

Attendance Policy



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Signed by: 

Position: Chair of the Governing board

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Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed at least annually in line with DfE, HSCP, HCC and any other relevant guidance.

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1. The Inclusion Way

The Inclusion Way is based on over ten years' experience and captures our wellbeing and mental health ethos, our pedagogical approach and all aspects that affect a learner's educational experience.

We know that the Inclusion Way works because:

- Our learners are happy
- Our learners tell us it works for them
- Our learners make educational, emotional and social progress
- Our parents/carers tell us they feel supported by their school in caring for their child

For over ten years we have supported the most vulnerable young people in our community to become mentally healthy, resilient and successful young adults.

In this and all other policies, all of which come together to form The Inclusion Way, you will learn what we do to unlock potential in each learner and how we do it.

Before reading this policy, it is important to know our learner and the journey they have taken before they start Inclusion School:

- Our learners will have a severe and chronic diagnosed mental health need. They will be experiencing, or have experienced, self-harm, suicide ideation, depression and high anxiety. Most of our learners will be experiencing more than one of these things at any one time.
- Our learners will likely have diagnosed and undiagnosed SEND needs related to speech, language and communication (SLCN), communication and interaction needs (C&I) or a specific learning need (SpLD).
- Our learners will have experienced significant gaps in their education, (in some cases years) at primary and/or secondary level
- Our learners will have a history of non-attendance due to high anxiety and mental health needs and been identified as an emotionally based school avoider (EBSA)
- Our learners academic levels will be below age related expectations in Maths, English and Science due to these gaps in education and unmet needs
- Our learners will have experienced trauma, whether through an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) or by having been a victim of bullying in previous settings
- Our learner is a teenager exploring their identity and discovering who they are and who they want to be. They may present as having difficulties with emotional regulation and academic attainment but they are not of the cognitive ability of primary age children. They are young adults and want to be treated like one

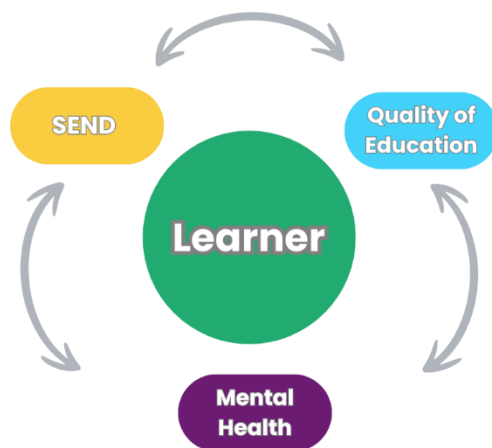
The Inclusion Way is designed to meet these needs so the learner can succeed. This is how we achieve this, with further information available in the most important policies:

- A PACE approach with each learner's SEN needs being met (see our SEN and Mental Health Policies)
- Establish foundations of positive and sustainable mental health on which we can build learning (see our Mental Health Policy)
- Positive, trusting and consistent relationships with adults (see our Behaviour Policy)

- Recognition that good attendance can look different for everyone at different times and should not be taken for granted. Good attendance should be celebrated because it can be lifechanging (see our Attendance Policy)
- An adaptive pedagogy and curriculum with reading, literacy, Gatsby and cultural capital at its heart (see our Curriculum and Reading policies)

An integral element to the success of the Inclusion Way is our model of triangulation between Mental Health, Quality of Education and SEND. These three aspects are of equal importance and they all inform the each other.

Only by working in combination, as embodied in the school through our Deputy Headteachers (Quality of Education, SEND) and Senior Mental Health Lead, overseen by the Headteacher, are our learners able to make sustained and holistic progress.



2. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting appropriate and ambitious attendance expectations for our learners
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reduce unauthorised absence and act early to address patterns of absence
- Detail attendance and absence procedures
- Articulate how Inclusion School monitors and evaluates attendance
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure learners have the support in place to attend school
- Describe the strategies and support Inclusion School and its staff utilise to enable an improvement in learner attendance and support families

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance](#) [parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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 Education \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Learner Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment.](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a learner's attendance: guidance for schools.](#)

4. A whole school approach

Inclusion School strongly promotes, encourages and celebrates good attendance for all its learners and their families because of the benefits it provides to each learner's personal development and academic progress.

However, Inclusion School recognises that many of its learners are experiencing ongoing mental health needs, and some are in crisis. In these circumstances, each learner's attendance is viewed individually and within the context of each learner's needs and it is essential that Inclusion School, parents/carers and other professionals communicate and work together to understand, promote, improve good attendance on an individual, learner level.

Punctuality is part of Inclusion School's expectation of good attendance but as a school, with many young people being transported by Local Authority transport, this is sometimes out of their control.

Inclusion embeds a whole school approach to attendance in which all staff, learners and parents/carers understand the benefits of good attendance and believe in this mindset.

All staff are trained in valuing and celebrating good attendance and identifying persistent or declining attendance to ensure early intervention.

As a school, we work in partnership with the learner and their family to be a positive, safe and welcoming environment in which they want to be present. We communicate the benefits of good attendance throughout a learner's time and celebrate this in reports and communication with families.

However, as per our Admissions Policy and our Inclusion Way (see Section 1), many of our learners have experienced significant gaps in education, and/or have experienced emotionally-based school avoidance. Therefore, we set appropriate and ambitious expectations around attendance for each learner and allowing them the time to achieve this goal.

We want to work with our learners and their families to be able our learners to contribute to our school community but, for most, this takes patience and time for them to achieve.

During our admissions process we identify those who experience emotionally-based school avoidance, or with significant gaps in education, and work with the learner's previous school, their family and the Local Authority to support this from the start of their journey at Inclusion School to develop a bespoke attendance plan. Further details of this can be found in Section 5.

Inclusion School has high expectations and standards for its staff around attendance and punctuality as these serve as important modelling for our learners. For example, if a lesson starts at 9am, it is the expectation that a teacher/tutor is always on site to meet and greet their students.

Inclusion School's strategic lead responsible for the organisation's approach to attendance is Yvonne Haynes, Head of Mental Health & Engagement.

Appendix A, taken from "Working together to improve school attendance" captures our whole school approach.

5. Benefits of good attendance

There are numerous benefits to a young person's mental health and wellbeing, personal, social and academic from regularly attending school. These benefits can be taken for granted and easily overlooked. At Inclusion School we feel it is important to communicate the positives of regular attendance.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the benefits for learners who regularly attend into the following areas:

Learning and attainment

- Access support to meet learning and other needs from trained teachers and tutors
- Increase self-esteem through positive recognition of effort and achievement
- Enhance literacy, numeracy and ICT skills
- Increase opportunities for college, university, employment or chosen future
- Achieved recognised qualifications
- Develop forms of intelligences (e.g. emotional, interpersonal, logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic)
- Develop confidence through learning with a supportive network of teachers, tutors and wellbeing professionals
- Increase organisational ability
- Access greater number of qualifications through regular attendance
- Experience the transformative potential of education
- Experience teaching and learning using sequential knowledge
- Increase a sense of worth and achievement through qualification and a love of life-long learning.

Social and personal development

- Sustained engagement in education
- Experience a sense of belonging and community outside of the family
- Build and experience friendships
- Develop resilience
- Develop teamwork and understanding of others' needs and beliefs
- Develop social communication and interaction skills
- Experience positive routine and structure
- Experience a sense of achievement
- Engage with kind and nurturing adults who can be positive role models
- Develop positive routines
- Develop practical skills, such as cooking, gardening and employability skills
- Experience new cultures, beliefs and people to broaden horizons and break down prejudice and stereotypes
- Develop identity, purpose and independence

- Have the opportunity to experience new things – such as school trips, work experience and equine therapy.

Mental health and wellbeing

- Access mental health support from experienced, trained and caring adults, including signposting to other services
- Develop strategies for positive mental health and wellbeing for success in school, post-16 education and workplace environments
- Develop the resilience and endurance to balance mental health and wellbeing with educational or other expectations (e.g. work)
- Develop confidence and self-esteem through relationships peers and trusted adults
- Experience a change of environment
- Support peers and others
- Develop friendships to challenge feelings of loneliness
- An opportunity to collaborate with others
- Develop positive relationships and routines (e.g. to support sleep)
- Attend a non-judgemental, accepting and calm environment
- Offer a distraction from other problems
- Engage with physical exercise to boost mental wellbeing
- Access therapeutic activities, such as art, crafts and music to benefit wellbeing
- A sense of belonging (one of our school values)
- Experience the benefits of a regular and consistent routine
- Achieve a sense of worth through achievement
- Enjoy the benefits of play
- Access to other positive role models
- Developing trusting relationships with other adults outside of their family to strengthen their connectedness to the wider world.

6. Achieving “good” attendance

Inclusion School’s lead for measuring and monitoring attendance is Yvonne Haynes, Inclusion School’s Head of Mental Health & Engagement. Inclusion School knows that for its learners, who have significant gaps in education and/or have been identified as emotionally-based school avoiders, good attendance requires a bespoke, learner-centred and holistic approach.

The Deputy Headteacher and SEND Lead, Ele Murphy, is essential in designing a personalised support package to improve attendance. All staff will have this information shared with them to ensure a consistent approach is implemented by the whole school.

Inclusion School knows from its experience that learners with mental health needs often struggle to sustain education for 30 hours per week across a school year and require flexibility at times dictated by their mental health.

Inclusion School has worked closely with its Occupational Therapy provider (ACE) to understand our learner’s emotional energy and capacity. For example, each learner’s “battery” capacity can be too low due to their mental health and wellbeing (blue/red zone) to learn and succeed and requires a timetable intervention to prevent further escalation, and ultimately withdraw from education altogether.

It is therefore important that learners have the opportunity to temporarily “recharge” at home and have a mental health break to develop resilience whilst learning positive and sustainable mental health strategies long term, alongside the school’s mental health team, to ensure that they can sustain education and employment long term.

The following extract based on the expertise of Occupational Therapists (OT), why learners who are on bespoke timetable plans to how help achieve a learner's version of "good" attendance until they can be in line with national expectations:

- *"ACE Children's Occupational Therapy (OT) Team provide onsite direct and indirect support for the students attending Inclusion School. Appropriately identified students may, initially, be provided with a reduced timetable, by way of supporting their sensory modulation, anxiety management and social-emotion-communication needs. These students are likely to present with 'behaviours that challenge', due to previously negative experiences in an education setting, which will have led them to find the classroom environment intimidating and distressing. In these instances, by initially reducing the student's timetable, they experience a graded approach towards increased and longer-term education attendance and engagement. This approach enables these students to gradually acclimatise to their new supportive environment and adjust to the therapeutic approach delivered by the teaching staff."*

- ACE Children's Occupational Therapy, October 2023

The school has developed two approaches to enable good attendance, and the school works with its learners and their parents and carers to design and implement these plans.

For every learner, the school has designed a personalised "good" attendance figure based on attendance at their previous setting and previous terms at Inclusion school. This is reviewed half termly alongside fortnightly timetable reviews by the school's SLT. The Local Authority is informed of these in regular meetings between the Deputy Headteacher (SEND) and the school caseworker.

6.1 Mental Health Individual Timetable Plans (MHITP)

Mental Health Individual Timetable Plans (MHITP) are used:

- When learners have experienced a mental health crisis or are experiencing one
- Struggling to sustain full-time education due to feeling burnout, exhaustion or other mental health need.

How this presents depends on each learner and can range from proactive communication to prolonged and sustained emotional dysregulation even after bespoke mental health and wellbeing interventions on site.

There are two variations of these plans: on-site and off-site.

Learners may be on site but not attending all lessons due to experiencing difficulties. In these cases, learners are completing mindfulness activities, task trays or independent learning projects.

Off-site plans are for those who are struggling to manage being on school site. The Mental Health Lead, tutor or other member of staff may identify a learner struggling to attend school during contact with the learner or their parent/carers.

These plans are agreed with parents/carers and recorded and reviewed fortnightly by the Head of Mental Health & Engagement. A daily safeguarding phone call takes place on the days when they are not expected to attend school.

In these cases, C2 will be used on the registers.

6.2 Individual Timetable Plans (ITP)

Individual Timetable Plans are for those learners who start at Inclusion School who are anxious about returning to education. These plans particularly apply in the Autumn Term of each year. These are gradual transition plans agreed by the Head of Mental Health & Engagement, learner and parent/carer.

On admission to Inclusion School, the school's Pastoral Lead, Jane Gardner and Head of Mental Health, Yvonne Haynes, will home visit the learner and their family. Based on the learner and their parents/carers views, and their EHCP/background, the school will agree a bespoke transition timetable which will be reviewed every two weeks with the view to have made a successful transition into school within 4/6 weeks. If a learner is doing well and wishes to attend more frequently, the school will promote and encourage this and the plan would then stop.

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7. Strategies for improving attendance

Alongside our timetable interventions, to improve attendance long term, the following is a non-exhaustive list of strategies and supportive measures Inclusion School implements to improve attendance.

- A small step approach to returning to school, including simply "crossing the threshold"
- Implement a reduced timetable, with fortnightly reviews to look to increase the reduced timetable gradually and supportively
- Be met by a trusted member of staff at the start of each day
- Time at the start of the day (or another time during the day) with Inclusion School's therapy animals
- Accessing additional therapeutic and wellbeing support within school, such as Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner, art or music
- Changing classes or lessons due to difficult peer relationships (if these cannot be resolved in another manner)
- A home visit to discuss concerns and identify appropriate support – including personalised packs
- A personal return to education plan can be formulated at home visits, identifying trusted adults, effective strategies and embedding learner voice.
- Social stories and visuals (such as timetables), led by the SEND Lead

- The Pastoral Lead, or another DSL-trained member of staff, will look, with parental/carer/learner permission, to collect the learner from their home to take them to school
- Arrange a review meeting with parents/carers, as well and with support from our Pastoral Manager
- Referrals for further support such as Hampshire SEN, Early Help Hub, Children's Services, CAMHS, GP, sleep support or other appropriate avenues of support
- Hold an Emergency Annual Review
- Legal Intervention Team
- Embedding task plans into every lesson
- Find the "hook" into a learner's life to help them feel understood
- Incluros – our bespoke reward system
- Reading time with adults and the whole school community
- Our unique engagement team to support learners struggling to access lessons
- Individual learner profiles shared across all staff so they know learners and to establish greater trust and understanding
- Using assessment (such as Star Reader and Star Maths during our admissions phase) to ensure that learning is pitched correctly to allow learners to enjoy school and build confidence
- Daily tutor check-ins
- Social events – such as daily communal lunch with other learners and our staff
- Respect our learners and their experiences
- Prioritising building relationships with learners and their families
- Helping learners develop personalised long-term projects
- Ensure that there is never too much pressure put onto our learners – unless they are ready and supported to manage it.

If following all these interventions a learner continues not to attend education, and other strategies have been put in place, and there has not been any other safeguarding considerations which have prompted a Children's Services referral, a referral to Children's Services will be made under Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's Level 4 Threshold "chronic persistent absence" (HSCP Threshold Chart, July 2019)

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

8.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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 learners
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

8.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating Individual Timetable and Mental Health Attendance Plans in partnership with learners and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to learners and families
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Yvonne Haynes and can be contacted via email at yvonne.haynes@inclusionschool.org.uk.

8.4 Teachers and tutors

Teachers and tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9.30am each school day, and in the afternoon at 1pm.

It is everyone's responsibility to share concerns around attendance of learners.

8.5 School Office Staff

School Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance team in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

8.6 Parents/carers

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)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetable on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority.

- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Yvonne Haynes, Head of Mental Health & Engagement who can be contacted via Yvonne.haynes@inclusionschool.org.uk
- Parents/carers are responsible for collecting their children, regardless of distance, if their child falls unwell during the school day and has to be collected.

8.7 Learners

Learners are expected to:

- Attend every according to their timetable

9. Recording Attendance

9.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all learners onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Learner Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every learner is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 2 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a learner is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a learner is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 9.15am and ends at 3.10pm

Learners must arrive in school by 9.15am on each school day.

Schools have to register attendance twice per day – at the start of the day and after lunch. Registers are open for 15 minutes in the morning and 5 minutes in the afternoon but it is the expectation that these will be completed at the **beginning (within the first 5 minutes)** of this time.

9.2 Unplanned absence

The learner's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an

unplanned absence by 9.15am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 012456 437177 or absence@inclusionschool.org.uk

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

9.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the learner's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

This should be done by calling the school office on 01256 437177 or emailing absence@inclusionschool.org.uk.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the learner should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The learner's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

9.4 Lateness and punctuality

A learner who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

9.5 Following up unexplained absence

If a learner does not arrive for their session by 9.30am, and the Admin Team has not been contacted by the parent/carers to inform Inclusion School of the learner's absence in advance, it is the responsibility of the Form Tutor or Admin Team to follow the following safeguarding procedures:

1. The Form Tutor will take the register at the start of the Form period. The register is open for 15 minutes.
2. If the learner has not arrived within the 15 minutes of the registration period opening, a member of the admin team will make a call to the primary contact number. They will be marked as an unauthorised absence (N, reason for absence not yet provided) on the register until we have spoken with a parent/carers when the code will be updated to reflect the correct absence code.
3. If a voicemail facility is available we will always leave a message saying that [name] has not arrived and ask for them to return the call with a reason for absence as soon as possible.
4. All communication will be recorded, including if a voicemail message has been left.
5. The admin team will update the register with the appropriate absence code once the call has been returned with a reason for absence and update the register.

Please note the following:

- If a learner arrives late but before the register closes this will be marked on the register as L (late arrival before the register closed).
- If the learner arrives after 15 minutes this will be marked as U (arrived in school after registration closed)

To assist with this process, Inclusion School asks that parents/carers provide at least two emergency contact numbers prior to a learner starting so that someone can be contacted if a learner is absent.

9.6. Requesting additional support

If you are concerned about your child's attendance and would like to request additional support from Inclusion, please contact our Pastoral Lead, Jane Gardner (jane.gardner@inclusionschool.org.uk) to discuss how we can support you and your child.

9.7 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy about their child's attendance and absence levels via Termly Reports and at Parents Evenings.

10. Authorised and unauthorised absence

10.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow learners to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a learner during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the learner is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Compassionate leave, such as attending a family funeral
- Because our learners have identified mental health and SEN needs, we will grant one day before the end of summer term to allow for summer holidays to avoid busy travel periods

Leave of absence will not be granted for a learner to take part in protest activity during school hours. As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible at the school front office or by emailing the absence@inclusionschool.org.uk account. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- **Religious observance** – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learner's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- **Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes** – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the learner is attending educational provision
- If the learner is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a learner to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the learner is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the learner not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

10.2 Legal Intervention Team

Inclusion School, where it feels that it is not being supported by the child's parents/carers to improve and support attendance will make a referral to the Local Authority's Legal Intervention Team.

The Legal Intervention Team has the ability to issue penalty notices for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

Details of the Hampshire Legal Intervention Team can be found here: [Legal intervention | Education and learning | Hampshire County Council](#)

11. Attendance monitoring

11.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance at a SLT and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual level
- Report attendance to the governors at every LGB (half termly)
- The Head of Mental Health & Engagement and Attendance Governor will meet termly to review and analyse attendance data

- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels, where possibly and appropriate to do so, to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

11.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify learners and cohorts in need of additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support for these learners and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and develop strategies to address these patterns
- Identify learners whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence

11.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Attendance and absence is discussed at learner review meetings, which can include Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Annual Reviews, Personal Education Plans (PEP), Termly Reports and Parent's Evenings and any meeting requested by parents/carers or suggested by the school

School attendance is reported termly to the Inclusion School governing board and Inclusion Education Trustees including the cohorts overall percentage, the number of 'persistently' and 'severely' absent, and is differentiated by category of vulnerable learners (e.g. Child Protection, SEND, EAL, Looked After Child, Learner Premium, FSM and Looked After Children). The overall attendance percentage is compared term-on-term and year-by-year.

12. Safeguarding and external support

As outlined in this policy, Inclusion School will be in daily contact with parents/carers if their child is absent.

If Inclusion School staff are not able to contact the two emergency contacts provided during admission this will prompt an unannounced visit from a member of the safeguarding team. For Basingstoke and the surrounding area this will take place within 48 hours. This may take longer for learners living outside of this radius due to the small size of the school and may prompt a Children's Services referral.

If there is no one at home or no contact is made at the home visit the member of the safeguarding team will contact the police and make a referral to Hampshire Children's Services.

A learner's absence could be indicative of a deeper issue. Although Inclusion School will do all it can to support a learner and their family, there will be some support that it cannot provide and require the involvement of other partners and agencies, such as Early Help, CAMHS, ALP and the Local Authority. After Inclusion School has exhausted all other options, it will seek to involve other partners, which may include legal intervention (see "[Working together to improve school attendance](#)").

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, Inclusion School recognises the safeguarding risks associated with those learners who are absent from education and proactively acts to prevent this.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Mental Health & Engagement to lead these discussions with the learner and their family following home visits and other communication.

Ultimately, if attendance does not improve, it indicates that Inclusion School is not the correct placement for that learner. As Inclusion School has said that it can meet the learners needs and they are not attending it will require the SEND Lead to lead discussions with the learner, parent/carer and the Local Authority SEN department at an Emergency Annual Review.

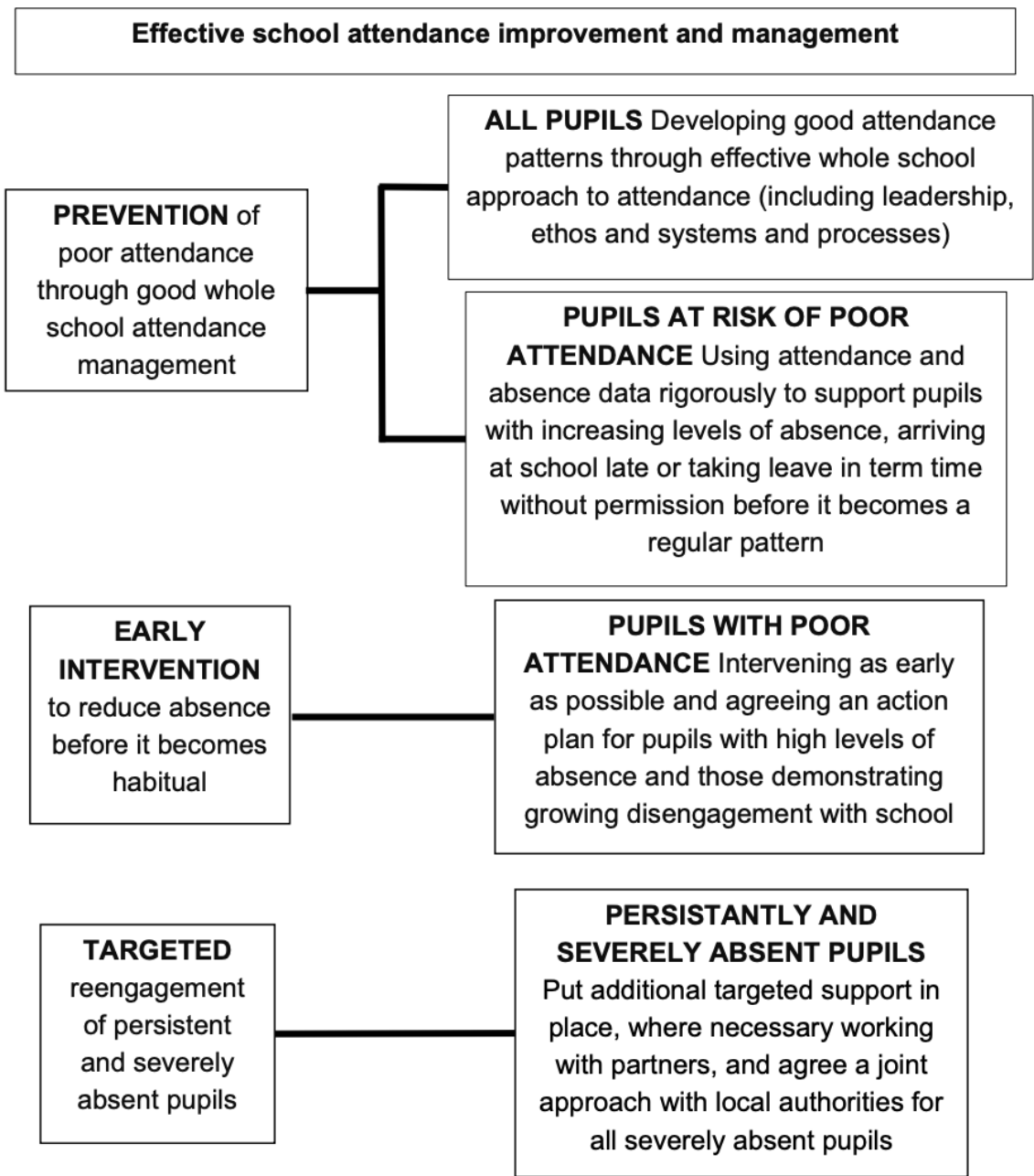
13. Links with other policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- SEND Policy
- SEN Information Report
- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy

14. Appendices

Appendix A: whole school approach to managing and improving attendance



Appendix B: term-time absence leave request form

November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Request for leave of absence - only in exceptional circumstances

In response to your request, I enclose a form which you will need to complete as you wish to take your child out of school during term time. Please may I draw your attention to part of our school Attendance Policy regarding absence from school:

10.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow learners to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a learner during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the learner is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Compassionate leave, such as attending a family funeral

If after reading these guidelines, you feel you still need to take your child out of school, please complete this form and return to either myself or the office as soon as possible.

We have high expectations of attendance because of the social, mental health and learning benefits. Examples of these benefits are communicated in our Attendance Policy, which is available on our website or on request, and I ask that you consider this prior to making a request.

Yours sincerely,



Matthew Atkinson
Headteacher & DSL

Inclusion School - APPLICATION FOR THE LEAVE OF ABSENCE OF A SCHOOL CHILD

TO: **The Headteacher**

I would like to request that my child _____ be granted leave of absence from the above named school from _____ until _____ (please give inclusive dates) for the following reason

Signature of Parent: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

NOTE: The parent of the learner should send this application to the Headteacher or the office **before any leave is taken**

INCLUSION SCHOOL

Request for absence for the above learner is authorised/non authorised.

Reasons for non-authorisation

Signed: _____ Headteacher: _____

(a copy of the whole of this form should be returned to the parent)

Appendix C: Working together to improve attendance absence codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Learner is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Learner is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Learner arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Learner is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Learner is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Learner is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Learner is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Learner is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Learner is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Learner is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Learner is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Learner has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Learner has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Learner of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Learner is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Learner has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Learner is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Learner is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Learner is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Learner has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Learner is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Learner is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Learner is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Learner is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every learner absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

Y5	Criminal justice detention	Learner is unable to attend as they are: In police detention Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Learner's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Learner is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Learner has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective learner not on admission register	Learner has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays