




Official Policy

Attendance Policy

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Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Promoting and supporting punctuality to lessons.

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school' May 2013
- 'Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance,' February 2023
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles & Responsibilities

All members of the school community have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence and must:

- Recognise that good attendance is not a discrete piece of work but rather an integral part of the school's ethos and culture
- Know the importance of good attendance and be consistent in their communication with pupils and parents
- Recognise children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues.

3.1 The Governing Body:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it through the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure all staff receive adequate training on attendance.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority

3.3 Senior Leadership

A designated senior leader will oversee and coordinate the school's work to improve attendance by providing a clear vision, monitoring expectations and processes, analysing attendance data, and communicating key messages to pupils and parents. They are also responsible for ensuring the attendance policy is applied consistently across the school.

3.4 Teaching and Support Staff

Attendance Officer

- Promote and support high levels of attendance
- Monitor attendance daily ensuring all registers are completed and amend inaccurate registers.
- Receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding pupil absences and record appropriately.
- Contact parents/carers regarding pupil absence including first day calling and enact processes to follow up unexplained absences
- Identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff
- Manage in-year admissions to the school
- Work collaboratively with the Student Support Team, other schools in the area, local authorities and share appropriate information
- Provide support for the pupil in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the school
- Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances
- Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome
- Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate.
- Advise the Headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices
- Implement children missing education (CME) procedures where appropriate.

3.5 Family Support Adviser:

- Build strong relationships with families
- Undertake home visits to ensure children are safe and to engage families
- When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents' barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them

- Help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school
- Formalise support where absence persists, and voluntary support not being engaged with
- Lead on enforcing attendance through statutory intervention where all other avenues have been exhausted
- Encourage good relations and effective dialogue between parents and teachers about children's progress
- Work collaboratively with the Student Support Team, other schools in the area, local authorities and share appropriate information
- Ensure that parents fully understand the demands and responsibilities of elective home education (EHE)

3.6 Heads of Year:

- Promote and support high levels of attendance, emphasising the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment
- Support pupils to improve their attendance
- Share concerns/actions with the Attendance Officer and Family support advisor
- Discuss absence and attendance concerns with pupils
- Contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified.

3.7 Classroom teachers:

- Record the attendance of each lesson using the correct codes within the first 10 minutes of lesson time and amend registers according to ensure register are always accurate
- Promote, welcome and value the attendance of all pupils at all appropriate opportunities
- Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom
- Support pupils to reengage with their learning after a period of absence
- Identify any absence trends or concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff. Form tutors:
- Promote and support high levels of attendance, emphasising the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment
- Record the attendance of registration using the correct codes within the first 10 minutes of lesson time and amend registers according to ensure register are always accurate
- Discuss absences and attendance weekly with pupils using class data and form targets.

3.8 School attendance/ admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absences on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the appropriate member of the attendance or wider pupil support to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.9 Pupils

- Arrive at school by 8.35am pupils and strive to attend every day
- Attend registrations and all lessons on time
- Take responsibility for registering at the pupil reception desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

3.10 Parents/Carers

- > Ensure their child attends school every day and on time.
- > Talk to their child about school and promote the value of education and regular attendance.
- > Report unexpected absence to the school by 8.45am and update the school on each subsequent day of absence via ClassCharts or calling the schools absence line.
- > Provide up to date contact details including more than one emergency contact number.
- > Request leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances and in advance.
- > Arrange medical appointments outside the school day where possible and provide medical evidence when appointments occur during school hours.
- > Engage with Classcharts and any other communication systems.
- > Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may affect attendance.
- > Seek support from the school if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- > Work proactively with the school and local authority when a child is at risk of persistent absence.
- > Engage with any support offered, including attendance or parenting contracts and early help plans.

4. Recording attendance

In line with the law, we have admissions register (school roll) and an attendance register. All pupils will be placed on the admissions register and have their attendance recorded on the attendance register.

4.1 Registers

School starts at 08:40am and ends at 15:10pm.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during the afternoon session using the national attendance and absence codes (see Appendix I). This

is at 8.45am and at 12:05pm; 12.35pm for KS4 and KS3 respectively. Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.35am to allow them to be in their form room by 8.40am. Pupils are registered within the first 10 minutes of every form time or lesson by their teacher who will call a full register.

Following registers being completed, the Attendance Officer along with, where appropriate, other members of the Student Support Team will contact home to inform parents/carers that the child is not present.

4.2 Punctuality

As a school we actively discourage late arrival. If there is a pattern of late arrival, we will seek an explanation from the parent. Lateness to school sessions and lessons is recorded daily.

Arrival after the close of registration will be marked with a *U* showing arrived in school after registration closed. This mark shows them to be on site but is legally recorded as an unauthorised absence.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded *M*. Pupils arriving after 8.45am should sign in at the pupil entrance reception desk, giving their reason for being late.

If lateness persists parents/carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the issue and support offered, which may include the pupil being monitored by a punctuality report.

5. Absences

5.1 Authorised absence:

An authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory satisfaction for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised

5.2 Unauthorised absence:

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request.

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. We may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, particularly if the illness is longer than 3 days, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If we are not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

Data is used to target attendance improvements, when a pupil is identified whose attendance has fallen below 92% support will be formalised.

The school must report pupils absent for ten consecutive school days (authorised or unauthorised) or twenty consecutive days without authorisation to the local authority. If contact cannot be made, the child is referred as at risk of missing education.

5.3 Planned Absence

- There is no legal entitlement for term-time holidays; only exceptional circumstances may be authorised.
- Leave of absence must be applied for in advance by the parent with whom the pupil normally lives, and the headteacher decides whether the circumstances are exceptional.
- Each request is considered individually, and the headteacher determines the number of days granted. Exceptional circumstances are defined as rare, significant, or unavoidable events that could not be scheduled at another time.
- Parents must complete the ERYC leave of absence form before making travel arrangements; forms are available online or from the Attendance Officer.
- Unauthorised term-time leave may result in fixed-penalty fines or legal action if absence thresholds are met.
- Medical or dental appointments count as authorised if notified in advance and supported with medical evidence.

5.4 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may do a door knock and the address listed on the system.
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- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
 - Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
 - Call the parents on each that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
 - Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker
 - Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
 - Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

5.5 Persistent and Severely Absent (less than 90% and 50% respectively)

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), this is called persistently Absent (PA) we will offer support to remove any barriers to attendance and look to re-engage these pupils.

Focus will be given to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present those missing 50% or more of school are classed as severely Absent (SA). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them.

We will ensure persistent and severe absence is a focus of regular data monitoring and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible.

6. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Supporting pupils with poor attendance is a key priority for the school. We are committed to working in partnership with pupils, parents and external agencies to identify barriers to attendance at an early stage and provide timely, appropriate support. This would include working with the pupils and their families and may include attendance contracts. Letters are sent to parents when attendance is a concern – see stages flow chart (appendix 2)

6.1 Local authority interventions

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful; we may work with the local authority who will contact parents to start more formal interventions

6.2 Penalty Notices

Parents can be fined for the unauthorised absence of their child from school. If a child has 10 unauthorised sessions within a 10-week period, parents be fined by to Local Authority. Further details in link below)

The use of a penalty notice is an intervention to improve attendance as a school we will take all reasonable steps to ensure good attendance without the use of Penalty notices.

We will refer to the local authority where a pupil's attendance has become a concern and if there is no improvement, they may start the Penalty notice process. (See Appendix III/LA <https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/learning/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-attendance/holidays-during-term-time-and-authorised-absence-from-school/#:~:text=Penalty%20notices%20will%20be%20used,warnings%20may%20not%20be%20given>)

6.3 Elective Home Education

Elective Home Education (EHE) is a parental right; however, the school strongly believes that full-time education within a school setting provides the broadest academic, social and emotional benefits for young people. We do not actively encourage Elective Home Education and will work proactively with families to address any concerns or barriers to attendance so that pupils can, wherever possible, remain in full-time education. Where parents are considering EHE, the school will offer guidance, support and discussion to ensure that all available options have been explored and that decisions are made in the best interests of the child. Our priority is to promote high attendance, continuity of learning and positive outcomes for every pupil.

When a parent informs the school of their decision to EHE we will:

- Ask for this in the form of a letter addressed to the Headteacher.
- In the first instance, the family support advisor will contact parents to discuss this decision and offer a meeting with relevant staff and if appropriate external agencies, to support the family. Other key staff may also contact home to ensure everything has been offered to the pupil and their family to stay in school.
- Local authority forms will be completed and returned to East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Only when confirmation of this information has been received from the local authority will we remove from roll.
- Send a letter to the parents confirming the removal of their child from our school roll.

7.Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

The school recognises that some pupils face barriers to regular attendance. We are committed to providing timely, appropriate, and targeted support to enable pupils to return to and sustain full-time education wherever possible.

Where absence is due to mental or physical ill health, we will work in partnership with families and relevant professionals to understand the pupil's needs and agree a reintegration plan. This may include reasonable adjustments such as a phased return, adapted timetable (time-limited and regularly reviewed), pastoral support, or adjustments to learning and assessment.

For pupils with SEND, we will review provision to ensure needs are appropriately met and make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to attendance. The SENDCo will work closely with families and, where appropriate, external agencies.

Disadvantaged pupils and those facing practical or financial barriers will be supported through early identification, pastoral intervention and, where appropriate, the use of Pupil Premium funding to address specific obstacles to attendance.

For pupils known (or previously known) to Children's Social Care, attendance will be monitored as part of safeguarding arrangements, with close liaison between school and external professionals.

Where pupils face additional challenges, such as being a young carer, the school will provide appropriate flexibility, pastoral support and signposting to specialist services.

All interventions will be timely, proportionate and regularly reviewed to ensure they are well-chosen, targeted and effective in securing sustained improvements in attendance.

7.1 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence will be supported through a planned and structured reintegration process to support a return to full time education successfully and sustain improved attendance. A personalised reintegration plan may be appropriate, which could include a phased return (time-limited and regularly reviewed), academic catch-up support, pastoral mentoring, and reasonable adjustments to reduce anxiety or remove barriers.

8. Attendance Monitoring

8.1 Promoting good attendance

Alongside accurate recording of attendance and absence we have robust day to day processes to track and follow up absence and poor punctuality these include:

- Proactively managing lateness
- Contacting parents on the first day of absence where a reason has not been provided.
- Identifying any absences that are not explained for each session and contacting parents (and where appropriate foster carers and/or social workers) to understand why and when the pupil will return
- Regularly informing parents about their child's attendance and absence levels including the amount of time missed and the impact on the child's learning
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and making the necessary referrals
- Making the necessary statutory data returns to the local authority
- Supporting pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and providing support to build confidence and bridge gaps
- Celebrating good or improved attendance through assemblies and tutor time and communication with parent.
- Rewards programme for good attendance including improved attendance.

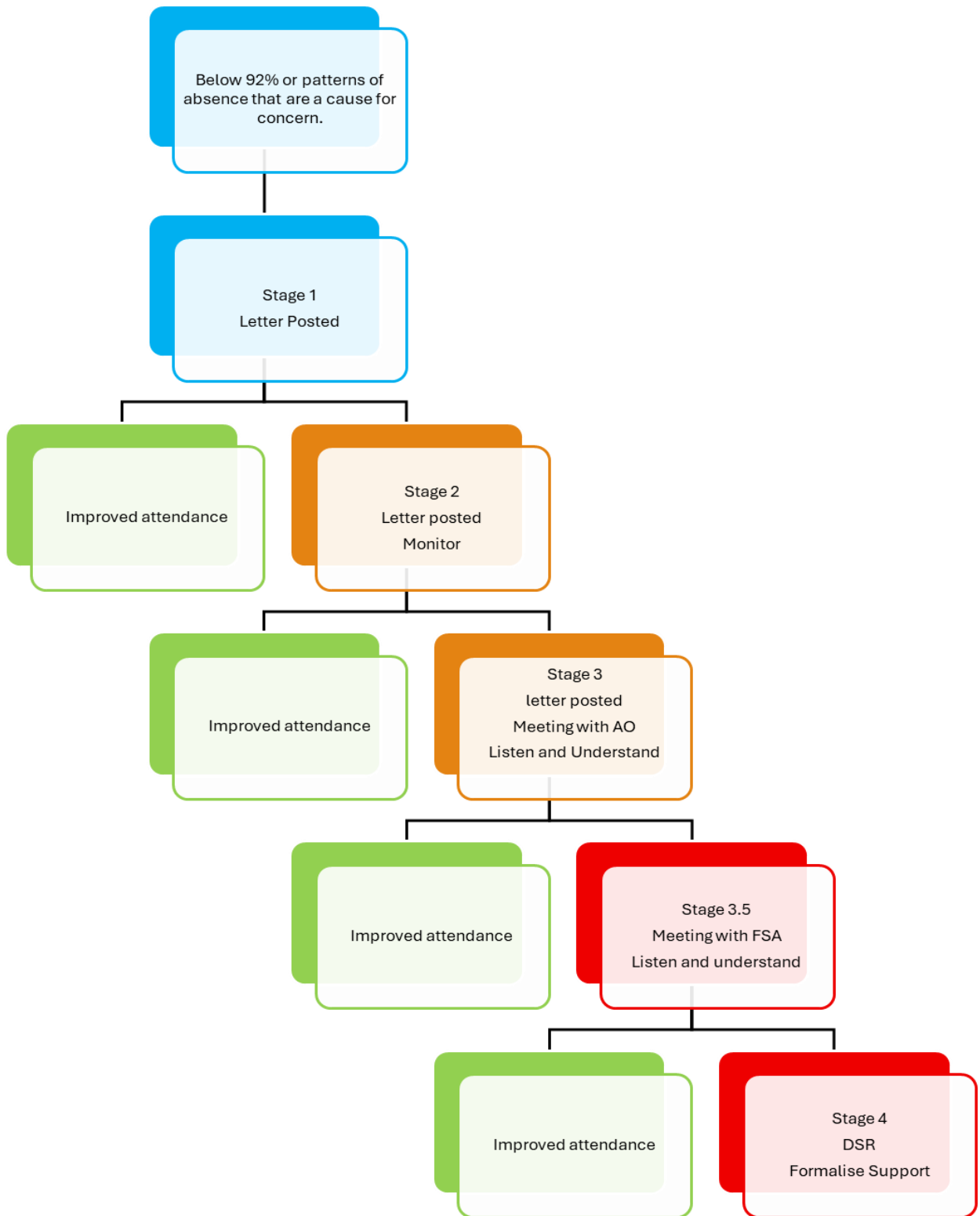
8.2 Attendance monitoring and analysis

As poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early intervention are crucial. The key to this is regular data analysis to both identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that

need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them.

To achieve this, we will:

- Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level).
- Monitor pupil's absence daily.
- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families
- Use this analysis to provide regular communication about attendance to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This includes analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance
- Benchmark our attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.



Working together to improve attendance

<p>Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:</p>	<p>At Withernsea High School this looks like:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Expect</p> <p>Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Expect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School values • School attendance policy • Assemblies • Form time activities, rewards and incentives • ClassCharts use with pupils and families
<p style="text-align: center;">Monitor</p> <p>Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Monitor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. • Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends.
<p style="text-align: center;">Listen and Understand</p> <p>When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Listen and Understand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive communication with pupil and family working together to address any in school barriers to attendance. • provide appropriate flexibility, pastoral support and signposting to specialist services. • Introduce timely, proportionate and regularly reviewed interventions to ensure they are targeted and effective in securing sustained improvements in attendance
<p style="text-align: center;">Facilitate Support</p> <p>Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include and early help or whole family plan where absence is a system of wider issues.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Facilitate Support</p> <p>Interventions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance reports and plans • Additional needs Support – EHCP • Dove House (Bereavement Counselling) • Reintegration Timetable • Therapeutic Intervention • School Nurse • Social Prescribing (NHS) • Literacy, numeracy Intervention • Referral to externals support agencies • PCSO Support • Behaviour Support (IBP/PSP/AP)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIEAG with Careers Leader <p>Letters home 1-2-1 tuition. Formal meeting with SLG, Attendance Officer/support team</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Formalise Support</p> <p>Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Formalise Support</p> <p>If voluntary support is not effective or engaged with, options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting contracts Education Welfare Service • ESO • Fixed penalty notices
<p style="text-align: center;">Enforce</p> <p>Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupils right to an education.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Enforce</p> <p>Prosecution</p>