



Batley Girls' High School
Visual Arts College

Achievement • Respect • Transformation

Attendance Policy

Batley Girls' High School – Visual Arts College

Next review due: June 2021

Approved by: Local Governing Body

Last review: June 2018

Reviewed by: GG and AV

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1. Rationale and aims

At Batley Girls' High School, we believe regular school attendance is a vital component in securing educational success. Not only does regular attendance allow students to actively participate in the broad, balanced, creative and appropriately challenging curriculum provided, but it is vital in helping all students to make the very best use of their individual talents and abilities.

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

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

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

We are committed to working with students, from all Key Stages and their families to identify the reasons for unsatisfactory attendance and to try to resolve any difficulties. We work closely with *Kirklees Education, Safeguarding & Attendance and Pupil Support Service* in our efforts to ensure good school attendance for all students.

2. Legislation and guidance

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

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all students are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session (am) and at the start of the second session (pm) of each school day. Additional registers will also be taken at various other points during the day. Registers will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Not in lesson, but working elsewhere in school
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes and appendix 2 for additional codes used internally.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. As attendance records may, at times, be kept in student files this information may be retained in the school archive, until the student turns 25.

The school building opens for students at **8:00am** on school days and students are expected to arrive by **8:20am** on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at **8:30am** and will be kept open until **10:00am**.

The register for the second session will be taken at **1:20pm** and will be kept open until **2:20pm**.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents 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 – by **9:00am** or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

When parents are unsure if their daughter is well enough to attend school, they are advised to send her in and contact her Pastoral Manager. Qualified first aiders are available in school, who can monitor such students and who will contact parents to arrange sending the student home if required.

The procedure for reporting that a student is not attending school is as follows:

- A parent (or other listed contact) should call **01924 350094** to leave a message on the school Absence Line as soon as possible but before **9am**.
- The message should include the following information:
 - o The full name and tutor group of the student
 - o Detailed reason for absence (*if the absence is due to severe weather conditions, this should be made this clear in the message*)
 - o A return contact number, in case any details need further clarification, as sometimes messages are difficult to hear due to background noise or poor quality connections

This process should be repeated for every subsequent day of school absence (there may be some exceptional cases such as hospital stays when this is not required).

Absence due to illness will be authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Medical evidence will not be asked for unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, parents will be notified of the decision to record the absence as unauthorised.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Parents are encouraged to make all medical and dental appointments out of school hours, but in cases where this is not possible, the school needs to be notified in advance and the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Wherever possible an appointment card should be provided.

On the rare occasion when a medical appointment during the school day is unavoidable, the absence will be counted as an authorised absence.

Prior to the absence, parents should notify their daughter's Pastoral Manager, either by telephone, or in writing.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their daughter arrives at school on time. The school building opens for students at **8:00am** on school days and students are expected to arrive by **8:20am** so that they are in lesson when the first register of the day is taken at **8:30am**.

A student who arrives late but before the register has closed (see 3.1) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (*see Appendix 1 & 2*).

A student who arrives after the register has closed (see 3.1) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (*see Appendix 1 & 2*).

Pastoral teams and the school Attendance Officer carefully monitor punctuality and parents will be contacted if there are persistent punctuality issues, or if they become aware of patterns of poor punctuality. In some cases, support from the schools' *Attendance & Pupil Support Officer* may be enlisted.

3.5 Following up absence

It is expected that parents will seek approval for student absence, when it is known about in advance, or by following the procedure for reporting unplanned absence (see 3.2). If the reason for an absence has not been reported, school will follow it up, so that the reason can be established. This is important for the following reasons:

- To ensure proper safeguarding action is taken when necessary
- To identify whether the absence is approved or not
- To identify the correct attendance code to use

The procedure for following up an absence that has not been reported is as follows:

- Once registers and late arrivals have been checked, a telephone call will be made by a member of the Attendance, or Pastoral teams to ascertain the reason for the absence. *There may be times when an SMS is sent instead of making a telephone call.*
- If school are unable to make contact with parents a voicemail may be left, or a Truancy Call SMS message will be sent, requiring an immediate response to explain the absence
- In cases where parents receive a Truancy Call SMS after they have already reported an absence, it is advisable that they call school, as there have been times when messages left on our Absence Line are inaudible.

If a reason for absence has not been provided after the above, Form Tutors and Pastoral Managers will continue to pursue the reason. This may involve: additional attempts at making contact over the telephone, a letter home with reply slip, a home visit and in some cases involvement of the schools' *Attendance and Pupil Support Officer.*

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance records will be shared with all parents when attainment reports are sent home. In addition to this, there may be other times when attendance records are shared with parents. This may be at meetings to discuss attendance concerns, or in written communication.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Education is our priority and as children and families have weekends and holidays, Co-Heads/Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. At Batley Girls' High School an absence for 'exceptional circumstances' is defined as an absence that cannot be reasonably avoided.

Requests for term-time absence must be made by completing the appropriate form, available from Reception, and returning this at least **4 weeks in advance** and prior to making any firm travel plans. All requests will be considered on an individual basis, but the following are examples of situations where term-time absence may be approved:

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement; documentary evidence of this event will be required
- To attend a funeral of a close relative
- to attend a wedding of a close relative, if the Co-Heads/Headteacher are satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the discretion of the Co-Heads/Headteacher.

In cases where permission has not been granted for a leave of absence and it is still taken, or in cases where a leave of absence exceeds the agreed duration, a penalty notice is likely to be issued, as explained in section 4.2. Parents will be notified of this in writing (see appendix 3).

N.B. A student may also be removed from the school roll when a period of absence has not been authorised and is still taken, or when an absence exceeds the authorised time scale (see appendices 4a, 4b & 4c).

Other reasons where absence may be considered as '**authorised absence**' include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) 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 student is attending educational provision
- Attending an interview that cannot be held at any other time

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents (each parent and for each child) for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If parents are issued with a penalty notice, they must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. 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 Co-Heads/Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into 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, or when a term-time holiday exceeds the agreed length
- Where an excluded student 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.

N.B. If two Penalty Notices have been issued to you on two separate occasions for term time holidays taken in the previous 2 years, another unauthorised holiday could lead to fast-track legal proceedings at the Magistrates. If you are convicted, you could be fined up to £1000 and you will get a criminal record.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Batley Girls' High School good attendance is promoted at every opportunity. Form Tutors give attendance a high profile, and spend time during Reflection Time reviewing attendance and setting attendance targets. Attendance and Pastoral teams regularly review attendance and work closely with the *Kirklees Education, Safeguarding & Attendance and Pupil Support Service* to support students and families where necessary.

Every effort is made to identify attendance issues as early as possible and to work together with students and families to support improvements to attendance.

Rewarding good attendance is also part of our strategy for promoting good attendance. Students with good attendance are rewarded in a termly *Rewards Assembly*, letters are sent home to students who maintain 100% over a half-term and attendance challenges take place at key points during the year.

Awards for students who have shown a transformation are also given at various points in the school year; an improvement in attendance can result in a transformation award.

6. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Officer and Pastoral Teams monitor student absence on a daily basis and support is put in place for students and families where attendance does not match expectation.

Appendix 5 gives detail about how attendance is monitored for all students and what action is taken when attendance becomes a concern. At Batley Girls' High School, we are aware that there are sometimes complex reasons for absence and that action and support may need to be tailored to the needs of the student and the family.

Early identification of attendance issues is made possible through weekly meetings between Pastoral Managers and the *Attendance & Pupil Support Officer*. This allows letters that are sent to parents informing them of action taken at various stages of the attendance monitoring and support process.

Student-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Co-Heads/Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The Co-Heads/Headteacher

The Co-Heads/Headteacher are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Co-Heads/Headteacher support other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students and will issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The Senior Leadership Team

Relevant members of SLT will...

- Ensure attendance is addressed as part of the ongoing SEF/QA process
- Review term time leave of absence requests
- Liaise with General Office and *Attendance & Pupil Support Officer* regarding penalty notices
- Provide attendance information to the Local Governing Body, as required

7.4 The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer will...

- Produce detailed attendance data and ensure that this is shared with Group Tutors, Pastoral Managers, Progress Leaders and SLT as required
- Monitor registers and late arrivals to school
- Manage first day absence calling and record responses from parents
- Follow up on unreported absence
- Liaise closely with Pastoral Managers, the Wellbeing Centre the *Attendance & Pupil Support Officer* and SLT about vulnerable student absence

7.5 Progress Leaders

Progress Leaders will...

- Monitor the progress of students with relation to attendance issues
- Meet regularly with Pastoral Managers to keep up to date regarding attendance issues in their year group(s)
- Support Pastoral Managers in implementing support and intervention to improve attendance

7.6 Pastoral Managers

Pastoral Managers will...

- Monitor attendance patterns and implement attendance reports and monitoring systems
- Liaise with the attendance officer in order to circulate up to date attendance and punctuality information
- Liaise closely with parents and carers to address attendance issues
- Closely monitor the attendance of vulnerable students, undertaking home visits and other regular contact, to ensure the safety of these students
- Liaise with the Wellbeing Team and DSL regarding concerns
- Attend meetings with parents/carers and other agencies where attendance is discussed
- Attend weekly meetings with the schools' *Attendance & Pupil Support Officer* to discuss attendance issues and make referrals when necessary
- Ensure that attendance is discussed at link meetings with Progress Leader

7.7 Subject Teachers

Subject teachers will...

- Ensure registers are completed accurately every lesson
- Record lateness to lessons and arrange catch up where necessary
- Inform Pastoral Managers of any emerging patterns of absence
- Support students when they return to school following an absence
- Know the names of Persistent Absentees and ensure they receive personalised support

7.8 Form Tutors

Form Tutors will...

- Monitor attendance and punctuality weekly and set personalised targets
- Report attendance and punctuality concerns to the relevant Pastoral Manager
- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality during Reflection Time

8. Monitoring arrangements

This attendance policy will be reviewed by the Co-Heads/Headteacher and the Local Governing Body every 3 years. At each review, necessary changes will be made before the policy will be reapproved.

9. Links with other policies

This attendance policy is linked to the following policies:

- Safeguarding & child protection policy
- Exclusions policy
- *Rewards policy for the relevant academic year*
- *Expectations of school attendance are also set out in the 'Batley Girls High School Ethos and Charter'*

Appendix 1: DfE attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student 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 a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student 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 student is in custody

Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: BGHS attendance codes



Attendance Code List Report

Batley Girls' High School

Date Interval: 26/08/2018 - 31/08/2019

Mark	Type	Description
	Cancelled	Cancelled
#	Cancelled	Planned whole or partial school closure - not counted in possible attendances
/	Present	Present
?	Missing Mark	Precreation Mark
\	Present	Present (PM)
A	Present	Present in school absent from lesson
B	Educational Activity	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)
C	Authorised Absent	Other authorised circumstance
D	Cancelled	Dual registration
E	Authorised Absent	Excluded
F	Present	Holiday, no paperwork
G	Unauthorised Absent	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Authorised Absent	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Authorised Absent	Illness
J	Educational Activity	Interview
K	Present	Out of lessons, with Yr team, Hub, LRC
L	Present	Late before reg. closed
M	Authorised Absent	Medical/dental
N	Unauthorised Absent	No reason yet provided
O	Unauthorised Absent	Unauthorised absence
P	Educational Activity	Approved sporting activity
Q	Present	Out of lessons and in Isolation
R	Authorised Absent	Religious observance
S	Authorised Absent	Study leave
T	Authorised Absent	Traveller absence
U	Unauthorised Absent	Late after reg. closed
V	Educational Activity	Educational visit
W	Educational Activity	Work experience
X	Cancelled	Non-comp school age absence
Y	Cancelled	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Cancelled	Pupil not yet on roll

Appendix 3: Fixed penalty notification letter for unauthorised leave of absence

Name

Address etc.

Dear (*Name of Parent/s/Carer*)

Penalty notice for leave of absence

It has come to my attention thathas been absent from school for days fromto This leave of absence was not authorised by the school.

The school's Attendance Policy makes it clear that parents must seek permission for leave of absence in writing from the head teacher in advance should they wish to take students out of school. If leave, or part of the leave, is taken which has not been authorised, a penalty notice may be issued.

The school will be arranging for a penalty notice to be issued against you. The penalty notice request will be processed by Kirklees Council in due course on behalf of the school.

The penalty notice will be issued to each parent of each child. Each penalty notice will be for £60 if it is paid within 21 days, and will increase to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child's attendance at school.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 4a: Extended absence leading to deletion from school roll when leave of absence is taken but not requested

On discovering leave of absence has been taken, school to liaise with any contacts listed on school system and liaise with any siblings' schools to discover more information.



School writes to parents advising that, if no contact made and not returned to school within 20 (school) days, child will be removed from roll on 21st day and referred to the Attendance & Student Support Service as CME.



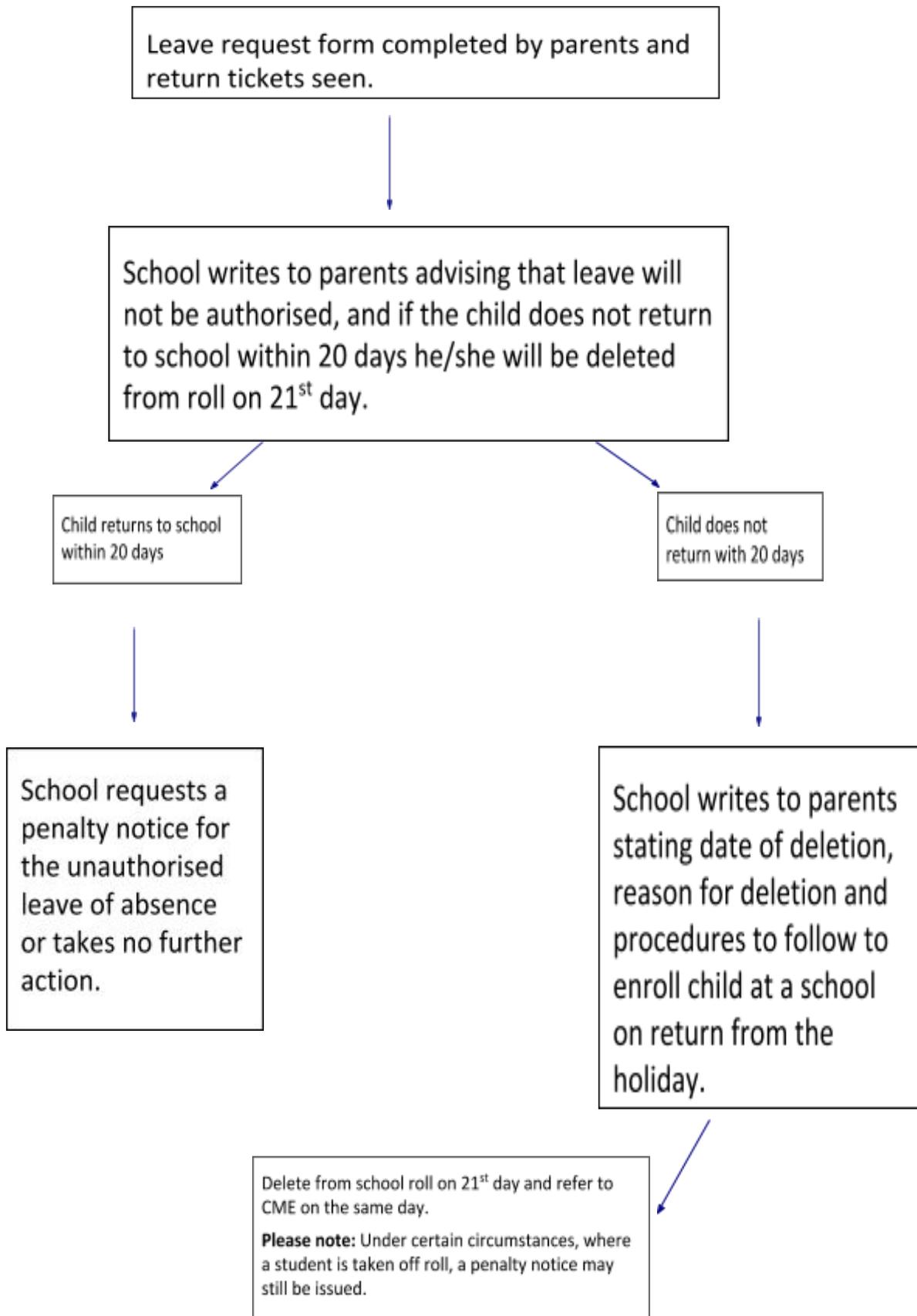
If no contact made within 20 days, school writes to parents stating date of deletion, reason for deletion and procedures to follow to enroll child at a school on return from the leave of absence.



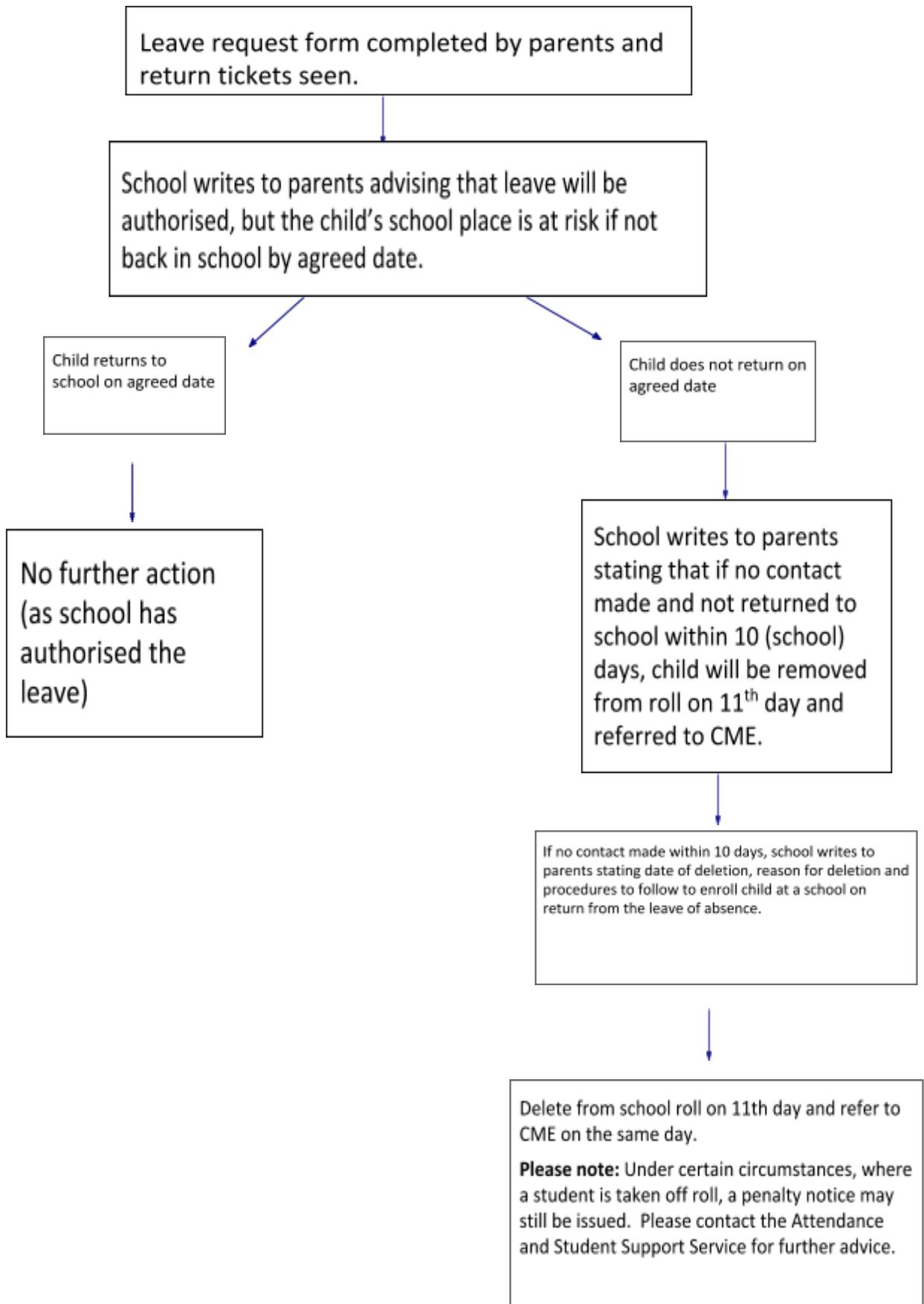
Delete from school roll on 21st day and refer to CME on the same day.

Please note: Under certain circumstances, where a student is taken off roll, a penalty notice may still be issued. Please contact the Attendance and Student Support Service for further advice.

Appendix 4b: Extended absence leading to deletion from school roll when leave of absence is requested but not authorised by the school.



Appendix 4c: Extended absence leading to deletion from school roll when leave of absence is authorised by the school but family does not return by the agreed date.



Appendix 5: Attendance & Punctuality: Monitoring & support

Attendance & Punctuality: Monitoring & support (Batley Girls' High School)

