



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

This policy was approved and ratified by

Cox Green School

on 14th June 2022

Version	Authorisation	Approval Date	Effective Date	Next Review
1	Full Governing Body	16/7/13	16/7/13	July 2015
1.2	Full Governing Body	7/7/15	1/9/15	July 2017
1.3	People & External Relations Committee	7/6/16	7/6/16	June 2019
1.4	Senior Leadership Team	22/5/19	22/5/19	May 2022
1.5	Senior Leadership Team	14/6/22	14/6/22	June 2025



Introduction

Full attendance and good punctuality are key to achievement in school. We consider them vital to providing equal opportunities for all students, ensuring access to the full curriculum and achieving both academic and social success.

Cox Green will therefore work in partnership with students, parents and outside agencies to support all families, and ensure students make progress with their education and life beyond education. We recognise that students who are absent will miss important educational opportunities which will affect their grades. We do however acknowledge that some absences will occur from time to time due to illness or unavoidable family circumstances.

Aims:

- Work in partnership with parents/carers to secure full attendance and good punctuality. This means that students should have 96% or above for both attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that there are effective systems, known to all, to ensure attendance and punctuality is correctly recorded and monitored and evaluated accurately;
- Communicate with parents/carers regularly about attendance and punctuality;
- Reward positively for attendance and punctuality;
- Follow up any issues regarding attendance and punctuality with parents/carers and outside agencies to ensure a student attains a good attendance and punctuality record.

Expect	<i>Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to be in school, ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement as a whole school responsibility.</i>
Monitor	<i>Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched</i>
Listen & Understand	<i>When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them</i>
Facilitate Support	<i>Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.</i>
Formalise Support	<i>Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.</i>
Enforce	<i>Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforcing attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution in order to protect the pupil's right to an education</i>

Attendance Legislation

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that the child may have. This can be regular attendance at school or by education otherwise. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education



Act 1996. If a student is absent for more than 10% of school sessions they are deemed as persistent absentees.

Rewards

Our students are actively encouraged to achieve excellent attendance and punctuality, and to understand their importance in helping them to achieve academic success. Our tutor and assembly programmes promote and emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Cox Green School recognises those students who improve their attendance and punctuality record.

Attendance Practice

Improving attendance is a whole school responsibility. Parents, students and all members of staff have a responsibility to encourage and support students to ensure they reach at least 96% attendance. Targeted interventions are implemented each week where a student has declining attendance.

Attendance	100 – 96%	95 – 93%	92 – 90%	89 – 88%	87 – 85%	Below 85%
Code	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6
Staff Focus	Form Tutors & class teachers	Head of Year	Head of Year & SAFE Manager	SAFE Manager & Attendance lead	Leadership LINK & Attendance officer	Senior Leadership Team

This robust monitoring is led by the Attendance Officer in conjunction with the SAFE Team and Heads of Year who work with their teams to ensure students maintain attendance above 96%. The link between attendance and attainment is regularly reinforced.

There are two categories of absence from school.

Authorised (Approved Absence)

Types of authorised absence that may be approved:

- Leave of absence – bereavement, funeral, wedding;
- Medical absence for appointments at hospital or orthodontists. (Non-urgent, routine check-up appointments should be made for after school hours or during the school holidays). Students are expected to be absent for the minimal amount of time and not absent for the whole day;
- Illness;
- Religious observance;
- If a student is excluded from school for a behaviour related incident, this is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised (Not Approved) Absence

Types of absence that will not be approved:

- Absence due to birthday, shopping for uniform, looking after family members;
- Holiday in term time;
- Late arrival to school after the register has closed has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absence can lead to parents/carers being fined by the Local Authority. All absence, authorised and unauthorised, will be analysed and subject to challenge, to ensure that any concern



regarding frequency, pattern or validity is acted upon swiftly to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met.

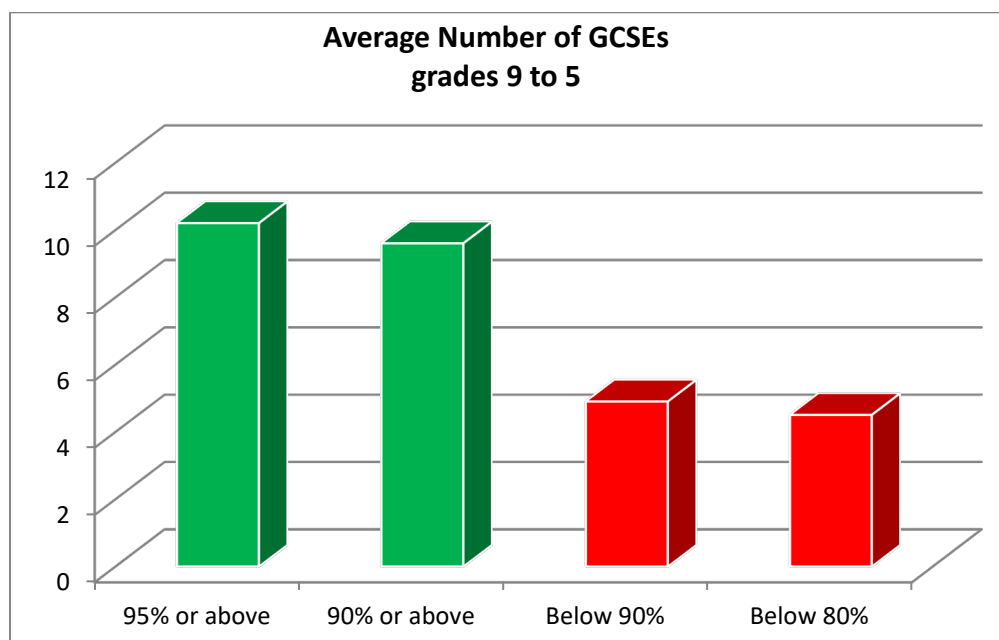
Every half day (session) from school has to be marked in the register and given a code by the school. The absence will be either authorised or unauthorised. That is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If the school does not receive details as to why a pupil is absent it will always be unauthorised.

Only the Headteacher (or their delegate) can approve an absence from school. That is the law. Absence will be recorded using the code recommended by the Department for Education Guidance on School Attendance. Request for absence in term time must be submitted in writing in advance to the Headteacher, who will treat every request on an individual basis and respond accordingly.

Attendance and Outcomes

Every School Day Counts	
0 days off school	100%
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%
Equates to 30 days off school each year	85%

The graph below compares the attendance in Year 11 and the average number of GCSEs at grades 9 to 5 (A* to C):



Intervention by Educational Welfare Officer

If there is no improvement in the student's attendance, the school may make a referral to the Education Welfare Officer attached to the school. Persistent Absentees are automatically referred once their attendance drops below 90%. Education Welfare Officers are employed by the Local Authority to monitor



the attendance and welfare of children. They can offer support and guidance if you are having problems getting your child to school. They also have a duty to ensure that parents are following their legal duty in ensuring their children have regular attendance.

Prevention of poor attendance through good whole school management	All pupils developing good attendance patterns through effective whole school approach to attendance (including leadership, ethos and systems and processes)
	Pupils at risk of poor attendance. Using attendance and absence data rigorously to support pupils with increasing levels of absence, arriving at school late or taking leave in term time without permission before it becomes a regular pattern
Early intervention to reduce absence before it becomes habitual	Intervening with pupils with poor attendance as early as possible and agreeing an action plan for pupils with high levels of absence and those demonstrating growing disengagement with school
Targeted reengagement of persistent and severely absent pupils	Persistently and severely absent pupils put additional targeted support in place, where necessary working with partners, and agree a joint approach with local authorities for all severely absent pupils

The Education Welfare Service can advise parents on rights and responsibilities regarding attendance and exclusion, liaise with school staff, meet with children in school, suggest other agencies who might be able to help, visit families at home, and provide further information on the consequences of non-school attendance.

Fixed Term Penalty Notices

The law states that it is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child has regular attendance at the school at which they are registered. If after consulting with parents and the Educational Welfare Officer, attendance or punctuality of an individual student does not improve, the school may consider asking the Education Welfare Service to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. The circumstances in which a Fixed Penalty Notice might be issued include:

- Truancy;
- Parent-condoned absences;
- Persistent lateness;
- Unauthorised absences;
- Deliberate taking of a holiday in term time.

From September 2013, the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice incurs a cost to the parent of £60, if paid within 21 days of issue, rising to £120 within 28 days. Failure to pay can lead to prosecution in a Magistrate's Court, where if found guilty, you may receive a criminal record and a possible fine and/or a custodial sentence for failing to ensure your child's attendance in school

Fixed Penalty Notices may be restricted to one per student per academic year. In cases where families contain more than one poor attending student, multiple issue may occur, but this may be subject to careful consideration with external agencies. There may be no restriction on the number of times a parent/carer may receive a formal warning of a possible issue of a Penalty Notice. A student must be absent from school for at least ten sessions (the equivalent to 5 days) in any term before a Penalty Notice may be issued.



Return to School After Long Term Absence/Integration:

Cox Green School is committed to ensuring that all students achieve their potential. Any barriers to learning are considered on an individual basis, and we therefore make flexible arrangements to integrate students back into lessons after prolonged absence, whatever the reason for the absence. Once again, a staged approach to this reintegration will be taken, as follows:

1. A meeting will take place with the student, parent/carer, SAFE Manager and any other relevant staff and or outside agencies. A tailored plan will be drawn up which will acknowledge the reasons for the student's absence plus temporary additional support arranged. All teaching staff and form tutors will be advised by the SAFE Manager in advance of an anticipated return. This is to enable all staff to plan how to re-introduce the student successfully;
2. Any barriers to re-engagement will be discussed and possible solutions explored. A member of staff may be appointed to act as a mentor to support the student and family. A modified or reduced timetable may also be utilised in conjunction with parental consent.

Religious Observance

There is no legislation or regulation or DFE guidance on this matter. The Headteacher will review each application reasonably, and in consultation with the members of the pastoral team and the parents. The school expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

Leave of Absence/Holidays During Term Time

Leave of absence including holidays may not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Only the Headteacher can agree exceptional leave of absence. Exceptional situations may be taken into consideration if a request for term time absence form is submitted to the Headteacher a minimum of 15 school days prior to the dates requested. If leave is taken without the Headteacher's authorisation, the leave may be marked as an unauthorised absence and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive punctually to school and to lessons. Punctuality is monitored on a daily basis; students arriving late to school/lessons without an acceptable reason may be issued with a Late Reflection this is usually 20 minutes in length.

Every Minute counts. Lateness = Lost Learning (Figures below are calculated over a school year)	
5 Minutes late each day	3 days lost
10 Minutes late each day	6.5 days lost
15 Minutes late each day	10 days lost
20 Minutes late each day	13 days lost
30 minutes each day	19 days lost

If students persistently record late marks, a meeting will be arranged by the Attendance Officer. The school may record late marks as unauthorised absence if a student arrives at school 60 minutes after morning registration or if a letter has been sent regarding student's punctuality. Unauthorised marks for punctuality may be referred to the Local Authority for issue of a Penalty Notice.

Communication of Policy

The Policy is published on the school website for parents and the staff intranet.



Evidence of Implementation

The Senior Lead will report back to the Senior Leadership Team as requested and Trustees will complete visits to evaluate the effectiveness.

Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed every 3 years by Cox Green School.



APPENDIX 1:

Operational Procedures

Roles and responsibilities

Students will:

- Attend school every day unless ill;
- Arrive to school by 8.30am in good time for registration;
- Recognise that he/she is late when they arrive after 8:35am, resulting in a 10-minute reflection in Break 1. If this continues the sanction will be escalated;
- Attend all lessons during the school day and remain in these lessons unless instructed to by a member of staff;
- Take responsibility for lateness and nonattendance and accept the consequences of this;
- Sign out with the Attendance Officer if they are leaving school during the day. A student will only be allowed to leave site if a note is provided or by phone by a parent.

Parents/Carers will:

- Ensure that their child attends school every day unless they are ill;
- Book medical, dental and health appointments during holiday periods and after school. Where this is impossible then evidence of the appointment will be provided;
- Take holidays during school holiday periods. Any holiday taken outside of the school holiday will be considered unauthorised and will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Ensure their child arrives by 8.30am to school ready for morning registration;
- If their child is ill to notify the school by 9am on the first day and every following day of absence, including an estimation of the likely length of absence;
- Respond to any text sent daily, indicating why their child is absent;
- Contact the school at an early stage about any concerns they have about their child's attendance;
- Recognise that the school will be concerned when any child fails to meet the attendance target and work with the school to improve their child's attendance.

Form Tutors will:

- Ensure students are registered accurately in accordance with their legal obligations;
- Follow up with students who have been absent, as part of their regular tutor group check ins;
- Any notes or communication must be passed onto the Attendance Officer on the same day;
- Issue an absence catch up form to the student;
- Speak to students who have missed sessions to find out the causes and report through relevant internal tracking systems;
- Inform pastoral staff of students causing concern;
- Celebrate and reward good attendance.

Class Teachers will:

- Ensure students are registered accurately in accordance with their legal obligations;
- Inform the Attendance Officer or SAFE Team of any student who is absent without notification (i.e. potential truancy, leaving the classroom without explanation, regular interventions which narrow the delivery of the curriculum without prior discussion);
- Provide work for students who are off long-term sick.

Attendance Officer will:

- Monitor and evaluate data to:
 - Identify individual absence and lateness to both school and lessons;



- Identify patterns of lateness and absence and the identification of trends by year groups, seasonal patterns, patterns and nature of unauthorised absence and vulnerable groups e.g. SEN, EAL, FSM, PP.
- Intervene and communicate with parents/carers of students who have declining attendance/punctuality levels;
- Set a termly individual student attendance target, monitor and record in planner;
- Initiate strategies to improve attendance with appropriate staff;
- Liaise with Local Authority regarding Persistent Absentees;
- Liaise with the Local Authority and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school;
- Provide information on attendance and punctuality for parent reports, prospectus and DfE returns;
- Deliver staff training/advice and support regarding attendance to staff, highlighting use of the Attendance Tracker;
- Managing physical interventions (i.e home visits?)

Office Manager will:

Support the Attendance Officer and Leadership Team member with responsibility for attendance in providing data systems which will enable them to:

- Identify individual absence and lateness to both school and lessons;
- Identify patterns of lateness and absence and the identification of trends by year and groups, seasonal patterns, patterns and nature of unauthorised absence, vulnerable groups e.g. SEN, EAL, FSM.

Pupil Premium and Attendance Leader will:

Work with data systems to identify trends and ensure appropriate action plans are created and acted upon by the relevant parties. For example:

- Working with form tutors to prevent poor attendance with pupils identified as at risk;
- Working with Heads of Year on early intervention to reduce absence before it becomes habitual;
- Working with Attendance Officer and SAFE Office Manager on targeted reengagement of persistent and severely absent pupils.

Heads of Year will:

- Lead and manage Form Tutors to ensure the school attendance and punctuality target is met for their year groups;
- Ensure their Tutors arrive on time for registration and follow their legal obligations of accurately recording attendance and punctuality;
- Highlight/update attendance at Year Team meetings/assemblies;
- Identify students causing concern and analyse data of vulnerable groups e.g.: SEN, PP, FSM;
- Monitor and intervene with all students whose attendance is declining;
- Implement School Attendance Agreements for those students who become persistent absentees;
- Liaise with external agencies about students causing concern;
- Organise celebration events for good/improved attenders in their year;
- Work with parents and other external agencies as appropriate to raise attendance and punctuality percentages.

Senior Leader will:

- Ensure the attendance and punctuality policy takes account of all students;
- Provide information to Attendance Officer and Pastoral staff about SEN students;



- Identify patterns or trends that emerge from SEN data with regards to attendance and punctuality;
- Identify the areas of policy which will remove barriers to learning for all students;
- Model good examples of inclusive practice across the school;
- Model and promote effective teaching skills which show manageable differentiation to address student needs;
- Contribute to professional development to address effective teaching to improve attendance and behaviour;
- Develop links with support services to provide expert advice on SEN students;
- Provide feedback to LT on where good SEN practice exists within school and use this to provide training for NQTs and new staff;
- Develop good recording and monitoring procedures to inform practice, groupings and levels of support required. Lead and manage SAFE Managers, Attendance Officer and Office Manager to ensure the school attendance and punctuality target is met;
- Lead and manage the SAFE Team to ensure SAFE Managers monitor and evaluate attendance and punctuality;
- Set whole school and year group and 'vulnerable groups' attendance and punctuality targets and monitor and report progress towards these;
- Set attendance and punctuality targets as part of the performance management cycle for Heads of Year and SAFE Managers;
- Work with Heads of Year and SAFE Managers to identify students causing concern and analyse data of vulnerable groups e.g.: SEN, CLA, and FSM using whole school;
- Monitor the work of Heads of Year and SAFE Managers who are working with students whose attendance is below 85%;
- Provide regular report to Trustees, the Headteacher and parents about attendance and punctuality and write the relevant section of the SEF;
- Ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school.

The Headteacher will:

- Set attendance and punctuality targets as part of the school development plan, target-setting process;
- Monitor progress towards targets;
- Review Leave of Absence requests;
- Notify parents, as appropriate, that if a student of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents/carers commit an offence;
- With the Leadership Team member compile an annual report with statistics to the Board of Trustees.

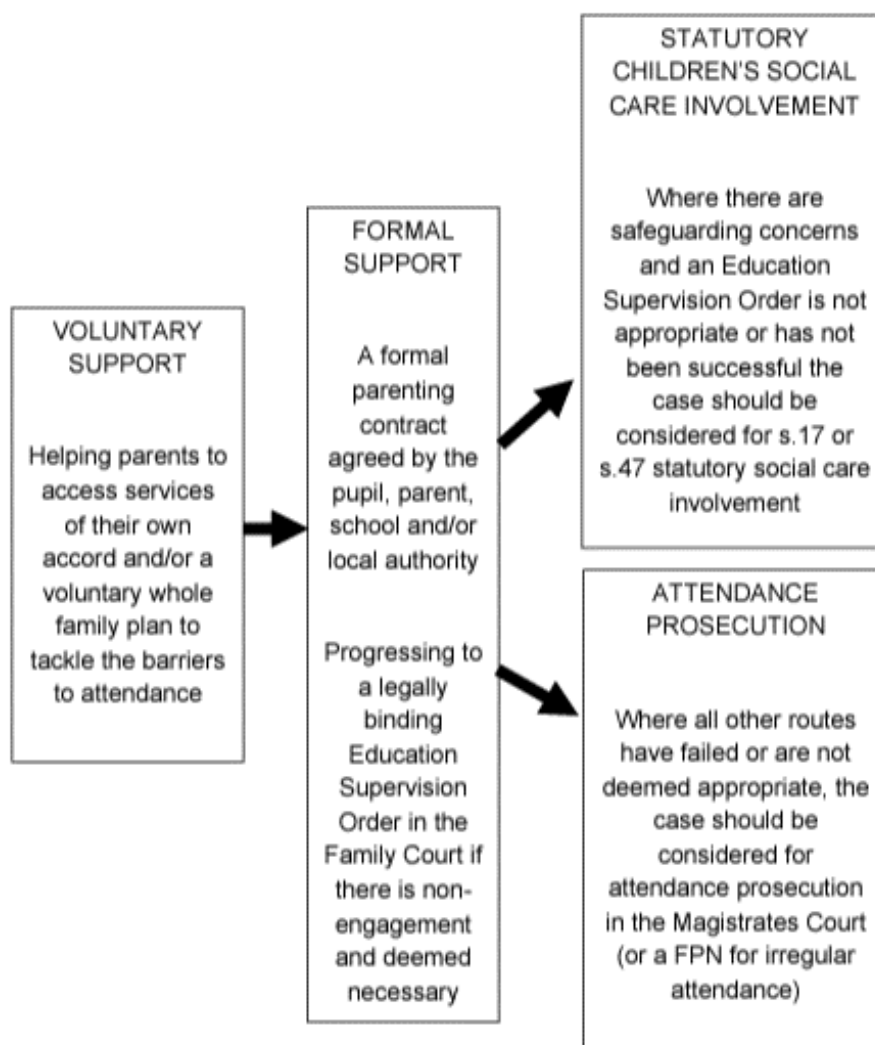
The Trustees will:

- Review the Attendance and Punctuality Policy each year and evaluate its impact;
- Review attendance and punctuality figures each term at the sub – committee and report to Board of Trustees;
- Ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school and is known by parents;
- Organise Trustees and Attendance and Punctuality Panels to see students and families about attendance issues



APPENDIX 2: The Attendance Diamond and Attendance Tracker

- The Attendance Diamond should be displayed in every tutor room.
- The Attendance Tracker will be prepared each week by the Attendance officer and sent to all staff via email.
- The attendance statistics for every student at the school will be displayed weekly by the Attendance Officer.
- The tutor is responsible for the overview of attendance in their group; however, they will be supported by Heads of Year and SAFE Managers.
- The tutor should share tutor group attendance with their group issuing reward points for every student with an up or sideways arrow. The tutor has initial responsibility for praising students in the green group for high attendance and encouraging and supporting students in the yellow, amber, pink and red groups.





A staged approach occurs in order to intervene with student's each week their attendance declines. In summary these are as follows:

Escalations

Interventions	Explanation
Tutor conversations with students ¹	Initial conversations with student to address first attendance drops without valid reason.
Letter 1 & Attendance Officer call	Letter sent to parent(s) raising initial concerns regarding declining attendance.
Letter 2 & SAFE Manager Call	Letter sent to parent(s) requesting all future absences are supported by medical evidence
Letter 3 & HOY Call	Letter sent to parent(s) to schedule first meeting within the school.
Meeting 1	Attendance Officer & HOY meets with parent(s) to discuss attendance concerns, and offer support to improve attendance.
Letter 4 & LT Call	Letter sent to parent(s) raising further concerns regarding declining attendance, scheduling a second meeting at the school.
Meeting 2	Education Welfare Officer, Attendance Officer and LT member meet with parent(s) to discuss attendance concerns, and make parent(s) aware of legal implications of poor attendance.
Letter 5 & DH/HT Call	Letter sent to parents outlining further concerns, and providing a final warning prior to legal action initiating.

Note:

The Platt Judgement has now been published. The judgement makes clear that if a parent takes a child out of school on an unauthorised holiday, this will not automatically entitle the school to issue a penalty notice. However, otherwise, the legal position is somewhat unclear. Parents commit an offence if they fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly but there is no legal definition of what 'regularly' means. The Platt decision suggests that each case will need to be judged on its own merits, including the attendance record over a wider period. At Cox Green School we will suggest that if a parent takes their child out of school on an unauthorised holiday, we will look at their overall attendance record before issuing a penalty notice and it is likely we will use 95% as a starting threshold.

¹ Tutors to provide 'Pastoral tool-kit' which outlines procedures/strategies to follow and what steps to take when things become challenging.

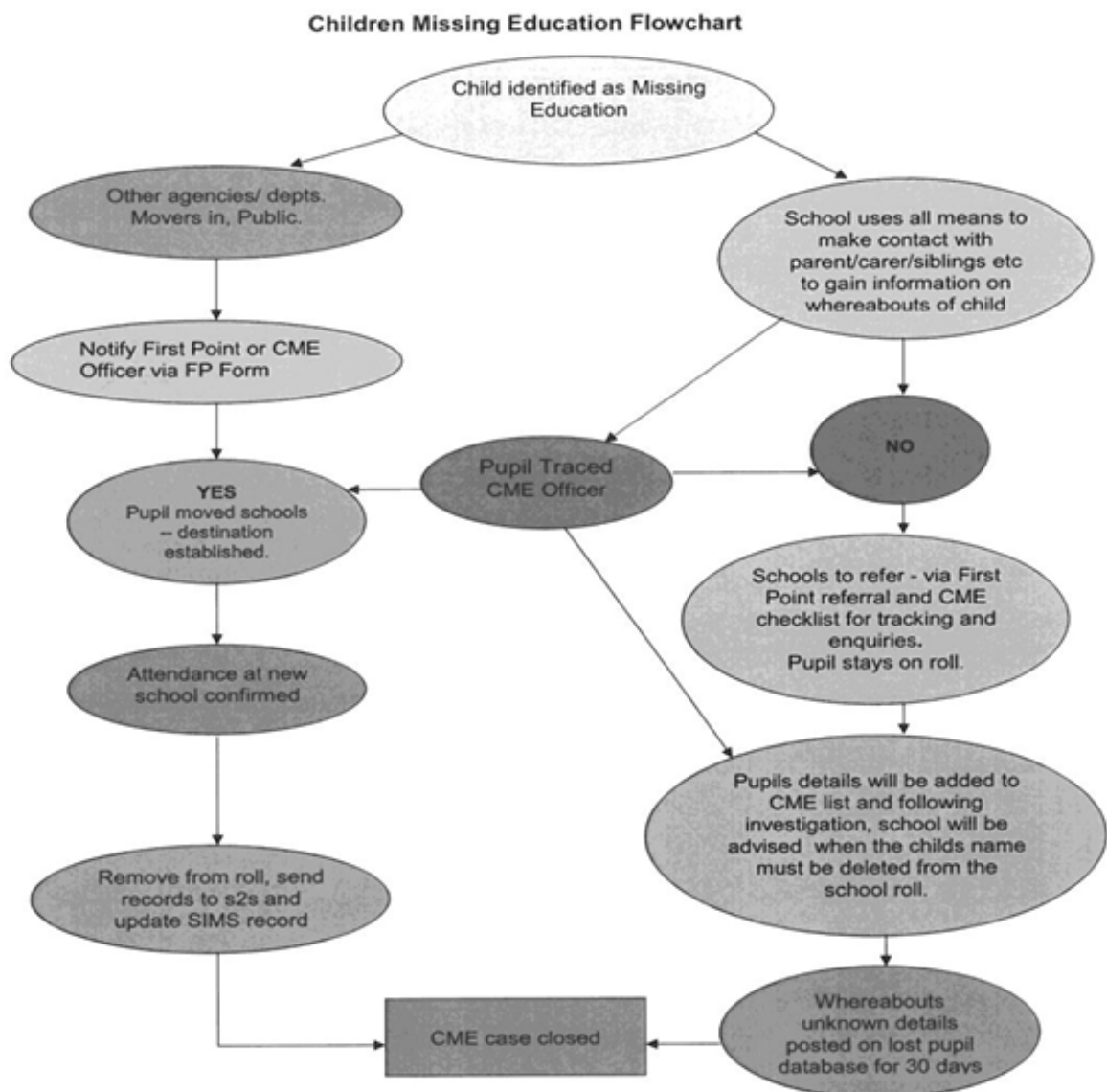


APPENDIX 3: Child Missing in Education Process

The term 'Children Missing from Education' (CME) refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more).

Children can fall out of the education system because they:

- Fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- Cease to attend, due to exclusion (e.g. illegal unofficial exclusions);
- Live a life style which involves travelling;
- They are withdrawn by their parents; or
- Fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new LA).





APPENDIX 4: Cox Green School Attendance Organisation chart

