

Keighley First Locality Attendance Policy

This common policy for Keighley First Locality is intended to support parents in helping their children make maximum progress in ALL schools within our locality. We are giving a clear, consistent message that “Every Day Counts,” that high attendance is essential in order to meet the outcomes of Every Child Matters. We will follow similar guidelines so that families and young people have clear, consistent message from all schools regarding:

- Absence and attendance codes
- Leave of absence
- School Holiday patterns
- Religious observance
- Medical Matters
- Lateness

Aims

- To secure high attendance against agreed targets.
- To implement common policies and procedures to support the achievement of Every Child Matters outcomes and to promote safeguarding for all
- To work together as a LAP to deliver a clear, consistent message which supports young people and families.
- To raise standards for the young people of our locality.
- To promote good relationships between home and school and to foster effective community cohesion.
- To recognise the individual needs of each school
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analyzing attendance and attainment data.
- To share good practice between schools.
- To meet the needs of vulnerable pupils and their families.
- To promote partnerships in the locality.
- To reward good attendance.
- To promote good attendance in Early Years.

Targets

By July 2015, we aim to be in the upper quartile for schools in Bradford.

Absence and attendance codes

In order for us to identify trends, areas for concern and good practice across the LAP it is essential that all schools are following common practice in the use of absence and attendance codes.

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Consistently apply the 'School Attendance: Statutory Guidance and Departmental Advice' document published in August 2013. This document is available from <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/f00221879/school-attendance>
- Ensure that staff who are responsible for inputting the codes will receive regular training on using the correct code

Absences in Term Time

Extended absence from schools can have a huge impact on a child's education. We believe that a common policy across schools in Keighley First is necessary, so that parents receive a consistent message and there is no incentive to play one school off against another.

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Agree to follow Children's Services Leave of Absence Policy, which is available from Bradford Schools Online. [link to policy](#)
- Only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
- If pupils do not return to school within ten days of the agreed return date and there is no good reason for the non-return, the pupils will be removed from roll, and parents will need to reapply for school places through Children's Services Admissions Department..
- Inform parents that holidays should not be booked without the prior agreement of the school to authorise the leave. We will also ask proof of return date.
- Arrange a meeting between a senior member of staff and parents to discuss potential extended leave plans. We will give parents a copy of the Holiday in Term Time Policy .
- Ensure that parents will complete a Leave of Absence Request Form, which is available from Bradford Schools Online. [link to form](#)
- Explain to parents that if they take extended leave / holiday in term without the permission of the school OR take additional days in excess of the agreed number of days, the school will request that Children's Services issue a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The Penalty Notice is for £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.
- Promote the positive impact of not taking extended leave in term time.

School Holiday Patterns

Some families have children in different schools and this can cause difficulties with holidays and attendance. A common holiday pattern would be desirable.

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Agree to follow a common holiday pattern throughout the locality.

Religious Observance

Schools in Keighley First recognise the value of school attendance and of community cohesion. It is essential to take account of religious observance and the impact of its recognition on community cohesion when setting school holiday patterns.

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Use the flexibility available from occasional days and disaggregated staff training days to enable parents to celebrate Eid without affecting children's attendance at school.
- Agree to engage with the local mosques with a view to minimising disruption regarding religious festivals.

Medical Matters

Examination of attendance data for Keighley First demonstrates that the chief reason for absence is Illness (Code I). We are determined to lower these levels in order to improve overall attendance in our schools.

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Follow medical guidance regarding number of days absence for specific conditions [link to guidance](#)
- Regularly monitor levels of absence due to illness for individual pupils
- Consult with the School Health Service to assess the reasons given for illness absence and provide guidance to parents.
- Encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school time.
- Engage with the local health providers to encourage the making of appointments where possible outside of school time.
- Ask parents to provide a medical certificate for medical absences longer than five days.

Lateness

Schools in Keighley First recognise that lateness is not acceptable as it disrupts lessons and may lead to more serious absence. Punctuality is a life skill which must be taught and encouraged.

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Follow DfE guidance which states that schools should close the register to pupils 30 minutes after the start of the session.
- Apply the following coding:
 - L is used if a child arrives after the register has been called, but within 30 minutes of the start of the school day.
 - U is used if a child arrives more than 30 minutes after the start of the school day.
- Examine their practice surrounding the start of each session to encourage and facilitate the prompt arrival of children at the beginning of each session.

Unauthorised Absences

There are many absences that are not for an acceptable reason. The Headteacher may decide whether an absence is authorised or not.

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Not authorise absences for pupils with less than 85% attendance. Absences will not be authorised unless the parent provides medical evidence, e.g. an appointment card, recently prescribed medication etc.
- Not authorise absences for unacceptable reasons, such as:
 - My brother/sister was ill.
 - We went shopping or I had my hair cut.
 - We took my grandparents to the airport.
 - We were moving house or we went on holiday without authorisation.
 - It was my birthday.
 - We went to visit relatives.
 - I was late so I stayed at home.
 - We went to visit someone in hospital.
- Will contact the parents of the pupils who regularly have unauthorised absence in an attempt to improve attendance. If the school is unable to achieve this the child and family will be referred to the Education Social Work Service who may use legal interventions to improve attendance
- When a pupil has more than 10 sessions unauthorised absence in a six week period, this may result in a warning being given by Children's Services of the possible issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any unauthorised absence in the following 4 weeks will result in a Penalty Notice being issued. The Penalty Notice is for £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Impact Of The Policy

WE AGREE THAT: All schools will

- Analyse their data by code each term to identify trends and differences and act upon the findings.

WE AGREE THAT: Children's Services will:

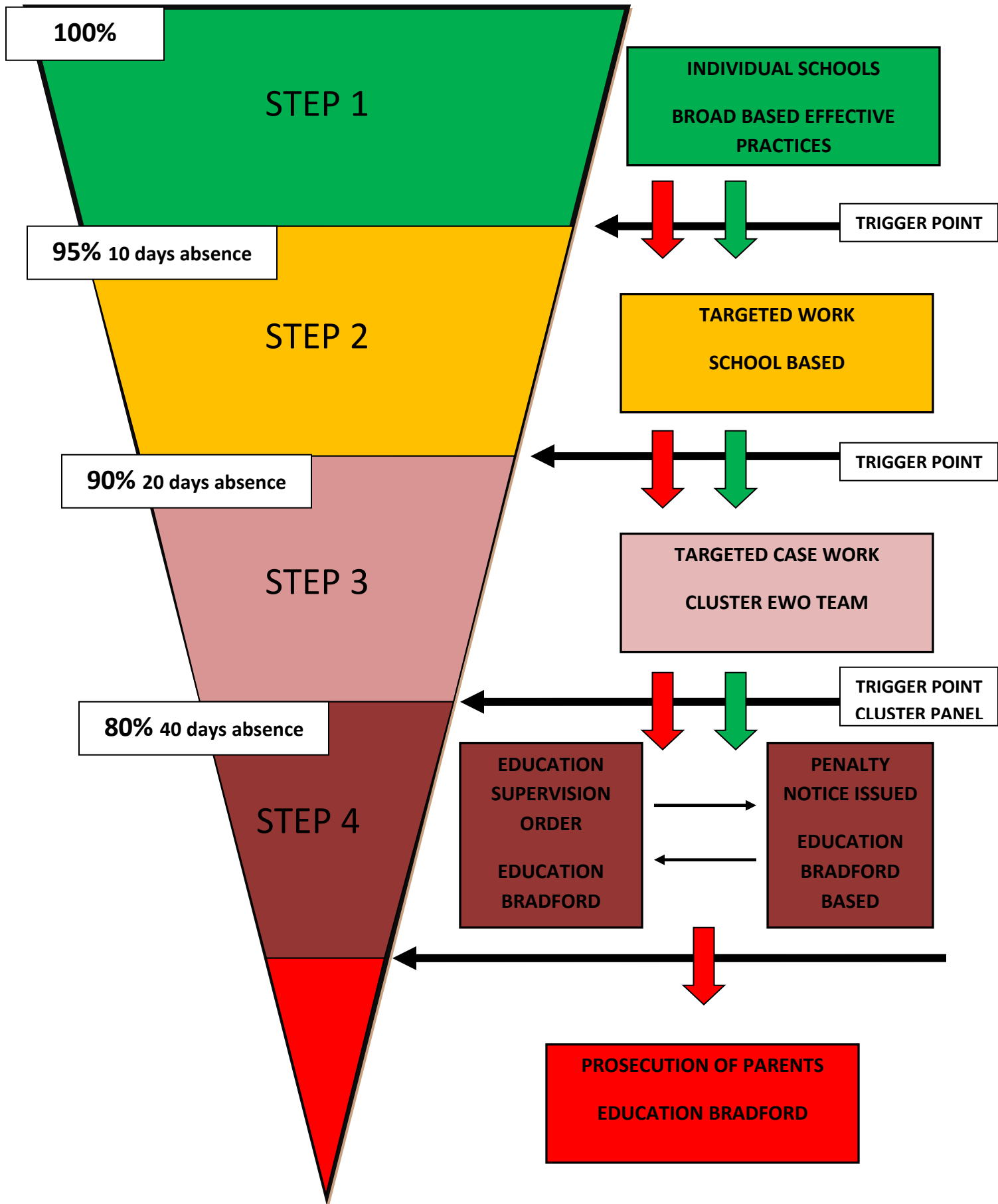
- Provide the locality and each school with termly attendance data.

WE AGREE THAT:

The impact of the policy will be monitored and evaluated:

- In each school, on a continuous basis
- By the steering group of the locality termly
- By the Behaviour and Attendance team termly

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE IN **K**eighley First Locality



IMPROVING ATTENDANCE IN **K**eighley First Locality

For a generally healthy child, the following would apply:

1 DAY IS EQUAL TO 0.5128% OF A CHILD'S ATTENDANCE
 ½ DAY IS EQUAL TO 0.256% OF A CHILD'S ATTENDANCE

School Attendance		
OUTSTANDING	100% - 99%	
GOOD	98% - 97%	
SATISFACTORY	96% - 95%	2 SCHOOL WEEKS OF LOST LEARNING
UNSATISFACTORY	94% - 90%	4 SCHOOL WEEKS OF LOST LEARNING (Becoming a cause for concern)
TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE	89% - 76%	8 SCHOOL WEEKS OF LOST LEARNING (Risk of being issued with a Penalty Notice or Prosecuted)
NEGLECT	75% - 70%	12 SCHOOL WEEKS OF LOST LEARNING (School will request a Penalty Notice or Prosecution)