

The Nethersole C of E Academy

Academic Year 2026 to 2027

Attendance Policy

To be light (living in our community and reaching out beyond it) bringing out the God-colours in the world.'

Jesus said, 'You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colours in the world.' **Matthew 5:16**



Date Policy Ratified by the LAB	September 2026
Headteacher	Mrs S J Goode
Chair of Governors	Mrs G Sparrow
Review Date	September 2027

Introduction

We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all our pupils. We promote school attendance by making our school a happy, engaging and rewarding place to learn.

Our Attendance Policy implements the

Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of children at school.
- To improve children's attainment through good attendance.
- To encourage parents to ensure that children arrive at school on time, every day that the school is open.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school, including parents, pupils, teachers, and governors.

To achieve these aims for our pupils, we are committed to the following:

- providing a welcoming, stimulating, and safe learning environment, where pupils are happy to come into school every day and are keen to learn.
- for all staff to feel happy to come to school to work with pupils, developing them to their full potential.
- having high expectations of our pupils and all staff.
- providing a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum.
- recognising and celebrating achievements in all areas of school life.
- providing equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life.
- providing high quality teaching using a variety of teaching strategies.
- providing a range of resources that are effectively used to support and challenge learning.
- providing experiences, which will develop our pupils' spiritual, moral, and cultural understanding.
- providing support, guidance, and training for all those who teach and work with our children.
- fostering and maintaining links with our wider community

Legislative Framework

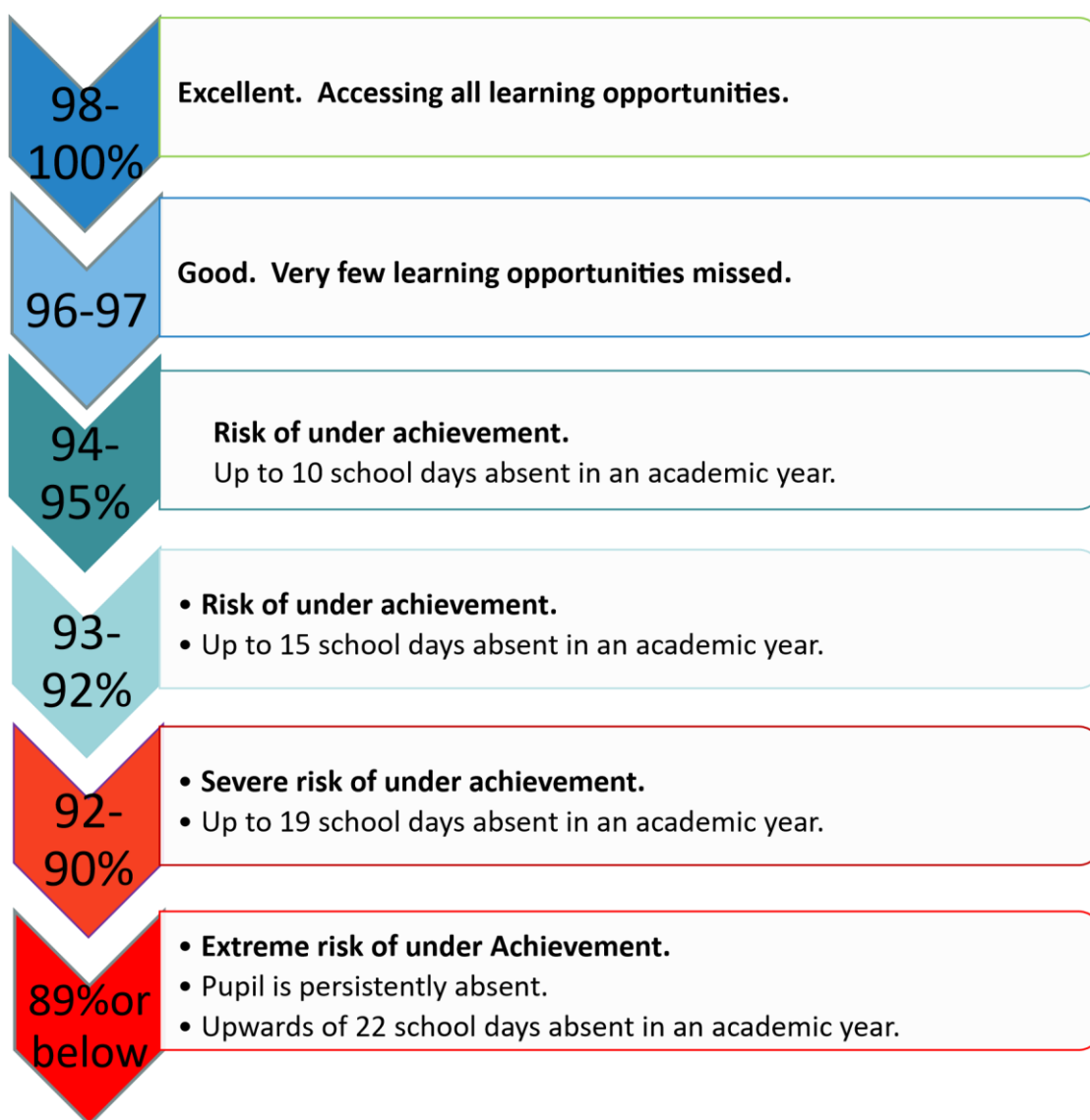
Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (sec 444) to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and fulltime basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to Warwickshire Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement. The Nethersole C of E Academy will act alongside the publication 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2026.)

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Expected Levels of Attendance

Attending school regularly and on time has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for pupils. Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success.

At the Nethersole CofE Academy we expect all children to achieve attendance that is at least 96%.



Attendance Partnership Expectations

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- To attend school -- every day that the school is open unless you are too ill or the school has authorised your absence.
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day, having eaten breakfast or attend breakfast club.
- To tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents and carers:

- To ensure their children attend school every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. (A list of statutory reasons/ authorised absences can be found in Appendix 2)
- To ensure contact is made with school, as soon as is reasonably practical, whenever their child is unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- To ensure that their children arrive in school, on time and well prepared for the school day, having eaten breakfast.
- To only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and to do this in advance in writing to the Headteacher.
- To book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- To inform school staff if they have concerns that could affect their child's attendance so appropriate support can be put in place in a timely manner.
- To work with school staff and other professionals to improve their child's attendance, when attendance falls below the expected levels identified on the previous page.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Regular, efficient, and accurate recording of attendance.
- Follow up support if needed. This may come from other professionals if this is identified as appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities for Attendance

- The Nethersole CofE Academy School has a named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues. This is the Headteacher.

- The Nethersole CofE Academy School also has a Family Support Worker with day-to-day responsibility for attendance and attendance interventions.
- Members of school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have responsibility for attendance issues in school. For detailed roles see Appendix 3.
- Attendance matters are reviewed by the Headteacher and members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Family Support Worker.
- Attendance issues are reported on a minimum termly basis, to the Local Academy Board.

We believe that through attending school every day, on time, children and young people will get the best possible start in life.

Procedures for persistent absence

We will follow the following process for addressing attendance concerns of all pupils. Whole School Attendance will be monitored at a minimum of half termly. The attendance of pupils falling to persistent absence levels (below 90%) will be monitored weekly.

Stage 1 - Attendance Below 95% (more than 1 period of absence)	Stage 1 – Monitoring via the weekly attendance tracker. This is on a case-by-case basis. Letter / email of concern will be sent home advising of the concerns and who to contact in school if support is required. Offer of school-based support made.
Stage 2 – Attendance Fails to Improve and Falls Below 93%	Stage 2 – School would work with CSAWS and would invite parents / carers in for a meeting. An Attendance Action Plan would be agreed – targets would be set and a review date agreed. Attendance will continue to be monitored. Early Support offered. If a child has more than 3 periods of absence due to illnesses - a Medical Letter is to be sent out requesting proof for future absences to be authorised. Reminder of parent's legal responsibilities.

Stage 3 - Attendance Fails to Improve and Falls Below 90%	Parents advised in writing that previous attendance target not met, and attendance remains a concern. Formal Attendance Meeting. School / CSAWS / Parents agree A Formal Attendance Contract to improve attendance, including target, actions, and review date. Meeting will go ahead if parents do not attend. The case is also discussed with Warwickshire Attendance Service Targeted Support Worker - Invite / led by Warwickshire Attendance Service Targeted Support Officer.
Stage 4 - Attendance Fails to Improve and Targets are not met	Parent notified in writing. Formal Referral to Warwickshire Local Authority Statutory Attendance Service.

***Where attendance continues to be a concern, school will continue to provide support and monitor progress. The stages outlined above are part of an ongoing process and do not reset at the start of a new academic year. Any actions, interventions or support already agreed will therefore continue, subject to ongoing review.**

Procedures for Absence

If a child is absent from school parents should contact the school on the first day of absence by 9am if possible, to inform the school of the reason for absence. Parents are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

At 9.30 am school registers are checked for any absences where there has been no contact by parents and reason given.

School staff will telephone any parent where their child is absent, and no reason has been given to ascertain a reason for the child's absence from school. When there is no answer, this will be followed by a text message requesting contact.

If staff are concerned about a child's absence or there is no response to their telephone call, they will follow the process detailed in Appendix 1. This includes telephone calls to other emergency contacts, home visits, and referrals to the police for a safe and well check.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated (Working Together to Support School Attendance 2026)

It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school.

Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child (KCSIE 2026) Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.

Illness:

Not all illness requires an absence from school. For minor childhood ailments such as coughs, colds, earaches etc, we would not expect children to be absent. However, when a parent makes the assessment that their child is unfit for school, they should follow the above absence process.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes.

If you are unsure if your child should attend school, please contact the school who will offer advice and guidance and signpost you to the relevant service.

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In most cases, a parent's explanation of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance or reason for absence, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

School will challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance. In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Child is absent and there are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness.
- Child has had three periods of absence due to illness.
- Child is absent and the same reasons for absence are frequently repeated.
- Child is absent and attendance is below expected levels and there is a concerning pattern of absence/reasons for absence.
- Where there is a medical problem and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support.

Medical appointments -

Parents should avoid making routine medical appointments and dental appointments during the school day. In most cases, appointments can be made outside of the school day / during the school holidays.

Where appointments must be taken during the school day, only the time for the appointment and travel to and from will be classed as an authorised absence. Pupils are expected to return to school for the remainder of the day / attend school prior to the appointment.

Parents may be required to provide a copy of the appointment letter or card prior to the day of the appointment.

Other reasons for absences:

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on each occasion. Notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. The school will follow the guidance provided in 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' 2024 and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays, or child minding.

Religious Observance -

School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends, and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. However, parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. Religious bodies maybe contacted to verify these occasions.

Traveller Absence -

The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

School can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in ongoing dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must advise school of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

School will authorise absence of Traveller children if their parent(s) are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place and has given indication that they intend to return. Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

Leave of Absence

- **The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.**

Expectations -

- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission for a Leave of Absence from a school may only be given by a person who the school's proprietor has authorised to do so (an authorised person).
- Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify

the parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.

- It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Where applications for Leave of Absences are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an “unauthorised” absence. Where a leave of absence is requested but additional days take either prior to or after the request, they may be considered as part of the leave of absence.
- Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as ‘unauthorised’.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the
- Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council’s Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council’s Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

The law relating to Penalty Notices changed with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence taken from September 2024 will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

- First Leave of Absence Offence: The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- Second Leave of Absence Offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.
- Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice). A Penalty Notice will not be issued and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council’s Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Punctuality -

It is important that pupils are punctual so that they do not miss out on the beginning of each school day. Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session.

If a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer.

To access the school day we ask parents to ensure that their children are in school by 8.40am and at the latest 8.50am, when there are a range of educational activities and interventions. The formal school day starts at 8.50am.

Children arriving after 8.50am will be late for school and must report to the school office.

Where a pupil arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (Code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes).

School registration will close at 9.20am.

The registers are monitored daily and to identify pupils who are arriving late and regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable.

The following procedures are put in place to resolve poor punctuality:

- 6 Late arrivals in a Half Term – Letter.
- 6 U codes in half a term - a letter sent home / offer of school support.
- 10 U codes - Stage 2 Attendance / Meeting / Action Plan / Review.
- Further U codes and attendance below 90% - referral to Warwickshire Local Authority.

Our afternoon registration is at 12.50pm. Afternoon registration will therefore close at 1.20pm.

Reintegration of Long-Term Absentees -

Absence can significantly interrupt the continuity of students learning, and positive strategies should be employed to minimise such effects.

Key Principles to consider -

- We should always keep in touch with a student / and his / her family during a long absence.
- We should always make sure he / she is welcomed back.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher / SENDCO to consider a phased return where appropriate. This needs to be considered in line with the Warwickshire LA process and procedure, which includes seeking expert advice from relevant professionals and coordinating a multi-agency meeting. Consideration needs to be given to any special / additional needs the pupil may have and appropriate support identified. Consideration must be given to a package of support which may include providing a mentor (staff member / student.)

Class Teachers should ensure that the pupil feels welcomed back to school in an appropriate way and take any necessary steps to support their re-integration.

Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child who is absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

All schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days education – (School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024).

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll on the limited grounds set out in School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to an increased risk of harm. Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties.

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (as amended).

This attendance policy is part of a broader suite of safeguarding policies including the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Registers

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations.

Every half day of absence from school must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence can be given only when the Headteacher has either approved in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the Headteacher [see School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024].

There are procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks. School complies with and uses the DFE Compulsory National Attendance Codes to categorise absence (Appendix 2).

Use of Attendance Data

All schools must provide their attendance data to the DFE, most schools use their management information systems to send their data via school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

The Nethersole CofE Academy will collect, use and store attendance information about our pupils and may receive information about children from their previous school. The information we keep regarding attendance includes name, contact details, attendance records, late records and any relevant medical information.

Appendix 1

First day absence report run to identify any children absent and no reason provided.



All late arrivals recorded and added to Arbor. All morning registers completed and updated by 9.20am.



All messages regarding pupil absence entered on to Arbor by 9.20am.



Telephone call made for all children when reason unknown.
Calling completed where no reason known / inadequate reason provided.
Text message sent to follow up where no answer.



Telephone calls made to other contacts / emergency contacts when unable to make contact.



A risk assessment made as to whether a home visit needs to be undertaken for pupils absent with no reason given and no response to first day call or emergency contacts based on individual circumstances. Contact will be made with Social Workers attached to any absent pupil where first day contact has not been made.
Any child on **3rd day of absence where no reason or an inadequate reason** given will have a home visit. Home visits made and letter left if no response.



Cases identified for referral to Police for Safe and Well checks.

Appendix 2

NATIONAL ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

Code	Meaning	Statistical Value
/	Present at school AM	Attending (Present)
\	Present at school PM	Attending (Present)
L	Late arrival before register is closed	Attending (Present)

K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA	Attending approved educational activity (present) an
V	Attending an Educational visit or trip	Attending approved educational activity (present) an
P	Participating in a Sporting Activity P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity	Attending approved educational activity (present) an
W	Attending Work Experience	Attending approved educational activity (present) an
B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity	Attending approved educational activity (present) an
D	Dual Registered at another school	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)

C1	Leave of absence – performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
M	Leave of absence for Medical or dental Appointment	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for Interview	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for Studying for public examination	Authorised absence
X	Non – Compulsory School age pupil not required to attend school	Not a possible attendance

C2	Leave of absence – compulsory school age pupil subject to part time / reduced timetable	Authorised absence
C	Leave of absence for exceptional	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
R	Religious Observance	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical appointment)	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or Permanently excluded with no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
G	Leave of absence not granted by school	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements	
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available (travel)	
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption (e.g. train strikes)	
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed (e.g. RAAC)	
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed (eg burst water mains)	
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law (e.g. Strep-A)	
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	

Appendix 3

The Nethersole C of E Academy Roles and Responsibilities for School Attendance

Name	Role	Responsibilities
BDMAT Trust Board – Trustees.	BDMAT Trust Board – Trustees.	- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures. - Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. - Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.

CEO (BDMAT).	CEO (BDMAT)	• Strategic responsibility for oversight of Head of School Support
Head of School Support (BDMAT).	Head of School Support (BDMAT)	• Review school attendance. • Support school leaders with persistent absence monitoring and share best practice across the MAT to improve attendance. • Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (e.g. pupil registration, attendance registers.) • Half termly reports to the Trust Board.
Schools Governors.	Schools Governors.	• Reviewing school attendance and checking if attendance policy and procedures are having the required impact. • Agreeing and Reviewing School Policy.
Headteacher.	Headteacher.	• Authorising/authorising absences. • Responding to all Leave of absence requests in line with DfE guidance. • Compliance with relevant legislation. • Overview of clear and escalating interventions.
Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.	Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.	• Compliance with relevant legislation. • Data analysis and Strategic Plan for attendance. • Implementing school policy and leading on whole school approach. • Line management.
Headteacher and Family Support Worker.	Headteacher and Family Support Worker.	• Overview of clear and escalating interventions. • Evaluation of interventions. • Promoting school attendance. • Responsibility for links with CSAWS and the LA Statutory Team. • Attendance at attendance panels. • Responsibility for termly reports to Local Academy Board and half termly reports to Head of School Support.
Office Staff / Family Support Worker	Office Staff / Family Support Worker	• Maintaining registers. • Identifying children whose absence needs further follow up action in line with the school absence procedure. • Rewards and incentives. • Home visits. • Contacts with parents. • Attendance interventions in line with the policy and procedures.
Class Teachers	Class Teachers	• Marking registers. • Promoting importance of regular school's attendance. • Providing early warning of attendance concerns. • Positive role modelling. • Following policy and procedures consistently.

School Office	School Office	• Late arrivals. • Half termly attendance letters. • Taking absence calls. • First day calling / text messages. • Communicating with Attendance Mentor. • Entering Late Codes.
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