



Campion School

Attendance Policy

Dated: September 2024

Review: September 2025



Campion School

Attendance Policy

Date of policy: July 2024

Date of next review: July 2025

Members of staff responsible for overseeing that this policy is implemented and regularly reviewed:

Jassa Panesar (Headteacher),

Steve Bolsover (Deputy Headteacher)

Signature (Chair of governors):

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Panesar', written in a cursive style.

Date: June 2022

Signature (Headteacher):

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Date: July 2024

Section 1: Introduction

Campion School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive full-time education which maximises opportunities to realise their full potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment with engaging learning experiences, so pupils feel valued and secure. It is a high priority at Campion School to work in partnership with pupils, families and outside agencies to provide encouragement, information, advice and support.

School staff will work with pupils and their families to encourage each pupil to attend school regularly and punctually. Children who miss out on education are at an immediate disadvantage to their peers, at a great cost to themselves and to the community as a whole. One day a fortnight away from school means a child will have lost half a year's schooling by the end of Year Eleven.

Our Attendance procedures seek to reward and incentivise excellent attendance across the entire school. We seek to achieve this by providing pupils with a learning environment that they value and want to attend. Where pupils do not respond, we will challenge pupils and parents who regard attendance as low priority and provide for those who need further support in improving their attendance.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the standard of attendance and punctuality is outstanding by:

- improving the percentage of pupils attending school
- reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent
- ensuring attendance and punctuality are a priority for all
- providing support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils
- promoting effective communication and partnership with pupils, parents, the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS), other services and agencies.

The objective of this policy is to make outstanding attendance and punctuality embedded across all aspects of the school by:

- supporting teachers, form tutors, house learning leaders, pupil support and school leadership in promoting and monitoring outstanding attendance and punctuality
- ensuring legal requirements and school policy are clear to pupils, parents and others
- working in partnership with parents and pupils and other agencies
- recognising the needs of individual pupils when planning attendance support

Section 2: Working in Partnership: Parents

2.1 Responsibility and Legal Requirements

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a proper full-time education. Parents are responsible for making this happen, either by registering the child at school or by making other arrangements, which provide an effective education. (The Education Act 1996 Section 7).

The government expects young people to be in education and/or work based training until their 18th birthday. Therefore, parents/carers should make every effort to encourage their children to attend sixth form if that is their chosen route.

The term “parent” also includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child or who have care of the child (Children Act 1989 and Education Act 1996)

A child should come to school every day. They should only be absent if the reason is unavoidable or there are significant health reasons. Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the reason for each absence is required.

When can my child return to school?

Chicken Pox 5 days from onset of rash and all the spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis No need to stay off, but school or nursery should be informed	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from the last symptoms	Glandular Fever No need to stay off, but school or nursery should be informed	Flu When recovered *	
Hand, foot & mouth No need to stay off, but school or nursery should be informed	Head Lice No need to stay off, but school or nursery should be informed	Impetigo When lesions are crusted & healed or 48 hours after starting antibiotics	Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash and recovered *	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling *	Scabies After first treatment
Scarlet Fever 24 hours after starting antibiotics	Slapped Cheek No need to stay off, but school or nursery should be informed	Threadworms No need to stay off, but school or nursery should be informed	Tonsillitis No need to stay off, but school or nursery should be informed	Whooping Cough 48 hours after starting antibiotics *	If you are worried please seek further advice from your GP or community pharmacist. *Vaccine preventable

A child’s education is a partnership between the school and the parent(s) and if there is a reluctance for your child towards school, please contact us rather than condoning absence by providing an excuse. We will do what we can to support you and your child.

It is the Headteacher that makes the final decision on whether to authorise any absence from school.

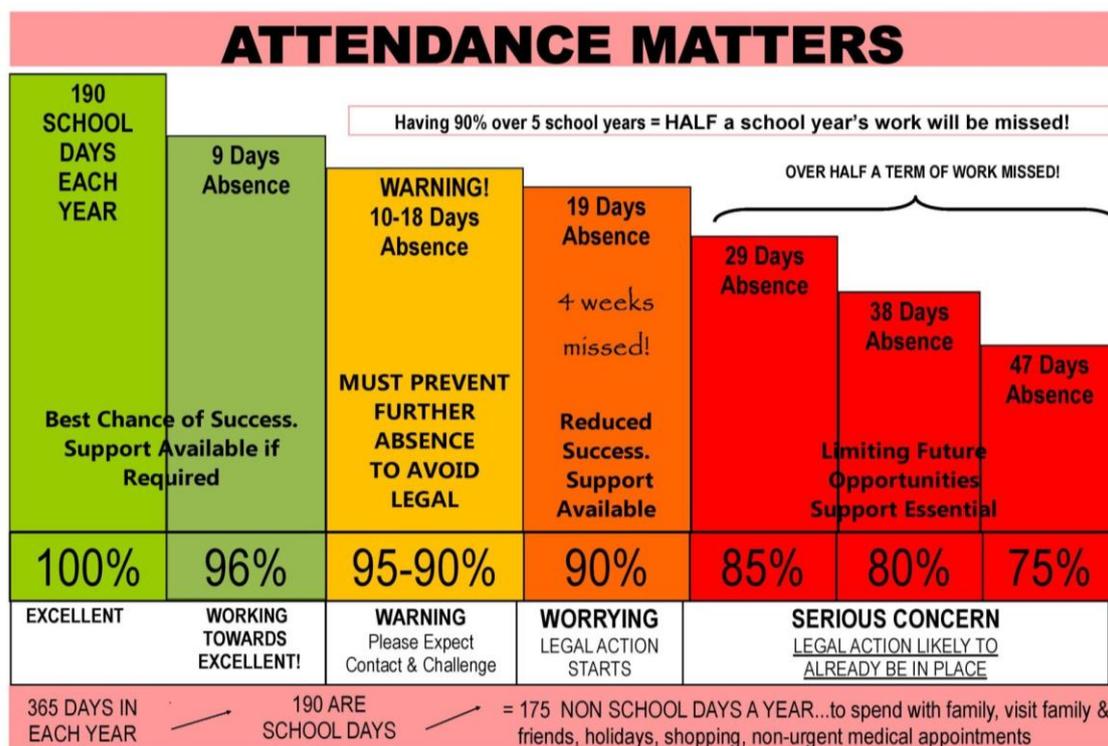
2.3 How parents / carers help:

- aim for your child to have school attendance as close to 100% as possible; (in attendance terms even 95% is not good)
- organise your child so that they attend registration periods on time every day
- help your child to be confident about attending school
- ensure they have the correct uniform and stationary (pens, pencils etc.)
- encourage them to complete their homework properly and on time
- talk to your child about school and inform school of any difficulties they may be experiencing
- if your child is experiencing difficulty, the school will attempt to support them

2.3.1 Absence

Your child must only miss school if they are affected by a significant illness or other serious, unavoidable issue. On the first day of absence a parent must contact the school by 9.00 am, giving the reason for absence. The same applies to each subsequent day of absence.

The school will consider the messages from parents when determining whether non-attendance is authorised or unauthorised.



2.3.2 Punctuality / lateness

Morning registration begins at 8.40 am. Afternoon school begins at 1.00 pm. Ensure your child arrives at school punctually; provide a written explanation for any late arrival. Anyone attending

registration late without a valid note or reason from home will be sanctioned for their lateness. Persistent lateness results in exploration of the cause and likely additional sanction. Pupils arriving after 9.45am will be recorded as 'unauthorised late after the register has closed'.

The importance of arriving at school on time

If your child is 5 minutes late they lose	25 minutes a week	1 hour 40 minutes a month	2 hours 30 minutes a half term	5 hours a term This is equivalent to over 1 full day	16 hours 15 minutes a school year This is equivalent to over 3 days
If your child is 10 minutes late they lose	50 minutes a week	3 hours 20 minutes a month	5 hours a half term This is equivalent to 1 full day	10 hours a term This is equivalent to 2 full days	32 hours 30 minutes a school year This is equivalent to over 6 full days
If your child is 15 minutes late they lose	1 hour 15 minutes a week	5 hours a month This is equivalent to 1 full day	7 hours 30 minutes a half term This is equivalent to over 1 full day	15 hours a term This is equivalent to 3 full days	48 hours 45 minutes a school year This is equivalent to over 9 full days
If your child is 20 minutes late they lose	1 hour 40 minutes a week	6 hours 40 minutes a month This is equivalent to over 1 full day	10 hours a half term This is equivalent to over 2 full days	20 hours a term This is equivalent to over 4 full days	65 hours a school year This is equivalent to 13 full days

2.3.3 Medical appointments

Routine medical appointments should not be taken during school time. Doctors and dentists are used to requests for appointments that won't disrupt schooling and will try to accommodate. Where an emergency appointment during school time is unavoidable, pupils must only be absent for the duration of that appointment; i.e. leave school only for the time necessary to attend the appointment and then return to school the same day.

2.3.4 Prevent your child becoming a persistent absentee

Pupils with below 90% attendance are classed as persistent absentees. Being officially considered a persistent absentee has serious implications. Colleges and employers normally ask for pupils' attendance when requesting references. Pupils with such low attendance are also significantly less likely to do well academically and this affects their life chances. If a pupil is a persistent absentee they and their parents will become the focus of significant intervention to improve the attendance of the pupil. This will involve the school, Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) and other agencies as appropriate. Parents of persistent absentees may be issued with fines and may be required to attend court.

 Per Parent, Per Child...	 First Offence...	 Second Offence (within a 3 year period)...	 Third Offence (within a 3 year period)...	 5 consecutive days of term time absence from school...
<p>Penalty Notices will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.</p> <p>FOR EXAMPLE:</p> <p>3 siblings absent for term time leave Each parent receiving 3 separate fines</p> <p>(5 school days = 10 sessions (AM & PM marks))</p>	<p>The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or Irregular school attendance the amount will be:</p> <p>£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days</p> <p>REDUCED to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days</p> <p>(5 school days = 10 sessions (AM & PM marks))</p>	<p>The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave of absence or Irregular school attendance the amount will be:</p> <p>£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days</p> <p>(PLEASE NOTE - there is no option for a reduced amount on a second offence)</p> <p>(5 school days = 10 sessions (AM & PM marks))</p>	<p>The third time an offence is committed for term time leave of absence or Irregular school attendance (within a 3 year period) by the same parent, for the same child a Penalty Notice WILL NOT be issued and the case will be referred to Bristol City Council's Education Welfare Service for PROSECUTION which may result in fines of up to £2500 per parent, per child</p> <p>Cases found guilty in a Magistrates court can show on a parents future DBS certificate</p> <p>(5 school days = 10 sessions (AM & PM marks))</p>	<p>Penalty Notices may also be issued for any term time absences that are unauthorised (please refer to the attendance codes for clarity) whether these absences are taken consecutively or cumulatively over a rolling period of 10 school weeks.</p> <p>5 school days = 10 sessions (AM & PM) marks</p> <p>All parents/carers are strongly encouraged to inform the school of their child's absence (everyday) and the reasons why as this will impact which codes are used.</p>

The new regulations from Working Together to Improve Attendance, come into effect from August 19, 2024. This puts the requirement for the school to consider giving a fixed penalty notice (FPN) to parents of students after the child has missed their 10th session within ten school weeks. A session is either a morning or an afternoon session and is the equivalent of 5 school days.

The FPN is currently £80, which rises to £160 if not paid within 21 days. Any second fine will be £160. Schools cannot give more than 2 FPNs in any 3 year period. Legal proceedings will be taken if the criteria for further FPNs are met. Each fine is for each of the parents.

Before a fine is given the school would normally work with the family to try and address the reason for the absences. This support could be in the form of adapted timetables, alternative ways of accessing the curriculum, referrals to mental health, SEND support or counselling. It is expected that the school set up an Early Help with the family to help manage the strategies to remove barriers to school attendance.

Where the school has tried to worked with the family and the family have not been engaging with the process the school can ask for a Notice to Improve (NoI) to be issued. If attendance does not improve after intervention from the school and the family are still not engaging then the school can ask for a Parenting Order (PO) to be issued by the courts.

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS CHANGING

1

FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after **19th August 2024**.

3

THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education'.

10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10-WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

2.3.5 Leave of Absence

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.

Leave of Absence taken in the academic year 2023-24

Penalty notices will be issued in accordance with the regulations regarding Leave of Absence (The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013):

It is important to note, 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 in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 each child if paid within 21 days).

Leave of Absence taken in the academic year 2024-25

The law relating to Penalty Notices is due to change with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence after this date 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.

Section 3: Working in Partnership: Pupils

Our Expectations

1. All pupils are expected to attend school registration and all of their lessons regularly and punctually.
2. Pupils who experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from tutor/class teacher, and if the need should arise, from their House Learning Leaders, Attendance Support Officers or the Leadership Team.
3. Pupils who achieve high attendance or improved attendance are acknowledged through the rewards system.
4. Any pupil wishing to go home ill in the school day must have a slip completed by either a member of SLT or their House Learning Leader. Once completed the pupil takes this slip to School Reception where a member of staff will contact home to ensure that it is safe for the pupil to go home. The "signing out" book or ipad will be administered from main reception.
5. Pupils signing out for doctor/dentist or other appointments should also report to Main Reception.
6. Staff will only agree to a child potentially going home if they feel the child is suffering from a significant illness. It is our expectation that children attending school stay in school.

Section 4: Working in Partnership: The School

4.1 Duty of Schools

1. School staff will inform parents of the attendance and punctuality of their child. School staff will monitor the attendance of all pupils and will pay close attention to those that may be at higher risk of having poor attendance or falling attendance.
2. Staff will encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff). The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will investigate promptly all absenteeism. There will be close liaison with parents. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

3. Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly and punctually at the school where he/she is a registered pupil. In law, parents have the responsibility for ensuring that pupils attend school regularly.
4. The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised. Ultimately, the final decision on whether to authorise absence from school is the Headteacher.
5. In law, attendance registers are required to be called twice each day. When this is done each pupil must be present, engaged in an approved educational activity or absent.

4.2 Children missing or absent from education

For children missing from education or absent from education (10 consecutive days of unexplained absence) see Appendix 1 at the end of this policy.

Section 5: Working in partnership: Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS)

The WAS Service is a partner in ensuring support for pupils whose attendance is causing concern.

Procedure:

- House Learning Leaders will regularly highlight pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and meets criteria for brought in or statutory support
- In consultation with Senior Staff, House Learning Leaders and Tutors as appropriate, a formal referral will be made to the WAS Service
- The WAS worker allocated to work with Champion School will support school staff to manage students with attendance that is causing concern.
- Where intervention and support do not result in a positive outcome, issuing of fixed penalty fines and prosecution may follow.

Section 6: Procedures: Rewards, Sanctions and Intervention

6.1 Rewards System

The rewards system will be reviewed regularly in order to maximise pupil enthusiasm and ensure affordability. Examples of possible rewards include:

- Displays outside of the pupil support office that help to engage pupils in their attendance
- Letters of praise to acknowledge good or improved attendance
- Certificates will be awarded termly to all pupils who achieve 100% attendance
- Pupils receive merits for good attendance

6.2 Support for those with poor attendance

The school will use available sanctions including:

- Tutors ensuring that tutees write their year to date attendance rate in their planner each week.
- Assemblies on the importance of good attendance.
- Highlighting and discussing issues via escalating attendance meetings. These will involve pupils, parents or carers and school staff: House Learning Leader, member of Senior Leadership Team. Attendance meetings may also involve staff from other agencies. Where formal meetings are held, targets will be set and sent home. If parents or carers do not attend meetings concerning their child's attendance, targets will be set in their absence. Records will be kept on file for future reference and may form part of the evidence base for issuing fixed penalty fines and instigating legal proceedings.
- Contact to all parents whose child's attendance falls below 95%, or meet the criteria of 10 missed sessions, by letter.
- Contact from school, on a minimum of three occasions per year, informing parent or carers of the level of attendance of their children
- Referral to Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS). (See also possible interventions section below)

6.3 Detention Procedure

A pupil is to be marked late (L) if they are not in the tutor room by 8:40 am for morning registration or 1:00 pm for afternoon registration.

The following detention sanctions will be applied:

- If a pupil arrives late to morning registration (after 8.40 am) or to afternoon lesson (after 1pm) they will be informed by the tutor when they have a late detention.
- Tutors are responsible for setting lates detentions for their form.
- The form tutor will ring home to let the parent know when a student is late.
- Failure to attend the "lates" detention results in a 45 minute "school" detention.
- Failure to attend the "school" detention escalates to a 2 hour "Headteacher's" detention. Failure to attend a "Headteacher's" detention is considered a serious breach of school discipline and will normally lead to the pupil being isolated or other appropriate reprimand.
- Where persistent lateness exists, the school will attempt to identify the cause of the persistent lateness and remedy the situation; this may include additional pastoral support or school sanctions as outlined in the behaviour policy (separate document). Parents/carers will be made aware of the issue and a course of action appropriate for that child will be decided upon.

The current detention tariff for lateness is as follows:

- 1 late in a week is a warning from the form tutor
- 2 lates in a week is a 5 minute detention from form tutor
- 3 lates in a week is a 10 minute detention from the form tutor
- 4 lates in a week is a referral to the House Learning Leader

- 5 lates in a week is a minimum 30 minute detention

6.4 Possible Interventions

The school will consider a wide range of intervention where pupils are identified as needing support. The list is not exhaustive, as interventions will be used where they are thought appropriate to each pupils circumstances. These may include:

- Interview with Pupil
- Adjustment of Pupil timetable
- Referral to School Counsellor
- Mentoring
- Offering the pupil a buddy
- Targeted rewards
- School linking into home rewards system
- Meeting between pupil and tutor, HLL, WAS Worker
- Home visit from pastoral support or member of SLT
- Internal panel meeting with pupil, HLL, senior staff and parent/carer
- Meeting between parents, school staff and other professionals
- Referral to CAMHS
- Consideration of EHCP (Early Help)
- Enrolment in appropriate extracurricular activities
- Introducing parent to the Triple P course.

6.5 Procedures: Monitoring and Evaluation:

6.5.1 Monitoring

- Attendance matters will be regularly discussed in senior leadership team meetings and appropriate governor meetings
- Pupil Support will monitor all pupil attendance, with particular emphasis on those with less than 95% or heading towards 10 unauthorised missed sessions within 10 school weeks and who are likely to be referred to the WAS Service.
- Pupil Support, House Learning Leaders or members of the Senior Leadership Team will meet with individual pupils to discuss attendance concerns and set a target for improvement.
- Senior Staff or House Learning Leaders will contact parents where there are attendance concerns and improvements are not forthcoming.
- Senior staff will produce an attendance report for Governors. The report is normally made at each Pupils, Parents and Communities Committee several times a year.
- Where a pupil is absent for medical reasons, the school may request medical evidence relating to the absence.
- Pupils whose medical absences give cause for concern may have their circumstances referred to a school nurse via Pupil Support.

- House Learning Leaders will provide Deputy Headteacher with attendance data for main school and vulnerable groups every fortnight. Data will include comparison with like for like data for the previous two years.
- Student Support will circulate Lates Reports to all Tutors, Pupil Support/Attendance Officers, House Learning Leaders and Assistant Headteacher after each two week timetable cycle.
- House Learning Leaders will circulate reports for all pupils with less than 95% attendance for all Houses and Years to all Tutors, Pupil Support, House Learning Leaders and Senior Staff on a fortnightly basis.

6.5.2 Evaluation

Evaluation of attendance strategies will include regular interrogation of attendance data for the main school, year groups, vulnerable groups and persistent absentees. The rate of persistent absence in comparison to previous years may also be used. These reports will be analysed by senior staff and then form the basis of improvement strategies to be discussed with the Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher, school governors or ACE service as appropriate.

6.5.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Tutor Responsibilities

- registers are to be completed as soon after 8.40 am and 1.00 pm as possible and saved
- tutors should be with their tutees by 8.40 am and subject staff at 1.00 pm
- any pupil arriving after these times should be marked late
- on an assembly day, all tutors should register their form in the assembly hall or refectory as directed using the paper OMR sheets
- pupils should be periodically reminded of the procedure for "late" registration and the legal importance of registration

Teaching staff Responsibilities

- all teachers must take an accurate register of the pupils in their class within the first ten minutes of each lesson

House Learning Leaders and Pastoral Support responsibilities:

- maintain and update attendance displays on a weekly basis
- provide all form tutors with year to date attendance of their tutees on a regular basis
- produce unexplained absence list once illness etc. have been established
- check absences against absences reported on pupil absence line
- input all attendance coding information
- contact home using the Group Call system on the 1st day where reason for absence is not known. Where there is no response, a phone call to parents is made
- refer any concerns to attendance team

- produce "lates" report and display it to pupils and hand to the staff member running the lates detention
- produce other periodic reports as requested by Senior Leadership Team and House Learning Leaders
- retain applications for term-time holiday absence, process holiday requests and inputting codes
- maintain files on individual pupils attendance, intervention strategies and outcomes
- issue "late slips"
- discuss with pupils why they were late and offer advice or liaise with parents where persistent lateness occurs
- monitor attendance of: main school, houses, individual tutor groups, individual pupils or specific groups as directed
- meet with pupils whose attendance is causing concern and to offer advice and support.
- produce certificates / letters home to celebrate and promote high pupil attendance
- produce letters informing parents when pupils fall below attendance thresholds
- encourage pupils with good attendance by liaising with parents verbally or in writing as appropriate

Appendix 1

Children Missing Education - A guide for schools, partners, agencies and other key professionals working with children of a compulsory school age* in Warwickshire

September 2016

PLEASE NOTE: Following new guidance issued by the Department of Education September 2016 this guide will be updated shortly. Contact details for referrals have been updated.

Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to:

- Ensure schools** are aware of their responsibilities regarding children missing education (CME)
- Help identify CME and which children are most at risk
- Provide information about the procedures relating to CME and how to make a referral

Children Missing Education (CME)

"All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have. CME are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life" - DfE, Children missing education, Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2015

The Local Authority's Responsibilities

The law requires the Local Authority to know where all Warwickshire children are and where or how they are being educated. In meeting those duties, the LA has considered a range of statutory guidance including the DfE Children missing in education January 2015 guidance which refers to a range of legislation including the Education Act 1996.

Warwickshire County Council has a named CME officer within the Access to Education Team who has responsibility for managing and monitoring procedures for identifying and reporting CME including the collation of data on all reported cases.

From 2013, Ofsted implemented a new joint inspection for multi-agency arrangements for the protection of children; this now includes CME.

"Compulsory School Age - a child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday until the Friday of June in the school year when they reach sixteen.

"School - for the purpose of this guide, school is all maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools and any alternative provision where a child is attending.

Who are CME and which children are most at risk of becoming CME?

Children of a compulsory school age who are:

1. Not on a school roll (not including children going through the LA schools admissions process) and not receiving a suitable education in an alternative setting ie home educated, privately or other approved educational alternative provider
2. Deemed not to be receiving a suitable education at home
3. Children who are missing (family whereabouts unknown) and are on a school roll/alternative provision
4. Have not taken up allocated school place
5. Absent 10 or more consecutive days from school without explanation, or has left suddenly and destination unknown.

"All schools must inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the schools permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such an agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State)" - Regulation 12(1) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Children most at risk of missing education

Schools are tasked with robustly monitoring their pupils' attendance and will have stringent systems in place to deal with persistent absences including appropriate safeguarding policies and processes. However, certain children are at particular risk of becoming CME for a wide range of reasons some of which can be complex and long term; CME is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including sexual exploitation. Schools will

The following list is not exhaustive but should be an indication of children who are likely to face obstacles to their entitlement to education and may become CME:

Children who are:

- At risk of harm or neglect
- At risk of sexual exploitation
- Looked after/privately fostered
- Under the supervision of the youth justice team
- At risk of female genital mutilation
- Missing/runaways
- At risk of honour based violence including forced marriage
- Permanently excluded from school
- Young carers
- Victims of bullying or discrimination on the grounds of race, faith, gender disability or sexuality
- Affected by alcohol or drug misuse
- Refugees or asylum seekers
- Not attending school - if the reason not known. Parents electing to home educate must inform the school
- Teenage parents

Children who have:

- Long term emotional or medical problems
- Special educational needs
- Parents with mental health needs
- Parents with learning disabilities

Children from families:

- Who move frequently, e.g. armed forces, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families
- Involved in anti-social behaviour
- Fleeing domestic violence
- Who are homeless - families maybe in bed and breakfast, temporary accommodation or houses of multiple occupancy
- Who are migrants

CME Referral Procedures

Anyone can make a referral and for every referral, the Access to Education Officer will conduct robust checks on a range of education and social care systems and liaise with relevant professionals.

All reasonable steps should have been taken by the school to establish the whereabouts of the child. Reasonable steps to locate a CME could include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts - Recorded delivery letters to the home - Contact with other schools where siblings are registered - Home visit where safe to do so - Enquiries through school contacts to neighbours, friends - Enquiries with any other agencies/services known to have involvement with the family - Record all actions undertaken

How to make a referral

If you would like an initial discussion before making a referral you should contact Access to Education on T: 01926 742517 or 01926 742102

Alternatively, complete the online referral form by going to:

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/WSCB and go to Children Missing Education and return through a secure email address to:

E: cme@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk

What happens next?

1. On receipt of the referral, the Access to Education Officer will attempt to locate the child for a further 10 school days utilising a range of additional agencies and services. This may include police, other local authorities CME Officers, health, housing and social care. 2. The Access to Education Officer may organise a home visit which will include making enquiries with neighbours. 3. If the child is located, the Access to Education Officer will update the original referrer and ensure any support or help to ensure a suitable education is secured. This might include the involvement of a range of services which may include Fair Access, Area Behaviour Partnerships and, the Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Team.

In the rare instance that the Access to Education Officer fails to locate the child, the school will be informed and a message will be published on the national Schools2Schools secure website. The Access to Education Officer will advise when the child may be taken off the school roll, schools are advised not to do this until agreed with the Access to Education Officer and will be backdated to the first day of absence.

Schools should be familiar with the new DfE Statutory guidance "Keeping Children safe in education" July 2015 p13 which outlines the legal requirements for schools when informing the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register. The new guidance states:

"It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of a compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect" DfE Keeping children safe in education, Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, July 2015.

This guidance will be reviewed on an annual basis or before subject to new or revised guidance from the DfE.

