

Attendance Policy

**Policy Folder:
Safeguarding**

Document History

Version	Comments/amendments	Name	Date
1.0	Working together to improve attendance guidance in place September 2022	Emma Tucker Gould	September 2022
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ATTENDANCE POLICY

The School

The school has a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across the school community. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility. That starts with the senior attendance champion on the school's leadership team, but includes all school staff.

The school consistently promotes the benefits of good attendance and makes school a place pupils want to be. The school sets high expectations for every pupil, communicating those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents. The school systematically analyses attendance data to identify patterns targeting improvement efforts, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance. The school also recognises that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils can learn and thrive.

To manage and improve attendance effectively, the school will:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support.

Data

The school will analyse data regularly in senior leadership meetings, staff briefings and governance meetings, using this data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most. The school will share this data with the appropriate local authority when required. Mountfield Heath School uses an electronic management information system for registrations. Registers are legal records and therefore the school will preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date the data was entered.

Designated senior leader

Mountfield Heath School's Senior Attendance Champion is Sam Dugan,
Sam.Dugan@Mountfieldheathschool.co.uk 01323 914600

The designated senior leader is responsible for championing and improving attendance in school, liaising with pupils, parents and external agencies where needed. The Senior Attendance Champion will set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, they establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school. It is an ongoing responsibility, and the Senior Attendance Champion is also expected to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes.

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Whole School Culture

- All teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced, including where applicable staff who can work in partnership with families, conduct home visits and work in partnership with school leaders, the local authority's School Attendance Support Team and other partners.
- Expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils is high and this is communicated regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.
- The benefits of good attendance are visibly demonstrated throughout school life. This is done in displays, assemblies and with Headteacher awards.
- Staff recognise that attendance is never 'solved' and is a continuous process by regularly reviewing and updating messages, processes, and strategies.
- Staff understand that children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

- **Expect**

- Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

- **Monitor**

- Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

- **Listen and understand**

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

- **Facilitate support**

- Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

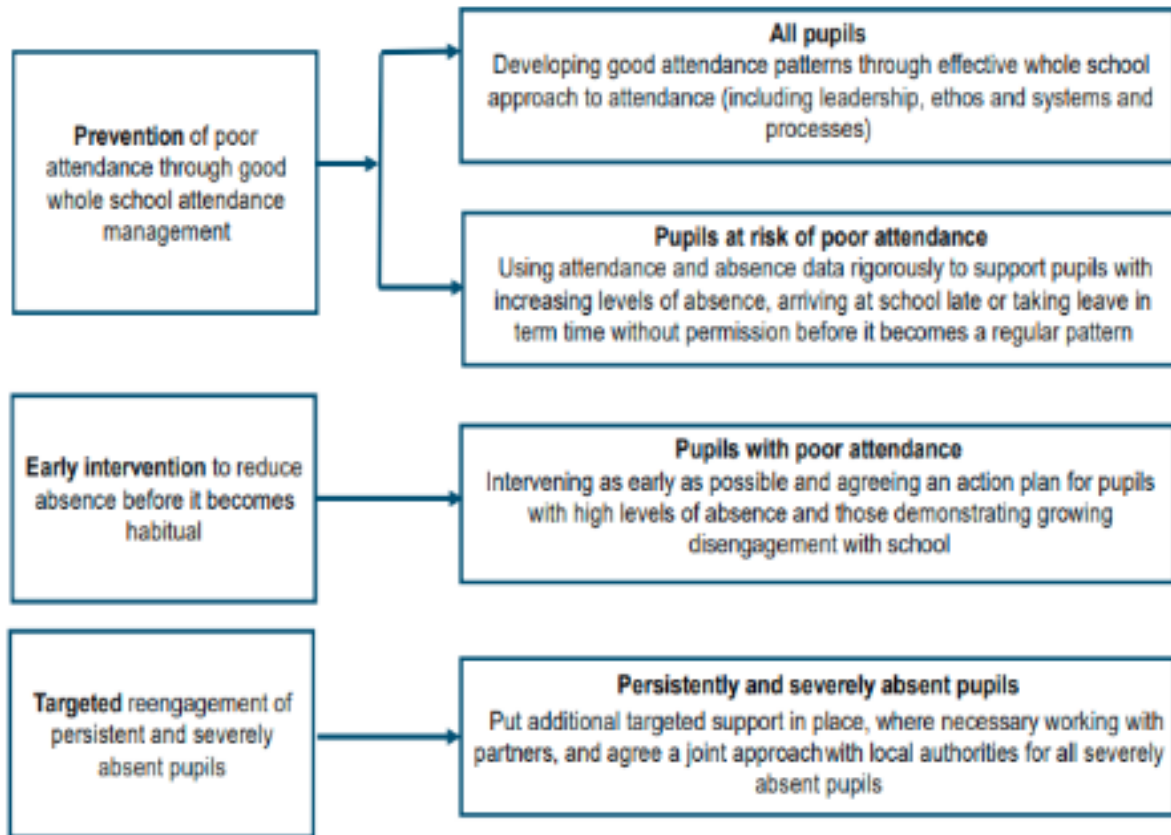
- **Formalise support**

- Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

- **Enforce**

- Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Effective school attendance improvement and management



Working with Pupils and Families

The school will take a supportive approach to all attendance issues as early as possible to enable all partners to work together in a timely manner. Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes problematic, the school will work with parents to understand the barriers the pupil or family may be experiencing and offer support. These supporting measures could include appropriate referrals to external services and organisations such as early help, who can offer additional support. The school will monitor the impact of any intervention(s) and make adjustments where necessary in discussion with pupil, parents and any other partners involved.

Working together to improve attendance

Schools, trusts and local authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These could be;

- **Attendance Contracts**
- **Education Supervision Orders**
- **Attendance Prosecution**
- **Parenting Orders**
- **Penalty Notices**

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In doing so, the school will help parents/carers to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development. It will also provide clarity on the short- and long-term consequences of poor attendance.

Day to Day Attendance Management

The school will keep an attendance register in accordance with [regulation 6](#) of the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

The attendance register is taken at the beginning of each morning session **9.00am-9.30am** (**attendance after 9.30am will be marked as late**) and once at the beginning of the afternoon session **12.25pm**. On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code will be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time.

Absences

Illness

Illness absence should be reported to the school before 9.20am on the first day of the absence and each following day of illness – School office - 01323 914600 - Office@Mountfieldheathschool.co.uk

In the case of illness, the school will follow the NHS [Common Conditions](#) advice. Children suffering vomiting and/or diarrhoea should remain away from school for 48 hours after the last episode of sickness and/or diarrhoea.

Medical appointments

Evidence should be shared with the school office in advance of the appointment so that the register can be updated and staff notified of the absence accordingly. Medical appointments should be scheduled outside of the school day where possible.

Transport

The school will work with families to help support routines where transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners needing additional support interventions

Leave of absence

The school will follow the guidance and codes within the DfE guidance 'working together to improve school attendance' August 2024 for any leave of absence. The senior leadership team will consider any leave of absence taking into account the pupils SEN needs.

Unknown absences

Absences, which are unknown, will be recorded as N. Office staff will call emergency contacts until contact is made. Office staff will update the register to reflect the reason for the absence as soon as this information is gained. If contact cannot be made via the office, a safeguarding concern will be issued to the DSL via the safeguarding concern system. The DSL or appropriate delegate will then take ownership of the absence. The DSL or delegate should update the office with the reason for absence once a reason is given, so that the register can be updated accordingly. For pupils looked after [CLA], social workers and or placing LA will also be informed.

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

The school will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or put in an individual health care plan where needed. The school will work with parents to develop specific support for

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attendance approaches, ensuring the provision in the pupil’s education, health and care plan is accessed.

Part-time timetables

Where it is in a pupil’s best interests, there may be a need for the school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable will not be used to manage a pupil’s behaviour. The school holds clear records of part-time timetables, with rationale and review dates.

Persistent and severe absence

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), the school and local authorities will work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. The school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches. Particular focus will be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school).

This policy should be read alongside the statutory guidance and school policy documents on

- [Working together to improve school attendance DfE](#)
- [Parental Responsibility Measures](#)
- [Children Missing Education](#)
- [Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School](#)
- [Suspensions and Exclusions](#)
- [Alternative Provision](#)
- [Safeguarding](#)

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