ATTENDANCE POLICY

SCHOOL STATEMENT ON ATTENDANCE

- Good attendance by pupils and staff is part of this school's daily life
- We ensure dedicated time and resources, including the employment of additional staff as needed, e.g. home-school liaison worker
- We ensure a high quality curriculum and teaching
- We ensure support is in place to meet the individual needs of every pupil
- We have procedures in place that are monitored and reviewed with the input of staff, pupils and parents
- We make decisions based on evidence, including through regular data analysis
- We fast track attendance issues with an emphasis on early intervention and referral to external agencies when required;
- We work in partnerships with the local community, businesses and parents

TARGETS

- The use of targets is embedded throughout our school community
- We regularly set and review achievable but challenging attendance targets for the whole school, individual pupils and specific groups as required
- We publish our targets to staff, pupils and parents in reports, newsletters and on our website
- We compare our attendance with other schools by using national and local data, and strive to ensure that our attendance remains above the national average.

DATA

- We use effective electronic recording systems to ensure our data is reliable
- We analyse our data to:
  - Understand the reasons our pupils are absent from school
  - Identify:
    - Vulnerable pupils
    - Pupils who are or may become Persistent Absentees (PA – any pupil whose attendance is at or below 85%)
  - Measure the impact of our teaching and learning on attendance
  - Evidence links between attendance and:
    - Attainment
    - Exclusions
    - Bullying
    - The support we put in for our pupils with special educational needs
  - Ensure that we allocate time and resources to match levels of need with an emphasis on early intervention
- Data enables us to agree action or support plans, and strategies for:
  - The whole school
  - Individual pupils with attendance difficulties
  - Vulnerable pupils
  - New pupils or those admitted to our school mid-term
  - Pupils returning after a period of absence
  - PA pupils or pupils on track to become PA
  in order to maintain learning and progress
- Data provides evidence to help us review and amend our plans and strategies
- Data reports are provided to our Senior Management Team, our Governing Body, specific groups and individuals pupils, parents, external agencies, the Government

PROCEDURES

We take a fast-track approach to dealing with attendance issues, promoting early intervention and prompt referral to external agencies where needed.

Registration

The register is a legal document and the school complies with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 by taking a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. We use statutory registration codes to indicate which pupils are late, present or absent, and whether any absences are authorised or unauthorised.

- Gates open at 8:40 a.m. pupils may be on site from 8:40 a.m.
- Pupils are expected to be in the classroom by 8:50 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
- Paper registers are completed by the class teacher; any pupil not present at this time are left blank
- Pupils who arrive late must sign in at reception and provide a reason for the late arrival, and then go straight to their classroom, they will be marked 'L' as being late before the close of registers at reception. Any pupil who arrives after 9:30am will be marked with a 'U' as arriving late after the close of registers. Please note the U code is counted as an unauthorised absence and will therefore reduce a child's overall attendance percentage.
- Parents are contacted by the school before 10:00 a.m. to provide a reason for the child's absence
- Any absence deemed by the school to be without good cause or reason will be unauthorised and marked 'O'
- The registration of every pupil is collated and stored on the school's computer system.

Attendance concerns

Concerns may be raised by parents, staff or through data analysis. In order to clarify and address these concerns we use and keep records of a variety of procedures and interventions. These stepped procedures are intended to be in line with any continuation or escalation of the concern but we may skip or repeat steps as appropriate to a pupil's individual needs or circumstances. This will be evidenced by monitoring the impact of interventions whilst taking into account the need to address issues in a timely manner. Our 'escalation' procedures are:

- o Telephone call home made by an appropriate member of staff to alert parent of individual absence or early stages of concern
- o Letter sent home by an appropriate staff member to alert parent of individual absence, overall absence rate, or to invite to a meeting
- o Meeting in school with parent, pupil and appropriate staff to discuss concerns, note pupil/family circumstances that may be affecting attendance, and agree a support plan to address the concerns and improve attendance; this may include temporary alteration to the pupil's timetable or educational provider and/or referral to external agencies. All agreed plans will be monitored and reviewed in consultation with the pupil and parent, and input from external agencies will be expected to build on work carried out by the school

In addition the school will:

- o Publicise school term and holiday dates through newsletters and the website
- o Carry out regular 'register sweeps' where staff will call at the home of any pupil absent from school with no reason in order to discuss this with the parent
- o Conduct 'late gate' initiatives where pupils will be encouraged to arrive at school on time and move promptly to registration; parents will be contacted if their child's punctuality gives cause for concern and the pupil may be subject to sanctions
- o Use a rewards and sanctions system that impacts positively on attendance
- o Offer targeted support for parents including parenting groups and support from the schools home/school liaison worker
- o Referral to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) will be made where concerns continue regarding a pupil's attendance despite evidence that the school has made every effort to bring about improvement through the use of our own support and interventions (as detailed above) and it is agreed that a child's attendance may only be improved with the involvement of a statutory service.

Please note: Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence.

Leave of Absence

Parents must apply to the school in advance for permission for their child to miss school due to a forthcoming, exceptional circumstance. Parents do not have the right or entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday. If a parent feels there are exceptional circumstances that mean the holiday cannot be taken during the thirteen weeks of school holidays an application form (available from the school office) must be completed and submitted with any relevant supporting evidence. In most situations the school will not authorise a pupil's absence due to a

holiday during term time as this will disrupt the pupil's education. If no application is made or we do not give permission for the absence and the holiday is taken the Local Authority (through the EWS) may issue a Penalty Notice fine for £120 if paid within 28 days (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to <u>each parent for each child</u> taken out of school; or may instigate legal proceedings against the parent/s.

Children Missing from Education (CME)
The school will make checks to establish the reason for a pupil's absence but where this is not possible and the parent does not respond to school contact we will refer the pupil to the Local Authority (represented by EWS) as CME (under the Education Act 436A, Chapter 2 Part 6). The EWS will then carry out checks, including with the Police and Social Care where appropriate to determine the wellbeing and safety of the child.

Deletions from the School Roll
Under the Education Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 (R12) we advise the Local Authority (through the EWS) of our intention to delete any child's name from the school roll; this enables checks to be made by EWS, thereby ensuring our compliance with the strict criteria set out in law. Parents should inform the school if their child will not be returning to us; providing details such as your new address, the name of your child's new school, the date of your move, etc.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Staff
- Have good attendance and punctuality
- Model practice in line with school policies
- Know their pupils well
- Use a holistic or 'team around the child' approach to raise and resolve issues
- Act as the 'key worker' as part of support plans when appropriate
- Know and understand their own and others' roles and responsibilities, and apply these consistently
- Take ownership and responsibility for promoting social and emotional skills across the whole school
- Act as a coach or mentor to other staff when requested to do so by senior managers
- Have their skills, knowledge and understanding regularly reviewed and assessed so as to inform their Continuous Professional Development (CPD) timetable. CPD may include formal and informal training, external and in-house, coaching/mentoring, group and individual work

Headteacher
- Provides the school with a strong and determined leadership to improve attendance

Senior Management Team (SMT)
- Work with the Governing Body to agree whole school attendance strategies, policies and procedures
- Ensure that parents are consulted on any changes to the attendance policy
- Model expected attendance practice
- Use data reports and other evidence to analyse the links, correlation and impact between attendance and:
  - Behaviour; attainment; teaching and learning; exclusions; and bullying
- Support the School Attendance Leader and School Attendance Officer
- Ensure a robust staff performance management system that ensures staff skills, knowledge and understanding is assessed so that staff receive CPD in line with the needs of the school
- Ensure there is a planned and comprehensive approach to promoting social and emotional skills within a whole school framework, including assemblies, PSHE lessons, curriculum/focus days, etc
- Ensure the curriculum provision in the learning support unit is of a high standard and pupils are supported to return to the mainstream provision
- Ensure that pastoral support systems are in place and that all staff and pupils are able to access them
- Ensure school ethos, policies and procedures are communicated to parents
- Ensure parents have opportunities to engage with school through a range of community events
- Ensure the local community is encouraged to and knows how to alert the school to concerns about attendance and punctuality

School Attendance Leader (SAL)
- Is a member of the SMT and has a key strategic role in improving attendance with the ability to influence school development and access resources
- Supports the SAO
- Ensures attendance data is accurate and reliable in order to provide reports and commentary to the SMT

School Attendance Officer (SAO)
- Is supported by the SAL and SMT
- Responds to parents' requests for help and support with a child's attendance
- Takes the lead in arranging, monitoring and reviewing individual pupil attendance support plans
- Consults with individual pupils to ensure they know their attendance targets, current levels and how to improve
- Ensures parents are informed when concerns arise about their child's attendance; and that parents are consulted and kept informed of interventions, support, further concerns and/or improvement

Class Teacher
- Engages pupils in an ethos of attendance and learning
- Supports individual pupils with concerns or issues that may affect attendance
- Identifies possible vulnerable pupils and ensures early intervention and support
- Supports and welcomes back pupils following a period of absence and clarifies the reason for absence, taking appropriate action to reduce the possibility of a recurrence

Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) or staff new to the school
- Are supported (mentored/coached) by a named member of staff in attendance issues
- Undergoes an induction process that includes the ethos of 'attendance for learning'

Governing Body
- Works with the Headteacher and SMT to agree, monitor and review whole school attendance strategies, policy and related procedures
- Analyses data in order to set and review attendance targets
- Has a named attendance governor to lead on attendance matters
- Attends regular training on attendance including in-house, external and e-courses
- Play an active role in the implementation of strategies where appropriate, e.g. Late Gate, Pupil Voice or consultations, awards assemblies, taking part in attendance panels and in agreeing parenting contracts
- Provide challenge to the SMT on attendance issues

Pupils
- Attend school every day, on time or in accordance with any agreed timetable
- Seek assistance when needed for *any* concern which may affect his/her attendance, such as issues with other pupils, staff, subjects, family circumstances, exams, etc
- Understand the link between attendance and attainment; and how these may subsequently affect future education, training or employment opportunities

Parents
- Support the school by signing and adhering to the home-school agreement
- Keep accurately updated with school policies, procedures, term and holiday dates, etc through the school website and newsletters – do NOT rely on word of mouth or social networking sites for this. If unsure, please telephone the school to check
- Ensure you understand the link between attendance and attainment; and how these may subsequently affect your child's future education, training or employment opportunities
- Engage with school and support your child by attending community or other events
- Telephone the school by 9:30 a.m. to explain your child's absence; providing evidence to support this if requested by school
- Ask school for support or report concerns you may have
- Respond to school phone calls or letters regarding absence by your child and attend meetings when invited so that concerns may be addressed and support agreed
- Make medical or dental appointment out of school hours and keep appointment cards/letters, prescription labels, etc as you may be asked to provide these as evidence to support the absence
- Apply in advance to request any leave of absence (including holidays during the school term) for your child