

# Attendance Policy

Maun Infant and Nursery School



*Where the sun shines every day*

February 2021

Next Review: February 2024

Approving body	Full Governing Body
Date approved	March 2021
Supersedes	November 2018
Consultation undertaken	LA Guidance DfE Guidance
Complies with Equality Act	Yes
Supporting Policies	Child Protection
Review date	February 2024
Lead person	Bridget Ramsdale
Signed	

## 1. Maun Vision



**M**aun, a safe place where we...

**A**spire to succeed;

**U**nderstand and welcome uniqueness;

**N**urture and challenge.

## 2. Core Principles

At Maun Infant and Nursery School, we are committed to providing a full and effective education for all our pupils. The school sincerely believes that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. Pupil performance and well-being go hand-in-hand. Pupils can't learn if they don't feel safe or if ill health problems are allowed to create barriers. To this end, the school will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any issues, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

The law states that parents/carers have a legal obligation to ensure that children within their care attend school regularly. Schools and the local authority have a duty to ensure that poor school attendance is dealt with swiftly.

Local authorities have legal enforcement powers under sections 444, 444A and 444ZA of the Education Act 1996 to bring legal action against parents in order to enforce attendance at school.

## 3. Aims

**Maun Infant and Nursery School recognises that:**

- All pupils of statutory school age have equal and inclusive rights to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations, regardless of gender, race, religion, belief, disability or ability;
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development;
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure attendance at school as required by law;
- Some pupils and their parents/carers may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities;

- Situations beyond the control of pupils, parents or carers may impact upon attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parent/carers, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these;
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their society.

#### 4. Expectations

Maun Infant and Nursery School believes regular attendance is vital when it comes to children reaching their full academic potential; therefore we encourage all of our parents/carers to support us in giving their child every opportunity to achieve their best.

##### **We expect the following from parents/carers:**

- To ensure their children attend school every day unless the reason for absence is unavoidable;
- To report absences to the school before the start of the school day or nursery session, on the first day of absence along with the predicted date of return where possible. Parents/carers can do this by telephoning the school office and speaking to a member of the office team, or by leaving an answerphone message;
- To ensure children arrive in school on time and well-prepared for the school day;
- To contact the school whenever any problem occurs that may affect attendance;
- To work with the school in ensuring that their child's attendance is at least in line with National figures (between 96 and 97%).

##### **Parents and pupils can expect the following from Maun Infant and Nursery School:**

- Daily, efficient and accurate recording of attendance (absences are classed as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED);
- Rewards and celebrations for good attendance i.e. weekly *Best Team Attendance Award* celebrated in assembly, half-termly whole school *Attendance Lucky Draw*, termly and annual attendance certificates for attendance of 98% or above (emergency medical appointments will not affect attendance awards where we are provided with copies appointment letters/cards as proof);
- A high-quality education;
- To be kept informed of termly attendance figures provided at parent evenings and with annual reports;
- To provide support, advice and guidance for all aspects of school attendance through our designated Child and Family Support Worker (see Appendix D: Attendance Guidance);
- A staged response to managing pupil attendance as shown in Appendices A, B and C. This may include a home-visit (see policy shown as Appendix E).

## 5. Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given.

This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Truancy before or during the school day;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark:
  - in main school: after 9.15am for the morning session or 1.15pm in the afternoon
  - in nursery: after 9.00am for the morning or 1.00pm in the afternoon;
- Absences which cannot be authorised as medical proof is required.

Please ensure all medical appointments are taken out of school time, or at the very least, the end of the day. We may need to request medical evidence if absences become a concern - we do want to support all families so please talk with us about any issues.

## 6. Persistent Lateness

In main school (F2-Y2), the school day at Maun officially begins at 8.55am and parents are expected to have children at school by this time (doors open from 8.45am). All children who arrive after classroom doors close must report to the Main Reception and be signed in by a parent/carer. Lateness will be recorded in the registers as follows:

9.00am - 9.15am - "L" Code

9.15am onwards - "U" Code

In nursery, session times officially begin at 8.30am in the morning and 12.30pm in the afternoon. Nursery doors close 15 minutes after the start of each session and parents are expected to have children at school by this time. All children who arrive after the door closes will be signed in at nursery by a parent/carer. Lateness will be recorded in the registers as follows:

	Morning Session	Afternoon Session
"L" Code	8.45 - 9.00am	12.45 - 1.00pm
"U" Code	9.00am onwards	1.00pm onwards

## 7. Leave of Absence During Term Time

Maun Infant and Nursery School will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion and is **not a parental right**. In accordance with government guidelines, the application must be made 12 days in advance in writing to the head teacher. The head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave.

**Maun Infant and Nursery School may agree 'leave of absence' only in exceptional circumstances such as:**

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education;
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

**Maun Infant and Nursery School will not agree a 'leave of absence' in circumstances such as:**

- Availability of cheap holidays;
- Availability of desired accommodation;
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday period;
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term;
- Holidays booked before checking with the school;
- Birthdays;
- Day trips, shopping or visit to hairdresser, dentist, relatives or similar;
- Having no clean uniform;
- Getting up late;
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment

Leave of absence that has not been approved will be unauthorised and may lead to issue of a Penalty Notice Fine.

## **8. Fixed Penalty Notices**

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued in line with the [Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct](#). Warning letters will be sent as detailed within our staged response (see Appendices A and B) and Penalty Notice Fines will be issued, to each parent for each child of statutory school age, for the following:

- **Persistent unauthorised absence** of 5 days (10 sessions) over a 6-week rolling period;
- **Unauthorised leave of absence (or holiday)** in excess of 3 days (6 sessions) in total over a 6-week rolling period;
- **Persistent lateness** where a pupil is late for 10 separate instances over a period of six school weeks and where these are signified as a 'U' for 'Unauthorised Absence' in the attendance register.

Maun Infant and Nursery School does appreciate the value of taking family holidays, and also understands that many families wish to avoid inflated holiday costs during the traditional school holiday period. Therefore, we will block our four INSET days within one week for families to book a holiday at a much more competitive price. We will let you know our INSET week at the beginning of the academic year so that you have plenty of time for booking.

#### **9. Involvement of Other Agencies**

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed. When Stage 2 has been reached in the intervention process, we may initiate involvement of support services such as the following, to improve the outcomes for identified pupils:

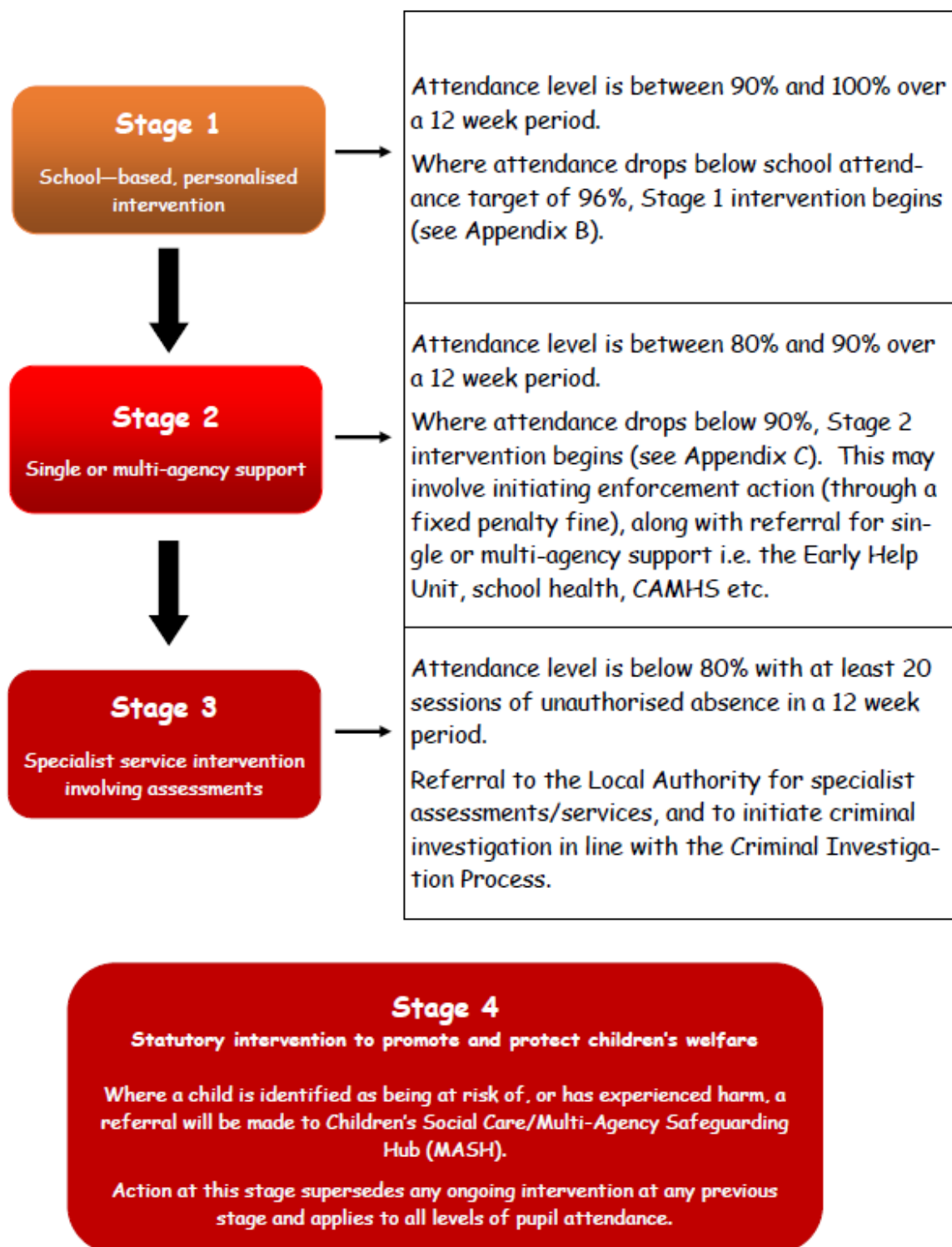
- Family Service
- Educational psychologists
- School health
- Social care
- Youth Offending Team
- Police
- CAMHS

#### **Data Protection Act**

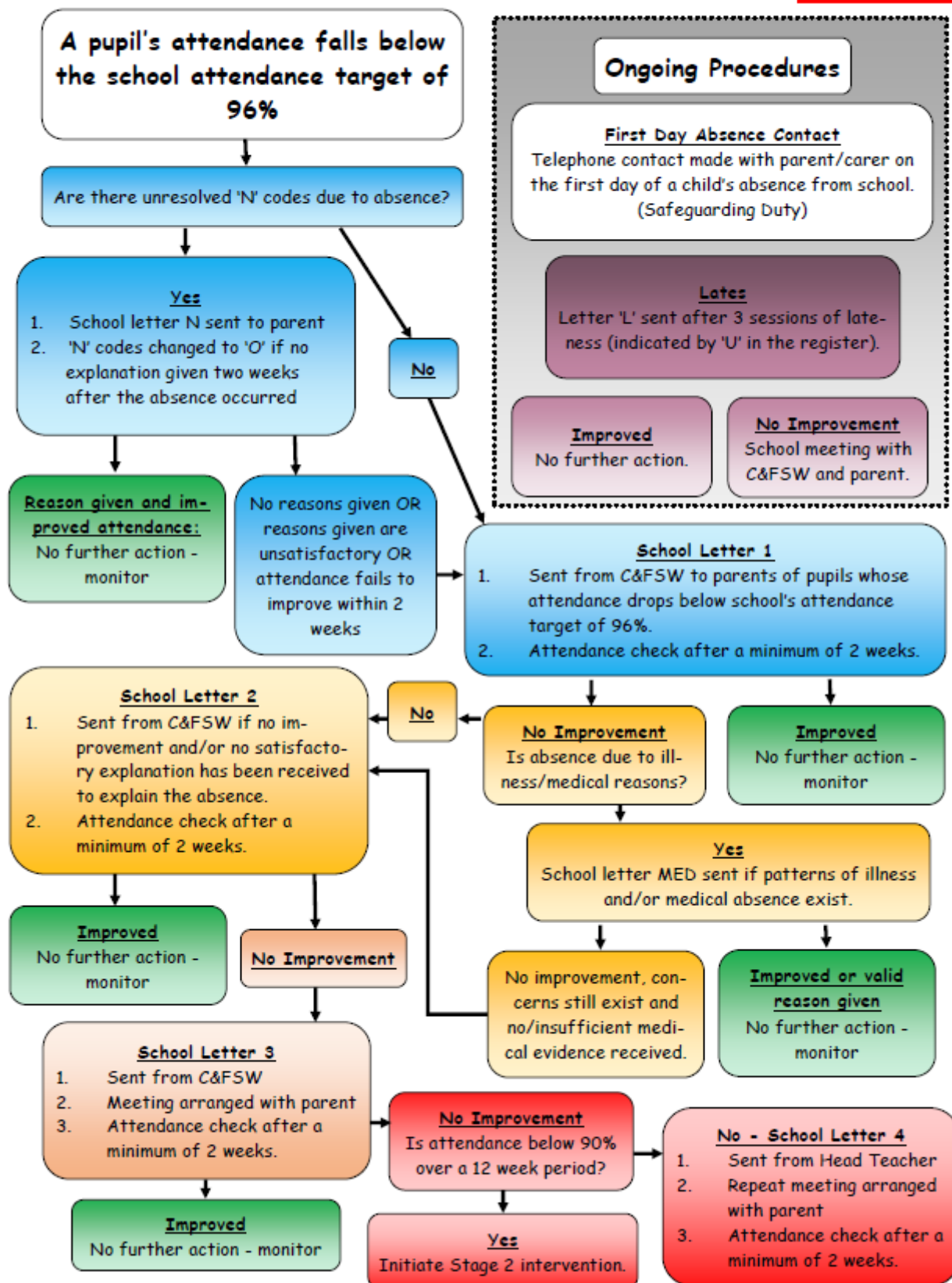
The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard to the requirements of the Act. Each school has a Data Protection Notification which details the circumstances under which data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents a school sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.



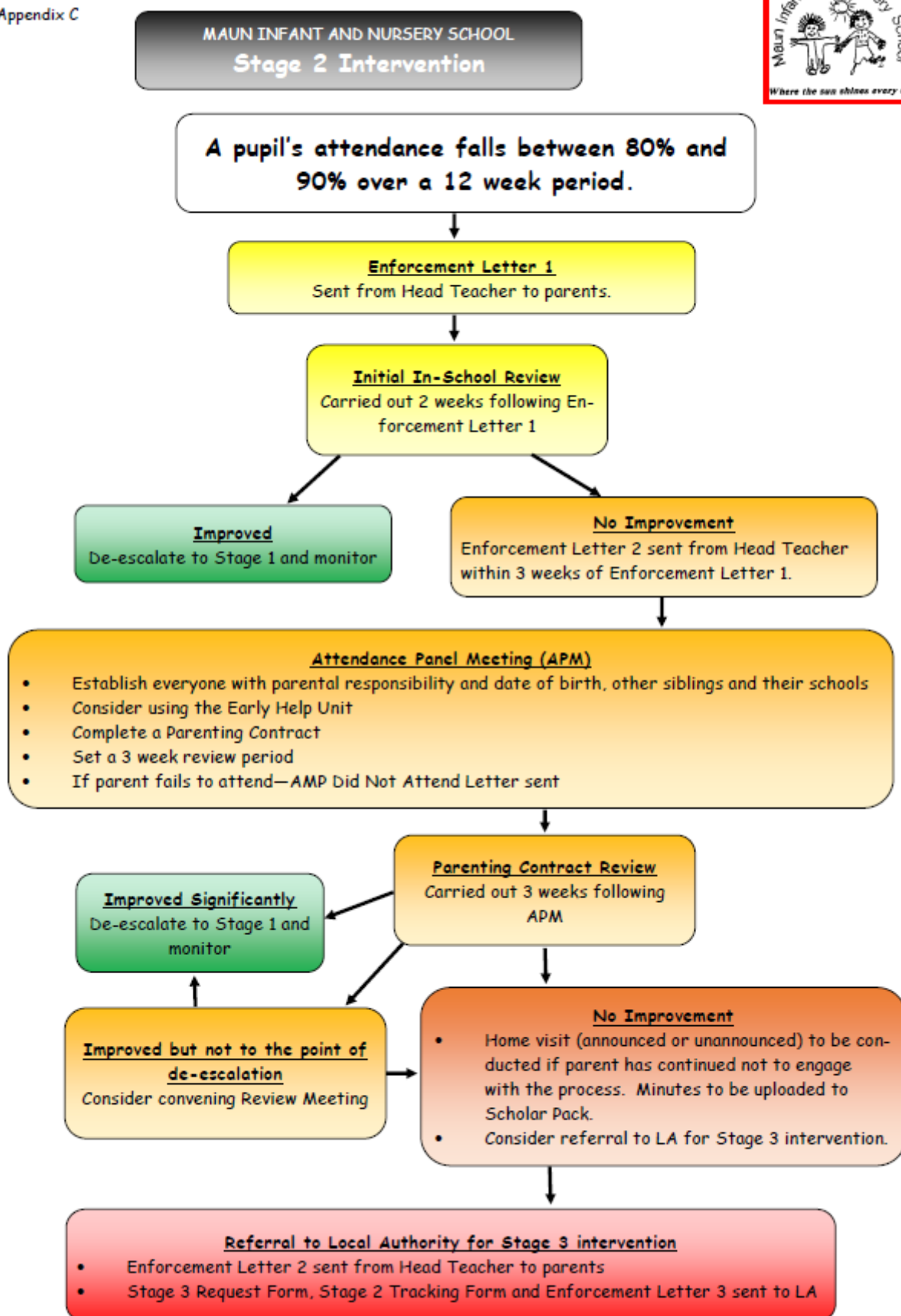
MAUN INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL  
**Staged Intervention Overview to Managing School Attendance**



MAUN INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL  
Stage 1 Intervention







**ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE - MAUN INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Maun attendance target: 96%.

Please use the guidance below to find out how your child's attendance compares to National expectations:

99% - 100%	Excellent attendance	Children with little or no absence during the school year are the most likely to achieve their full potential and reach National standards.
96% - 98%	Good attendance	
95%	Satisfactory attendance	Children with this level of attendance have had around 18 days off school, which is the equivalent of almost four weeks. These children will have missed important aspects of their learning and gaps will begin to be evident. Attendance for children within this band is monitored very closely in school to ensure improvements are made.
91% - 94%	Unsatisfactory attendance	
86% - 90%	Persistent absenteeism	Attendance at this level is of serious concern. Children within this band will have missed around 27 days of school; the equivalent of over 5 weeks (almost half a term). These children will have developed significant gaps in their learning which will prevent them from keeping up with their peers.
85% or below	Persistent absenteeism	Children with less than 85% attendance have missed the equivalent of at least half a term of schooling (6 weeks) in one academic year. These children generally struggle with the basic skills needed in everyday life associated with reading, writing and maths. They are considerably less likely to achieve the standards expected of them throughout school. <b>Cases of attendance at this level will be referred to an external attendance advisor.</b>

## **MAUN INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

### **HOME VISITS POLICY IN RESPECT OF ATTENDANCE CONCERNS**

#### **Section 1**

##### **Our Policy in Practice**

- This policy is designed to protect the safety of all Maun Infant and Nursery School staff.
- Potential dangers include verbal abuse or threatening behaviours, emotional or physical violence and potentially damaging allegations being made against staff.
- All home visits will take place in pairs.

##### **Staff Specific**

- Staff should never do unaccompanied home visits.
- Home visits should not be the first option. Can a mutually acceptable alternative meeting environment be agreed?
- Home visits for attendance must be carried out in accordance with the school's attendance and punctuality policy.
- School policy and procedures must be consistently applied by school staff and other accompanying professionals.

##### **Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers**

- Show respect for parents/carers as equal partners.
- Be a good listener.
- Make appointments in advance and offer alternative dates/times.
- Ensure that parents/carers know when you will arrive, how long you will stay, what will happen, what kinds of questions you will be asking and what information you will bring.
- Ask them to think about the information they need from you in advance of the meeting.
- Accept the right of a family not to want a home visit.
- Confirm parents/carers actual name and title and keep on record. Do not presume that there are two parents/carers with the same surname as the pupil.
- Do not assume that all parents/carers are literate.
- Make sure you consider diversity of social, cultural, racial, religious and sexual orientation.
- If there is no response at the address, staff will leave a letter to inform the parent/carer of their visit and the need for the parent/carer to call school as soon as possible to rearrange the appointment. If parents/carer do not call and pupil is absent from school for a continuous period of ten days, the school will make a referral to Social, Care and notify the Children Missing in Education Officer.

##### **Working in Partnership with other Agencies**

- Communicate with other agencies that are already involved with the family.
- Clarify the role of other professional involved to avoid duplication and so that you are not working at cross-purposes with other agencies.
- Evidence of good practice is where services liaise and support each other with a clear and common aim of assisting the pupil/family to overcome barriers to learning.

## **Section 2**

### **Specific Protocols for all Home Visits by all Staff**

#### **Risk Assessment**

- Where home visits take place, a risk assessment should be completed in advance. This will identify any concerns about potential risks and appropriate measures to be taken.
- Check records to see what is known and information available.
- Talk to other professionals who may already have had contact or involvement with the family.
- Obtain information about the location of the home visit. For example, does the area have a reputation for being unsafe, isolated or poorly lit?
- Discuss strategies to adopt when working with potentially challenging Parent/Carer/Family with your line manager.
- Where potential risks are identified, arrange an alternative meeting environment or refer to an appropriate alternative professional.

#### **Health and Safety**

- Inform a nominated member of staff (usually the school office) when you are leaving for a home visit.
- Complete the visit proforma outlining details of the visit, including family name, pupil's name, address, telephone number, purpose of visit, time of appointment and time due back at base.
- You must inform the nominated person if there is a cancellation or alteration to the time.
- Carry with you and show the parent some form of identification or a letter of introduction.
- Demonstrate normal courtesy - wait to be invited into the home.
- If a pupil answers the door ask if an adult is present in the house before entering. Do not enter if an adult is not present.
- If you need to speak to a pupil in confidence, a member of the family or a colleague should be present or within sight during the interview.
- Care should be taken that your proximity to a pupil cannot be misinterpreted.
- If the parent/carer appears at all uncomfortable about the visit continuing, staff should offer to leave, offer to continue the contact with a telephone call and give the parent/carer the telephone number of your line manager.
- It is important that all contacts with pupils and families are recorded. This will be done on CPOMS using the relevant tab i.e. 'Attendance' and noting all people present at the meeting, with dates, times and issues discussed and agreed.
- Use common sense, trust your instincts and if a situation feels dangerous or threatening, then leave.

#### **After the Home Visit**

- Contact the nominated person immediately after the visit is finished informing them that you are safe.
- The nominated person must advise the line manager if staff have not made contact by the appointed time and locally agreed actions must be followed.

The record of the visit outlining details and agreed actions, must be written on CPOMS within 5 working days after the visit.