



# BHES

## *“Attendance Policy and Procedures”*

Note: in this policy reference to governing body or governors refers to the management committee and its members.

Where contextually appropriate for school read service.

Date adopted: 01/03/2022

## HISTORY OF POLICY CHANGES

Date	Page	Details of Change
March 2022	Front	Removal of the Meriton Remains inline with BCC model policy Reviewed by BCC attendance team
November 2024	All	Reviewed Remains in line with BCC
March 2025	All	Reviewed Updates added
May 2025	Pg. 8	Reasoning for adding self-harm procedure into the attendance policy

## Contents

Part 1: Introduction and Aims.....	4
1. Introduction .....	4
2. Aims.....	4
3. Safeguarding and Attendance.....	5
4. Legislation and Guidance .....	5
Part 2: School Procedures and Legal Requirements .....	5
1. Contents of the Attendance Register.....	5
2. Present at School (and Lateness).....	5
3. Authorised Absences .....	5
4. First Day of Absence Response .....	6
5. Leave of Absence Requests – ‘Exceptional Circumstances’ .....	6
6. Unauthorised Absence .....	6
7. Exceptional Circumstances Where Students Are Unable to Attend .....	6
8. Support for Poor School Attendance .....	7
9. Self-harm procedure and reasoning .....	7
10. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions.....	7
11. Children Missing Education (CME).....	8
12. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence.....	8
13. New Attendance Codes (DfE 2023).....	8
14. Roles and Responsibilities.....	8
15. Policy Monitoring Arrangements.....	9
16. Links with Other Policies .....	9
Appendix 1: Department for Education (DfE) Attendance Codes .....	10
Appendix 2: Contact Plan 1:1 .....	14
Appendix 3: Contact Plan classes.....	15
Appendix 4: Outreach/virtual recording of attendance .....	16
Appendix 5: Self Harm procedure.....	17

# **Part 1: Introduction and Aims**

## **1. Introduction**

The Bristol Hospital Education Service (BHES) aims to provide an environment where pupils can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We believe that regular attendance is essential for students to succeed and reach their full potential. BHES is committed to supporting students with health-related absences from their on-roll school. Our attendance policy reflects this commitment and supports the ethos that regular attendance promotes academic success and social integration.

The Department for Education (DfE) defines persistent absenteeism as missing 10% or more of schooling during the academic year. Regular attendance has a direct impact on a pupil's motivation and academic performance. BHES's role is to educate students who are unable to attend their mainstream school due to illness. For students who are able to attend their on-roll school, that remains the preferred option, and BHES provision is arranged in close consultation with health professionals. It is regularly reviewed and tailored to meet each pupil's current health needs

Attendance at BHES is measured against the individual provision planned for each student, and any absence from the provision is closely monitored. On-roll schools maintain their responsibility for attendance and safeguarding during periods when students are attending BHES.

## **2. Aims**

BHES aims to ensure pupils experience an engaging educational environment that fosters both learning and personal growth. We seek to meet our obligations regarding school attendance by:

- Promoting regular attendance for all students.
- Taking early action to address patterns of absence.
- Ensuring parents follow the correct procedures when reporting absence.
- Supporting students to attend their lessons regularly and punctually.
- Working with families to resolve issues affecting attendance.
- Celebrating and rewarding excellent attendance and punctuality.

We expect students to attend every scheduled lesson unless they are too ill to do so. We will support students in overcoming any barriers to regular attendance.

We also aim to provide a seamless transition for pupils returning to their on-roll school when medically possible, as this remains the most beneficial outcome for most pupils.

### **3. Safeguarding and Attendance**

As part of our safeguarding obligations, BHES closely monitors student attendance. Any unexplained or unexpected absences are investigated, and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), concerns are reported to the appropriate authorities. If a student's whereabouts cannot be established and there are concerns for their welfare, BHES will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police as required.

### **4. Legislation and Guidance**

This policy complies with the DfE's 2023 school attendance guidance and follows legal provisions within:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

## **Part 2: School Procedures and Legal Requirements**

### **1. Contents of the Attendance Register**

BHES must record attendance at the start of each session. Attendance is recorded as:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (e.g., illness or transport disruption)
- Via CPOMS (1to1 lessons)

### **2. Present at School (and Lateness)**

Students are marked as present if they are in school when the register is taken. If a student leaves school after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes. Parents are responsible for ensuring timely attendance, and persistent lateness will be investigated by appropriate staff to explore potential solutions.

### **3. Authorised Absences**

An absence is considered authorised if the school has either given prior approval or accepted a reasonable explanation. Examples include:

- Part-time timetable – agreed via educational review

- **Illness:** Absences reported by parents due to illness are generally authorised unless the service has concerns about their authenticity.
- **Medical/Dental Appointments:** Parents should attempt to arrange appointments outside school hours. If this is not possible, only the minimum necessary time away will be authorised.
- **Religious Observance:** The service will authorise one day for religious observance, but additional days will be unauthorised unless special circumstances apply.
- **Traveller Absence:** Students who travel with parents due to work commitments will have their absence authorised as necessary, subject to statutory limits.
- **Exclusions:** Absences due to exclusion will be recorded as an exclusion and follow DfE statutory guidance.

#### **4. First Day of Absence Response**

BHES follows an established process for responding to the first day of absence, including contacting parents to determine the reason for the absence (see Appendix 2 for further details).

#### **5. Leave of Absence Requests – ‘Exceptional Circumstances’**

Parents should seek prior approval for any leave of absence during term time. BHES will only grant leave for exceptional circumstances such as serious family emergencies. Requests should be submitted as early as possible, ideally four weeks in advance. If a child misses more than the agreed leave, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

#### **6. Unauthorised Absence**

Absences without valid reasons or without prior approval from the school will be marked as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences include:

- Shopping trips
- Birthdays
- Waiting for household deliveries
- Extended term-time holidays (unless approved by the school in exceptional circumstances)

Unauthorised absences may result in legal consequences, such as Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

#### **7. Exceptional Circumstances Where Students Are Unable to Attend**

Certain circumstances, such as site closures or transport disruptions, may prevent a student from attending. These are not counted as absences and will be recorded as “Unable to Attend due to Exceptional Circumstances.”

## **8. Support for Poor School Attendance**

All students' attendance is reviewed fortnightly. If attendance concerns arise, BHES will arrange a meeting with the parent and student to address the underlying issues and agree on a support plan. We believe that early intervention helps to prevent further attendance issues.

## **9. Self-harm procedure and reasoning**

Including this self-harm procedure (Appendix 5) in the attendance policy is important because it establishes clear guidelines for handling sensitive situations in a structured and consistent manner. It ensures that the school community is prepared to support students who may be struggling with self-harm, while also addressing the importance of student safety and mental health. The procedure being in the attendance policy makes it a formal part of the school's overall approach to student welfare, ensuring that:

- **Consistency in Response:** All staff are aware of how to handle incidents of self-harm, providing a clear, standardized response that aligns with the school's values and safeguarding practices.
- **Safeguarding:** Including it in the policy ensures that students' physical and emotional well-being is prioritized and that there's a plan in place for informing parents and other necessary support networks, ensuring no student falls through the cracks.
- **Raising Awareness:** It highlights the school's commitment to mental health and well-being, helping to reduce stigma and creating an environment where students feel safe seeking help.
- **Clear Expectations for Students and Parents:** Parents and students are aware of the procedures, ensuring transparency and trust in the school's approach to handling self-harm incidents.

Incorporating the self-harm procedure within the attendance policy reinforces that student welfare is integral to the school's operation and emphasizes the importance of addressing mental health and safety proactively.

## **10. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions**

Failure to ensure regular school attendance is an offence under the Education Act 1996. BHES may issue Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences. Legal action can also be taken if attendance issues are not resolved.

## **11. Children Missing Education (CME)**

BHES follows the Bristol City Council Children Missing Education (CME) guidance. Any concerns regarding pupils missing education will be referred to the Children Missing Education Officer. For advice, email [childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk).

## **12. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence**

Attendance and reasons for absence are logged in BHES's systems (see Appendix 2 & 3 for the Contact Plans for 1:1 students and group classes).

## **13. New Attendance Codes (DfE 2023)**

To reflect the 2023 DfE Attendance Guidance, the following updated attendance codes are used by BHES to track students' attendance accurately:

- / (Present in school): The student is physically in school.
- L (Late): The student arrived after the register was closed but within a reasonable time frame.
- C (Leave of absence authorised by the school): Absence due to exceptional circumstances (e.g., family emergency or other urgent matters).
- C1 (Student is receiving a medical appointment that affects their attendance): This code is used when a student's medical appointment falls during school hours and the absence is authorised.
- C2 (Student is receiving treatment related to illness that affects their attendance): This code is used when a student is unable to attend school due to ongoing medical treatment, and the absence is authorised by the school.
- I (Illness): Absence due to illness reported by parents.
- M (Medical/Dental Appointment): Absence for a medical or dental appointment.
- R (Religious observance): Absence for religious observance.
- T (Traveller absence): Absence due to travel related to family work commitments.
- E (Exclusion): Exclusion from school.
- B (Educated off-site): Student is attending an approved educational activity off-site.
- X (Not required to attend): A student is not required to be in attendance (e.g., during a public holiday or school closure).
- # (Exceptional circumstances): Used to indicate a student unable to attend school due to exceptional circumstances, such as site closures or transport disruptions.

## **14. Roles and Responsibilities**

- The On-Roll School: Continues to hold responsibility for attendance and safeguarding during BHES provision periods.



- The Management Committee: Monitors attendance and holds the Headteacher accountable for policy implementation.
- The Headteacher: Ensures consistent policy application across the service and reports attendance data to the Management Committee.
- Assistant Head with Responsibility for Attendance: Monitors attendance, addresses issues, and works with on-roll schools to ensure re-engagement.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Coordinates safeguarding duties in relation to attendance.

## **15. Policy Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if necessary, by the Assistant Head with responsibility for attendance. Any changes will be reported to the Management Committee.

## **16. Links with Other Policies**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Self-Harm Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing Education (CME) Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Complaints Policy

## Appendix 1: Department for Education (DfE) Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the

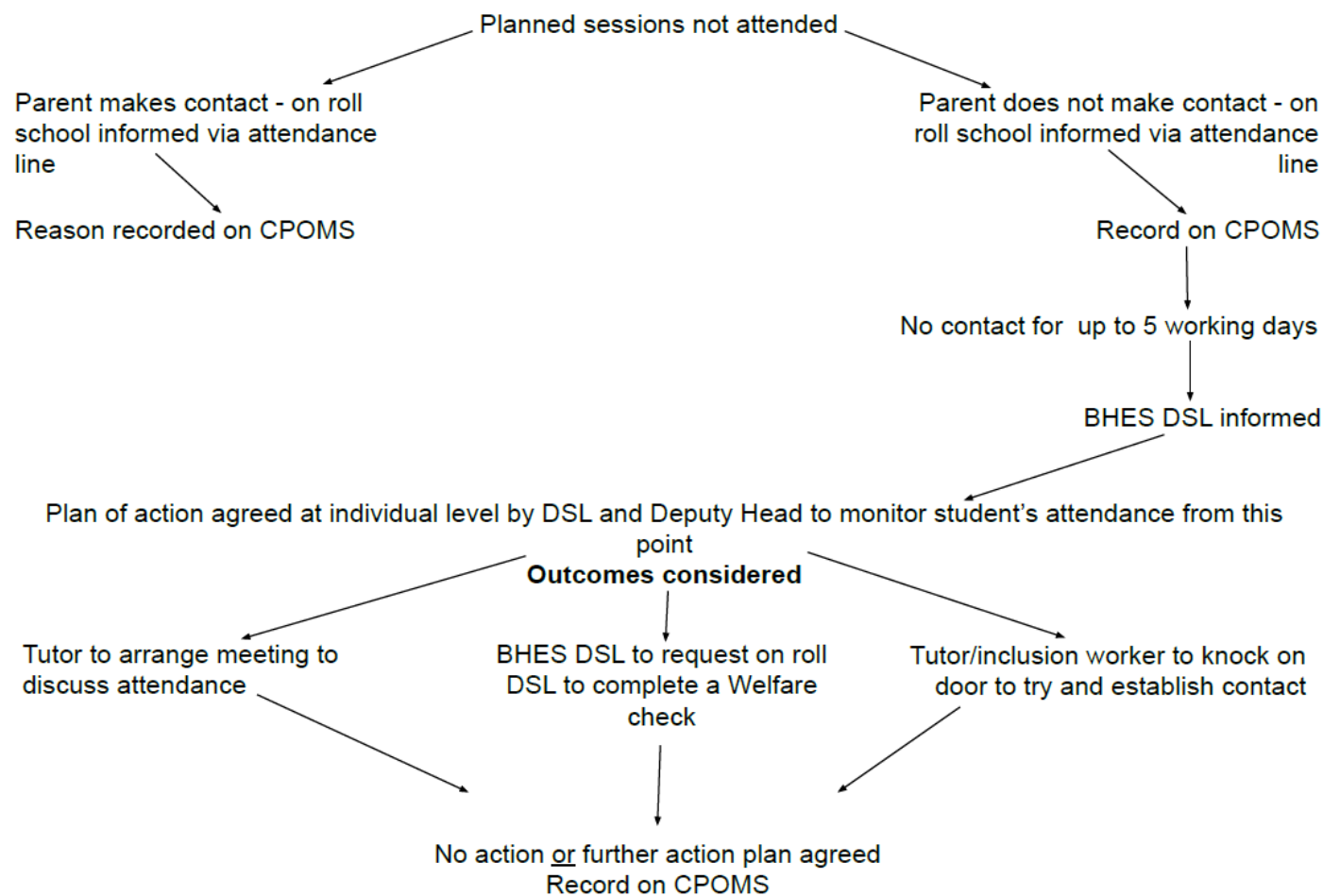
	regulated employment abroad	school
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		

<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school

<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

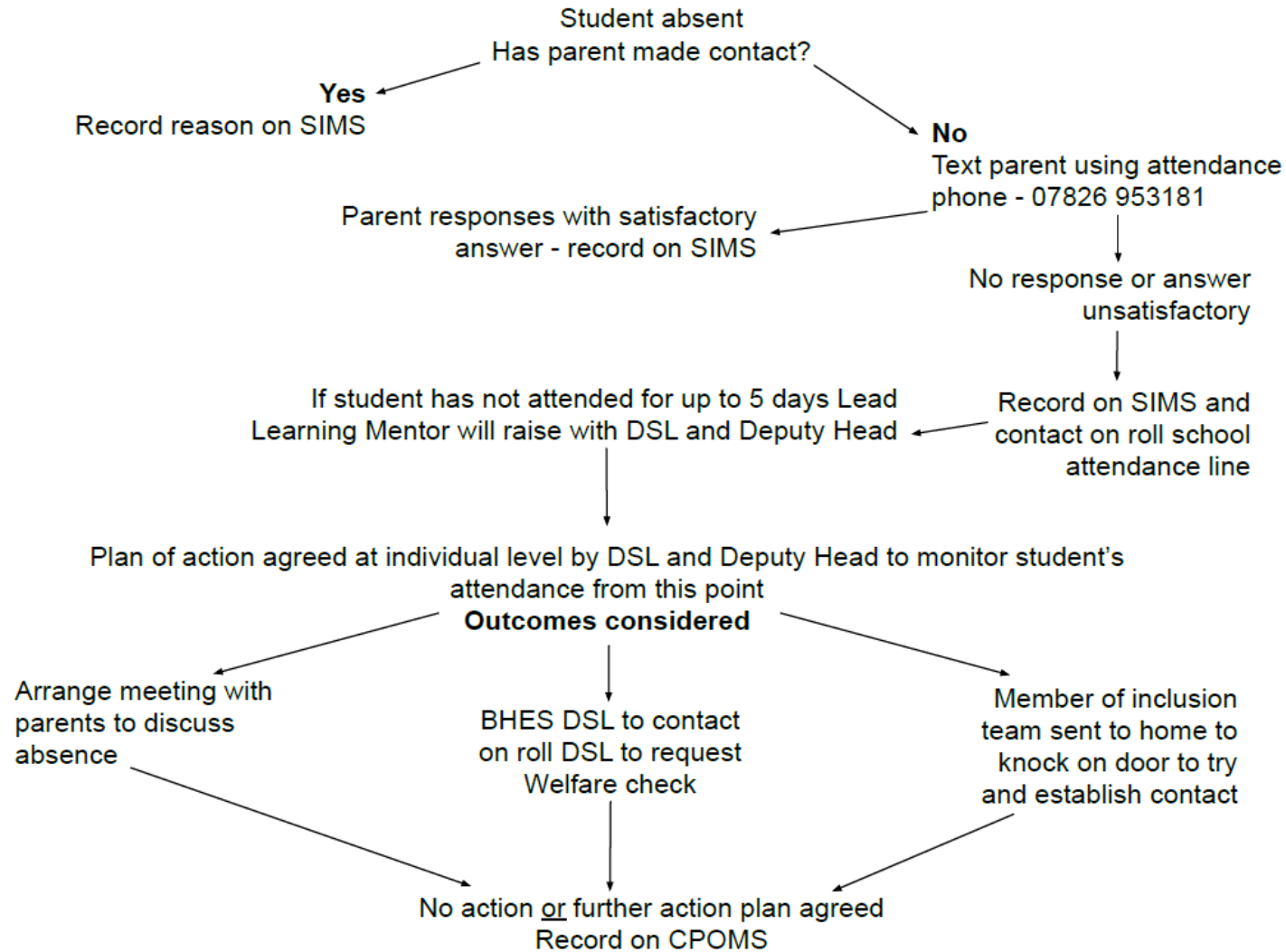
## Appendix 2: Contact Plan 1:1

### 1:1 Attendance - Contact Plan



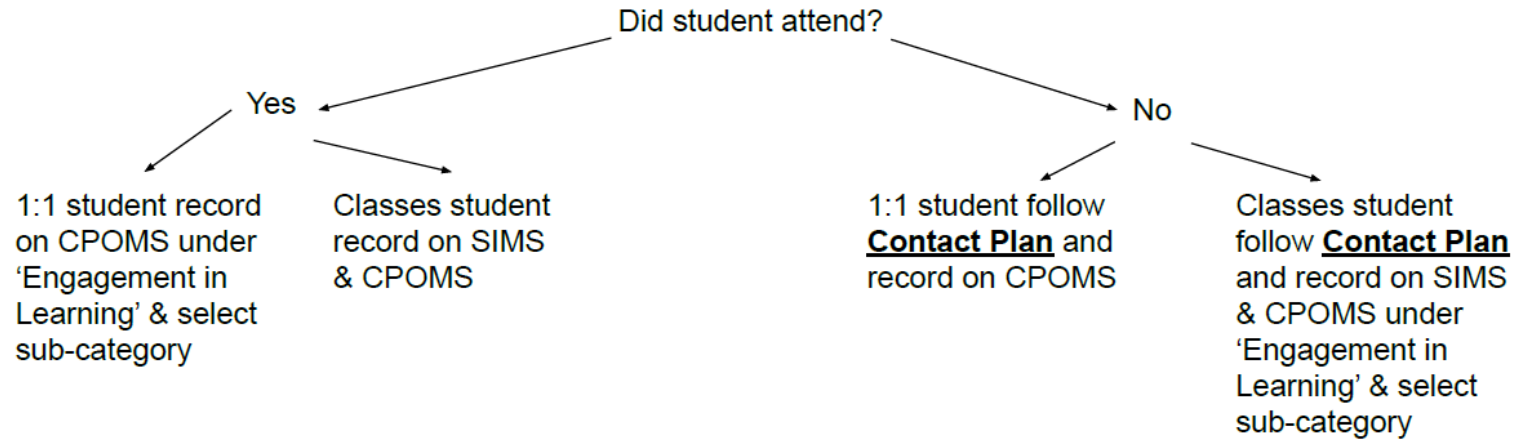
### Appendix 3: Contact Plan classes

## Classes Attendance - Contact Plan



## Appendix 4: Outreach/virtual recording of attendance

### Outreach/Virtual recording of attendance



### Recording on SIMS

- Log in
- Focus - Attendance - Edit Marks
- Enter mark (right click to see codes)
- Enter comment (right click) if necessary
- Add C's to all sessions student is not required to attend

**Note:** If you are unclear as to if a student is 1:1 or Classes this information is on CPOMS



## Appendix 5: Self Harm procedure



### BHES Procedure for Onsite Deliberate Self-Harm

(developed in consultation with Bristol CAHMS)

- **ZERO TOLERANCE TO TALK**  
It is not appropriate or healthy to talk about self-harm or suicide to other students in school please find an adult if you need to talk if you need support.
- **IF YOU SELF-HARM AT BHES**  
You must have one day at home reflection time if you deliberately self-harm at BHES. You will be told you have a 'day of reflection' due to the self-harm.
- **VISIBLE SELF-HARM INJURIES/MARKS**  
If you come to BHES with healing self-harm injuries, they must be covered or dressed. If you have self-harm scars they must be covered at all times.
- **WHO WILL BE INFORMED?**  
Your parents/carers will be informed.  
It will also be considered if any agencies working with you need to know.
- **FIRST AID**  
You will be offered first aid.  
An ambulance will be called if necessary.