



Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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MUNDELLA PRIMARY PRINCIPLES FOR ATTENDANCE

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LEARNING MENTOR/DSD: [Miss Lisa Hewitt](#)
ATTENDANCE GOVERNORS: [Mrs Lavender](#)

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Policy Statement

Good attendance and punctuality are vital if pupils are to achieve their maximum potential. Mundella Primary School is committed to working with parents/carers and pupils to ensure that each pupil benefits from the academic, personal and social opportunities available to them during their years with us.

Aims of the Policy

- Set out clear procedures encouraging pupils to achieve their maximum potential by maintaining and promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring parents/carers and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring all teaching, non-teaching staff and governors understand the procedures
- To recognise and reward pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year.
- To set out strategies to support children and families to increase the whole school attendance from 94.2% to 95.7% this academic year.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

The Law

- The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.
- It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law
- For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

The school day

- The school gates open at 8:40am and closes at 8.45am
- The school day starts at 8:45am
- Registration is at 8:50am
- FS & KS1 school day ends at 3:15pm
- KS2 school day ends at 3:20pm

Working in Partnership

What the school expects of our pupils:

- Attend regularly, on time and ready to learn
- Be prepared for the day with appropriate equipment
- Report to the office should they arrive after the school gates close at 8:50 am/ registration time
- Tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school

What the school expects of parent/carers:

- Ensure their child attends regularly, on time and are prepared for the day
- Notify school on each day of absence
- Only request leave in term time in exceptional circumstances
- Accept the obligations contained in the Home/School Agreement
- Make dental, medical, non-urgent appointments out of school hours if possible
- Ensure your child is collected from school on time (3:15 pm – FS & KS1 and 3:20 pm – KS2)
- *Please see Uncollected Children Policy (Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership)
https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/assets/1/uncollected_children_sept_22.pdf
- Parent/ carers should supply at least 2 emergency contact numbers and addresses
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school office in the first instance to discuss any issues impacting their child's attendance/punctuality – 0114 2551348. Concerns regarding a child's engagement/enjoyment at school which impact on their attendance and punctuality can be further discussed with the class teacher/ Learning Mentor (Lisa Hewitt) or Headteacher (Mr Smith)

What parent/carers can expect from school:

- To provide a broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture with an expectation that full time, punctual attendance will be the norm and all absences will be followed up
- Allocate a member of Senior Management as Attendance Champion for our school.
- A member of the Governing Body to take responsibility for attendance and have a practice of reporting to governors on attendance matters
- Attendance information to be sent to parents/carers on a termly basis either by Email or end of year report.
- Produce and annually review a whole school attendance policy. This should be ratified and monitored by the governing body and then shared with staff and parents/carers.
- Set realistic but challenging annual attendance targets.
- Have efficient and effective registration systems which encourage attendance, punctuality and safeguards children. Monitor attendance daily through checking registers and parental notes
- Contact with parent/carers when a pupil is absent without explanation
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance/ absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- When attendance is of serious concern, follow the procedures stated in this policy
- Have an emphasis on the importance of regular school attendance in the Home/School agreement

- Reward children with excellent or improved attendance
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Regulations have been laid in Parliament to mandate attendance data sharing by all schools so schools, local authorities and DfE have access to near-live data from the beginning of the next school year.
- Adhere to legal requirements regarding admissions and attendance registrations
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- Maintain an overview of attendance through reports provided by the Head teacher and Attendance Champion
- Have a named governor for Attendance – Mrs M Phelan & Mrs F Lavender
- Attend School Attendance meetings as necessary & regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Headteacher

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues
- Liaises with the other officers of the Local Authority to implement attendance strategies
- Works with the Learning Mentor/DSD and Attendance Champion to implement targets, review statistics and amend the policy as necessary
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster
- Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of Children Looked After by the Local Authority along with the CLA lead
- Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

Learning Mentor/DSD and Attendance Champion

- Leading attendance across the school
- Maintain an overview of attendance and manage the day to day implementation of attendance plans and strategies
- Meet with the Local authority termly – this may also include staff with a lead or responsibility for a focus group – i.e. SEND (Special Educational Needs) or PP (Pupil Premium).
- Offer a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs. B Kotak and can be contacted via 0114 2551348 or bkotak@mundella.sheffield.sch.uk

Class teachers

- Accurately mark registers using appropriate codes
- Send any notes regarding a pupil's attendance to the school office
- Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a pupil
- Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school

School Office staff

- Receive, update and maintain accurate register records
- Maintain Scholar Pack attendance database and update on a daily basis
- Provide reports from Scholar Pack to governors, Head teacher and school staff as requested
- Provide relevant information to Local Authority officers making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality

Procedures

Registers are a legal document, care must be taken to ensure registers are marked accurately. Attendance of all pupils is monitored using the following procedures:

Registration

- The school day starts at 8:45am
 - Morning registration is 8.50 am
 - Afternoon registration is 12:50 pm - FS/ KS1
 - Afternoon registration is 1.15 pm - KS2
 - Where pupils are present, class teachers will enter a present mark (/)
 - Pupils who are absent and the reason is known will be marked with the appropriate code.
 - Where the reason for absence is unknown an 'N' code will be given. This code must be changed to reflect the reason for the absence within 5 working days.
 - Should a reason for an absence not be supplied within 5 working days – the code will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Punctuality

Pupils arriving after 8:50am are deemed to be late. The school gates are locked at 8:50 am prompt, all those arriving after 8:50 am will enter school via the school office where their attendance mark is entered as an 'L' and their name and reason for lateness recorded on ScholarPack.

- Where possible parents should inform the office or leave a message on the school answering phone giving the reason why their child is going to be late.
- If no notification has been received by 9.30 am the Office will contact the parent to ascertain the reason for the absence
- Any pupil arriving in school after 9.20 am will be marked 'U' – 'attended after registration closed'. In case of emergency during the school day, the register shows the pupil is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late
- On arrival at school parent/carers should notify the school office the reason for their child's late arrival

- We request that parent /carers accompany their child to the school office when late to notify the office staff of the reason for them being late
- School staff may gather the 'child's voice' if a child is late
- Data regarding punctuality/ lates can be shared with the Local Authority during termly meetings

Absence

Parents are requested to telephone school on the first day of absence and **each subsequent day to explain why their child is not at school** – unless the absence has been agreed with the Headteacher.

If a parent is leaving an absence message on the answering phone, they will be asked to give the child's name, class, reason for absence and details of symptoms. Staff may call parents/carers back to request additional information to record on the attendance system if required. Parents are requested to leave a message on each subsequent day of absence. Absence due to illness will be marked as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

All absences without notification will require a "First day" call from the office to home to ascertain the reason for the child's absence. If we are unable to contact the first parent/carer on your child's contact sheet we will leave a message and then contact others who are listed on the data sheet. Further attempts to contact will be made. When an absence is unexplained a letter is sent to the parents asking for them to explain the absence. If no explanation is given, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Extended absence without contact will result in a referral to CME (Children Missing Education). The appropriate attendance symbol may then be entered in the school attendance record.

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason, the school has received notification from a parent or guardian and the Headteacher agrees that the absence will be authorised. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence and this is agreed by the Headteacher. **FROM 19TH AUGUST**, headteachers will no longer be able to authorise holidays during term time.

Only the Headteacher can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Absence may be authorised if:

- The pupil is too ill to attend school
- The pupil is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause i.e. Emergency medical/dental appointment
- The pupil is absent on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs (2 days maximum per year).
- The school at which the pupil is registered is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority *unless the parents/carers have chosen to send their child to a school which is not within walking distance*
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- There is a close family bereavement
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave under exceptional circumstances.
- Term time leave where permission has been sought and where the Headteacher has agreed that there are exceptional circumstances
- The Headteacher feels the request for absence is unavoidable or adds value to the child's education.

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason or consent from the Headteacher, even with the support of a parent.
- Staff will call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

Absence should not be authorised if:

- No explanation is offered by the parent/carer
- The Headteacher is not satisfied with an explanation offered
- The pupil is staying home to look after parents, siblings or the home
- The pupil is absent on special occasions e.g. birthday
- The pupil is absent due to agreed Term Time leave for longer than agreed by the Head Teacher
- The pupil is absent on a family holiday not agreed by the Head Teacher
- The pupil is absent unnecessarily e.g. taken shopping, for a haircut
- The pupil is a persistent absentee (where absence is below 90%), the parent has been notified that they need to provide medical evidence for future absences and has failed to do so.

Attendance monitoring

Registers are monitored on a daily basis.

The Learning Mentor will complete checks of targeted pupils with attendance concerns.

Whole school attendance is monitored twice half-termly by the Learning Mentor and the Attendance Champion to identify any children whose attendance is of concern or is in danger of dropping below 90%. All parents/ carers will be notified on a termly basis of their child's attendance percentage/ sessions missed and lates.

If a pattern of poor attendance is formed:

- Parents will receive a record of attendance and letter from the Headteacher – this is in addition to the termly data supplied to parent/carers for information purposes only
- The Learning Mentor may do a home visit when a child does not attend without communication.
- The Learning Mentor may on occasion collect children from their homes to enable attendance. This should only be for a short period of time when required.
- Children with concerning attendance will be monitored for improvement. If no improvement is seen/worsens, the parent/carer is invited to discuss this further with the Learning Mentor. School Nurse/Attendance Champion/SENDSCO/Governor for Attendance/Headteacher could also be included in the discussion.
- Persistent absence will be discussed with the local authority. If advised a referral can be made to MAST or the Inclusion and Attendance team who will meet with parent/carers, discuss, and agree strategies for improved attendance and when appropriate make prompt referrals to external agencies. The Learning Mentor may attend this meeting.
- Where attendance falls into the persistent absence category (i.e. less than 90%) medical evidence could be requested for all future absences whilst the child remains in this category, failure to provide such evidence could result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

- Further discussion with the Local Authority representative for attendance can be offered to support parents in addition to a referral to MAST for practical support and guidance.
- If parents do not engage with school to improve attendance, the school could exercise its right to impose a fine or pursue court action in line with the local authority policy.

Responding to absence

- The School office will contact parent/carer for any child absent without notification
- Should your child's attendance fall below the **school target of 95.7%** the Learning Mentor may contact parent/carers to discuss any possible barriers to attendance and look to offer in school support
- Where attendance is of concern, school will contact parent/carers to discuss any support required and where appropriate make prompt referrals to external agencies
- If attendance drops below 90% - Your child is classed by the local authority as a persistent absentee - strategies will be considered and steps taken in an attempt to support and improve attendance and punctuality. This could include home visits from school staff, meetings in school with other professionals (Internal or external) if deemed appropriate to support your child
- Parents/carers can be invited to attend a School Attendance Panel (SAP)
- When all supportive measures have been explored without improvement or engagement - a referral can be made to the Attendance Legal Team for support and action
- When a pupil has not attended for 10 school days the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the Local Authority.

Persistent Absence

When an absence falls below 90%, a child is classed as a 'Persistent Absentee'. Children who fall into this category will be monitored by school in conjunction with the Local Authority. To support improvements with a children's attendance Mundella School will also:

- Have efficient and timely monitoring and referral systems that identify attendance concerns.
- Consider sanctioning holidays in term time, following the LA guidance
- Encourage both teaching and non-teaching staff to forge effective links with parents.
- Share good practice locally across families of schools and city wide through engagement with the Schools Attendance Forums.
- Liaise with the Local Authority and external services to assist and support families where needed by considering targeted support to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils.
- The attendance team will consider the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties.
- Pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school) are classed as severely absent. More intensive support is needed across all relevant services to prioritise them – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.
- If all avenues of support have been facilitated by school, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect.
- Schools and local authority are expected to make patterns of both persistent and severe absence a focus of their regular data monitoring and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible.
- Concerns and data regarding attendance / punctuality can be shared with the schools Local Authority Inclusion and Attendance team during termly meetings

Attendance legal interventions

Mundella aims to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.

- VOLUNTARY SUPPORT - Helping parents to access services of their own accord and/or a voluntary whole family plan to tackle the barriers to attendance
- FORMAL SUPPORT - A formal parenting contract agreed by the pupil, parent, school and/or local authority - Progressing to a legally binding Education Supervision Order in the Family Court if there is non-engagement and deemed necessary
- **PARENTING CONTRACTS TO BECOME ATTENDANCE CONTRACTS** - A formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. A parenting contract is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. It is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support, an attendance contract allows accountability for agreed actions by all involved. An attendance contract is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract and cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.
- STATUTORY CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE INVOLVEMENT - Where there are safeguarding concerns and an Education Supervision Order is not appropriate or has not been successful
- ATTENDANCE PROSECUTION - Where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate, the case should be considered for attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court
- EDUCATION SUPERVISION ORDERS - ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education
- PROSECUTION IN THE MAGISTRATES COURT - The last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate in the circumstances of the individual case
- PARENTING ORDERS - Parenting orders can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order.
- **PENALTY NOTICE WARNING LETTER** – This will become a "NOTICE TO IMPROVE". A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered. **In Sheffield the notice to improve period is usually 15 school days.**
If the threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions in 10 weeks has been met, school have exhausted all support and followed APDR, this has not been fully engaged with, or didn't bring around change, a notice to improve letter is sent to parents as a final chance to engage in support or a final chance to ensure their child is engaged with education. Notice to Improve are issued from the Headteacher of the school, once the Local Authority has deemed it to be an appropriate next step.
- **ATTENDANCE PENALTY NOTICES** – From 19th August, the new Penalty Notice regulations are:
 - Each parent will be issued a separate penalty notice, for each child who is absent. For example, 2 parents and 3 children, each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £160 each, with a family total of £960 in fines.
 - The fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
 - This will be considered your first offence.
 - The next time an offence occurs, within 3 years of the date the first penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, with no reduction.
 - **The third time an offence occurs this will be presented to Magistrates court with no penalty notice issued.**
 - This will include Term Time Leave fines and Irregular Attendance.

Term Time Leave

Headteachers will no longer be able to authorise any holidays during term time. The H code has been removed for authorised holidays and the headteacher can only authorise term time leave under exceptional circumstances, covered by the new C codes. **Term time leave does not just include holidays.**

- If parents wish to request time out of school, they need to request a Term time leave form, which is available from the school office or can be downloaded from the website. This form should be completed at least two weeks before the proposed absence. It is important to note that a letter from a parent does not authorise an absence, only the Headteacher's acceptance of the explanation offered by the letter can authorise the absence under exceptional circumstances.
- If parents take children out of school when this has not been authorised by the Headteacher, school could exercise its right to impose an **Attendance Penalty Notice** (as per above) or pursue court action in line with the local authority policy.
- Where a child is absent and it is believed they are absent due to term time leave, schools will be expected to carry out a home visit and **see the child on the 3rd day of the absence.**

Irregular Attendance

This is where a **child has unauthorised absences of 10 sessions or more in any 10-week period.** When this occurs, the school must consider escalation to prosecution. Sessions refer to EACH half a school day, with most schools having 2 sessions each day. **These 10 sessions could be made up of term time leave, unauthorised late marks or unauthorised absence.**

It is therefore important that parents notify school everyday with regards to absences, provide a valid reason and where appropriate evidence of medical appointments or prescribed medication. Schools will consider the following NHS guidance when deciding whether to authorise absence due to illness:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Awards and Rewards

- Attendance assemblies are held regularly to celebrate individual pupil's attendance, class attendance and whole school attendance.
- Improved attendance will be recognised and rewarded.
- Termly/Annual certificates will be awarded to pupils with 100% attendance. (Where a child presents with significant medical needs or following agreement by the Headteacher – school will ensure that the child is not penalised for these reasons and still receive their attendance certificate)
- Weekly 'Chocolate biscuit' award to the class with the highest attendance -. (Where a child presents with significant medical needs or following agreement by the Headteacher – school will ensure that the child is not penalised for these reasons and the class still receive their chocolate biscuit reward.

Children Missing from Education

If a child was absent from school and we had no notification as to where they were and any attempts to contact them had been unsuccessful, they would be considered missing. If after 10 days and following contact to all known contact numbers / home visits/ letter to known address etc. there had been no contact the Children Missing from Education Team, will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Children in Public Care

Mrs Wild is the co-ordinator who liaises with the Local Authority's Children Looked After team. CLA pupils will be set up as an Attendance Group on Scholar Pack.

Children with a social worker

Children with a social worker will be set up as an Attendance Group on Scholar Pack. Schools will be required to notify the child's social worker and Youth Justice Worker of any unauthorised absences

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Mundella aims to be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

This should include:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.
- Ensure data is regularly monitored
- Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

Reduced timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore will treat the absence as authorised.

Appendix A – Summary of responsibilities for school attendance

▾ All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to <u>prioritise</u> support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to <u>maximise</u> attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, <u>recognising</u> that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance. • Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. • Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.

Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p>	<p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including <u>behaviour</u> policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p>	<p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to <u>minimise</u> disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated. • Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance. • Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and <u>carers</u> – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance. • Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
<p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p>	<p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing in Education Guidance