

# **Marsh Hill Primary School**

## **Attendance and Absence Policy**

BCC Guidelines and Implementation 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Adopted and Signed by Head Teacher and Chair of Governors 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

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## Statement of intent

Marsh Hill Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. We aim to ensure that all pupils whom are unable to attend school due to medical needs continue to receive the same high standard of education, including physical education, and attend as many school trips as their medical condition allows.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, Medical Needs support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's senior attendance champion is Ms Cathy Lomas, and can be contacted via [attendance@marshill.bham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@marshill.bham.sch.uk). Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Managing Medicines Policy
- PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance

- Ensuring there is a schedule of regular updates on the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend the school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents where a pupil with health needs is able to, or partially able to, attend school and/or extra-curricular activities.
- Ensuring a suitable member of staff is assigned responsibility for the education of pupils with additional health needs to be a point of contact for the LA and parents.

The Headteacher – Mr John Cusack is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the senior attendance champion role, Ms Cathy Lomas who is responsible for the overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Working with the governing board to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting pupils with additional health needs.
- Working collaboratively with the LA, parents and other professionals, as necessary, to develop any school-based arrangements to meet the needs of pupils.
- Appointing a named member of staff, Ms Julie Holmes who is responsible for pupils with additional health needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.

The School Senior Attendance Champion – Ms Cathy Lomas is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers

Ms Julie Holmes will be responsible for:

- The management of any pupils registered at the school who are unable to fully attend school because of their health needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying any LA-arranged education providers with information about pupils' capabilities, progress and outcomes.

- Liaising with the Head teacher, LA-arranged education providers, and parents to help determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school, where necessary.
- Keeping pupils who are being educated by LA-arranged education providers informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, the school, and LA where necessary.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing school-based activities, including lessons, in a way that allows pupils with additional health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

### **3. LA Duties – Pupils with medical needs**

For the purpose of this policy, the LA's duties when pupils are unable to attend school due to health needs are outlined below. These duties have been included so as to differentiate the responsibilities that lie with the school and those that will be carried out by the LA. The school is not responsible for ensuring that the LA meets its responsibilities – the school's responsibilities are outlined in the 'Roles and responsibilities' section of this policy.

The LA will be responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The school will fulfil its duty to effectively collaborate and communicate with the LA as required.

In line with statutory guidance, it will be the LA's responsibility to:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutively or cumulatively.
- Liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the pupil.
- Ensure the education pupils receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of pupils with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.
- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for each pupil and that it provides suitable education.
- Have clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.
- Maintain good links with the schools in its area and put systems in place to promote cooperation between them when children cannot attend due to ill health.

To comply with statutory guidance, the LA will be expected to not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a pupil is able to attend school rather than whether the pupil is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

#### **4. Definitions**

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

**Absence:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

**Authorised absence:**

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency can be considered for authorisation depending on the circumstances.

**Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

**Persistent absence (PA):**

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

**Severe absence (SA):**

- Missing 50 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

**Missing education:**

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

**Children with complex medical health needs:**

“**Children with health needs**” are children of compulsory school age who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs. These medical needs include:

- Physical health issues
- Physical injuries.
- Diagnosed Mental health problems.
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend or participate in any of the following:

- **Hospital school** – a school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.



- **Home tuition** – many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- **Medical PRUs** – these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

For the purpose of this policy, “school-based support” in relation to supporting pupils with additional health needs may include:

- Day-to-day support offered at school where the pupil is able to attend as normal.
- Support given to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- Any educational or extra-curricular provision as requested by the LA as part of its arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school full-time, e.g. where the pupil attends school part-time as an arranged part of their full-time education provision.
- As part of their reintegration into normal school attendance following a period of absence or part-time attendance due to health needs.

“**LA-arranged education**”, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as education provision arranged by the LA where the pupil cannot attend school full time due to medical reasons for a period of 15 school days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

## 5. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils’ attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at **8:45am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **8:40am**.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **9:00am**. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at **9:20am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked by **12:50pm** for KS1 and **1:00pm** for KS2. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close at **1:15pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

## 6. Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before **8:45am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **the close of the morning register 9.20am** to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by **telephone call** as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school, this may be followed up by email.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than **three** school days in a row, or more than **10** school days in **one term**, or **three** periods of absence in a half term or **five** in a term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to genuine illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the school attendance champion. The school will inform the LA, on a **termly** basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance is considered to be a cause for concern, a formal meeting will be arranged by the school senior attendance champion – Ms Cathy Lomas with the pupil's parent.

Pupils absent for 5 consecutive days require a home visit. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will make a referral to the CME team and remove them from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

## 7. Attendance Register

The school uses Scholar Pack management information system to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register **at the start of each school day** and **at the start of the afternoon session**. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole or partial school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, and the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for **three years**.

## **8. Authorising parental absence requests**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Head teacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be considered with reference to the National Statutory legislation, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The Head teacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents relating to exceptional circumstances.

### **Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the Head teacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. These requests must be sent into school in writing or through the email address: **attendance@marshill.bham.sch.uk**

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, this is likely to be for the maximum of 5 days that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Illness and healthcare appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

### **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Head teacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Head teacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below **96 percent**. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Head teacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Religious observance**

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

## 9. SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **10. Pupils with additional complex medical health needs**

### **Managing Absence:**

The school will provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative, by liaising with the pupil's parents to arrange schoolwork, as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it, or part-time education at school. The school will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the pupil, their parents and relevant members of staff.

For periods of absence that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, the named member of staff with responsibility for pupils with additional health needs will notify the LA, who will take responsibility for the pupil and their education.

Where absences are anticipated or known in advance, the school will liaise with the LA to enable education provision to be provided from the start of the pupil's absence.

For planned hospital admissions, Ms Julie Holmes will liaise with the LA and the hospital education provider as early as possible to discuss the likely admission date and expected length. Plans will be made, where possible, for the educational programme to be followed while the pupil is in hospital.

The LA will set up a personal education plan (PEP) for the pupil which will allow the school, the LA and the provider of the pupil's education to work together.

The school will monitor pupil attendance and mark registers to ensure it is clear whether a pupil is, or should be, receiving education other than at school.

The school will only remove a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from the school roll where:

- The pupil has been certified by the school's medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
- Neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

A pupil unable to attend school because of their health needs will not be removed from the school register without parental consent and certification from the school's medical officer, even if the LA has become responsible for the pupil's education.

Staff will be alert to the fact that missing education can put pupils at risk of harm and may be an indicator of a safeguarding issue. Concerns will be handled in line with the Safeguarding Policy. Staff will also be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for pupils with additional health needs.

The school will provide to the LA, at agreed intervals, the full name and address of any pupils who are not attending school regularly, including if this is due to any additional health needs.

### **Support for pupils:**

Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.

Pupils with continuing health needs will have an IHP which is subject to regular review and assessment. Where a pupil's needs amount to ongoing SEND, an EHC plan may be more appropriate to meet their long-term needs. Where a pupil has an EHC plan and an IHP, both plans will be reviewed alongside each other.

Medical evidence will be used where available to best understand a pupil's needs and identify the most suitable provision. Where specific medical evidence is not readily available, the school will consider liaising with other medical practitioners and other sources of evidence to ensure appropriate provision can be arranged as soon as possible.

The LA expects the school to support pupils with additional health needs to attend full-time education wherever possible, or for the school to make reasonable adjustments to pupils' programmes of study where medical evidence supports the need for those adjustments.

The school will make reasonable adjustments under pupils' IHPs, in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.

During a period of absence, the school will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.

The use of digital resources will be considered to support learning and complement face-to-face education, where appropriate. Digital resources will only be used in accordance with the pupil's needs. Staff will follow procedures set out in the Remote Education Policy.

Whilst a pupil is away from school, the school will work with the LA to ensure the pupil can successfully remain in touch with the school using the following methods:

- Digital learning platforms
- General comms: cards; emails, invitation to attend events
- School website i.e. newsletters X

Where appropriate, the school will provide the pupil's education provider with relevant information, curriculum materials and resources. The school will strive to achieve effective collaboration between relevant services to ensure continuity of provision and consistency of curriculum.

Provision for pupils will support their individual needs to overcome barriers to attainment and achievement, giving equal consideration to their pastoral needs to allow them to prosper in the education system. Consideration will be given to the pupil's personal, social and emotional



needs to allow them to feel fully included in the school community, maintain contacts with classmates and have access to the same opportunities.

To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, individual adaptations may be considered i.e. additional support or accessing the curriculum from home.

The school will ensure that pupils are involved in decision-making as much as possible, in accordance with the pupil's age and maturity, to help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourage their commitment and engagement.

Alongside the LA, the provision offered to a pupil will be regularly reviewed by the school with the pupil, parents or carer, relevant external agencies and the SEND team where the pupil has an EHC plan, to ensure it continues meet the pupil's needs and that suitable education is being provided.

### **Reintegration:**

When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the school will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.

During a lengthy absence, a reintegration plan will be developed near to the likely date of return to avoid putting unsuitable pressure on an ill pupil in the early stages of their absence.

The school will work with the LA when reintegration into school is anticipated to plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside school.

As far as possible, the pupil will be able to access the curriculum and materials that they would have used in school.

If appropriate, the school nurse will be involved in the development of the pupil's reintegration plan and informed of the timeline of the plan by the appointed named member of staff, to ensure they can prepare to offer any appropriate support to the pupil.

The school will consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to provide suitable access to the school and the curriculum for the pupil.

For longer absences, the reintegration plan will be developed near to the pupil's likely date of return, to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on an ill pupil or their parents in the early stages of their absence.

The school is aware that some pupils will need gradual reintegration over a long period of time and will always consult with the pupil, their parents and key staff about concerns, medical issues, timing and the preferred pace of return.

The reintegration plan will include:

- The date for planned reintegration, once known.
- Details of regular meetings to discuss reintegration.
- Details of the named member of staff who has responsibility for the pupil.

- Clearly stated responsibilities and the rights of all those involved.
- Details of social contacts, including the involvement of peers and mentors during the transition period.
- A programme of small goals leading up to reintegration.
- Follow-up procedures.

The school will ensure a welcoming environment is developed and encourage pupils and staff to be positive and proactive during the reintegration period.

Following reintegration, the school will support the LA in seeking feedback from the pupil regarding the effectiveness of the process

### **Information sharing:**

It is essential that all information about pupils with additional health needs is kept up-to-date.

To protect confidentiality, all information-sharing techniques, e.g. staff noticeboards, will be agreed with the pupil and their parent in advance of being used, in accordance with schools Data Protection Policy and associated privacy notice (s).

All teachers, TAs, supply and support staff will be provided with access to relevant information, including high-risk health needs, first aiders and emergency procedures, via secure email.

Parents will be made aware of their own rights and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and information sharing. To help achieve this, the school will:

- Ensure this policy and other relevant policies are easily available and accessible <https://www.marshall.bham.sch.uk/key-information/policies>
- Ask parents to sign a consent form which clearly details the organisations and individuals that their child's health information will be shared with and which methods of sharing will be used.
- Consider how friendship groups and peers may be able to assist pupils with additional health needs.

When a pupil is discharged from hospital or is returning from other education provision, the school will ensure the appropriate information is received to allow for a smooth return to the school. The named member of staff will liaise with the hospital or other tuition service as appropriate.

### **Record keeping:**

In accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions & Managing Medicines Policy, written records will be kept of all medicines administered to pupils.

Proper record keeping will protect both staff and pupils and provide evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

All records will be maintained in line with the Records Management Policy.

## **Training:**

Healthcare professionals will be involved in identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required. Training will be sufficient to ensure staff are confident in their ability to support pupils with additional health needs.

Staff will be trained in a timely manner to assist with a pupil's return to school.

Once a pupil's return date has been confirmed, staff will be provided with relevant training before the pupil's anticipated return.

Parents of pupils with additional health needs may provide specific advice but will not be the sole trainer of staff.

## **11. Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by **8.45am** and **12.50pm** for KS1 and **1:00pm** for KS2, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the **school office** and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Head teacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **12. Absent pupils**

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the Head teacher immediately
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Head teacher
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Changing rooms
  - The library
  - Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after **10 minutes**, then the parents of the pupil will be notified
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The Head teacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The Head teacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

### **13. Attendance intervention**

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the school attendance champion, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.

- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Sending letters to parents.
  - Having a **weekly** pastoral review.
  - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
  - Using fixed penalty notices.
  - Creating attendance clinics.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- **Attendance Achievement Badges / Certificates of success**
- **Improved Attendance Awards**
- **Early Bird Big Breakfast Class Award**
- **Class Achievement trophies**

The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

## **14. Working with parents to improve attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Head teacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the school attendance champion will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school

will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the Head teacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the school attendance champion will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

## **15. Persistent absence (PA)**

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading **pastoral** check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the School Safeguarding Policy.

## **16. Legal intervention**

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve

attendance have not had the desired effect after **one term**, the school attendance champion will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put an attendance contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Head teacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

### **Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)**

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

## **17. Monitoring and analysing absence**

The school attendance champion will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.

- Pupils at risk of PA.

The school attendance champion will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a **fortnightly** basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The school attendance champion will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The school attendance champion will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

## **18. Training of staff**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the school attendance champion and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.



## **19. Monitoring and review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is **96 percent** – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the **school website**.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Head teacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **October 2025**.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.