to engage, the law protects pupils' rights to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts.

As such, parents could be:

- issued a Fixed Penalty Notice by the local authority for their child's non-attendance (the penalty is £60 per child per parent and this rises to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days).
- prosecuted by the Local Authority under section 444 Education Act 1984. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.



### Every School Day Counts! Good Attendance Means... being in school at least 96% of the time. This means 8 days off!

