

**Eastgate
Academy**

Eastgate Academy
Whole School Attendance Procedures

Last reviewed: Nov 2024

Date of next review: Oct 2025

Introduction

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance procedures document is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set an attendance target. Performance towards the target is monitored and reported to each Academy Council meeting.

The Academy's target for 2024/2025 is 96%.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

Eastgate Academy's named Attendance Officer is Mrs. Carole Walker, who can be reached at the Academy between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Eastgate Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Miss Kerensa Healy, who can be reached at the Academy between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mrs. Linda Hothersall, Mr. Andrew Stratton, Mrs. Jessica Seville and Mrs. Carole Walker.

School Procedures

The Academy opening times are 8:15 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Any child who is absent from school at morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Principal or the Attendance Officer acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8:45 a.m. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after 9.15 a.m. will be marked as being late (U – unauthorised absence) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e., school transport was delayed. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will start at 12:30 p.m. and will close at 1:45 p.m.

Registers are open for 75 minutes during the afternoon due to EYFS, KS1 & KS2 taking lunches at separate times from 11:45 a.m. through to 1:15 p.m.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated, for statistical purposes, as present.

Daily procedures when a child is absent.

Before 9:30 a.m. Parents/Guardians are asked to contact the school by one of two ways to report their child absent from school: -

Telephone the school office – 773088 or

Email the Attendance Officer on – attendance@ega.eastern-mat.co.uk

If a child is absent and the class teacher or office has no knowledge of their absence, then the procedures below will be followed:

1. The class teacher will inform the attendance officer via the electronic register, noting any information they may have received.
2. The attendance officer will initiate contact with parents before 10:30 a.m. (through telephone, text, or email), until contact is made.
3. If there has been no response by 11:00 a.m. the attendance officer will again try to contact parents and/or all other listed SOS contacts.
4. If the office staff are not present, then a teaching assistant will be asked to make the calls.

The school will continue to try wherever possible to follow this up, daily, if necessary, until a satisfactory answer as to why the child has been absent has been received. If the child returns to school and after further enquiries of parents have been made, with no satisfactory answer, then this will be registered as an unauthorised absence.

Second & Third Days of Absence

If a child is still absent from school on the second or third day and all measures of contact have been exhausted and no contact has been made with a parent or guardian, the Attendance Officer and another member of staff will carry out a routine home visit. If there is no response at home, then a letter will be sent to express our concerns about the child and ask the parents to contact the school the same day that they receive the letter.

Sixth Day Absence

If there has been no contact for 6 days, then a final letter will be sent to the parent/guardian.

If there are any concerns at all regarding the welfare of a child at any point during the child's absence, then a home visit will be carried out by the Attendance Officer/DSL and another member of school staff.

Ten Days' Absence

The absence of any pupil without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of **all** staff in each academy to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns and to alert the Attendance Officer.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents through the following stages, moving to the next stage each time if there is no significant improvement in attendance:

Stage 1	At the point where attendance has dropped below 95% the Schools Attendance Officer will contact parents informally by letter or email to raise concerns and give parents the opportunity to come in and discuss any attendance issues.
Stage 2	At the end of each half term, the parents of any child whose attendance is below 90% will be sent an invitation to attend a 1:1 telephone interview with an Assistant Principal or their child's phase group leader to discuss attendance and progress.
Stage 3	If no improvement is made the Attendance Officer will meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to schedule a Support First Approach Early Intervention meeting with the parents.
Stage 4	The School's Attendance Officer will contact parents via letter/email to arrange the Support First Approach meeting. This will be led by the Attendance Officer and a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Discussion at this meeting will usually follow the format of the Support First Approach Planning Record (see Appendix 1)
Stage 5	<p>If there is no parental engagement but improvement in attendance is observed, then parents will be written to thanking them for their support in encouraging their son/daughter to engage with the educational opportunities that our school has to offer by ensuring they are attending regularly.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>If there is no parental engagement and further absences are observed then parents will be written to informing them that we would really appreciate the opportunity to discuss and explore with them, any support that might be needed. A further face to face meeting in school or a telephone meeting if appropriate will be offered.</p> <p>The purpose of the meeting will be to revisit the support first approach plan already agreed, exploring any further barriers and additional supportive interventions that may be beneficial.</p>

<p>Stage 6</p>	<p>If all previous support first approach interventions have been unsuccessful then an Attendance Contract will be put in place. Parents & their son/daughter are invited to participate fully in the formulation of the contract and will be made aware that as parents, they are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance at school.</p> <p>Although not legally binding, parents will be made aware that failure to adhere to an Attendance Contract could result in a Notice to Improve being issued.</p> <p>If a Notice to Improve is issued parents have 30 school days (6 weeks) in which to improve their child's attendance. During this time frame their child must show significant improvements in attendance and have no unauthorised absences from school during the set period. If there are any unauthorised absences during the set time, the Attendance Officer will need to refer the matter to the Local Authority. At this stage the Local Authority will consider what legal intervention is the most appropriate to pursue. More information regarding the national framework for penalty notices and possible legal intervention can be found in our school attendance policy.</p>
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Support Systems

Eastgate Academy recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance.

As a school we will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Pupil voice activities
- Nominating a friendship buddy
- Reward systems
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support – part-time timetable
- Attendance improvement plan
- Engaging the support of other agencies

The support offered to families will be child centered and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with all the support first approach interventions offered, and further unauthorised absences have occurred, then the Attendance Officer will consider the use of legal sanctions following consultation with the Local Authority.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence, pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence are filed within the individual pupil's attendance file and held in the school office. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil that may require further investigation, then the notes may be referred to in the future.

Promoting attendance

The school uses opportunities as they arise to remind parents/guardians that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The school uses a variety of rewards for pupils who have good or improving attendance: (See Appendix 2 for rewards).

Holidays in term time

Holidays during term time are actively discouraged and are not permitted. Parents are reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The current regulations from the Department for Education say that Headteachers/Principals may not give permission for leave of absence during term time for any reason unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Parents must apply in advance for permission for any leave of absence. (See Appendix 4)

The Government have introduced a single national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England. This threshold is **10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period**. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

In line with national guidance, the Local Authority (LA) retains the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the threshold is met. This might apply for example, where parents have taken several term time holidays below the national threshold. The LA also retains the discretion to consider going straight to prosecution where appropriate.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices per parent, per child, can be issued within a rolling 3-year period. This period will start from the issue of the 1st penalty notice. The national framework also sets out the escalation process which applies to such penalty notices. If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool should be used. In Norfolk, where a pupil's attendance has met the national threshold for a third time within 3 years and the parent/s have already been issued with 2 penalty notices within that period, consideration will be given to prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a criminal conviction and fine of up to £2,500.

A parent includes any person who is not a natural parent but who has parental responsibility for the child **or** who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty notices will usually be issued to the parent/s with day-to-day responsibility for the child's attendance or the

parent/s who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

The first penalty notice issued to a parent for a child will be charged at £160 to be paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice, the second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first offence, is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. **There is no reduced sum available in this instance.**

Part payments or payment plans are not acceptable, and fines must be paid in full within 21 or 28 days, at the rate specified within the penalty notice. There is no right of appeal against a penalty notice.

Requests for leave of absence.

[Working together to improve school attendance](#) advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday as the Government 'does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.'

Requests for leave must be made in advance, otherwise schools will be unable to consider your individual circumstances, and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

The registration system

The school utilises electronic registration via Pupil Asset. Registers are completed both a.m. and p.m. by teaching staff and checked by the Attendance Officer. National codes are used to record attendance information.

Appendices

The following pages contain appendices relevant to Eastgate Academy's attendance procedures.

- Appendix 1 Template Support First Approach Planning Record
- Appendix 2 Attendance Rewards
- Appendix 3 School risk assessment for children absent from education
- Appendix 4 CME process

Date of Meeting:		Location of meeting:	
Name of pupil(s):		Name of School:	
		Year Group:	

Attendee Name:	DOB: (parents)	Role & Organisation:

Family Information:

Use this section to detail other parents and siblings that may not be known to school and think about the family's wider friend and family network that could be asked to provide support.

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Why are we here and what are we worried about?

To support this part of the conversation, use the child's registration certificate as a visual aid.

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Parents' views and feelings:	
How do you feel your child is finding school currently?	
<p>What does your child report that they enjoy at school?</p> <p>Are there any lessons or subjects they prefer or is there anything that has piqued their interest?</p>	
Is there a particular member of staff your child has a positive relationship with?	
What do you think is important for your child about school?	
What is important to you as parent(s) about school, for example, is it their grades, their well-being, their friendships, or all the above?	
Do you know if your child has any concerns about school – subjects, friendships, teachers?	
Is there anything you as parent(s) have concerns about in relation to school, for example, subjects, friendships, teachers?	
Is there anything your child is struggling with or worried about at school? And is there anything we as a school might be able to do to help?	
Is there anything that might be worrying you or your child outside of school?	

Is everything ok at home, and is there anything we might be able to do to support you?	
Child views and feelings:	
How do you feel about coming to school each day?	
What are some things you enjoy about school?	
Can you tell me about a time when you felt happy at school?	
Are there any parts of the school day that you find difficult or upsetting?	
What do you wish could be different about your school experience?	
Is there something specific that makes you not want to come to school?	
What activities or subjects do you look forward to at school?	
Are there any activities or subjects you don't like? Why?	
How do you feel about your teachers and classmates?	

How do you feel when you think about going to school tomorrow?	
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Identified barrier and agreed action to support:	Person responsible:	By when:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Other key issues discussed: (Please ensure you record any other issues/key points not captured above)

Review Meeting Date:	
Time:	
Venue:	

School Representative			
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Name:		Name:	
Role:		Role:	
Signed:		Signed:	
Date:		Date:	

Other Professionals			
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Name:		Name:	
Role:		Role:	
Signed:		Signed:	
Date:		Date:	

Parents/carer			
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Parent/ Carer Name:		Parent/ Carer Name:	
Signed:		Signed:	
Date:		Date:	

Child – this section is voluntary for the child to complete.			
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Child Name:		Date:	
Signed:			

Appendix 2

Eastgate Attendance Rewards

Eastgate Academy has a range of awards for attendance, rewards for individuals as well as rewards for a child's class. Our 2024—2025 academic year rewards are: -

Weekly

All classes which have achieved 97% or above by registration on Thursday morning, will be rewarded with a sweet treat breakfast of either rocky road or an iced chocolate oatcake. They will receive this for their breakfast on the chosen day the following week.

Every class that achieves over 98% after p.m. registration on a Friday, will be rewarded with a non-uniform day, on a chosen day the following week.

Any class that achieves 100% attendance for an entire week will be rewarded with a non-uniform day and also have the choice of one of the following rewards: -

◇ An off-timetable afternoon with time to watch a movie and bring in their own snacks/sweets.

◇ An off-timetable afternoon to play their choice of sports/games or an extra afternoon playtime.

Termly – Class Awards

We have a termly leaderboard on display in our assembly hall. Each week, during assembly the attendance monitors (Eastgate Heroes) move the class positions up or down accordingly so that all the classes see where on the leaderboard their class is for attendance over the term. The class at the top of the leaderboard at the end of the term will have a choice of one of the following awards: -

◇ Take Mrs. Hothersall to McDonalds for a McDonalds lunch.

◇ Visit the Majestic Cinema to watch a movie;

◇ Try out some exciting new skills with Mr. Nick Hothersall—fencing, archery, art, and circus skills.

◇ Enjoy an off-timetable afternoon of arts, crafts or cookery.

Termly - Individual Awards

All pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for an entire term have their names put into a draw to win some fantastic prizes which may include a brand-new laptop. All other prizes are very kindly donated by The Friends of Eastgate Academy. They are also given a gold certificate from Mrs. Hothersall. Any pupil achieving between 97—99% attendance is rewarded with a silver certificate.

Once per term there is also the opportunity for each child to win a pupil specific reward for 100% attendance during a specific set time frame (usually 6 – 8 school weeks). Each child that achieves 100% during the set time frame wins a trip to the Majestic Cinema to see a newly released film. This once-per-term incentive is funded from a donation received by the Friends of Eastgate Academy.

Annually: -

All pupils who achieve 100% for an entire academic year get the opportunity to go to Waterstones with Mrs. Hothersall, to pick a book of their choice and are then taken for an ice cream.

We also have a further leaderboard in the school assembly hall where the class positions are moved up or down accordingly and shows how the classes are doing with their attendance during the academic year. The class at the top of the leaderboard at the end of the academic year wins the opportunity to choose the reward of their choice from the half termly award options.

Appendix 3

Eastgate Academy risk assessment for possible pupil missing education

Pupil name		Date of birth		Year group	
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Possible pupil missing education checklist

Day one-ten		
Action taken	By whom and when	Outcome
Contact the parent using all available contact numbers/email.		
Contact any other relatives/emergency contacts using all available contact numbers/email addresses.		
Check within school for information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff ▪ SENCO ▪ Pastoral staff ▪ Friends 		
Check with sibling/s school/s.		
Check with other agencies involved with the family.		
Visit the family home to establish whether the family still resides at the property and any information about forwarding address.		

If reason for pupil leaving is established with sufficient evidence, submit off roll notification under relevant regulation	If reason for pupil leaving is not established, conduct possible pupil missing education telephone consultation to agree joint enquiries
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Identifying risk factors		
<p>Refer to Designated Safeguarding Lead to inform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Police and/or ▪ Children's Advice and Duty Service or ▪ child's current Children's Services worker 	Is there good reason to believe that the pupil may be the victim of a crime?	
	Has the child gone missing from home?	
	Does the pupil have a Pupil Protection Plan or Pupil in Need Plan?	
	Is the pupil looked after by Norfolk LA (Local Authority) or by another LA and has LAC Virtual School been notified of this?	
	Does the pupil have a Children's Services worker, and have they been notified?	
	Is a Section 47 pupil protection enquiry about to start?	
	Is there a person present in or visiting the family with previous convictions for an offence against pupil (Schedule 1 offender, Children and Young Persons Act 1933) or another person suspected of previously harming a pupil?	
	Is there a history of domestic violence, parental mental health issues or substance misuse?	
	Is the pupil at risk of child sexual exploitation?	
	Is the pupil at risk of child criminal exploitation?	
	Are there wider concerns about the pupil and family with regards to radicalisation? Could they be travelling abroad? Has a Prevent referral been made?	
	Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour of the pupil or family?	
<p>Refer to Designated Safeguarding Lead to consider the vulnerability of the child and following risk assessment, inform relevant services</p>	Have there been any past concerns about the pupil associating with significantly older young people or adults?	
	Was there any significant incident prior to the pupil's unexplained absence?	

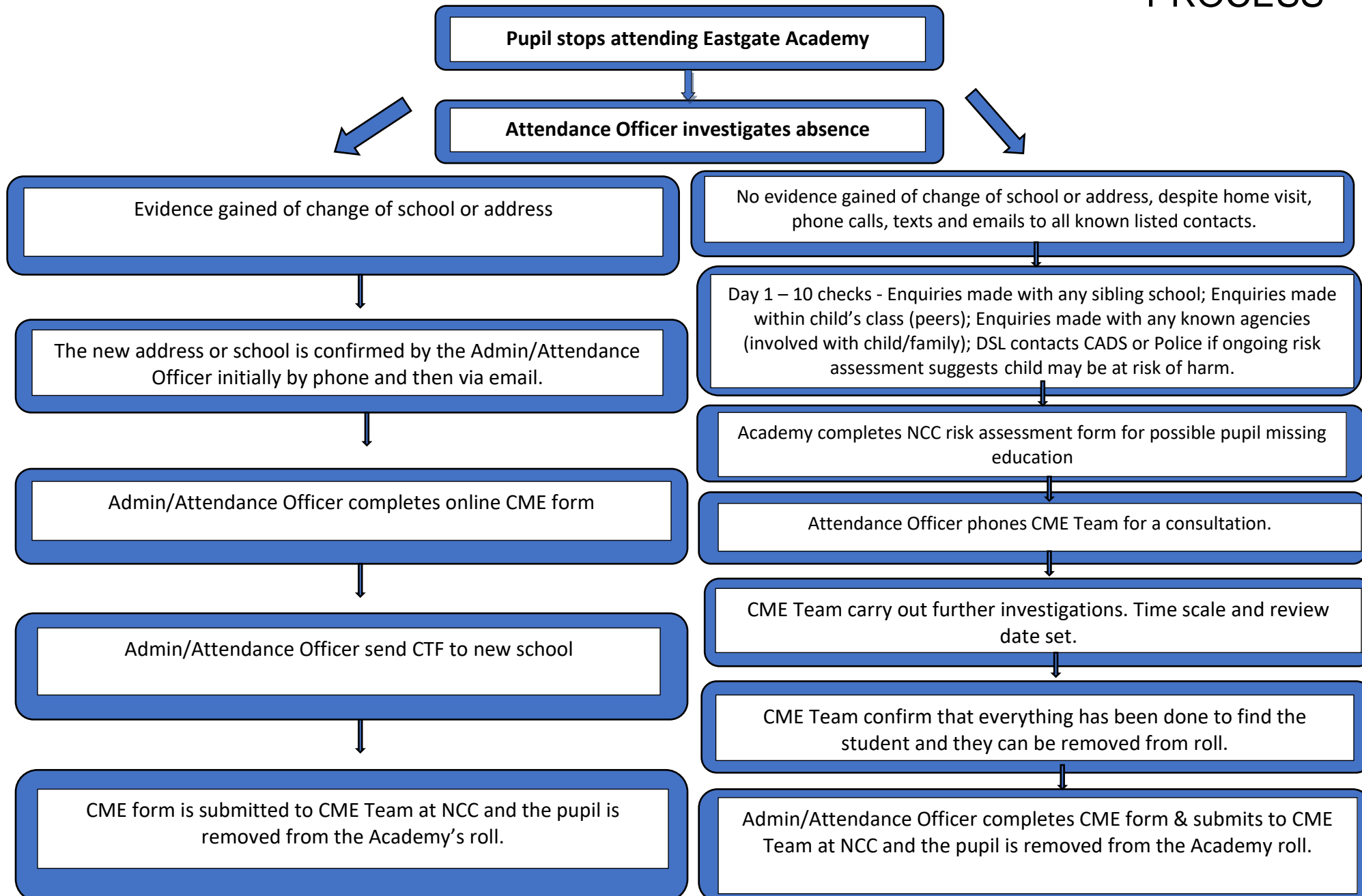
which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Police ▪ Children's Advice and Duty Service ▪ Children's Services Worker ▪ Healthy Child Service ▪ Youth Offending Team ▪ Harmful Sexual Behaviour Team ▪ EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) Coordinator ▪ Early Help 	Are there health reasons to believe that the pupil is at risk? e.g., does the pupil need essential medication or health care?	
	Was the pupil experiencing any mental health or substance misuse issues prior to their unexplained absence?	
	Does the pupil have any special educational needs?	
	Has the child been a victim of bullying in or out of school?	
	Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g., rites of passage or forced marriage planned for the child? Female genital mutilation? Historical information relating to older siblings?	
	Have there been past concerns about this child and family, which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?	
	Are there concerns about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?	
	Has there been any change in the child/family's financial circumstances?	
	Is there a history of poor attendance?	
	Have parents faced prosecution for irregular school attendance?	
	Is there a history of frequent house or school moves?	
	Are there immigration issues?	

What are we worried about?	What's working well?
Danger Statement – Who is worried, what are they worried about, why are they worried – in the short-long term if nothing changes.	Safety Goal – What would you need to see to not have any worries about danger and feel confident the child is safe.
Scale of Safety – On a scale of zero to ten; where 0 is our worries of past harm/complicating factors means the child	What brings you to this point on the scale?

is not safe and 10 is everything is working well in the child's family to keep them safe, where would you rate the worry?	



Appendix 4

CME
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Appendix 4

CME Process

