



# Special School Attendance and Absence Policy

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## 1.1 Statement of intent

Tulip Academy believes that to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance champion is Kat Garland and can be contacted via email – [Kat.Garland@tulip-cit.co.uk](mailto:Kat.Garland@tulip-cit.co.uk)

Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance champion for queries or concerns about attendance.

## 1.2 Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2023) Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2023'
- DfE (2016) Children missing education'
- DfE (2023) Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Home Visit Policy
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

## 1.3 Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board, supported by the Local School Board, has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the ELT and the school's SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance

**The headteacher is responsible for:**

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance champion role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

**Staff are responsible for:**

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

**The attendance champion is responsible for:**

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents about attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

**Parents are responsible for:**

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

## **2.1 Definitions**

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

**Absence:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

**Authorised absence:**

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

**Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

#### **Persistent absence (PA):**

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

### **3.1 Attendance expectations**

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at 9:00am, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by 8:55am.

Pupils accessing our Springview Campus will have a morning break at 10:15am, which will last until 10:45am, and a lunch break at 12:00pm, which will last until 1:00pm – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Pupils accessing our Waterside Campus semi formal curriculum will have a morning break at 10:35am, which will last until 11:05am, and a lunch break at 12:15pm, which will last until 1:25pm – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Pupils accessing our Waterside Campus formal curriculum will have a morning break at 10:55am, which will last until 11:15am, and a lunch break at 12:15pm, which will last until 1:15pm – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked and closed by 9:15am. Pupils will receive an absence mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a late mark with the exception of transportation issues
- The afternoon register will be marked by 1:30pm. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

In the event that a pupil leaves site between one registration and the other, it is essential that the pupil signs out and this is recorded on the next available register point of that day.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

### **3.2 Absence procedures**

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by 09:15am to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than three school days in a row, or more than 10 school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s) (where possible).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance champion. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, the attendance champion will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

### **3.3 Attendance register**

The school uses Bromcom to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole or partial school closure
- / = Present in the morning

- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school as not statutory school age
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register. The only exception to this would be if remote learning was provided with an online face to face tutor, in which case the pupil would be marked on the register as present for that session as this would be an alternative provision.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

#### **4.1 AUTHORISING PARENTAL ABSENCE REQUESTS**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the

headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

### **Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Permission to leave site at lunch time**

Although unlikely due to the needs of the pupils, there may be occasions where pupils wish to be off site during lunch time.

Parents will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the headteacher will ensure a photo lunchtime pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Pupils will leave the school premises within 10 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch.

Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register at the school office. A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff at the school office has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents will be able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a termly basis – letters will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

### **Illness and healthcare appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

### **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Religious observance**

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

## **4.2 SEND- and health-related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with EHC plans that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

There may be occasions where a pupil's condition presents like common illness e.g. a pupil who has a reflux issue may be perceived as being sick and therefore require being home for 48 hours, as per NHS guidance. In these cases, school will work with parents and health professionals to confirm what symptoms are associated with the condition that could be perceived as general illness, and a list of suggested criteria will be agreed for school to use as a guide to decision making about requesting a child be collected by parents. It is down to the judgement of the staff who are present at the time to make the decision as they are best placed to do so. It is important for parents to acknowledge that this will be done in the best interest of the child. If for example a child has a temperature as well as being sick, this would indicate an underlying illness rather than related to their condition. School should work closely with health professionals to seek first hand advice rather than from parents so that they are following the correct guidance.

See appendix 9 for a specialist graduated approach to supporting pupils with complex reasons for low or no attendance.

## **4.3 PREGNANT PUPILS AND PARENTS WHO ARE SCHOOL AGE**

As a school, any confirmed child/teenage pregnancy should be treated as a medical condition and school should make reasonable adjustments in relation to uniform, toilet pass, authorised absence for antenatal appointment, reduced timetable (if applicable) etc. Please see the Trust policy for Education and Support for Pregnant pupils and School Age Parents.

## **4.4 TRUANCY**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 9:00am and 1:15pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **5.1 MISSING PUPILS**

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the headteacher immediately
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Changing rooms
  - The library
  - Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

## **5.2 ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION**

To ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance champion supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:

- Sending letters to parents.
- Attendance intervention
- Safe and well checks
- School Attendance Panels (SAPs)
- Engaging with LA attendance and SEND teams.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

### **5.3 WORKING WITH PARENTS TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

The school will update parents regarding the expectations for absence for different illnesses using the update NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance champion will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance champion will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance champion will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

### **5.4 EMOTIONAL BASED SCHOOL AVOIDANCE (EBSA)**

#### **Underpinning Principles**

- The EBSA Ladder focuses on facilitating a 'step-change' in how we support children and young people (CYP) with their mental health and wellbeing when that drives school avoidance.

- It is the people in the day to day lives of CYP who can help them the most and the Ladder aims to give them confidence in this.
- The approach aims to broaden the conversation away from thinking that help is the domain of specialist services. These are important, but there is much more that can be done to provide support.
- When extra help is needed to address EBSA (step four) the Ladder aims to take a 'no wrong door' approach so that CYP get the right help at the right time and in a way that is right for them.
- Families, schools and communities are vital in preventing mental health difficulties, but also in helping when CYP struggle most. This is not just about prevention; it is also about intervention including for those of greatest concern.
- The aim of the medical need's consultation (step four) is to bring everyone together across agencies and services to focus on the same goal – helping CYP in ways that support their mental health and wellbeing so that they can thrive in school.

Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a term used to describe a child or young person who has severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors. This can result in prolonged absences from school.

EBSA can present differently across individuals, but can show as:

- low or intermittent attendance
- high sensitivity or reactivity
- low mood and anxiety (fear of talking to teachers, fears around academic performance)
- social isolation
- signs of emotional distress that affects their ability to function at school, such as difficulties forming relationships with teachers and peers
- developmental differences that fundamentally shape perception and action in ways that cause significant challenges in emotional self-regulation and social functioning (autistic spectrum disorder, ADHD).

## 5.5 MEDICAL SUPPORT PANELS

For our Lincolnshire schools the Local Authority has a medical support panel (MSP) which is a multi-agency panel that considers the needs of pupils to arrive at a decision about how suitable education might be provided. [Lincolnshire's medical needs policy](#)

This is in line with the following policy. [Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Referrals to medical support panel are submitted by a pupil's school or if a pupil is not on the role of a school, via an authorised officer within the local authority (pupil reintegration team or the inclusion and attendance team). The medical support panel is evidence based and will consider pupil's needs holistically.

Medical support panel takes place fortnightly during term time and considers the referral paperwork and supporting evidence that has been submitted. The panel consists of representation across attendance, inclusion, mental health, early help and Pilgrim Hospital School.

Pupils who are on Palliative care packages should be supported on a case-by-case basis and the local authority should be involved in discussing with parents the most appropriate provision for the pupil.

## 6.1 ADJUSTED 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 an adjustment to their timetable to meet their individual needs.

There are law's that are important to understand and refer to when making a decision about what is in the child's best interest:

**Education Act 1996 (Section 19):** Local Authorities must arrange suitable full-time education for children who cannot attend school (unless medical reasons mean full-time is inappropriate)

For pupils with an **EHCP**, if school cannot meet full-time provision, the LA remains legally responsible for ensuring the child still receives their specified support and education.

**Children and Families Act 2014 (Section 42):** The Local Authority and health commissioners have an absolute duty to secure the provision written in the EHCP.

**Equality Act 2010 (Section 20 & Schedule 10):** Schools must make reasonable adjustments and plan accessibility.

The Education Act 1996, Section 19 places a duty on Local Authorities to

*"Make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them."*

The key words are "suitable education" and "full-time". The Education act does not define a fixed number of hours — but full-time means equivalent to what is normally provided in school for a child of the same age, ability, and aptitude.

The Department for Education has clarified what full time/suitable education should be:

Primary-age pupils: typically, 21–23 hours per week.

Secondary-age pupils: typically, 24–25 hours per week.

Education should be offered for the whole of the school year, not just part of it.

Only if a child's health/medical evidence shows they cannot cope with full-time education may fewer hours be provided — and this must be reviewed regularly.

## 6.2 REDUCED TIMETABLES (RTT)

Any reduction must be proportionate, reviewed, and demonstrably in the child's best interests and must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. When a child is placed on a reduced timetable, schools must be clear whether they are reducing only teaching hours or also cutting breaks/lunch (social development time). Both count as part of their entitlement, so reductions still need proper recording, LA agreement (for EHCP pupils), and review.

**Formal agreement and record keeping:** School should:

- Have a written agreement with parents/carers, signed and dated.
- Notify the Local Authority immediately (mandatory for EHCP pupils).
- Keep a central log of all pupils on reduced timetables — tracked by SLT/governing body.
- Record attendance accurately.

**Register codes:**

When the pupil is in school use the normal present codes:

/ = Present (AM)

\ = Present (PM)

Other present codes if in a lesson/activity (e.g. B if educated off-site).

When the pupil is not in school because of the reduced timetable:

Code C2 (authorised absence – other)

## **Clear reintegration Plan**

- A written plan with specific targets, timeframes, and support to return to full-time education.
- Explicit review date (every 4 weeks or sooner if needed).
- Plan should show how the child will not miss statutory or EHCP provision (e.g. therapies, interventions).

**Safeguarding:** School should not agree to a reduced timetable if this puts the child at increased risk of harm. The named DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) should track every child on reduced timetable.

Risk assessment should be in place considering:

- Where the child will be when not in school.
- Who is supervising them.
- Impact on safety, welfare, and development.

## **Communication and consent:**

- Parents must agree in writing; verbal agreements are not enough.
- Pupil's views should be recorded (where possible) in line with Children and Families Act 2014 (pupil voice).
- School should share the plan with social care, health, or other professionals if they are involved.

## **Monitoring attendance and welfare**

- Daily attendance checks should be carried out even if the child is only in part of the day.
- Welfare calls/home visits must take place if the child is not in expected provision.
- Attendance and safeguarding teams track patterns (e.g. persistent part-time arrangements, repeat cycles).

## **Senior leadership and Governance oversight**

- SLT will regularly review the log of reduced timetables.
- Governors/trustees should receive reports on numbers, reasons, and reintegration outcomes of RTT's to prevent misuse of reduced timetables to "off-roll" or manage behaviour informally.

## **6.3 FLEXIBLE TIMETABLES**

A flexible timetable is a planned, longer-term arrangement where a pupil's education takes place in more than one setting, or in different ways, to meet their needs. Unlike a reduced timetable (short-term, temporary), a flexible timetable can be part of a pupil's reasonable adjustments (Equality Act 2010) or written into an EHCP e.g.

- Splitting the week between mainstream school and a special resource base.
- Attending a FE college or alternative provision for part of the week.
- Including therapeutic programmes (speech therapy, OT, CAMHS) during school hours.
- Blended learning (part in school, part at home/hospital school).

### **Definition:**

A flexible timetable is a short- or medium-term arrangement that allows a pupil to receive a modified pattern of attendance or education, tailored to meet specific educational, medical, behavioural, or emotional needs.

Unlike flexi-schooling, a flexible timetable is initiated by the school, not by parents, and is designed to be a temporary measure with a clear plan for reintegration to full-time education.

### **Legal Context:**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education.

A flexible timetable may only be used in exceptional circumstances and must be agreed with parents/carers, recorded formally, and kept under regular review.

The Department for Education and local authority guidance make clear that:

- A flexible timetable should only be used as part of a carefully planned intervention.
- The arrangement must be in the best interests of the pupil.
- It should never be used for a long-term solution to behavioural, attendance, or resource issues.
- The school remains responsible for the pupil's safeguarding, education, and attendance during the period of the arrangement.

### **Purpose of a Flexible Timetable:**

A flexible timetable may be considered when:

- A pupil is reintegrating after a long-term absence or exclusion.
- There are medical or mental health needs supported by evidence from health professionals.
- A temporary adjustment supports improved attendance, behaviour, or emotional regulation.
- Part of a reintegration or support plan following alternative provision.
- As part of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or individual support plan.

### **Approval and Agreement Procedure:**

The decision to place a pupil on a flexible timetable rests with the headteacher (or delegated senior leader).

Parents/carers must be fully informed and provide written consent for the arrangement.

A Flexible Timetable Plan will be drawn up, setting out (see appendix 16 for example letter)

- The reason for the arrangement and desired outcomes
- The specific days/times the pupil will attend school
- The duration of the arrangement (normally no longer than 6–8 weeks)
- The support to be provided by the school and any external agencies

### **Review dates and reintegration plan.**

A copy of the plan must be shared with parents/carers and filed securely on the pupil's record.

### **Recording and Monitoring Attendance**

The pupil remains on the school roll and is recorded as attending part-time under a flexible arrangement.

Attendance should be coded as follows:

- Attending school sessions – '/' or '\'.
- Absences outside the agreed arrangement – 'O' (unauthorised).
- B (educated off-site, e.g. therapy, AP, college).
- D (dual registered, e.g. split placement).
- C only for genuine short, authorised absences, not to cover flexible provision.

Attendance will be monitored regularly to ensure the arrangement remains appropriate and safe.

The school must notify the local authority of any pupil who is not receiving full-time education for medical, safeguarding, or other reasons.

### **Safeguarding and Oversight**

The school retains full safeguarding responsibility for all pupils on flexible timetables.

A designated senior leader will monitor attendance, progress, and welfare, maintaining contact with the pupil and family throughout the arrangement.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed of all flexible timetable arrangements and included in reviews.

The local authority may be consulted or notified, depending on local guidance and duration of the arrangement.

### **Review and Reintegration**

Flexible timetable arrangements must have clear objectives and a defined timescale.

Reviews will take place at least every 2–4 weeks, with input from parents/carers, staff, and relevant professionals.

Each review will consider the pupil's wellbeing, progress, attendance, and readiness to increase time in school.

The goal of every flexible timetable is full reintegration to regular, full-time attendance as soon as it is reasonably possible.

### **Ending or Extending the Arrangement**

A flexible timetable will end when:

- The review concludes the pupil is ready for full-time education
- The arrangement no longer meets the pupil's needs
- Safeguarding or welfare concerns arise.

Any proposal to extend beyond 8 weeks must be reviewed by the headteacher and may require consultation with the local authority and/or other agencies.

## **Equality and Inclusion**

All flexible timetable arrangements will be considered individually, in line with the school's Equality Policy and statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. The decision will always prioritise the best interests of the child and ensure fair access to education.

## **6.4 FLEXI SCHOOLING**

### **Definition:**

Flexi-schooling is an arrangement whereby a child, who is registered at this school, receives part of their education at school and part elsewhere, usually at home, under a formal agreement between the parent/carer and the headteacher. The child remains on the school roll and is not regarded as being electively home educated.

### **The law:**

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for ensuring that their child receives an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have — either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Flexi-schooling is not an automatic entitlement. Approval is granted entirely at the discretion of the headteacher, who must be satisfied that the proposed arrangement will not adversely affect the child's education, welfare, or the effective functioning of the school.

### **Request and Agreement Procedure:**

Parents/carers wishing to pursue flexi-schooling must make a written request to the headteacher, outlining:

- The reasons for the request.
- The proposed pattern of attendance.
- The educational provision to be delivered at home.

The headteacher will consider the request in consultation with relevant staff and, where appropriate, the governing body. (See Appendix 17 for example response letter)

If approved, a Flexi-Schooling Agreement will be drawn up, signed by the parent/carer and headteacher, setting out:

- The agreed days of attendance at school and at home
- Roles and responsibilities of both parties
- Arrangements for curriculum continuity, safeguarding, and communication
- Review dates and procedures for amendment or termination.

### **Recording and Monitoring Attendance**

Pupils on a flexi-schooling arrangement remain registered at the school and are included in census returns.

Attendance will be recorded as follows:

Present at school – marked as present ('/' or '\').

Approved flexi-schooling (education elsewhere with prior agreement) – recorded as authorised absence ('C').

Absence without prior agreement or notification – recorded as unauthorised ('O').

Attendance will be monitored in line with the school's standard attendance procedures, and patterns of absence will be reviewed regularly.

### **Safeguarding and Communication**

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring the child's safety, supervision, and wellbeing during home-based education days.

Any safeguarding concerns arising at home must be reported immediately to the school.

The school will maintain regular communication with parents/carers to ensure continuity of learning and oversight of welfare.

Parents must notify the school promptly if a child is unable to attend on an agreed school day due to illness or other reasons.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

The school retains responsibility for the pupil's overall educational provision, progress, and achievement.

Parents/carers are encouraged to complement, rather than duplicate, the curriculum delivered at school.

The child's progress will continue to be assessed through the school's standard assessment and reporting procedures.

For secondary pupils, the school will make clear any implications of flexi-schooling for GCSE, vocational, or other accredited courses.

### **Review and Continuation**

Flexi-schooling arrangements will be reviewed at least once per term, considering the child's academic progress, attendance, wellbeing, and the effectiveness of communication between home and school.

The headteacher reserves the right to amend or withdraw the arrangement if it is deemed not to be in the best interests of the child or the school community.

### **Withdrawal or Termination of Agreement**

Either party may request a review or withdrawal of the flexi-schooling arrangement, normally with two weeks' notice.

The headteacher may withdraw the agreement immediately where safeguarding, attendance, or welfare concerns arise, or where the terms of the agreement are not being met.

### **Equality and Inclusion**

All requests for flexi-schooling will be considered on an individual basis, in line with the school's Equality Policy and statutory duties. No pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of background, ability, special educational need, or protected characteristic.

## **6.5 ALTERNATIVE PROVISION**

If a pupil cannot access full-time school due to health or complex needs, the LA must arrange suitable alternative education (Education Act 1996, s.19) e.g.

- Hosting dual placements (mainstream + special school or AP).
- Using hospital schools, home tuition, or blended provision.
- Ensuring EHCP provision continues across all settings.

## **6.6 REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS (Equality Act 2010)**

Schools have a duty to remove barriers and ensure disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. This doesn't change the EHCP but allows flexibility in how provision is delivered. This should be a written agreement between the Headteacher and parent/carer in response to removing specific barriers.

- Adjusting the school day structure (e.g. phased starts, rest breaks).
- Offering a flexible timetable (e.g. part-time mainstream + therapy sessions).

If a pupil's needs change or the current provision isn't workable, the Local Authority must review and amend the EHCP (Children and Families Act 2014, s.44). School should call and interim or annual review and provide evidence of why the EHCP needs adapting (medical, therapeutic, SEMH, physical needs). Once amended, the new EHCP legally secures the adjusted provision.

## **6.7 BLENDED ADAPTED TIMETABLES**

In some cases, a pupil may have a combination of provision e.g. Accessing an alternative provision 1 day a week (Flexible timetable arrangement), accessing a therapy one after a week (Flexible timetable), in school for 1 and a half days and at home for 2 days a week (Reduced timetable). In these circumstances, it is important to have a robust written explanation as to what function each aspect of the timetable provides the pupil. This should be reported to the local authority and reviewed regularly.

## **6.8 BAIL CONDITIONS**

In the event that a pupil has bail conditions, school will need to contact the police and SEND to confirm the reason for the bail conditions and any specific conditions that school need to consider.

It is important that staff do not /share any personal judgements of the case and staff should be reminded that an allegation does not mean that the pupil is guilty unless the police have made a conviction.

In the event that bail conditions relate to another pupil in school or relate to allegations against minors (including of a sexual nature), school will be expected to risk assess the impact of the pupil accessing school as well as the ability to safeguard all pupils within the setting.

Leaders need to consider if the pupil is able to be provided with full time adult supervision on site. In the event that it would not be in the pupil's best interest (e.g. as a result of being targeted by other pupils or if the mitigation would result in the pupil being socially isolated) the Headteacher must contact the SEND caseworker and work together to find alternative provision so that the pupil still receives the entitlement of full-time education.

Whilst school establishes an appropriate off-site provision the pupil should be coded on the register as Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) in line with paragraph 392 of working together to improve school attendance.

The Headteacher must contact the pupil's parents/carers to discuss options and confirm in writing what decision has been made. Any decision should be reviewed regularly in line with information provided by police and/or other agencies.

## **6.9 DUAL PLACEMENTS**

A dual placement occurs when a pupil is enrolled at two education providers simultaneously, typically to meet complex educational, social, or health needs.

Both schools/settings must record the pupil correctly using the statutory DfE codes:

D = dual registration

B = educated off-site (if part of the timetable is delivered elsewhere)

## **Mental Health Act 1983 / 2007**

If a pupil is detained under the Mental Health Act (e.g., in a hospital school):

The hospital or specialist education provider becomes responsible for delivering suitable education, in line with Section 19 duty.

Dual placement is possible with the home school or special school if the LA and responsible clinician agree.

Education must continue to meet statutory hours (full-time equivalent) and, if applicable, EHCP outcomes.

Risk assessments and safeguarding procedures must account for vulnerabilities associated with mental health detention.

## **7.1 DAILY ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURES**

Tulip Academy has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. A spreadsheet is sent to the SLT and attendance champion detailing weekly attendance.
2. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance champion daily.
3. If there is no contact with parents/carers a dynamic risk assessment will be put in place to determine if a home visit is necessary or if other professionals such as social workers or early help workers need to be informed. This will be recorded on CPOMS with any follow up actions.
4. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. See Appendix 1 below which shows the procedure for pupil absence. (At any point within the process, if there is a concern that a child may be at risk of harm then the safeguarding team must be informed to follow up on any necessary next steps).

## **7.2 PUPILS NOT ATTENDING REGULARLY (PNAR).**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 Section 12 requires schools to inform the local authority of any pupils who have 10 or more consecutive school days absence without the school's permission.

The current agreed criteria are to provide:

- The name and address of any pupil who has missed school for 10 days or more without the absence being recorded as authorised.

Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained absences.

Lincolnshire Schools can use the link <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-attendance/pupil-attendance/3> to report a pupil not attending regularly (PNAR).

## **7.3 PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA)**

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need (CIN)
- Children in Care (CiC)
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use several methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

## **7.4 SEVERE ABSENCE**

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may constitute neglect and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **7.5 PUPILS NOT ATTENDING AT ALL (PNAA) – See appendix 2**

Where a pupil is not attending at all and parents/carers are not working with school to address this, please follow the below flow diagram. In all stages the priority is ensuring that the pupil is safe and well and has

been physically seen by a professional/school regularly. If this is not possible then school should professionally escalate the case to ensure the pupil is safe and well.

## 7.6 CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION (CME)

County Councils have a duty under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to establish the identities of children who are missing from education (CME). Schools also have a statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of pupils who join or leave their roll, as well as pupils who may be missing from education, within prescribed time limits. This duty is set out in the *Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools* (DfE, September 2025), *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (2024), and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2025).

### Definition of Children Missing Education

Children missing education are of compulsory school age and are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise. These children may:

- Not be registered at a school.
- Have families whose whereabouts are unknown.
- Not be attending or receiving an alternative education provision.
- No longer habitually and ordinarily reside at their MIS-registered address.
- Children in temporary accommodation
- Children awaiting school placements
- Children receiving unsuitable elective home education (EHE)

Children are **not classed as CME** if they are:

- Registered as Elective Home Educated (EHE).
- On the roll of a school or provision and their whereabouts are known (though not attending).
- On holiday.
- Absent due to illness (including long-term).
- Temporarily absent from home with an indication they will return.

### Safeguarding and CME

- Being missing from education places children at significant risk of underachievement, harm, exploitation, or radicalisation, and increases the likelihood of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).
- While absence or CME status does not automatically indicate risk, it is a safeguarding concern and must be considered alongside other indicators.
- Where there is concern for a child's welfare, schools must follow safeguarding procedures, making a referral to the Local Authority and, where there is reason to suspect a crime, involving the police.
- Effective information sharing between schools, parents, and the Local Authority is critical in ensuring all children are safe and receiving suitable education.

### School Responsibilities

- Maintain and monitor daily registers in line with the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*.
- Notify the Local Authority promptly where pupils join, leave, or are suspected to be CME.
- Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and reasonable enquiries fail to establish their whereabouts, complete a Common Transfer File (CTF) and upload it to the DfE National Missing Pupils Database.
- Complete a return interview form and submit it to the Local Authority if/when a pupil is confirmed to have been missing.

- Ensure secure information sharing with the Local Authority in compliance with data protection legislation (GDPR 2018).
- Share data with local authorities and other agencies, using national databases like GIAP and S2S

## Reasonable Enquiries

Where a pupil is absent without explanation, the school must make **reasonable enquiries** to establish the child's whereabouts and confirm their safety. These may include:

### 1. Initial Steps

Look at the most recent attendance records.

Review registration forms, emergency contacts, and previous correspondence.

### 2. Contact the family:

- Phone calls, emails, letters to home or last known address.
- Ask for any updates on the child's location or circumstances.
- Check siblings or other family members:
- Use information already held on siblings at the school.

### 3. Internal Checks and Enquiries

- Speak to teachers, pastoral staff, or other staff who might have recent knowledge of the pupil.
- Check school systems, including school transport records, lunchtime registers, and club attendance.

### 4. External Checks

- Contact other local schools to check if the pupil is enrolled elsewhere (if applicable)
- Use School2School (S2S) transfer system or the GIAP database.
- Social services (if the child is known to social care).
- Health services, housing teams, or other multi-agency partners.

### 5. Elective Home Education (EHE) checks:

Ensure the child hasn't been formally deregistered for EHE.

**Escalation Steps:** If the child remains unlocated after reasonable attempts:

- Inform the LA immediately using CME referral process
- Consider safeguarding escalation if there is concern for the child's welfare.
- Police referral may be appropriate if there are risks of exploitation or harm.

**Documentation:** Keep a chronological record of all enquiries including:

- Date, method, outcome of each contact.
- Any actions taken or referrals made.

This record is evidence of compliance with statutory guidance.

| County          | Contact email                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lincolnshire    | <a href="mailto:CME@lincolnshire.gov.uk">CME@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Nottinghamshire | <a href="https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/education-and-schools/education-welfare/children-missing-from-education/">https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/education-and-schools/education-welfare/children-missing-from-education/</a> |

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leicestershire | <a href="https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/child-protection-and-safeguarding/pupils-missing-out-on-education-and-children-missing-from-education">https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/child-protection-and-safeguarding/pupils-missing-out-on-education-and-children-missing-from-education</a> |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 7.7 SAFE AND WELL CHECKS:

School should confirm:

- That the child is physically safe and accounted for.
- The reason for absence.
- Any emerging safeguarding concerns (e.g., neglect, domestic abuse, exploitation).
- Whether additional referrals or support are required.

### If a safe and well check cannot be carried out

As a school, we have a duty to safeguarding all children and young people. We also have a duty to protect our staff.

The following are agreed reasons when we would not complete safe and well checks:

#### Safety/Safeguarding:

- If carrying out a home visit would place staff at risk (e.g. history of violence at the address, known dangerous animals, or community safety issues).
- If there are serious safeguarding concerns that could escalate risk to the child (e.g. suspected domestic abuse, forced marriage, trafficking). In these cases, the referral should go directly to Children's Social Care or the police.
- Schools are not statutory enforcement agencies — they cannot force entry into a home or demand to see a child. If access is refused, escalation to the Local Authority or police is required.

#### Capacity & Legal / Procedural Boundaries:

- If the school has made reasonable enquiries (calls, texts, contacts with emergency numbers, checks with transport/siblings) and cannot establish the child's whereabouts, the legal responsibility passes to the Local Authority CME team under Education Act 1996 s.436A.
- Schools are not expected to pursue extensive tracking of families who may have moved outside their jurisdiction — this lies with the Local Authority.
- Where there are court orders, safeguarding restrictions, or no-contact directions that mean the school must not approach the home directly.

#### Practical / geographic limitations:

- If the child's address is unknown or inaccurate (e.g. family moved suddenly, provided false information).
- If the family has relocated outside the Local Authority's area — in these cases, the CME notification process (CTF upload + referral to LA) must be followed including a home visit to the original home.

What schools must do instead:

- Record all reasonable enquiries already attempted.
- Escalate immediately to the Local Authority CME team and, where safeguarding is suspected, to Children's Social Care and/or the police.

- Document the rationale for not conducting a safe and well check to ensure transparency and compliance.

## **8.1 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)**

All schools are required to notify their Local Authority when a parent wishes to remove a child from their register, to elect to Home Educate.

We will request a meeting with parents to fully discuss their decision to withdraw, and on contacting our department a member of our team may attend the meeting, if appropriate. The aim of this meeting is for parents to share any concerns they may have but also an opportunity for school to share all relevant information about EHE, including duties and responsibilities of the parent, to support parents in making a fully informed decision.

## **8.2 TAKING A PUPIL OFF ROLL**

There are strict legal requirements governing when a pupil's name can be removed from a school roll. Removal from the admission register in any circumstances other than those set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 is unlawful.

In addition, as all pupils within our special schools have EHCP, it is important to note there is additional legislation that needs to be considered including Children and Families Act 2014, Section 42 (duty to secure EHCP provision)

A school cannot remove a pupil with an EHCP from roll unless the local authority has agreed to amend or cease the plan or has made alternative arrangements for education.

Even if a pupil is not attending (e.g. on a reduced timetable or medically unfit), they remain on roll until the LA formally authorises otherwise.

A pupil may only be removed from the admission register in one of the prescribed circumstances below:

- The school is notified by the local authority that the pupil has been registered at another school.
- The pupil has ceased to attend, and the parent has informed the school that they are providing education otherwise than at school (for example, home education), and the local authority has confirmed this is suitable.
- The pupil has ceased to attend school due to medical reasons, and a medical certificate or statement indicates they are unlikely to return before ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- The Headteacher has been notified that the pupil has died.
- The pupil no longer ordinarily resides within a reasonable distance of the school and has ceased to attend.
- The pupil has not returned within ten school days of the agreed return date following an unauthorised term-time holiday and both the school and local authority have made reasonable enquiries to locate them.
- The pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the next school meeting and has confirmed they will not continue in education.
- The pupil has been permanently excluded, and the decision has been upheld by the governing board (or independent review panel, if applicable).

The school must continue to record attendance accurately and work with the LA to ensure provision is being made.

All schools must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register and follow their guidelines. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points, when the pupil has completed the final year of

education normally provided by that school, unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include:

- (a) the full name of the pupil
- (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 pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register

Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register.

The guidance on working together to improve school attendance and the guidance on children missing education says that schools can remove a pupil from the admissions register once they have had a certain number of days' absence, and if the school and the LA have failed to be established that pupil's whereabouts after making reasonable enquiries. The guidance also enables removal from the register if the pupil has been located but "there are no reasonable grounds to believe that they will attend the school again.

The DfE has included some guidance about what would amount to 'reasonable enquiries. Local authorities and schools are expected to agree roles and responsibilities in relation to making enquiries, which might include:

- a. contact the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details.
- b. check local databases within the local authority.
- c. check Key to Success or school2school (s2s) systems.
- d. follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children's social care, and HMRC.
- e. check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force.
- f. check with agencies known to be involved with family.
- g. check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known.
- h. check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved.
- i. check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is.
- j. in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS).
- k. home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s) and relatives.

Schools and local authorities are expected only to make reasonable enquiries, and so this will not necessarily mean exhausting all of the examples listed above. Schools and local authorities should use their judgment as to which approach(es) are appropriate, considering all of the facts of the case.

Please note the important caveat that neither of these grounds for deletion would apply if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. In the case of pupils with EHCPs, it is important to consider whether their absence is connected to illness or another unavoidable cause – in which case it would not be permitted to remove them from roll.

Paragraph 249 of the working together to improve school attendance guidance states:

“This ground cannot be used in any case where the pupil could reasonably be supported to return to school regardless of whether that support has been provided. It cannot be used where a pupil is absent because of a health reason. It also cannot be used in cases where attendance legal action to cause the pupil to return to school could reasonably be taken instead. In such cases, the appropriate support or enforcement should be taken rather than the pupil’s name being deleted from roll.”

In short, this means that, if there are any other ways of getting a child to attend, those options should be considered first.

## **8.3 Changing Schools**

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must contact the case worker to validate this information before the pupil is removed off role. Once confirmed schools should record this within their admission register.

Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, all schools are required to record in the admission register:

- a. the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live.
- b. the new address; and
- c. the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil’s name is to be removed from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with:

- a. the full name of the pupil.
- b. the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives.
- c. at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives.
- d. the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable.
- e. the name of pupil’s destination school and the pupil’s expected start date there, if applicable; and

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

If there is evidence to suggest the child has moved to a different local authority area, contact should be made with the named person in the new authority using secure communication methods. The local authority should maintain a record of the child’s details until they are located or attain school leaving age.

All safeguarding files should be securely transferred to the new school in a timely manner.

## **9.1 LEGAL INTERVENTION**

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance champion will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting (School Attendance Panel SAP) with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

### **Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)**

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an ESO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

## **10.1 MONITORING AND ANALYSING ABSENCE**

The attendance champion will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance champion will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.

- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance champion will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance champion will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

## **10.2 TRAINING STAFF**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance champion and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.