REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 1 JULY 2009

REPORT ON: REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE - POLICY & PROCEDURES

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 333-2009

1.0   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   This report reviews the operation of the School Attendance Initiative and draws the attention of the Education Committee to the revised document *Attendance Initiative - Policy and Procedures* designed to support staff in managing attendance and reducing absence rates.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this report and approves the *Attendance Initiative - Policy and Procedures* (Appendix 1).

2.2   Remit the Director of Education to continue to monitor the revised *Attendance Initiative - Policy and Procedures* and report back to the Education Committee in no more than three years' time.

3.0   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1   None.

4.0   MAIN TEXT

4.1   The Council's current *School Attendance Initiative - Policy and Procedures* (the Policy) was first issued in October 2000. The policy has been subject to periodic review and revision reviewed (Committee Reports 657-2000, 148-2006, 246- 2008 refer.)

4.2   School attendance rates have remained relatively constant during a six-year period when other indicators of community need have risen, in some cases, to a significant extent.
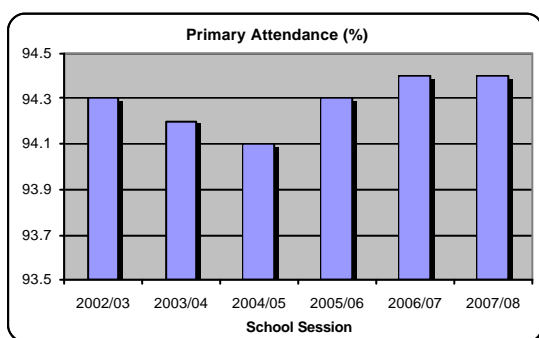

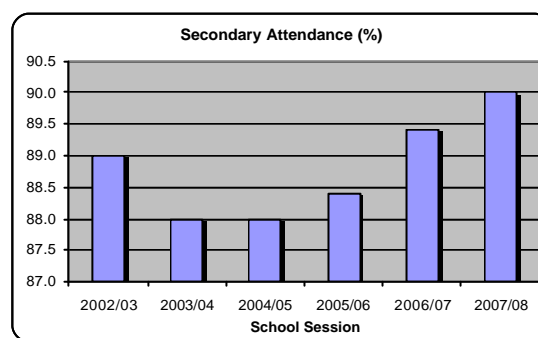Table 1:   Primary sector overall attendance from 2002/03 to 2007/08

Table 2: Secondary sector overall attendance from 2002/03 to 2007/08

4.2   Two key components are essential for the effective management of school attendance: (i) a clearly-stated policy and (ii) an operational structure which defines roles, responsibilities and resources. This revised Policy is the product of the expertise of the designated School Attendance Coordinators, and the experience of the practitioners who undertake the day-to-day work in this field. The Attendance Initiative is now very much a feature of the education provision in Dundee.

4.3   This policy statement is followed by comprehensive guidance for schools on the management of school attendance. It will provide other professionals and parents/carers with support, advice and ideas to help address the issues of attendance effectively. The procedures and processes are carefully designed to maximise the use of staffing provided by the Authority. Central to tackling non-attendance is the School Community Support Service. Secondary schools also have Pupil and School Support Workers in place and, with a cluster-wide role, additional clerical support to deal with attendance. This ensures that Dundee City schools are well placed to promote and achieve high levels of attendance and improve attainment.

4.4   Training will be provided to ensure that staff can swiftly implement the proposed changes to previous procedures. The proposed changes are designed to ensure rapid response to non-attendance and will contribute further to keeping children and young people in Dundee safe from harm.

4.4.1   Under these revised Policy and Procedures, teachers will input data directly from their classrooms into the school Information Management System as this will speed up the transfer of information and enable prompt contact with parents whose children are unexpectedly absent from school. It will promote consistency to working practices in completing registers and enable city-wide monitoring of daily absences to take place. This system is currently in place in every secondary school and in some primary schools. The revised Policy and Procedures would see this practice - supported by training - extended to all schools.

4.4.2   Schools are instructed that in-school guidance and information issued to parents/carers is to be updated to reflect the revised policy and procedures.

4.4.3   An automated text messaging facility - similar to that previously operated in every secondary school - is introduced to the primary sector as this would provide an efficient mechanism for prompt notification to parents of primary school children's absences on the first day of all unplanned absences.

4.5   Many important aspects of the existing mechanisms will remain in place

4.5.1   Attendance co-ordinators will continue to meet as a standing consultative group and will have a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the ongoing work of the Initiative.

4.5.2   The Attendance Review Groups will remain in place ensuring local input to serious cases of non-attendance seeking to work well with parents and carers of children whose non-attendance is creating real barriers to continued progress and learning

4.5.2   The multi-agency Attendance Management Group will continue to process and respond to cases of extreme levels of unauthorised absence on an individual basis as will the system of Attendance Hearings which can result in the prosecution of parents.

4.6   The implementation of the Policy will be further supported by the production of explanatory leaflets for parents and carers and by posters for schools.

5.0   POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1   This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

5.2   There are no major issues.

6.0   CONSULTATIONS

6.1   Head Teachers, Parent Councils, Social Work Department, Leisure & Communities Department, NHS Tayside, HMIe and Trade Unions were consulted during the review phase leading to the production of the attached, revised Policy and Procedures.

6.2   The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), and the Depute Chief Executive (Finance) were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0   BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1   None

Jim Collins, Director of Education   DATE: 12 June 2009

Dundee City Council
Education Department

Attendance Initiative

Policy and
Procedures

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

APPENDICES

FOREWORD

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Two key components are essential for the effective management of school attendance, viz. a clearly-stated policy, and an operational structure which defines roles, responsibilities and resources. The Attendance Initiative was first launched in October 1998 as a means of resolving non-attendance and thereby contributing to increasing levels of attainment across the city. This document is the developing product of the expertise of the designated School Attendance Coordinators, and the experience of the practitioners who undertake the day-to-day work in this field. The Attendance Initiative is now very much a feature of the education provision in Dundee.

A helpful set of definitions terms commonly used by practitioners has been added immediately following this introduction.

This policy statement is followed by comprehensive guidance for schools on the management of school attendance. It will provide other professionals and parents/carers with support, advice and ideas to help address the issues of attendance effectively. The procedures and processes are carefully designed to maximise the use of additional staffing provided by the Authority; namely, the School Community Support Service (SCSS). Secondary schools also have Pupil and School Support Workers in place and, with a cluster-wide role, additional clerical support to deal with attendance. This ensures that Dundee City schools are well placed to achieve optimum attendance, inclusion and attainment targets.

Improving attendance will remain a key driver to raising standards of attainment and behaviour as well as safeguarding each young person's personal well-being, safety and educational opportunity. The Attendance Initiative will remain central to securing improvement. All Dundee schools are now served by SEEMIS data management system. The facility to contact parents by text messaging and e-mail will be used in our schools making our response to non-attendance more immediate.

Some children returning from protracted spells of non-attendance may create management problems for schools in terms of providing an appropriate and manageable opportunity. The Attendance Initiative is integral to all other aspects of raising standards in schools. In addition to on-site behaviour and attendance support programmes and the extended Options resources, all secondary schools have further benefited from the appointment of school and pupil support workers.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

ATTENDANCE HEARING

Although first in this alphabetical list, this is the final phase of intervention prior to prosecution of a parent or carer in court. It is what all other aspects of this Initiative are designed to avoid. Attendance Hearings are held at regular intervals to hear cases recommended for prosecution by the Attendance Management Group.

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Attendance Management Group is a group of senior Council workers of different background. The Group has representatives drawn from the Leisure and Communities Department, Education, Corporate Planning, School Health Service and Housing and is convened by the Education Department to consider cases of non-attendance where it has been decided that the school has done all that it can do to resolve a pupil's non-attendance. There are various possible decisions available to the Attendance Management Group.

ATTENDANCE REVIEW GROUP

The Attendance Review Group comprises the secondary-based Cluster Attendance Coordinator as the Chairperson, where relevant, a nominated primary school representative, an Education Resource Worker (SCSS), Clerical Officer dealing with attendance and any other relevant agency or individual. The Group meets monthly to monitor the progress of the Attendance Initiative in the cluster. It considers and reviews cases, makes decisions about future action, and finally, records and monitors statistical data relating to attendance across the cluster.

CME (Children Missing from Education) Procedures

CME (Scotland) is a national co-ordinating body to help find children who have disappeared from view. If a local search proves unsuccessful, the project team who are based in Edinburgh will follow up with a wider search across Scotland and all other areas of the UK to locate the child. All Dundee referrals to CME **must** be made through the named CME contact who is the Departmental Attendance Coordinator.

DEPARTMENTAL ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR

The Attendance Coordinator has city-wide responsibilities for the management operation and monitoring of attendance issues.

EDUCATION RESOURCE WORKERS

Education Resource Workers have a key role in supporting schools to address cases of frequent or chronic absence and other issues adversely affecting the social, emotional and educational progress of children and young people. They are members of the staff of the city's School Community Support Service and are supervised by Team Leaders each of whom has a specific cross-city remit.

TEXT MESSAGING

An electronic texting system is available within SEEMIS. On the first day of absence, a text message is sent to a mobile phone or landline when a child is recorded "T"). It can also be used to send other messages to parent(s); for example, school closure due to inclement weather and dates of parents' evenings.

JOINT ACTION TEAM

There are two Joint Action Teams aligned to each school cluster. This term is often shortened to JAT for convenience. In each cluster, one of the two JATs will deal with

referrals relating to children and young people of secondary school age and the other will deal with referrals for pre-school and primary school aged children. Each JAT has representation from education, social work, leisure and communities, health, housing and other agencies, as appropriate. The remit of the JAT is to plan appropriate and supportive interventions for children and young people. Referrals are made when any single agency considers a child or young person to have needs which their single agency on its own cannot meet. When a primary-aged child exhibits a level of non-attendance that gives cause for concern and the initial approach does not improve attendance, then a referral will be made to the relevant JAT for further consideration. Written consent from the parent(s) must be obtained and that parent(s) would be consulted prior to a JAT referral being made.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICE

Often abbreviated to SCSS, this is the main agency which assists the school in dealing with persistent non-attenders and, in partnership with staff and parents, will seek to re-establish full attendance.

SECONDARY-BASED CLUSTER ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR

In each cluster, a member of the secondary school staff is the designated Attendance Coordinator for that cluster. This is usually a member of the secondary school's Senior Management Team. They play an important role in ensuring the success of the Attendance Initiative. The remit of the Secondary-Based Cluster Attendance Coordinator is explained on page 13.

SEEMIS

This is the IT-based system of recording absence in schools. Each absence is assigned a specific code depending on the reason for absence. This helps closely monitor attendance in all schools for each individual pupil.

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

In relation to Attendance Initiative Procedures, *Support for Pupils* IT system contains all relevant information which initiates procedures highlighted in the Attendance Initiative Policy and Procedures and is available to all schools.

Section 1

Policy

THE ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE - INTRODUCTION

This policy statement relates to all attendance-related issues including frequent or lengthy illness, absence, parental neglect, truancy, subject-specific absence, lateness, term-time holidays.

There is a statutory framework within which the Education Authority and parents/carers are partners in providing educational opportunity which meets the needs of all children and young people. Schools, parents and partner agencies want all of Dundee's children to achieve to the best of their ability.

The following 3 extracts highlight the statutory framework behind the Attendance Support Process.

RELEVANT STATUTORY EXTRACTS

> *"It shall be the duty of every Education Authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision for school education …………..".*
> Section 1, Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

> *"It shall be the duty of the parent of every child of school age to provide efficient education for him suitable to his age, ability and aptitude either by causing him to attend a public school regularly or by other means".*
> Section 30, Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

> *"A local authority shall "safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are in need".*
> Section 22 Children's (Scotland) Act 1995.

Successful schools are schools where children attend regularly and achieve and attain to appropriately challenging levels. The effective management of school attendance has always played a key role in successful schools. Children who do not attend school cannot benefit from the opportunities available to them. The Authority believes firmly that all involved in education, including parents/carers, have a duty to consider their own contribution to maximising every child's attendance. The policy, therefore, encourages and endorses multi-agency working practices and partnership with parents.

Partnership with parents/carers, through both consultation and practice, is at the heart of education. Regular attendance is more assured when there is a harmonious and productive relationship between home and school. When regular non-attendance becomes an issue, the Education Department will intervene at the most effective minimum level required to re-establish regular attendance, if possible, without recourse to statutory powers. Nevertheless, formal avenues to secure attendance, including prosecution, will be utilised when it is appropriate to do so.

Non-attendance and late coming are often underpinned by difficulties emanating from a range of factors:

- family and home   -   relating to parental disposition, family pressures or specific circumstances at a particular period in a child's life such as being a young carer or being homeless

- learning environment - stemming from a variety of factors relating to the appropriateness of the curriculum and teaching, peer pressure, bullying, disruption and discontinuity

- social and emotional - arising from issues such as travelling distances, peer pressures, unemployment, offending, drug and alcohol misuse as well as the broader range of social exclusion factors

- medical and health - arising from illness, disability or non-diagnosed conditions

Whilst the first response will always be to ask the parent or carer for information about reasons for absence, any action beyond that will include identifying and assessing the needs of the child and family in order that the most relevant support is provided.

In managing difficulties around attendance at school, the Education Department recognises that a number of children approaching the end of their time in compulsory education will progressively choose not to attend school. They and their parents/carers must be made aware that, in taking that decision, they are rejecting a very wide range of opportunities available to them and, as a consequence, are likely to lose out on key life chances.

Together with our partners, we must continue to try to ensure that all young people benefit from the positive opportunities, facilities and choices open and available to them. We will sustain efforts to maximise the attendance of these young people in our schools and other centres.

Studies show clearly that non-attending young people are far more likely to have fewer qualifications and engage in anti-social activities. They consequently face unemployment and an uncertain economic and social future. With all our partners including parents and carers, we will strive to enable such young people to find work, go forward into training or enter further education.

THE ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH
Successful schools enjoy a positive ethos within which there is opportunity and encouragement for solution-focussed partnership approaches to resolving problems.

It is important that all school teaching and support staff recognise that the school should be a welcoming, stimulating environment where there are consistently high expectations of all children in all areas of individual performance, including attendance. In promoting the Authority policy, each school should clarify and emphasise the roles of staff, should define the responsibilities of parents/carers and refer to the remit of other supporting agencies. Where non-attendance becomes a recurring or chronic problem, schools should consider consulting with parents and child to agree a comprehensive, written contract which clearly defines the mutually understood expectations and actions of all involved.

The aim must always be to identify issues of concern early and to provide appropriate supervision and support to the child and family. If the child is of primary school age and the initial approach does not improve attendance, then the Joint Action Team will consider how best to support and improve attendance in partnership with parent/carers. If the child is over 12 and attending secondary school and, if the initial approach does not succeed, then the School Community Support Service will undertake a full child and family assessment to develop a more intensive plan of intervention. Thereafter, if appropriate, a referral to the JAT would follow.

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT will:
- provide clear guidance to schools and parents on procedures for promoting attendance
- set targets on attendance for schools
- make arrangements to collect and collate statistical information relating to attendance for monitoring purposes
- provide appropriate support to allow schools to undertake their duties in this area

THE SCHOOL will:
- seek to contact parents/carers by 9.30am on the morning of the first day of any unexplained absence
- be vigilant regarding non-attendance, reporting cases of absence to the School Community Support Service after 3 days' consecutive unexplained absence
- develop in-house procedures on attendance through consultation, where appropriate, with staff, parents and partner agencies
- make parents/carers and children aware of the policy and procedures
- develop effective partnership working practices
- provide a welcoming environment and an appropriate curriculum for all children
- have a clear system of attendance monitoring and follow-up
- implement a series of graded rewards and sanctions relating to attendance and punctuality as appropriate

PARENTS/CARERS will:
- ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence by 9.00am or as soon thereafter as possible as stated in school handbooks
- support schools in the implementation of agreed policies
- promptly inform the school of home address or telephone number change including the emergency contact

THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICE will:

- make contact with children and parents/carers at home, to discuss attendance issues where absence from school is a recurring problem
- develop and deliver parent support strategies
- provide a co-ordinating role with other professionals and agencies, including medical personnel
- administer the Attendance Management Group process and formal legal process
- prepare reports and assessments for the Attendance Management Group, The Reporter to the Children's Panel, the Joint Action Team and other relevant decision-making groups
- maintain detailed professional records in respect of all work undertaken
- attend Joint Action Team and Attendance Management Group meetings, children's hearings and other decision-making forums
- maintain regular access to the Authority's/school's comprehensive attendance database
- provide a central service to co-ordinate, support and advise on the legal process

THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT will:
- reinforce the importance of regular school attendance with those children with whom they are in contact including those who are "Looked After" by the local authority
- ensure that "Looked After" children in residential care attend school regularly and are punctual
- where appropriate, ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to promote the positive aspects of education
- inform the Education Department promptly of any significant change of circumstance of a school-aged child with whom they are working with i.e. when a child is moved into care, returned home from care or is placed outwith the family home

HEALTH AGENCIES will:
- support schools in ascertaining the health and well-being of children who present recurring problems of non-attendance and in responding appropriately to identified health needs
- support and advise parents and children where ill-health causes recurrent or prolonged absence from school

THE LEISURE AND COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT will:
- support individual children in maintaining regular attendance
- work directly with schools and other staff in supporting children who have attendance difficulties
- provide issue-based group work opportunity where relevant
- participate directly in the attendance management procedure

DEPARTMENTAL ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR
The Departmental Attendance Coordinator will:
- offer support and advice to all schools on attendance related issues
- collate all referrals to the Attendance Management Group and to chair Attendance Management Group meetings
- collate and manage the referrals to the School Medical Protocol
- co-ordinate Dundee's participation in CME Scotland (Children Missing from Education) including families that come to the City under witness protection/Woman's Aid family relocation programmes
- chair the city wide Attendance Coordinator's meeting
- co-ordinate the Joint Police/ Education Initiatives
- liaise with all City Council Departments on all issues relating to non-school attendance
- investigate and respond to calls/anonymous calls from members of the general public regarding non attendance

- investigate and respond to calls from Dundee City Libraries as agreed in the protocol when Library staff observe a child/children in a Library during school hours
- report to the Director of Education (or nominee) when a case has been referred with a recommendation for prosecution by the Attendance Management Group
- liaise with Dundee City Council Legal Division Solicitors regarding cases that have been referred for prosecution, providing written and verbal reports on relevant up to date information that will assist in the ongoing prosecution process

THE ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE - PROCESS

PHASE 1 SECONDARY

SECONDARY-BASED CLUSTER ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR

The Secondary-based Cluster Attendance Coordinator's remit is to:
- make him or herself known to cluster primary schools and ensure primary school Head Teachers are informed of Attendance Review Group meetings
- monitor and evaluate the school's attendance policy and associated procedures, in liaison with appropriate staff
- collate information provided by staff for referrals
- feed back and discuss Attendance Review Group decisions with appropriate staff
- maintain Attendance Review Group file with copies of all paperwork
- liaise with staff regarding referrals to the Attendance Management Group
- attend or nominate a representative to attend the Attendance Management Group meeting in support of Attendance Review Group referrals
- relay back and discuss decisions of the Attendance Management Group with appropriate staff. Referral to Children's Reporter by the Attendance Management Group will be implemented by the school and the Joint Action Team will be informed of this decision for monitoring purposes.
- arrange issue of the official letters of the Attendance Management Group's decision, keeping the original in the child's file and a copy in the Attendance Management Group file
- compile, for the Head Teacher's signature, a Section 86 Education (Scotland) Act 1980 Certificate of Attendance when a decision to prosecute is made

GUIDANCE STAFF

Promoted guidance staff in secondary schools have a key role in supporting and monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality. They fulfil this role by getting to know pupils and their families on an individual basis and by developing relationships which allow them to recognise potential problems.

The remit of the Guidance staff is to:
- liaise with register teachers on a regular basis
- liaise with the clerical staff with remitted responsibilities for recording attendance
- liaise with the cluster's School Community Support Service Team Leader and Education Resource Workers
- review regularly the attendance records of individual pupils and discuss any issues with pupils and parents
- check the *Support for Pupils* database for feedback from the Education Resource Worker following an Attendance Initiative referral

When non-attendance becomes a significant issue (namely, when a child or young person's social, educational or emotional progress is adversely affected by the level of non-attendance), the appropriate member of the Guidance team will normally:
- interview the pupil concerned and make contact with parents/carers
- arrange a meeting where appropriate to discuss issues
- liaise with the appropriate member of SMT
- consult with/refer to School Community Support Service
- consider if a Case Conference is necessary and advise the appropriate member of SMT
- consider a referral to the appropriate planning group (e.g. Joint Action Team, Attendance Review Group)

- prepare paperwork to support a referral to the Joint Action Team, Attendance Review Group, the Attendance Management Group or the Attendance Hearing
- act as the school's representative at meetings called to consider referred cases

PHASE 1 PRIMARY

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT STAFF

School management staff have a key role in supporting and monitoring children's attendance and punctuality. They achieve this by getting to know children and their families on an individual basis as well as developing positive working relationships across the community.

Their remit includes:
- liaise with class teachers on a regular basis
- liaise with School Community Support Service and, in particular, the school's Education Resource Workers.
- review regularly the attendance records of individual children and discuss any concerns with children and parents
- check the *Support for Pupils* database for feedback from the Education Resource Worker following an Attendance Initiative referral

When non-attendance becomes a significant issue, the appropriate member of school staff will:
- seek to interview the child concerned and make contact with parents/carers
- arrange a meeting with parents/carers, where appropriate, to discuss issues
- liaise with the appropriate member of senior staff in school
- liaise with the cluster's nominated clerical officer with respect to ARG referrals
- consult with/refer to School Community Support Service
- consider if an in-school Network Meeting is necessary and thereafter advise the appropriate member of the school's Senior Management Team of decision
- consider making a referral to the Attendance Review Group
- consider making a referral to the Joint Action Team with particular reference to children of primary school age
- prepare paperwork for a referral to the Joint Action Team, Attendance Review Group, the Attendance Management Group or the Attendance Hearing, as appropriate
- act as the school's representative at meetings called to consider referred cases

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

REGISTER AND CLASS TEACHERS

Register and class teachers have the pivotal role in supporting children' attendance. They check the legal requirement is being met in terms of attendance at school and have **a duty** to take accurate class registration. Attendance figures are required for formal statistical attendance returns to the Scottish Government and a child's individual attendance summary may also be required by the Children's Reporter or for the sheriff court. Register and Class Teachers can do much to encourage regular attendance and punctuality amongst class groups and, through their knowledge of these children, are well placed to flag up concerns.

Through the text messaging facility, a message will be sent to a parent/carer if the child is recorded as being absent without explanation (a 'T' entry on SEEMIS).

Accuracy in taking registration is of paramount importance. If a child is present but is not recorded as having been present at registration, subsequent enquiries will raise

anxiety for a parent/carer, seriously jeopardise the relationship between school and home and adversely affect the credibility of the attendance monitoring system.

PUPIL AND SCHOOL SUPPORT WORKERS (Secondary)
The role of the Pupil Support Worker is to build professional relationships with identified young people, to encourage them to respond to improved patterns of attendance, to attempt to minimise lateness and selective truancy and to act as an additional monitor of concerns. This could include telephone contact and home visiting incorporated within the existing referral process. The School Support Worker can be directly involved in the first stages of a school's response to non-attendance. This could include telephone contact. All contacts with parents and carers must be documented. Intervention by in-school Support Workers should **occur no later than the third day** where the absence is continuous or **no more than three working weeks** where absence is sporadic. Where those timescales are exceeded, referral must be made to School Community Support Service.

Where appropriate and directed by the Attendance Review Group, issue-based and thematic group work can be undertaken by Pupil Support Workers.

CLERICAL SUPPORT

The remit of clerical staff in all schools is to:
- contact homes by text messaging, telephone or letter
- maintain a record of responses to text messaging from parents/cares
- liaise with the School Community Support Service Education Resource Worker and relevant workers from partner agencies

Each cluster has 0.5 FTE general clerical officer support for secondary school attendance matters and for all cluster schools with respect to ARG referrals. The clerical officer nominated to deal with attendance works in close association with appropriate staff and liaises with the secondary-based cluster Attendance Coordinator.

The remit of this clerical staff is to
- compile information and make Attendance Initiative Referral
- maintain regular contact with all associated primary schools
- collate information for the Attendance Review Group, the Attendance Management Group, the Medical Protocol and, where appropriate, for the Joint Action Team
- record and distribute minutes of the Attendance Review Group meetings.

PHASE 2

EDUCATION RESOURCE WORKERS
Education Resource Workers are currently centrally based within School Community Support Service and are supervised by Team Leaders. When a school has ongoing concern regarding non-attendance on the third day of consecutive unexplained absence, a request must be made that the Education Resource Worker make contact with the child's parents/carers. Referrals to Education Resource Workers should normally come through the *Support for Pupils* database via the Attendance Initiative. Guidance staff or primary SMT can also approach the Education Resource Worker in cases when they see urgency that merits immediate attention. They may choose to seek advice from the relevant duty Team Leader.

The remit of the Education Resource Worker is to:
- make regular contact with secondary school guidance staff

- maintain regular contact as appropriate with primary schools
- meet monthly with the Attendance Review Group to review individual cases and monitor progress
- undertake whatever visits are necessary within the requirements of the non- attendance procedure
- compile reports for the Joint Action Team, Attendance Management Group, the Children's Reporter and others as required
- remove barriers to learning
- support parent/carers
- collate information and assess circumstances around children referred
- liaise with all other Joint Action Team associated agencies
- maintain written records of all work undertaken
- undertake parental improvement strategies
- undertake family casework
- provide mediation and counselling as required
- identify and access additional resources for children

PHASE 3

ATTENDANCE REVIEW GROUP

The Attendance Review Group is the forum for the overall management of attendance issues at cluster level. It will be chaired by the Secondary-based Cluster Attendance Coordinator and will meet in the cluster Secondary School. It is essential that the Secondary-based Cluster Attendance Coordinator ensures that primary schools are fully informed and involved in the process.

Head Teachers of Primary Schools should establish effective communication with the Secondary-based Cluster Attendance Coordinator to ensure Primary School referrals are made to the Attendance Review Group when necessary.

Cluster Primary Schools will use the *Support for Pupils* database to place names on the Attendance Review Group agenda for the forthcoming meeting and are expected to attend this meeting to speak to the referral. Schools should note the potential of the Attendance Review Group to examine individual cases from perspectives other than simply attendance.

The Attendance Review Group will meet monthly to:
- monitor the progress of the Attendance Initiative in the cluster
- consider and review cases
- make decisions about future action
- record and monitor statistical data

The group will comprise:

- Secondary-based Cluster Attendance Coordinator - Chair
- a nominated primary school representative, where relevant
- Education Resource Worker
- Clerical Officer dealing with attendance
- any other relevant agency or individual

Disposals available to the Attendance Review Group include the following

- Continue Education Resource Worker support
- Referral for family case work, various agencies
- Medical Protocol referral
- Letter to parent (from Attendance Review Group)
- Monitor and continue to next Attendance Review Group

- Joint Action Team referral
- Attendance Management Group referral

PHASE 4

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Attendance Management Group is a centrally based multi-disciplinary group convened by the Education Department to address cases of non-attendance where they are deemed to have moved beyond all resources which can be accessed by the school

The Attendance Management Group comprises three members and is chaired by a Senior Officer of the Education Department - usually the Department's Attendance Coordinator - and has representatives drawn from the Leisure and Communities Department, Education, Corporate Planning, School Health Service and Housing. Referrals are generally received from Attendance Review Groups and are supported by full reports which describe the detail of resources and strategies already applied.

In recognition of the key statutory responsibility of parents to ensure a child is educated, the Attendance Management Group requires the attendance of parents/carers to explain their child's absence from school where that absence has become chronic and without adequate explanation. If it is deemed to be appropriate the child will also be asked to attend. It is also of paramount importance that a representative from the school attends to speak to the report submitted by the school for the Attendance Management Group meeting.

Disposals available to the Attendance Management Group include the following.
- Remind parents of a their legal requirement to secure their child's education and set a date to review progress
- Defer a disposal pending further investigation of expressed parental difficulty
- Referral to relevant Joint Action Team to facilitate appropriate support
- Referral to the Options Group
- Referral to the Children's Reporter (undertaken by the school)
- Refer to the Director of Education (or nominee) with a recommendation that the parent/carer be prosecuted

PHASE 5

ATTENDANCE HEARING

Where the parent(s) or main carer(s) fail to respond to the intervention of the Attendance Management Group process, then consideration will be given by the Attendance Management Group to referring the parent(s) or main carer(s) to the Director of Education (or nominee) with a recommendation that they be prosecuted. An Attendance Hearing will then be convened and chaired by the Director (or nominee) and the parent(s)/ main carer will be invited to attend.

The Department's Attendance Coordinator will present the case and be available to answer questions from the parent(s) or main carer(s) and Director (or nominee) regarding information submitted. Following the Attendance Hearing, the parent(s)/ main carer(s), the Attendance Coordinator and school staff present will be asked to leave and will later be informed in writing of the decision made. If the parent(s)/main carer(s) do not attend, a decision will be made in their absence. In either case, should the decision be to prosecute, the case will then be passed to Dundee City Council Legal Division to be raised in Court.

Other potential Attendance Hearing decisions by the Director of Education (or nominee) include a formal Attendance Order, referral back to Attendance

Management Group or a continuation to monitor progress, referral to Joint Action Team or referral to the Children's Reporter for which the school will be responsible.

PHASES 1 - 5

DEPARTMENTAL ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR
The Attendance Coordinator has city-wide responsibilities for the management operation and monitoring of attendance issues and is active in all 5 phases of the Attendance Initiative Process and Procedures.

Section 2

Procedures

PHASES 1 and 2 IN-SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

1. Clerical staff prepare the register for distribution to class or register teachers, including any additional, relevant information relating to individual child attendance. It is good practice for the previous week's register to be printed for staff for checking notes and also for the current week's register to be issued in case of IT difficulties and fire evacuation.

2. Class/Register teachers enter data directly into the school Information Management System. Accurate use **must** be made of agreed SEEMIS Absence Codes only (see Appendix 1).

3. Class/Register teachers must alert appropriate personnel (Head Teacher/ Guidance Teacher) to information they receive which causes them concern

4. Similarly, clerical staff must alert the Head Teacher or member of the Senior Management Team regarding information they receive or have that may require immediate action.

5. The Clerical staff categorise absences for action. Particular attention must be paid to cases when a child has not arrived in school and there has been no prior contact from this child's parent/carer (**see 4 above**)

6. When a 'T' entry is made, a text message is sent to the currently held telephone contact number of the absent child or young person's parent/carer. Clerical staff will record responses to text messages. Relevant information gleaned from that contact will be passed to appropriate personnel.

   If there is no response a letter should be sent to the family home on this day. This is facilitated via SEEMIS. If the absence continues to the following day, clerical staff will continue trying to make contact with the parent/carer (**see 4 above**)

   On the **third** day of unexplained absence, an Attendance Initiative referral via the *Support for Pupils* database to SCSS when in-school procedures have not been successful

7. If appropriate, and when agreed at Attendance Review Group level, the clerical officer will make a first-day (of unexplained absence) referral to the school's SCSS Education Resource Worker.

8. Referrals that have been made through the Duty System to School Community Support Service that are currently "open" to SCSS should not be referred through the Attendance Initiative during the time that the case is open.

All schools should ensure that they have in place a consistent scheme for the central recording and monitoring of lateness. By ensuring that all teachers register children and young people in class through SEEMIS directly, the Department will be able to monitor the consistency of the recording process.

All schools should note the summary of steps to be taken when dealing with each of the three main categories of absence: authorised, unauthorised (short-term) and unauthorised (long-term).

Authorised	Unauthorised (short-term)	Unauthorised (long-term)
Notification received of illness or other acceptable reasons for absence Enter relevant code	Unexplained, with no notification, and with 1 – 3 days' continuous absence Enter relevant code Implement text messaging process If no response, letter seeking explanation sent	Unexplained, with no notification or text messaging response, and with more than 3 days' continuous absence Enter relevant code Refer to Education Resource Worker for home visit that day Case presented for consideration at Attendance Review Group/Joint Action Team, whichever most relevant to meet the needs evidenced
	Where school determines a high degree of concern, request immediate involvement from School Community Support Service.	Where school determines a high degree of concern, request immediate involvement from School Community Support Service.

For most children, the standard procedures described above will apply. However, in exceptional circumstances, it will be possible to refer cases of selective truancy or unexplained absence that do not trigger an Attendance Initiative Referral directly to the Attendance Review Group for consideration. Cases of medical absences can also be referred directly to the Attendance Review Group when these cases are questionable.

When there are no known child protection/welfare concerns

When a parent /carer has informed the school that they are leaving the area and, after two weeks, the school has not been contacted by another Local Education Authority for information/PPR for this child, The Head teacher or the HT's designated member of staff must contact the departmental Attendance Coordinator who would then arrange an Education Resource Worker to make an initial investigation. Checks will be done with housing, social work and with the Local Authority where the child has allegedly moved to. If no contact is established with the family, the Education Resource Worker in partnership with school will refer the case to the departmental Attendance Coordinator for CME (Children Missing from Education (Scotland) Service) referral.

When there are known child protection/welfare concerns

As above or, if the school is informed that the child's family has moved out of the area without informing the school, the school **must refer immediately** to the departmental Attendance Coordinator.

TEXT MESSAGING

Text messaging facilities are available to all schools for parent contact on first day of absence unless the absence had been previously notified by the parent. E-mails can also be sent via this system. Text messaging can be used for any text or message and not only for attendance messages.

Text messaging uses the attendance data in SEEMIS to send a standard text message to any parent of a pupil who is marked TBC on the register on a daily basis. Text messaging allows you to determine which parent or contact should receive the message and messages can be sent to multiple contacts. SEEMIS can receive texts back from parents into the system.

SCHOOL TO SCHOOL (S2s) and CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION (Scotland) Service (CME)

This is a national system which is triggered by taking a pupil off a school roll and notification is sent to S2S Clearing House in Edinburgh. S2S also have systems in place to exchange information with schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The notification contains
- Name, date of birth, gender, leaving school, date of leaving
- Scottish Candidate Number
- Destination school (if known)

The message is sent on date of leaving or immediately if date of leaving has already passed.

If destination school is in the leaving message, then the pupil's details are sent to that school immediately:
- Name, date of birth, gender, leaving school, date of leaving
- Scottish Candidate Number

If pupil is the enrolled at the new school the 'Pupil left notification' is matched to 'Pupil enrolled notification' at S2S Clearing house and that is job closed.

If a pupil leaves and pupil left notification sent and new pupil notification sent but no enrolment message received for pupil after an 'appropriate period', CME is alerted.

If a pupil leaves and pupil left notification is sent but no destination school entered and no enrolment message is received for the pupil after an 'appropriate period', CME is alerted.

CME is a national body working closely with S2S to coordinate the search for children who are not currently registered in any school.

GYPSY AND TRAVELLER FAMILIES

Dundee City Education Department is a partner in the Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) and the Offsite Education Service is responsible for overseeing the education provision for Gypsy and Traveller families.

Information on the protocols of STEP is available from the Head of Offsite Education Service.

ATTENDANCE AT COLLEGE (outwith Options referrals)

If a school makes a direct arrangement with a college for a pupil on the school roll to attend college part-time or full-time, it remains the school's responsibility to closely monitor this placement and to regularly liaise with the college and to record accurately the pupil's attendance.

PLACING REQUEST PROCEDURES

If a pupil is on the roll of a Dundee school and a placing request is made for another Dundee school, it remains the responsibility of the first school to monitor the progress of the placing request and the attendance of the pupil. Should a placing request not be granted and the pupil does not return to his/her school, a referral must be made through the Attendance Initiative for an Education Resource Worker to visit the family home.

IT SUPPORT STAFF

The majority of procedures related to attendance rely on information technology and it is important that all staff associated to attendance procedures are conversant with the technology that is available to them. Training with regard to the *Support for Pupils* database is available through CPD online and support and advice on a day-to-day basis, is also available by contacting the MIS Strategy Officer/Support Officers.

FLEXIBLE LEARNING PACKAGES

These will be described in detail within the related policy on behaviour support. No element of a flexible learning package can be agreed until it is clear how the pupil's attendance is to be recorded. The responsibility for ensuring there is an accurate record of attendance within each element of a flexible learning package lies wholly with the school. When a pupil is in school as part of the flexible learning package, his or her attendance/absence will be recorded in the normal way. The code 'O' is to be recorded for attendances outwith the school building e.g. when attending Kick It Kick Off for a morning unless part of the package includes work experience, at which times the code to be used is 'W'.

PHASE 3

REFERRAL TO ATTENDANCE REVIEW GROUP

In general, referrals cannot be made without the prior documented involvement of the Education Resource Worker. Exceptions are in cases of questionable medical absence or selective truancy that does not trigger an Attendance Initiative referral. A referral can only be received from the cluster via the Secondary-based Cluster Attendance Coordinator, secondary school Guidance team, Joint Action Team, Primary Head Teacher or other relevant agency. Referrals will then be processed and the agenda prepared for the meeting by the nominated Clerical Officer.

The meeting will consider each referral and determine action to be taken. In most cases this will involve detailing the action to be taken by the child, school, parent/carers and Education Resource Worker; attendance targets will be set and monitoring and review mechanisms agreed. The child's progress will be formally reviewed at subsequent meetings. Each review will be formally recorded.

Referral to the Attendance Review Group should only be considered when resources available have been exhausted. This would include where no response is received from the parent(s)/carer to an invitation by the school to discuss the problem or when the Education Resource Worker's involvement has conclusively failed to ensure the child's regular attendance.

Disposals available to the Attendance Review Group are:
- continued monitoring and support by the Education Resource Worker and review at a subsequent Attendance Review Group meeting
- prioritising of case for specific issue-based family work via the School Community Support Service
- referral to Dundee Educational Psychology Service for educational assessment
- referral to the Options Group (for the most challenging children nearing the end of their school careers) for multi-agency planning and provision
- referral to Social Work Department ("Looked After" children only)
- Referral to the Joint Action Team for consideration – in particular with regard to primary school cases. Written consent from the parent(s) must be obtained and parent(s) consulted prior to a JAT referral being made
- referral to the Attendance Management Group

PHASE 4

REFERRAL TO THE ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT GROUP

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Referral to the Attendance Management Group should only be considered by the Attendance Review Group when it is seen as the mechanism most likely to achieve a return to school by the child. It does not remove or displace the responsibility from the child's school.

Generally, cases referred to the Attendance Management Group will have clear evidence of parental/carer non-cooperation. There will also be clear evidence - in most cases, from Joint Action Team minutes and recorded outcomes - that all available resources have been tried and failed to effect significant improvement. This will include documented Education Resource Worker involvement prior to a referral being made. A referral to the Attendance Management Group with regard to concerning medical absence is only made when the Attendance Review Group have involved the School Health Service through the medical protocol and that the School

Health Service have been unable to engage with the family due to lack of parental co-operation.

Referral to the Attendance Management Group can only be made through the *Support for Pupils* database (SCH2 Attendance Management Group) and the referral will be authorised by the Head Teacher.

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

Attendance Coordinators will be informed by the Departmental Attendance Coordinator of dates of meetings and deadline dates for submission of referrals before the end of term for the following academic year.

The referral report (SCH2 Attendance Management Group, Support for Pupils System) will be screened for accuracy and appropriateness; in particular, for the child who is in their final year of formal schooling. Head Teachers are strongly advised to consider alternative measures for such children whose cases cannot be meaningfully considered by the Attendance Management Group.

On acceptance of a referral, a standard letter will be sent to the Head Teacher, copied to the school Attendance Coordinator, giving the time, date and venue of the Attendance Management Group meeting. The letter will also ask for an Attendance Update and the name of the member of school staff who will attend the meeting.

The School Community Support Service will undertake the administration of the Attendance Management Group; informing and requesting the parent/carer and, if appropriate, their child to attend the meeting. The Departmental Attendance Coordinator may invite any other relevant person to attend, if appropriate; for example, Social Worker, Community Learning and Development Worker.

The School Community Support Service will also
- advise the Head Teacher/Attendance Coordinator of the Attendance Management Group's decision in writing
- note the cases to be reviewed at the next Attendance Management Group meeting
- update and store files of closed cases

The Departmental Attendance Coordinator will be available to offer school staff advice and support in relation to Attendance Management Group procedures.

DISPOSALS AVAILABLE TO THE ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Attendance Management Group can
- decide to take no further action on condition that the case is monitored and reviewed by the Attendance Review Group; parents and child being so informed
- implement a package of support involving school and partner agency staff
- continue the case to its next meeting to monitor progress
- liaise with the School Health Service when there are medical problems or issues
- make a recommendation to the Options Group of the Education Department for a placement with a training provider (final year/last six months of compulsory education only)
- referral to the Reporter to the Children's Panel (school to implement and to advise locality JAT of referral for monitoring purposes)

- refer the case to the Director of Education (or nominee) with a recommendation that the parent/carer be prosecuted

PHASE 5

ATTENDANCE HEARING

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR PROSECUTION

The Attendance Management Group will only refer a case on to the Director of Education (or nominee) with a recommendation for prosecution when all efforts to engage with the parents/carers have been unsuccessful. There must be clear evidence of non-cooperation by the parent. Normally, the parent will have shown disregard or contempt for efforts to contact him or her to clarify reasons for absence over a prolonged period of time. The parent will have shown little sense of personal responsibility towards the child's absence from school.

The Director of Education (or nominee) will hear the case and a representative from Dundee City Council Legal Services will be available to offer legal guidance on the proceedings.

A representative from the school will attend and the Departmental Attendance Coordinator will present the case in the presence of the parents/carers. Of particular interest for the Hearing is information regarding
- (i) whether the child has any identified additional support needs and strategies deployed to provide the necessary support
- (ii) the willingness of the parent to work with the school and its partners to ensure improved attendance
- (iii) whether the parent has been aggressive or abusive in his or her dealings with the school
- (iv) details of any reasons received for absences
- (v) whether it is known how the child spends his or her days away from school
- (vi) a historical perspective - has the current term seen a deterioration; does the absence level extend into previous session/s, has there been any period of time where an improvement was observed

The parents/carer will then be given the opportunity to ask questions and to explain reasons for the absence of the child from school.

The Director of Education (or nominee) will request that the parents/carers, child (if present) school representative and the Department's Attendance Coordinator leave the room. In consultation with Dundee City Council Legal Services, the Director of Education (or nominee) will make a decision and this decision will then be formally conveyed in writing to all present within 4 working days.

PROCEDURES FOR PROSECUTION

- The parents/carers will be informed of the decision of the Attendance Management Group to refer for prosecution, in writing.
- The Departmental Attendance Coordinator will liaise with the Director of Education (or nominee) regarding this recommendation and a date, time and venue for an Attendance Hearing will be arranged.
- The parents/carers will then be notified in writing by recorded delivery and a hand delivered letter of the meeting date, time and venue. In accordance with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Section 36 (1) the parents/carers will be served this notice (not being less than 48 hours or more than seven days from

the service of this notice) to appear (with or without the child) to be given an opportunity to explain the reason for the absence of the child from school.
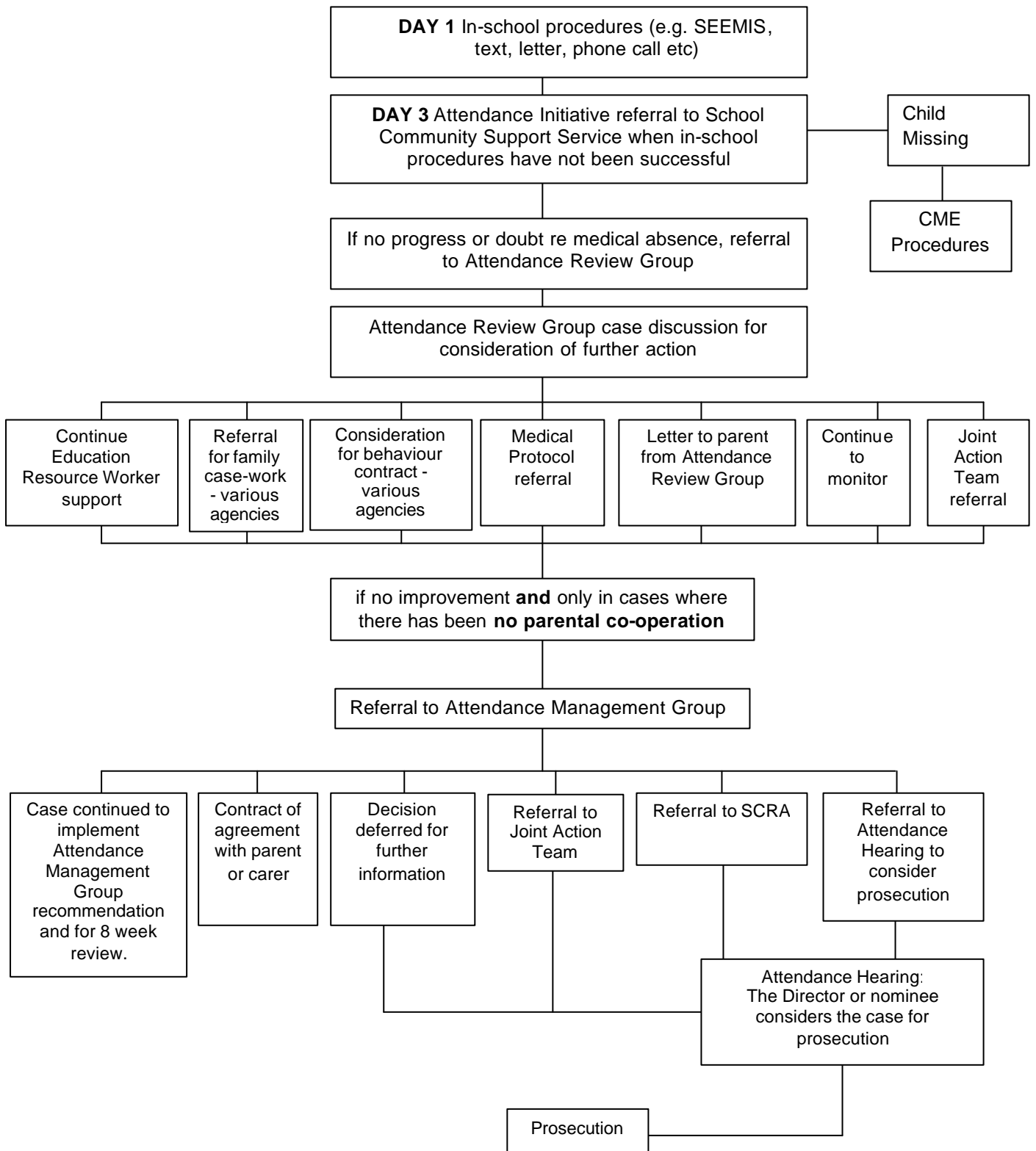
- The Director of Education (or nominee) prior to the meeting will be given all reports, records and correspondence regarding this case and the Departmental Attendance Coordinator will be available at the meeting to clarify any points regarding this case.

- If the parents/carers fail to appear for the meeting and it is clear that they have been served formal notice, a decision will be made on this day in their absence.

- A prosecution can be stopped at any time during the proceedings in consultation with the Departmental Attendance Coordinator and Legal Division if the parents/carers are seen to be co-operating and progress is being made regarding the child's attendance at school.

PROCEDURES FOR INCIDENTAL AUTHORISED ABSENCE

The Council is operating a consistent scheme for recording authorised absentees in secondary schools. Those requiring to be out of school temporarily are issued with an 'Authorised Absence Pass' (exemplar below) which is returned to the school office on the child's return. As with late-coming, the system allows for the central recording and monitoring of absence.

DAY	DATE	PUPIL'S NAME	TIME OUT	REASON FOR ABSENCE	PASS NO.	PERSON AUTHORISING ABSENCE

AUTHORISED ABSENCE PASS
The above pupil is authorised to be out of school
on the date and time specified above

Dundee City Academy
High Road
Dundee
DD
Tel: 01382 xxxxxx

No. 007652   This pass must be returned to the school office

REGISTERED ABSENCE PROCEDURE

DAY 1 In-school procedures (e.g. SEEMIS, text, letter, phone call etc)

DAY 3 Attendance Initiative referral to School Community Support Service when in-school procedures have not been successful

Child Missing

CME Procedures

If no progress or doubt re medical absence, referral to Attendance Review Group

Attendance Review Group case discussion for consideration of further action

| Continue Education Resource Worker support | Referral for family case-work - various agencies | Consideration for behaviour contract - various agencies | Medical Protocol referral | Letter to parent from Attendance Review Group | Continue to monitor | Joint Action Team referral |

if no improvement **and** only in cases where there has been **no parental co-operation**

Referral to Attendance Management Group

| Case continued to implement Attendance Management Group recommendation and for 8 week review. | Contract of agreement with parent or carer | Decision deferred for further information | Referral to Joint Action Team | Referral to SCRA | Referral to Attendance Hearing to consider prosecution |

Attendance Hearing:
The Director or nominee considers the case for prosecution

Prosecution

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

	Telephone	Designation
John Lannon	307120	Principal Officer, School Community Support Service
David Hutchinson	307121	Department Attendance Coordinator
Jim Murray	434334	Senior Solicitor, Legal Division
Jim Gibson	433500	Head of Support for Learning
Jeanette Cairns	736072	School Nurse Coordinator
Fiona McCarthy	434609	MIS Strategy Officer (Support for Pupils)
Lindsay Devine	434896	MIS Support Officer (Support for Pupils)
Lesley Murray	434947	MIS Support Officer (Text Messaging)
Greg Tocher	436603	Head of Off-Site Education

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS: SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The first measurement of effectiveness will always be percentage rates of attendance. However, monitoring the impact of strategy is central to an ethos of success, and the under noted form will enable each school to decide whether their arrangements reflect the principles of good practice incorporated therein. This should form part of the school's normal cycle of self-evaluation procedures.

Operating Principles	Profile				Evidence
	1 (Low)			4 (High)	
Clear roles and responsibilities for managing attendance	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Accurate record of period by period and daily attendance	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Simple, accurate and shared terminology	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Quick, efficient notification of absentees to all members of staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Knowledge of children and their domestic circumstances	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Effective and appropriate systems for contacting parents/carers	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Clear guidelines for parents/carers	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Commitment of all staff to achieving the attendance of all children	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Professionally trained support staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Careful and appropriate use of incentives or rewards for good attendees	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Good inter-agency networking	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Consultation with Pupil Representative Council	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Consultation with Parent Council	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Interest and involvement of community action groups	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Out-of-school passes (Secondary only)	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Systems for reintegration and 'catch-up' schemes for children returning after absence	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Public profiling – posters, campaigns, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

It is important to maintain contact with and involve parents and carers in all aspects of their child's education. Making parents and carers aware of attendance matters on a regular basis is one way of enlisting their support and ensuring better attendance.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Every school should seek community support and involvement in emphasising the importance of attendance. This can be done in a number of ways:

- enlisting the support of the Parent Council
- promoting partnerships with other agencies, such as the police, to visit known truant locations
- establishing poster campaigns in premises and outside in the community, and
- encouraging ownership of the school by the community (e.g. sporting activities, lets, social and community events in school, performing arts)

DRAFT OF ENTRY IN SCHOOL HANDBOOK/PROSPECTUS

The school always seeks to involve parents and carers in supporting each child's education. We can do this through formal reports, or simply being prepared to listen to you and consult with you. Ensuring that your child is in school and in class engaged in learning is crucial to helping him or her achieve what they are truly capable of achieving. So, school attendance is one very important area where your full support is absolutely essential.

- If your child is ill and cannot attend school, please tell us before 9.00am - or as soon thereafter as possible - on the same day that he or she will not be in school.
- Please keep us informed of any difficulty you and/or your child is experiencing that may affect the child in school
- Please tell us if your child is to be absent from school. If the absence is planned (e.g. a hospital appointment), we ask you to let us know before the day of the absence.
- It would be helpful if you can tell us at the same time or as soon as possible when you expect him or her to be able to come back to school.
- If you find your child's illness will mean an extended absence of more than 3 days, please call us again or write to us to tell us.
- If your child is not in school and you have not told us he or she is absent, we will contact you, at the first available opportunity.
- If there are problems about attendance that seem difficult to resolve, we will arrange for an Education Resource Worker to meet with you in your own home to work with you on getting your child back to school and attending regularly.
- We would ask you that family holidays are not arranged during term time as this will adversely affect the continuity of your child's education - and it may give your child the impression that you value education less than you do.

Please do not hesitate to talk to me, or to one of the persons noted below, if there is any attendance issue you wish to discuss.

_____   Guidance Teacher/Primary SMT Tel : _____

_____   Attendance Coordinator   Tel : _____

Appendices

APPENDIX 1
SEEMIS ATTENDANCE CODES/LEGENDS

Single codes used on Attendance Summaries

-	Present	**~**	In school but not in class	**B**	Sickness with educational provision
C	Closed	**E**	Authorised parental holiday	**F**	Medically Certified
G	Parental holiday (unauthorised)	**H**	School holiday, Should not attend, School closure or part-time time table		
I	In-service	**J**	Late	**N**	Unresolved exclusion, Other authorised absence
O	College, other attendance out of school	**P**	Medical or dental appointment	**Q**	Person/family exceptional domestic circ. (authorised)
R	Unacceptable reason, unauthorised exceptional domestic circ.	**S**	Study leave	**T**	To be confirmed
U	Truancy or unexplained absence	**V**	School visit or field trip	**W**	Work Experience
X	Exclusion	**Z**	Extended leave with parental consent	**#**	No admission date or not yet happened

Dundee City council are not using the codes
K, D, A
When using Period by Period M will appear on the attendance printout to show a child
has truanted at least 1 period in the day but overall attendance is not affected

Three letter codes used for Registration

(Single codes shown in brackets)

--- *(-)*	Present	**TBC** *(T)*	To be confirmed	**LAT** *(J)*	Late
MED *(F)*	Medically Certified	**DCA** *(Q)*	Personal/Family, Exceptional domestic circ.(Authorised)	**UPH** *(G)*	Parental Holiday (Unauthorised)
MED/ DENT (*Per* is shown) *(P)*	Medical or Dental Appointment	**UNA** (U)	Truancy or Unexplained Absence	**PHL** (E)	Authorised Parental Holiday
DCU *(R)*	Unacceptable Reason, Unauthorised exceptional domestic circ.	**EXL** (Z)	Extended leave with parental consent	**FLD** (V)	Field Trip
SCH (~)	In school but not in class	**OAT** (O)	College, other attendance out of school	**OUA** *(N)*	Unresolved exclusion Other unauthorised absence
VIS *(V)*	School visit	**SEP** *(B)*	Sickness with educational provision	**STY** (S)	Study Leave
WRK *(W)*	Work Experience	**LFT**	Off Roll	**SNA**	Should not attend *(Set from another screen)*
EXC	Exclusions *(Automatically set when an exclusion is entered)*				

Dundee City Council are not using the codes

SEL *(Self Certified)*. **LT2** *(Late, arrives after Mid-opening)*, **MIS** *(Missing)*,
ABS *(Other Authorised Absence)*,

APPENDIX 2

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE (Section 70, EDUCATION (SCOT) ACT 1980

The Certificate of Attendance will be required when a referral is made to the Children's Reporter for failure to attend school. A Certificate will also be requested by the Department Attendance Coordinator when a case is referred for prosecution in the Sheriff Court.

It is important to ensure that the SEEMIS Attendance Summary reflects the figures on the Certificate of Attendance and that the calculations are accurate. The Certificate **must** be signed by the Head Teacher and the original signed Certificate **only** is the valid document. The use of correction fluid or alteration of any sort on the Certificate is not acceptable

This certificate should be accessed by the Reports menu in Support for Pupils and is called Sch3. The intention is that the certificate will fill in automatically.

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE
(issued in terms of S.86 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980)

I, the undersigned being the Head Teacher of the school at which the under noted child is enrolled, hereby certify that the information given below is a full and accurate record of the child's attendance at the school, issued in accordance with S.86 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

Full name of child

Address

Date of Birth

Full name(s) and addresses of parent(s)/guardian(s)

Attendance Information

	Last Session		**This session**	
	from to		from to	
Possible Attendance				
Actual Attendance				
Number of Absences				
Number of absences for which parental reasons given, and accepted as reasonable excuse(s)				
Number of absences for which parental reasons given, and not accepted as reasonable excuse(s)				
Number of absences for which no reason given				
Number of absences caused by exclusion				
Total number of absences considered unacceptable				

Signature of Head Teacher ....

Name of Head Teacher (please print full name)

School   Date

APPENDIX 3

List of Acronyms

JAT	Joint Action Team
ARG	Attendance Review Group
AMG	Attendance Management Group
AH	Attendance Hearing
CME	Children Missing from Education
ERW	Education Resource Worker
ERW (A)	Education Resource Worker (Assistant)
SCSS	School Community Support Service
SEEMIS	The title of the management information system on which school attendance is recorded
STEP	Scottish Traveller Education Programme
TBC	"To Be Confirmed" – SEEMIS code
MIS	Management Information Systems
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
S2S	School to School
DEPS	Dundee Education Psychology Service
SCRA	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
SMT	Senior Management Team
DHT	Depute Head Teacher
SSW	School Support Worker
PSW	Pupil Support Worker
SCH2	Report format for Children's Reporter/AMG used by schools