Attendance Policy

Ricards Lodge High School

CONTENTS

Attendance at Ricards Lodge High School

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all students can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – students need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less at secondary school.

The government expects schools and local authorities to:
- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

We firmly believe that:
- Every child has a fundamental and legal right to be educated.
- Parents and teachers have a legal duty to ensure maximum attendance at school.
- Attendance at school on a regular basis is essential for our students to achieve.

We are committed to reducing the overall level of absence of our students in order to reduce its impact upon their learning and maximise their potential for the future.

We recognise that persistent absence can have a detrimental impact upon our students in a number of ways and our work in this area is vital and plays an integral part of our intention to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that students succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that students have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.
- Raise awareness of the need for our students to attend school on a regular basis amongst their parents and carers.

Aims
We are committed to improving levels of school attendance and punctuality. We aim to do this by:
- Enabling maximum student attendance through valuing and promoting the importance of high attendance and punctuality rates.
- Rewarding students with high levels of attendance and punctuality and those who are significantly improving their attendance and punctuality.
- Encouraging students to take full advantage of their educational opportunities.
- Identifying students with poor attendance or punctuality, **at an early stage.**

➢ Working to resolve any personal or social difficulties that may be contributing to poor attendance and punctuality.
➢ Recognising the external factors which influence students' attendance and punctuality and work in partnership with parents and carers, the Educational Welfare Services and other agencies to address difficulties.
➢ Recognising the internal factors which de-motivate and alienate students and to reduce their influence by maximising positive relationships and meaningful learning experiences by using the curriculum creatively.
➢ Providing effective and efficient systems, which allow us to monitor daily attendance, punctuality and truancy, from school and individual lessons.
➢ Reducing all forms of absenteeism, especially levels of persistent absenteeism.
➢ Using a range of actions and intervention strategies that promote monitoring, review and regular liaison with all parties.

To raise the levels of attendance at Ricards Lodge High School

Promoting Attendance

Positive Attendance: Attendance and Punctuality Incentives and Rewards

The school recognises that by raising awareness of attendance and lateness issues by using a variety of strategies that this will have a positive impact on the overall attendance and punctuality figures.

➢ Certificates and Vivo Points will be awarded termly to those students who have achieved 100% attendance.
➢ Each Tutor will award weekly Vivo Points to individual students with 100% attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Procedures and Guidance

➢ Students should make their way to tutor rooms for an 8.35am start. The register should be taken at the start of the session using SIMS. (If SIMS is not available, a list of absent students should be sent by the Tutor to the Attendance Office by 8.45am.)

➢ Students who arrive late to school should be marked as late on SIMS by the Tutor. The L code should be used and the number of minutes late to school should be added.

➢ If students arrive after Tutor time, they are expected to sign in at the Attendance Office and provide a reason for their lateness.

➢ For any absences to be monitored, staff should ensure that they have registered their class within the first ten minutes of a lesson.

Absence Procedures

Definitions
Authorised absences are mornings (Registration and Periods 1 to 4) or afternoons (Period 5) away from school for a good reason such as illness, or another unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' has been given. This includes:
➢ Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
➢ Truancy before or during the school day
➢ Absences which have never properly been explained

Absence Procedure for Parents
➢ Parents are asked to contact the school by telephone by 8.30am if their child is going to be absent.
➢ Parents are expected to phone each morning unless they have specified the number of days their child will be absent.
➢ Parents should also contact the school if they are aware that their child will be late to school for a known reason.

Absence Procedures for School Attendance Officer
The school uses an automated text system for informing parents and carers of any child's absences from school. It is designed to assist with the monitoring of absence and provides a quick and easy method of communication between school and home.

➢ On the first day of an unexplained absence an automated text will be activated by the Attendance Officer after 9:30am for contact to be made with home to confirm the absence.
Any follow up phone call made from parents and carers to the attendance office will be recorded on SIMS by the Attendance Officer.
➢ If absences are unauthorised for more than two days, then the Attendance Officer will inform via email the Headteacher, AHT (Attendance), Safe Guarding Officer, Head of Year, the Police Safety Officer and EWO for parents / carers to be contacted to ascertain the reason for the absence.
➢ Information will be distributed to Tutors and Heads of Years on a weekly basis.

Absence Procedure for Tutors
➢ Tutors will be sent the updated Attendance Tracker each week.
➢ Tutors should praise all students with 100% attendance for the previous week.
➢ Tutors should discuss attendance with all Tutees whose attendance fell the week before and ascertain reasons for the absence.
➢ All students in the blue zone (3 weeks of drop) should be identified as a priority even if they are not considered a PA to ensure early intervention.
➢ Any on-going concerns should be raised with the Head of Year and the Attendance Officer.
➢ The Tutor should request a written note from a student on their return from absence. This is a requirement of the school.

➢ If the Tutor does receive a note, they should clear the absence on Sims. Only the codes stated in this policy are to be used by the Tutor. Any other reason for absence must be referred to the Attendance Officer for the relevant code.

➢ If the Tutor does not receive a note after five days they should inform the Head of Year, or Attendance Officer. Parents and carers are asked to provide reasons for their child's absences. The school will decide if the absence is authorised.

Students Late to School (with no valid reason)

➢ Students who are late to school with no valid reason are expected to complete a 30-minute Late detention on the same day. The Heads of Years and Deputy Heads of Years are responsible for Late detentions and organising the rota.

➢ This increases to an SLT 60-minute detention if there is no improvement to punctuality or if a student fails to attend Late detention.

Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time (see appendix B)

The Government has made it clear that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time except in exceptional circumstances. The Governors of Ricards Lodge High School believe that leave of absence during term time should be avoided as it can have a damaging effect on a students' education and overall achievement. However, it is recognised that on occasions there may be extenuating or compassionate reasons that justify such leave.

➢ Leave of absence in exceptional circumstances is authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. (This is not an automatic right of parents/carers).

➢ You should not normally take your child(ren) on a leave of absence during the school term.

➢ A leave of absence should not be booked since authority may or may not be given.

➢ Each request for leave of absence will be considered individually, taking into account: the circumstances for the request, the supporting evidence provided, the overall attendance of your child(ren), your child's stage of education and progress and where appropriate both internal and external examinations and assessments.

➢ If the absence is approved by the Headteacher you will be advised as to how many days, the Headteacher has approved for your child's absence.

➢ If the school does not agree the absence and you take the leave without permission or your child is absent for more than the agreed number of days, the absence will be unauthorised.

➢ Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school may lead to your child(ren) being referred to the Education Welfare Service and the possibility of statutory action and a fine.

➢ Parents wishing to apply for their child(ren) to have leave from school should complete the "Leave of Absence" form available from the school office and return it to the school for authorisation at least **one month** in advance of the proposed leave. Absences should not be booked until permission is received for the leave to be taken.

> ➢ A letter outlining the decision of the school will be sent to parents and carers within 7 days.
> ➢ Any leave of absence that is not authorised is very likely to result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the London Borough of Merton. The Penalty Notice carries a fine of £120.

Taking or allowing your child to take an absence in term time without the school's permission is a serious matter. If we find that you have done so, then the unauthorised absence may contribute to the issuing of a standard penalty notice warning.

Absence Checks and Monitoring
The following checks are carried out by the Attendance Officer:

Daily Duties
Morning Session

> ➢ Check registers for the previous day – resolve all housekeeping for the previous day including clearing missing marks and unexplained absences.
> ➢ Check the AM registers have been taken.
> ➢ Input late marks.
> ➢ Check phone messages – amend marks where appropriate add notes to SIMS
> ➢ Chase missing registers for the AM Session.
> ➢ Aim to get registers up to date between 9.30am-10.00am ready to complete first day calling/texting.
> ➢ E-mail the missing registers and students marked in, when absent to AHT (Attendance) and staff.
> ➢ Send the punctuality report to Heads of Year and Deputy Heads of Year.
> ➢ Fire drill registers are printed and stored for use in the event of a fire drill.
> ➢ Monitored students are checked to see if they have attended during each lesson. Parents / relevant agencies are called if a student has not attended a lesson. Head of Year and SENCO are informed if a monitored student has not attended a lesson.
> ➢ Phone calls home to parents of monitored students if they are absent.

Late Morning/Afternoon Session

> ➢ Ensure the PM registers are input.
> ➢ Chase any of the missing PM registers.
> ➢ Resolve any housekeeping issues.

Weekly Duties
> ➢ Ensure all housekeeping is cleared by Friday afternoon – clear all missing marks and unexplained absences for the week where possible. Ensure that there are no mistakes or queries on the data before the attendance tracker is updated by the AHT (Attendance).
> ➢ Attend attendance meetings with HOY.
> ➢ Send letters as agreed in the attendance meeting.
> ➢ Send Leave of absence letters.
> ➢ Send percentage attendance report for previous week for school bulletin

Termly Duties
- ➢ Housekeeping on attendance data prior to the CENSUS check.
- ➢ Provide any statistical reports requested by AHT (Attendance).
- ➢ Produce attendance certificates for Year Group assemblies as requested by Heads of Years.

Annual Duties
- ➢ Meet with the Attendance Team to discuss progress for the year and to agree any forward going actions.

Addressing Serious Attendance Concerns
The school will work closely with other agencies to seek support for individual students with a view to securing regular and sustained attendance. These agencies include:
The Education Welfare Service (EWS)
The Educational Psychologist
Children and Family Services
Social Services
The Health Service
The School's Inclusion Team
The Police
CAMHS

Identifying students below 95%

- ➢ The Attendance Officer and the Head of Year will meet on a weekly basis. This allows each Head of Year to monitor the progress of the students in their Year group who are causing concern about attendance. The Attendance Tracker will be updated with notes on all students whose absence is of concern, ready to be reviewed by AHT(Attendance) and EWO on a weekly basis.
- ➢ The EWO and AHT (Attendance) will meet once a week to discuss all students of concern focussing on those who are categorised as PAs (90% and below).
- ➢ The Headteacher, the Safeguarding Officer and AHT (Attendance) will meet once a fortnight to review all PAs and any other students with an absence of 3 consecutive weeks.
- ➢ All parents of students who have an attendance level below 95% are contacted by the Head of Year and invited to attend a meeting to discuss reasons for level of attendance and to make them aware that we are monitoring the situation.
- ➢ Most students with an attendance level of below 95% will be placed on a Year group attendance project.
- ➢ Providing the appropriate referral criteria have been met as shown on the EWS referral form, then referrals can be made to the EWS for support and early intervention.
- ➢ On the 'Buy Back Day', any student with/or without parent consent, requested by Head of Year, Headteacher, Safe Guarding Officer or AHT (Attendance) will be seen by the EWO. Referrals can also be made for home visits.
- ➢ The Head of Year will make all concerns clear to the Tutor who can provide additional support.

If Attendance Does Not Improve

There are a number of strategies available to the school to address on-going attendance concerns. These may be applied at various times depending upon the nature of the absence, the level of communication with parents or the circumstances surrounding the student.

- ➢ A meeting may be convened by the Head of Year or AHT (Attendance) and/or EWO with parents / carers to discuss the concerns and put actions in place to resolve any issues and raise the level of attendance.
- ➢ Requests might be made to parents/carers for medical evidence from the GP to explain persistent absence.
- ➢ A referral may be made to the school nurse.
- ➢ If necessary, an Interagency Planning Meeting will be called with the parents and all other relevant agencies. A decision will then be taken about appropriateness of referral and further actions.
- ➢ A Penalty Notice warning may be issued and the student as an open case would be monitored for 6 weeks to ensure attendance is improving.
- ➢ If attendance does not improve then a Penalty Notice could be issued.
- ➢ Court action may be taken.

Following up Truancy

Identifying students who are truanting will be done by a variety of ways:
- ➢ Class teachers seeing that a student is absent when they have a present mark for the previous lesson.
- ➢ Spot check of students by Attendance Officer or Head of Year.
- ➢ Regular monitoring of students who are known to truant.
- ➢ Students who do truant will be placed on report to the Head of Year.

Informing Parents

- ➢ Parents are telephoned straight away by the Attendance Officer, School Office (in the absence of the Attendance Officer) or Head of Year to inform them that the student is truanting.
- ➢ Parents may be asked to come into school to discuss concerns.

Action for Student

- ➢ Arrangements are made for the student to make up the time missed in lessons
- ➢ Student is monitored by the Head of Year / Attendance Officer daily.

Continued Truanting

- ➢ A meeting with the Head of Year, Student, Parents/carers, EWO (if necessary) and AHT (if necessary).
- ➢ As SSP may need to be implemented and the legal position outlined with possible consequences if the situation persists.

Chasing up Student Absence

Tutor Responsibility

- ➢ To clear the absence of their tutees not already cleared by Head of Year or Attendance Officer.

Procedures
- ➢ Tutors will receive a weekly print out of currently unauthorised absences to aid with the identification of absences that need clarifying.
- ➢ Tutors should clear absences when they have received communication as to the reason for the absence. This may take the form of a phone call, letter or note in the planner.
- ➢ Lists of absence codes are available on SIMS.

Lack of Communication from Parents
- ➢ Tutors can put a note in planners or call parents to ask if reasons are not forthcoming.
- ➢ Any assistance required by Tutors can be provided by the Head of Year, Deputy Head of Year or Attendance Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff will actively promote the importance of full attendance and punctuality by close liaison with parents and those responsible for the care of students. Parents/carers will be made aware of the school's expectation prior to the child's admission through the Home School Agreement. At all times, the school will seek a positive partnership with parents/carers in all aspects of their child's education, including attendance and punctuality.

Students should:
- ➢ Arrive at school on time and attend Tutor Time.
- ➢ Attend all lessons on time.
- ➢ Remain on the school site during the hours of 8:35am to 3.00pm.
- ➢ Sign out at the Attendance Office when authorised to leave the site before 3.00pm.
- ➢ Monitor their individual attendance using their planner to record their weekly attendance and in discussion with the tutor who will make use of the Attendance Tracker.
- ➢ Catch up with any work missed due to lateness or absence.

Tutors should:
- ➢ Follow the Attendance procedure for Tutors.
- ➢ Provide accurate registration data and the sending of this data promptly to the Attendance Officer.
- ➢ Use the Attendance Tracker weekly to monitor all students whose attendance drops. This includes students who are not PAs.
- ➢ Allocate one Tutor time a week to discuss attendance issues with specific Tutees who have been absent the previous week.
- ➢ Use the Attendance Tracker to monitor and take responsibility for attendance issues within their Tutor Group.
- ➢ Inform Head of Year and/or Attendance Officer of any concerns.
- ➢ Remind their tutor group what the school means by excellent and good attendance.
- ➢ Keep attendance and punctuality high profile throughout the year, and award Vivo points each week to those students who attended every day and have not been late.
- ➢ Display the attendance tracker traffic lights poster on the Tutor noticeboard.

➢ Remind their tutor group that: The Government has an expectation that school will set appropriate targets for attendance and the Local Authority supports the school in their expectation that students will have an attendance level of 95% or above as a minimum.

Parents should:
➢ Ensure that their children arrive at school on time.
➢ Ensure that their children attend all lessons on time.
➢ Contact the Attendance Officer before 8.35am on each day of absence.
➢ Avoid any absence from school e.g. for medical or dental appointments.
➢ Contact the school promptly in the case of any unavoidable absence.
➢ Keep the school informed of any continuing and unavoidable absences.
➢ Ensure that their children catch up with any work missed due to lateness or absence.

Parents are asked to supply reasons for their child's absence. It is however the school that authorises the absence. If parents have any doubts concerning the authorisation of planned absences, they are to contact the relevant Head of Year. Leave of absence requests will only be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion. (Appendix B)

Classroom Teachers are Responsible for:
➢ Maintaining an attendance register for every lesson.
➢ Reporting suspicious absences to the tutor, Head of Year or Attendance Officer.
➢ All subject teachers should take a register within the first ten minutes of each lesson using Sims. If this is not possible a paper register should be used and passed to the Attendance Officer.
➢ Preparing well planned, structured and motivational lessons which engage students in their own learning and thereby minimise disaffection and de-motivation which may lead to unauthorised absence. Key factors in this are the provision of learning materials and learning progressions which are at the appropriate level to challenge and engage students and appropriate support for students in their learning interactions.
➢ Recording a student as late on Sims if he/she arrives after the start of the lesson. The number of minutes a student is late should be recorded and consequences implemented.
➢ **Students removed from timetabled lessons:** All staff who are working with students outside of their normal lessons must ensure that they are registered.

Heads of Years are Responsible for:
➢ Having a clear overview of attendance and punctuality issues within the Year group.
➢ Heads of Year will monitor and take responsibility for attendance issues below 95% and any student whose attendance has fallen for three consecutive weeks.
➢ Setting in place Home / School contracts to improve attendance of students who have an attendance level of below 93% for no justified reason.
➢ Meet with tutors on a regular basis and discuss individual attendance concerns and ensuring that all actions have been carried out by Tutors as detailed in this policy.

➢ Attending a weekly meeting with the Attendance Officer to discuss attendance issues (of 92% or less)
➢ Focussing and making a difference of PAs who are 89%
➢ Setting and maintaining high expectations for attendance and achievement.
➢ Presenting the 100% attendance awards in Year Assemblies.
➢ Referring to the importance of attendance and punctuality in routine contacts with parents and students.
➢ Monitoring the work of the tutor team in fulfilling responsibilities for attendance.
➢ Assisting in the processing and leave of absence requests when required.
➢ Concerns regarding unauthorised absence and casual truancy.
➢ Regular contact with the Attendance Officer to discuss specific attendance issues and complete all relevant paper work.
➢ Discuss attendance concerns across the Year Group with Deputy Head of Year and implement interventions as required.

Attendance Officer is Responsible for:
➢ Maintaining accurate records of attendance.
➢ Assisting with the recording, tracking and communication of punctuality data.
➢ First day contact with parents of monitored students in the case of unexplained absences.
➢ Ensure that the School automated text system informs parents / carers of any child's absence from school daily.
➢ Providing attendance and punctuality data for Heads of Years as requested.
➢ Processing Absence request forms.
➢ Attending weekly meeting with Head of Year and EWO to discuss attendance concerns in each Year Group.
➢ Providing paperwork as required for attendance SSP meetings and attend these meetings if requested.
➢ Providing attendance and punctuality data for the Local Authority as required.
➢ Completing DfE returns as requested.
➢ Keeping the Official Register up to date.

Assistant Headteacher is Responsible for:
➢ Leading all staff in an understanding of the importance of attendance.
➢ Ensuring that all staff, students and parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities within the policy.
➢ Updating the Attendance Tracker weekly and distributing the Tutor version to Heads of Years.
➢ Support and monitor Heads of Years to enable them to fulfil their duties within the policy.
➢ Supporting and monitoring the Attendance Officer in fulfilling their responsibilities within the policy.
➢ Acting as the main contact for the Local Authority and other agencies for strategic planning around attendance and punctuality issues.
➢ Reporting on policy, practice and outcomes to the Headteacher and the Governing Body.
➢ Identifying the need for and providing access to training and professional development for staff to support the School's work on improving and maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.

The Headteacher is Responsible for:
- Leading, supporting and monitoring the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for attendance and punctuality in fulfilling their responsibilities within the policy.
- Maintaining the profile of attendance at all levels within the school.
- Reporting accurate data to Local Authority officers and the DfE as required.
- Evaluating and reviewing the policy with Governors.
- Approving or disapproving all Leave of Absence requests.

The Local Authority is Responsible for:
- Supporting and guiding the school by providing regular meetings with an EWO
- The documentation and proformas for relevant procedures.
- The legal costs for any representation in court. The LA provides representation for court action however the awarding of costs is at the gift of the court and the LA is not responsible for any costs incurred by witnesses who may be called to attend from the school.

Children at Risk
- Some children who experience certain life events are more at risk of going missing from education.
- Ricards Lodge High School, has a statutory duty to identify children who are not receiving education.

  #### The school will implement the following:

- If a student is missing from day 1 to day 3 the family will be contacted and every effort will be made to locate the student (ask friends, home visit by EWO and/or School's Safety Officer).

- If a child has been missing for 5 days and no contact with home can be made, then a letter needs to be sent home requesting the child's return to school. If there is a CP issue, then contact the school's Safeguarding officer sooner.

- By day 10 if no contact has been made then a letter and phone call should be made to the EWS outlining what the school has done. The CTF should be completed via S2S entering missing pupil.

- All staff need to be vigilant and inform the Headteacher, Safeguarding officer, AHT (Attendance) and Attendance Officer of any concerns they may have regarding attendance and punctuality.

- The Safeguarding officer will be kept informed of any children who go missing.

Children Missing Education in line with the new requirements from September 2016

The new Children Missing Education statutory guidance for Local Authorities (September 2016) and keeping Children Safe in Education (August 2016) guidance places a statutory duty on the school to collect information during the admissions procedure and again when the child is leaving the school. It is the school's responsibility to make reasonable enquiries to ascertain this information and that

investigations as to the whereabouts of children is a shared responsibility between the school and the LA.

The school will:

➢ Ensure that there is an accurate admission register.
➢ Tell the local authority within 5 days of all admissions.
➢ If taking a child off roll record consult with the LA in specific circumstances (joint decision).
➢ Tell the local authority before or on the day of taking any student off roll and record the code under which the child has come off roll.
➢ Collect data from the parents about where that child is going, what school, address and contact details.
➢ Use the school to school (s2s) database to log all missing children.
➢ Share this information safely with LA.

The Admission and Attendance Registers

The school has both an admission register and, an attendance register. All students are placed on both registers.

Contents of Admission Register

The admission register must contain the personal details of every student in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

Expected First Day of Attendance

The school will enter students on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend the school. For most students, the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

If a student fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

Putting children on roll

The school will notify Merton Local Authority **within five days** of adding a student's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification will include all the details contained in the admission register for the new student. The school will notify the LA about all admissions at standard admission points.
The Office Manager will run a weekly report on a Friday pm so that this meets the 5-day notification requirement.

The School's Office Manager will provide the information to the LA using the School Admission Module (SAM) and ticking the column to indicate that the student has started.

Taking Students off roll

The school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the student's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii) (see Annex A form the statutory guidance).

The School's Office Manager on behalf of the school will tell the Local Authority when a child comes off roll by or before the date on which they are taken off roll. The school must collect key data and obtain agreement (if applicable) if the child can come off roll and the code under which this is agreed.

Seeking advice from the Local Authority about taking a child off roll

➢ The school will seek advice in advance of removing a student from roll in the following circumstances:
➢ Where the parent is proposing to home educate
➢ Where the child or family are missing and the school is unable to contact by letter or telephone
➢ Where the child is an open case to the Education Welfare Service
➢ Where the family have moved house and the school does not know where they will be educated
➢ Where the child is moving and the school does not know where they are going
➢ Where the school is unable to get the information to enable the school to comply with the law in reporting off rolling to the LA
➢ Where the child is on a legal plan with social care (Child Protection/Child in need, Youth Justice Plan)
➢ In other circumstances where the school have concerns.
➢ Where the child has an EHCP/Statement of Education Need by consulting with the SEN department which maintains the EHCP or statement.
➢ Where the child is looked after by a local authority the school will consult with the Virtual School.

There is no need to seek advice before taking students off roll if:

➢ The child is transferring to a named school/academy and the school has confirmed a start date/ transferred their common transfer file (ctf) via school to school secure access S2S using the 3 digit LA number and 4 digit school number.
➢ The child/family are going/have gone abroad and the school has all the necessary information about their onwards destination and the school has transferred their common transfer file via (ctf) via school to school secure access S2S using the Abroad outside the maintained sector (7 M's coding)
➢ The child has died
➢ At the end of compulsory education (Last Friday in June in the academic year that the child turns 16) except where the child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs / EHCP and post 16 provision hasn't been finalised.

Reasonable Enquiries prior to taking off roll.

In line with the duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, the school and the local authority have procedures in place to carry out reasonable enquiries.

- ➢ Heads of Years or Inclusion checking with relatives.
- ➢ School Safety officer or EWO checking with neighbours, landlords – private or social housing providers – and other local stakeholders who are involved.
- ➢ If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children's social care via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub if a Merton child. If not then the Social care of the LA they live in and the police if appropriate.
- ➢ All enquiries made should be recorded as evidence.

Informing the local authority when taking a child off roll

The School Office Manager when removing a student's name, the School Office Manager will notify the local authority of:

(a) the full name of the student

(b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides,

(c) at least one telephone number of the parent,

(d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and

(e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the student's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).

The School will collect and share this information with Merton LA under the Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance. The home borough of the child is entered on to the on and off roll spreadsheets as It is the responsibility of Merton LA to notify other LAs where the child resides about on and off rolling.

Home Educated Children

On receipt of written notification to home educate, the school will inform the student's local authority that the student is to be deleted from the admission register. The school will not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the student or because the student has a poor attendance record.

The school will not seek to prevent parents from educating their children outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home.

Absence and Attendance Codes

The school follows the national codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps the school, Merton local authority and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. (**Appendix C for the codes**).

Appendix A:
Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended

8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.

8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.

8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.

8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.

8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.

8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that –
(i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted;
(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
(iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.

8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and –
 (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);
(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and

(iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.

8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.

8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.

8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and–
(i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or
(ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.

8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.

8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.

8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.

8(1)(o) where–
(i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy;
(ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and
(iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

<u>Appendix B Leave of Absence Request Front of Letter 1</u>
Ricards Lodge High School
ABSENCE AND EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE

The Governors of Ricards Lodge High School believe that leave of absence during term time should be avoided as it can have a damaging effect on a student's education and overall achievement. However, it is recognised that on occasions there may be extenuating or compassionate reasons that justify such leave.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment Regulations 2013
state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

With regard to the regulation outlined above the school policy is as follows:

1. Parents and carers must request leave for exceptional circumstances as far in advance as possible.
2. The request should be made in writing using the leave of absence form. (Available from the school office)
3. This must include the reason why you feel that it is necessary to take a leave of absence. This may include any extenuating or compassionate reasons, including evidence of circumstances such as medical certificate or letter from employers.

On receipt of an application for leave on the appropriate form together with any supporting documentation, consideration will be given to the circumstance. A letter outlining the decision of the school will be sent to you within 7 days.

Any leave of absence that is not authorised is very likely to result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the London Borough of Merton. The Penalty Notice carries a fine of £120.

Appendix B Leave of Absence Request Back of Letter 1
Ricards Lodge High School Leave of Absence Form
LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

Request for Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstances during Term Time
It is not advisable to take your child/ren on a leave of absence during term time as this causes disruption to their education. Schools must follow the law in this regard and may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances if certain criteria are fulfilled.

The Pupil Registration Regulations (England) 2006 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances is authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. (This is not an automatic right of parents/carers)
- You should not normally take your child(ren) on a leave of absence during the school term.
- Please do not book your leave of absence since authority may or may not be given.
- Each request for leave of absence will be considered individually, taking into account: the circumstances for the request, the supporting evidence provided, the overall attendance of your child(ren), your child's stage of education and progress and where appropriate both internal and external examinations and assessments.
- If the absence is approved by the Headteacher you will be advised as to how many days the Headteacher has approved for your child's absence.
- If the school does not agree the absence and you take the leave without permission or your child is absent for more than the agreed number of days the absence will be unauthorised.
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school may lead to your child(ren) being referred to the Education Welfare Service and the possibility of statutory action and a fine.

In order for your application for absence to be considered, please complete below:

Name(s) of Child(ren) ....

Tutor Group ....

Home address: ....

Dates of absence: From: .... To: ....

Reason for request (additional evidence may be required)

....

Signed: Parent/Carer ....

Email address:..   Mobile phone number:...

Date form submitted: ....

The above request for leave of absence in term time for ....……………………………….

has/has not been authorised. If authorised, your child/ren should return to school on: ....

....

....

....

Signed... Headteacher Mrs Jerrard

Name of parent
Address
Xxxxxxxxx
Xxxxxxxxx

Date

Appendix B Letter 2 Leave of Absence

Dear ....,

Re: Leave of Absence Request for: Name... Form/Class:

Thank you for submitting a request for your daughter to have leave of absence from school between .... and ....

I am afraid I am unable to authorise the leave of absence as the circumstances outlined do not meet the Schools Governors Policy on leave of absence as covered in the school Attendance Policy. (Policy attached)

Should you choose to ignore this refusal, any absences will be unauthorised. It is very likely that the matter will result in a Penalty Notice, which carries a fine of £120. In the event if this is not paid the Education Authority may institute court action, which on conviction could result in a fine up to £1000 and a criminal conviction.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Jerrard
Headteacher

c.c.   File
        EWS

NAME AND ADDRESS

DATE

Dear XXXX

Re: Student Name XXXX   D.O.B.   XXXX   -   Form/Class XX

<u>Appendix B Letter 3 PENALTY NOTICE REFERRAL</u>

I am writing to inform you that a referral has been made to the London Borough of Merton Education Welfare Service to initiate the issuing of a Penalty Notice. The reason for the referral is unauthorised leave of absence.

The School has a clear policy regarding attendance and leave of absence. The policies are in place to ensure students achieve their full potential, as there is a clear link between poor attendance and underachievement. In this case it is felt the policy has not been followed and therefore the referral has been made.

I would ask for your full support with regard to Student Name attendance in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Alison Jerrard
Headteacher

c.c.   File
          EWS

Appendix C Absence and Attendance Codes

Present at School

students must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes. Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Consortia Schools Pupils attending consortia schools as part of their course only need to be placed on the registers of their 'main' school rather than on all the schools they attend.

They should be treated as guest pupils at the other consortia schools. The consortia schools however, must ensure they have suitable systems in place for monitoring and reporting the attendance and absence of the pupils involved, which must be shared with the 'main' school.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that 10 the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The

main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education.

Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made, they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which 12 the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as

other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School
Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.
If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided
Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for 13 absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation
If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed
Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Administrative Codes
The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school
This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:
   ➢ The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
   ➢ The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance
   ➢ A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register
This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
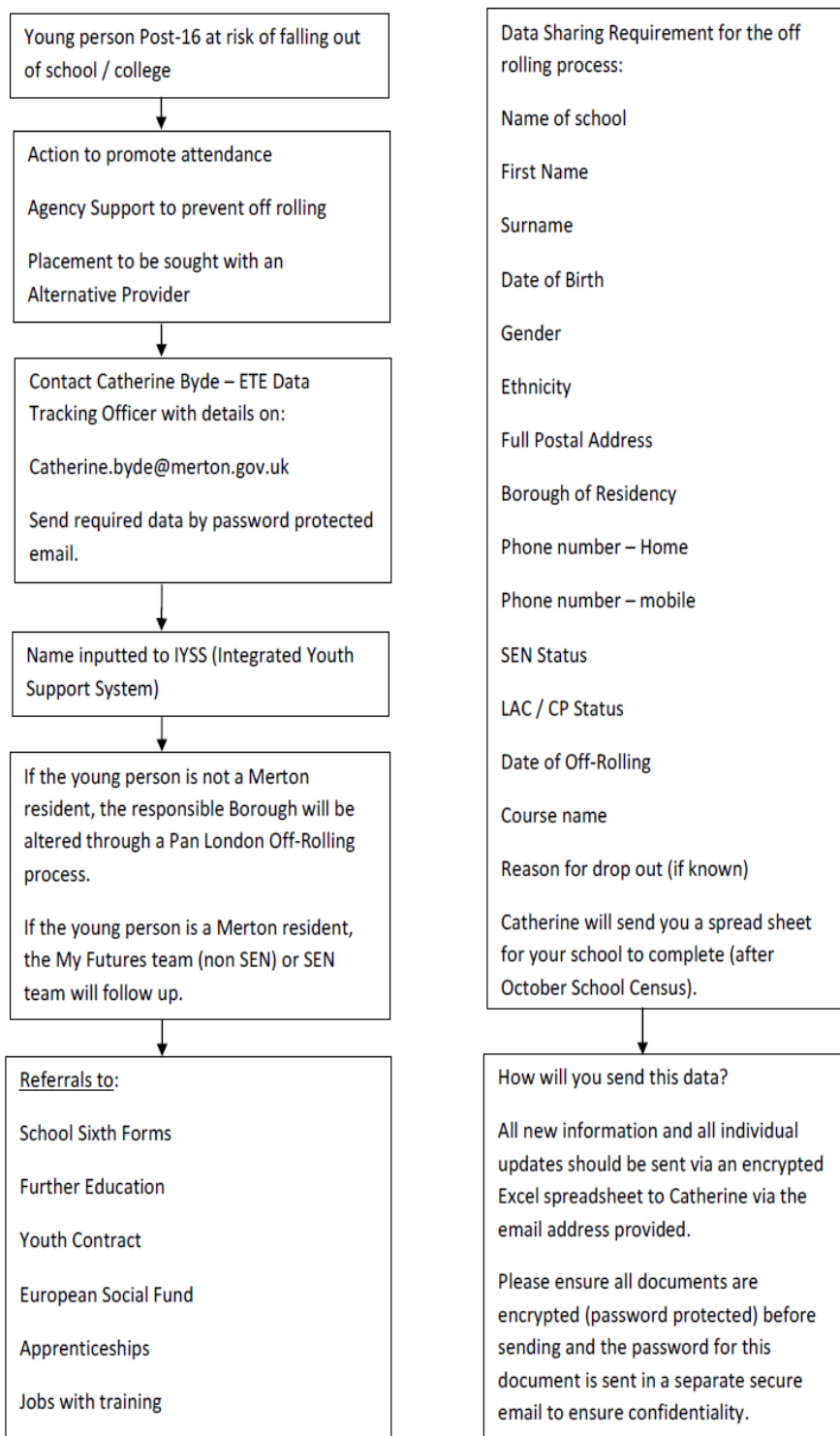
Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training.

London Borough of Merton Off-Rolling Procedure for RPA

From September 2013 all schools and colleges are under a new duty to inform the local authority if any young person post 16 is going off roll. Below describes Merton's process

---

Young person Post-16 at risk of falling out of school / college

↓

Action to promote attendance

Agency Support to prevent off rolling

Placement to be sought with an Alternative Provider

↓

Contact Catherine Byde – ETE Data Tracking Officer with details on:

Catherine.byde@merton.gov.uk

Send required data by password protected email.

↓

Name inputted to IYSS (Integrated Youth Support System)

↓

If the young person is not a Merton resident, the responsible Borough will be altered through a Pan London Off-Rolling process.

If the young person is a Merton resident, the My Futures team (non SEN) or SEN team will follow up.

↓

Referrals to:

School Sixth Forms

Further Education

Youth Contract

European Social Fund

Apprenticeships

Jobs with training

Data Sharing Requirement for the off rolling process:

Name of school

First Name

Surname

Date of Birth

Gender

Ethnicity

Full Postal Address

Borough of Residency

Phone number – Home

Phone number – mobile

SEN Status

LAC / CP Status

Date of Off-Rolling

Course name

Reason for drop out (if known)

Catherine will send you a spread sheet for your school to complete (after October School Census).

↓

How will you send this data?

All new information and all individual updates should be sent via an encrypted Excel spreadsheet to Catherine via the email address provided.

Please ensure all documents are encrypted (password protected) before sending and the password for this document is sent in a separate secure email to ensure confidentiality.

Please complete all columns and return to Catherine Byde - catherine.byde@merton.gov.uk - as and when a pupil is taken Off Roll
Please ensure that prior to returning this data you password protect the document and advise Catherine of the password in a separate e-mail or telephone call

Name of School/College/Establishment	Pupils First Name	Pupils Surname	Pupils DOB	Pupils Gender	Pupils Ethnicity	Pupils Address	Postcode	Borough of Residency	Home Telephone Number
Example School	Barry	Mumford	25/07/1996	Male	White British	London Road, Morden	SM4 5DX	Merton	0208 545 XXXX

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