Promoting Good Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Trust Board	Date: 01.09.2024
Last reviewed on: 10.10.25		
Next review due by: 10.10.26		

Updates and amendments

Date	Policy section	What's changed?	Why?

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This policy is based on the DfE's 'Working together to improve attendance' guidance (August 2024). The policy also references Ofsted's report (February 2022) 'Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence.'

1. Introduction

At Forward As One we expect all pupils within our schools to:

- Attend every school day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school prepared for the day

We believe that attending school, on time, is key to enabling pupils to make the most of the opportunities we offer to prepare them for their future.

We will work in partnership with our families to identify reasons for poor attendance supporting them in addressing any barriers to attendance for their child.

Promoting good attendance is a matter for the whole school community. This policy sets out our expectations and our approach. Our approach is in line with the Department for Education's guidance (August 2024) Working together to improve school attendance which applies from August 2024

This policy takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equalities Act 2010 and the 1996 Education Act.

Out approach to securing good attendance is based on the principle support first. In line with Ofsted's research, our approach can be summarized as "*Listen, empathise and support – but do not tolerate'*

Every pupil should be able to learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from har. Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers.

In the case of specific illnesses that require pupils to be kept off school, parents should follow public health advice to ensure the wellbeing of the whole school community. These illnesses are Chickenpox, Diarrhoea and Vomiting, Impetigo, Measles, Mumps, Scabies, Scarlet Fever and Whooping Cough – see 'How long should you keep your child off school – checklist poster'. Parents should follow the latest public health advice in relation to COVID-19.

This policy will be applied consistently and fairly. In applying this policy, we will consider the needs of individual pupils.

This policy is supported by other school policies and procedures e.g., admissions, safeguarding and child protection, anti-bullying, behaviour and inclusive practice.

2. Expectations

It is our responsibility to maintain a culture that promotes good attendance which is supported by consistently applied systems.

Our dedicated lead with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is [insert named lead and contact details].

Other staff in school who support attendance on a day-to-day basis are [insert names and contact details].

Staff who can provide support on attendance are [insert names and contact details/roles].

Parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, by regular attendance or otherwise.

We are committed to working with parents/carers to promote positive attendance. We expect all our parents/carers to:

- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance
- Contact the school as soon as possible if your child is absent to let us know the reason for the absence and the expected dates of return. [This should be followed up with a written note as soon as possible]
- Avoid unnecessary absences. For example, pre-planned medical/dental appointments should take place outside of school hours.
- Inform us of any changes in circumstance that may impact on your child's attendance.
- Support us by becoming involved in your child's education, acknowledging the value of education and the importance of children receiving the same messages from home and school.
- Work with us to address any barriers to attendance for your child including attending all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

We expects all our pupils to:

- Be aware of when they should attend school
- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn
- Speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- Communicate with parents/carers to encourage a written explanations to be shared with school to explain any absence that has happened or is foreseen
- Follow the school procedure If they arrive late

3. Daily Routines

At [name of school] our [insert named people] meet and greet our pupils at [insert place]. This begins at [insert time] each day. Pupils are then able to go to [insert place] before school classrooms are open.

Attendance registers are taken at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session.

Our school day begins at [insert time]. The morning register will be open and be taken at [insert time]. Any pupil arriving after [insert time] is required to report to the main school office to sign in and provide a reason for lateness.

If arrival is before [insert time] then the pupil will be recorded as late (late **before** the close of register) [insert the action school will take]

The school register will officially close at [insert time]. Any pupil arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session (late **after** the close of register) [insert the action school will take]

Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in further action being taken to support improved attendance.

Our afternoon session begins at [insert time] with a register taken at [insert time]

Our normal school day ends at [insert time].

4. Reporting Absence

If a child is absent from school, parents/carers should contact [insert names and details of contacts and/or how to contact] on the first day of absence providing a reason for the absence and the expected date of return.

If the absence continues, parents should contact insert names and details of contacts and/or how to contact] **each day of absence** to identify the reason for absence and the expected date of return.

Where absence is recorded as unexplained, a reason for the absence must be obtained, in writing, by no later than 5 school days after the session.

If a child is absent, and we have had no contact from the parent/carer to provide a reason for the absence, we will:

- Activate first day calling procedures after the register is closed at [insert time]
- If there remain no contact then a further telephone call will be made later that morning to the parent/carer and, if no response, a call will be made to the pupil's other emergency contacts
- If we cannot contact a parent/carer and are concerned about the pupil then, a home visit may be carried out by [insert name(s) of staff member(s)/ role of staff member(s)]. If the family is supported by a social worker, then the social worker will be informed of the absence.

If we have concerns around pupil's safety, we may also visit the home of the pupil or request a welfare check to be made by the police.

We will telephone home if a pupil leaves school without permission.

5. Requesting leave of absence

A leave of absence will only be granted (authorised) under exceptional circumstances. It is therefore unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday. In making our decision we will take into account the specific circumstances and context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. Requests for a leave of absence should be made in writing to the Headteacher giving as much notice as possible. [insert the school's process for requesting a leave of absence]

6. Managing Attendance

We will regularly [insert how often and by what means] inform parents/carers about their child's attendance, highlighting any amount of time missed and the impact on learning.

We value and recognise the importance of good attendance. We use the following to promote and celebrate good attendance: [insert schools' approach]

We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils who have consistently high attendance, those who have shown improvements in their attendance and to identify pupils who may be vulnerable. We will also analyse specific groups, classes/year groups to inform our strategy in promoting good attendance.

Our approach to attendance management is based upon prevention, dearly intervention and targeted support. We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils who are at risk of poor attendance, have poor attendance or are identified as being either persistently absent or severely absent.

PREVENTION of poor attendance through good whole school attendance management	**ALL PUPILS** Developing good attendance patterns through effective whole school approach to attendance
	PUPILS AT RISK OF POOR ATTENDANCE Using attendance and absence data rigorously to support pupils with increasing levels of absence, arriving at school late or taking leave in term time without permission before it becomes a regular pattern
EARLY INTERVENTION to reduce absence before it becomes habitual	**PUPILS WITH POOR ATTENDANCE** Intervening as early as possible and agreeing an action plan for pupils with high levels of absence and those demonstrating growing disengagement with school
TARGETED reengagement of persistent and severely absent pupils	**PERSISTENTLY ABSENT AND SEVERELY ABSENT PUPILS** Put additional targeted support in place, where necessary working with partners, and agree a joint approach with local authorities for all severely absent pupils

Our strategy for using data to target our work on attendance, including reducing persistent absence (pupils who are absent for 10% or more sessions) and severe absence (pupils who are absent for 50% or more session) is based on the table below:

0 – 4 days missed	98 – 100% attendance	**PREVENTION** Whole school approach/ celebrating good attendance	[Schools to add own commentary]
5 – 9 days missed	95– 97.9% attendance	**PREVENTION** Pupils at risk of poor attendance	[Schools to add own commentary]
10– 19 days missed	90.1 –94.9% attendance	**EARLY INTERVENTION** Pupils with poor attendance	[Schools to add own commentary]
20 or more days missed	90% or below attendance	**PERSISTENTLY ABSENT** 10% or more absence **SEVERELY ABSENT**	[Schools to add own commentary]

We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils or cohorts of pupils that need support. We will focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.

If we have concerns about a pupil's attendance and/or their punctuality, then we will work in partnership with parents/cares to support improvements. This may involve a meeting in school to support the family in identifying, and addressing, the barriers to attending school and/or attending school on time.

We recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties and trauma in child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help us to identify any additional support that may be needed. It is expected that the child and their family work collaboratively with us to identify the most appropriate support.

We recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

We hold regular meetings with the parents/cares of p[pupils who the school (and/or local authorly) consider to be vulnerable to discuss attendance at, and engagement with, school. This will include pupils who are classed as being persistently absent (10% or more absence), those who are severely absent (50% or more absence), those with patterns of absence and pupils who show an unexpected or unexplained dip in attendance.

Working with parents/carers, we will identify pupils who need support from wider partners and will make the necessary referrals as quickly as possible. With parental consent, this may include exploring Early Help support or through discussion within a team around the school meeting.

We will support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence to build confidence and bridge gaps.

If we have any concerns about the welfare and well-being of a pupil then, in line with our safeguarding responsibilities, we make any necessary referrals.

If we have been unable to contact the family, and have not seen the pupil, then we will inform the Local Authority so that joint enquiries can be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures.

7. Voluntary support, formal support and statutory action

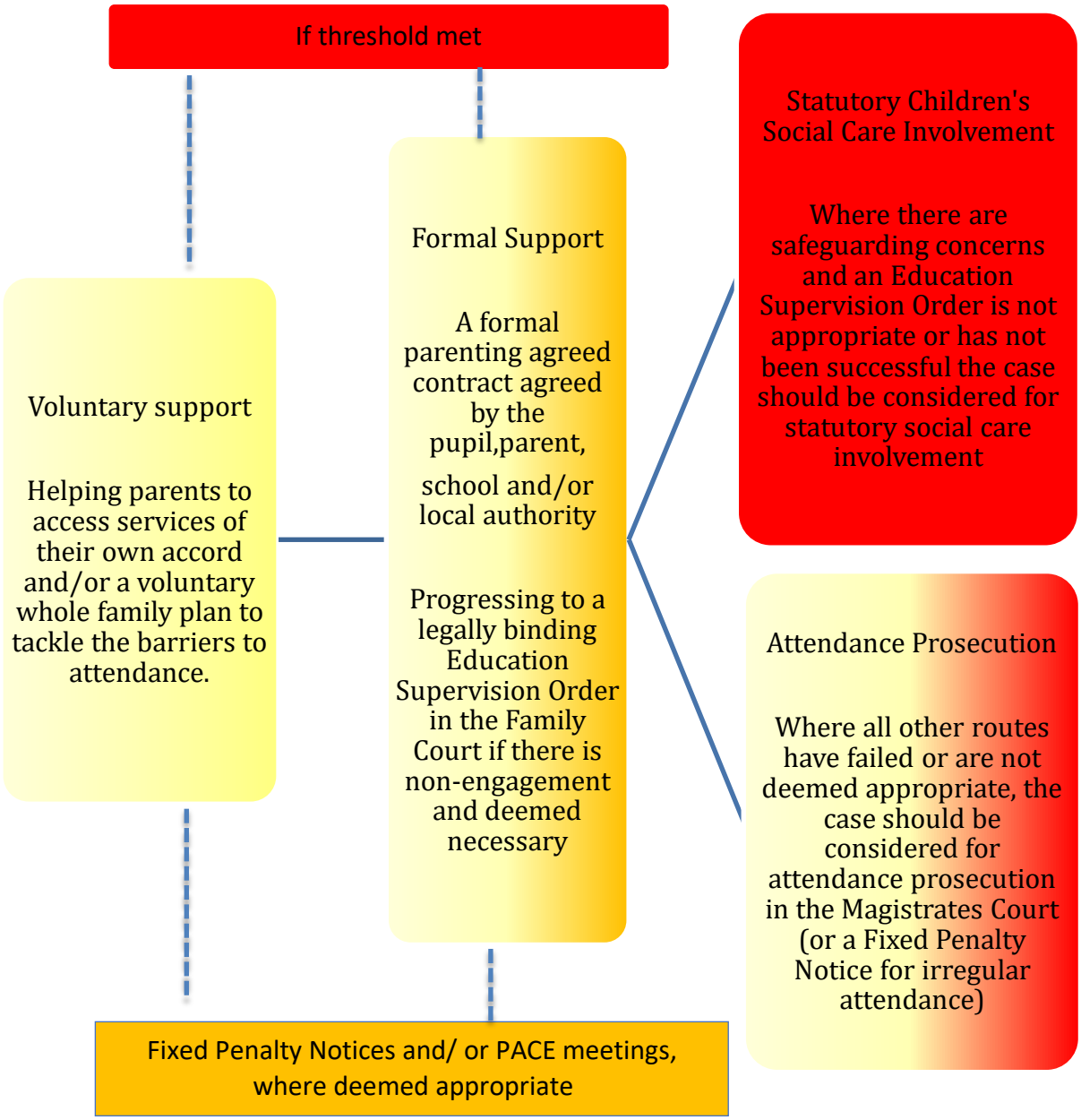
We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. These may include [delete/add as necessary]

- A recognised whole school approach that celebrates achievements in school
- Reward systems for positive behaviours
- Discussion with parents/cares and pupils
- Discussion with the Virtual school where the child is looked after and/or has a social worker
- Working with attendance professionals, internal and/or external to the school
- Attendance panels

- Attendance support plans
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies
- Learning mentor / children's champion
- Pupil voice activities
- Friendship groups
- Personal, social and health education
- Anxiety-based school avoidance resources
- Trauma-informed practices
- Early Help referral options
- Family learning
- Reward systems
- Time limited part-time timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion resources
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families, both internally and externally, will be child-centred, trauma informed and inclusive, planned in discussion and agreement with. both parents/carers and pupils.

Our approach to attendance management is based on the principles of prevention, early intervention, and targeted support. At all stages we aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to address any barriers to attendance and/or punctuality together. Where support is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.



We will work with our Local Authority to use the full range of legal interventions available to us to protects our pupils' right to an education. These are:

- Parenting contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed penalty notices

Decisions on which intervention to take will be made on a case-by-case basis after considering the individual circumstances of the family.

8. Fixed penalty notices

School and the local authority will have regard to our safeguarding duties as set out in the statutory guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Fixed penalty notices will be served on parents/carers as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure that their child regularly attends the school. Fixed penalty notices will be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and the absence constitutes an offence. Fixed penalty notices can be issued to each parent/carer liable for the attendance offence/s, which should usually be the parent or parents with day-to-day responsibility for the pupil's attendance.

We will only use a fixed penalty notice in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amended in 2013, where support to secure regular attendance has not been successful. Fixed penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised holiday in term time.

Fixed penalty notices can be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period suspension or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the suspension/exclusion the days that the child must not be present in a public place.

Note: This policy meets the requirements of the department for education's working together to improve school attendance guidance and referenced the statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties governing school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010,2011,2013,2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (and 2013 amendment)

This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, our school's child protection and safeguarding policy and our school's behaviour policy

9. Appendix 1

EXPECT

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



MONITOR

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



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen, to understand barriers to attendance and to agree how all partners can work together to resolve them



FACILITATE SUPPORT

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 an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues



FORMALISE SUPPORT

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



ENFORCE

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 pupil's right to an education