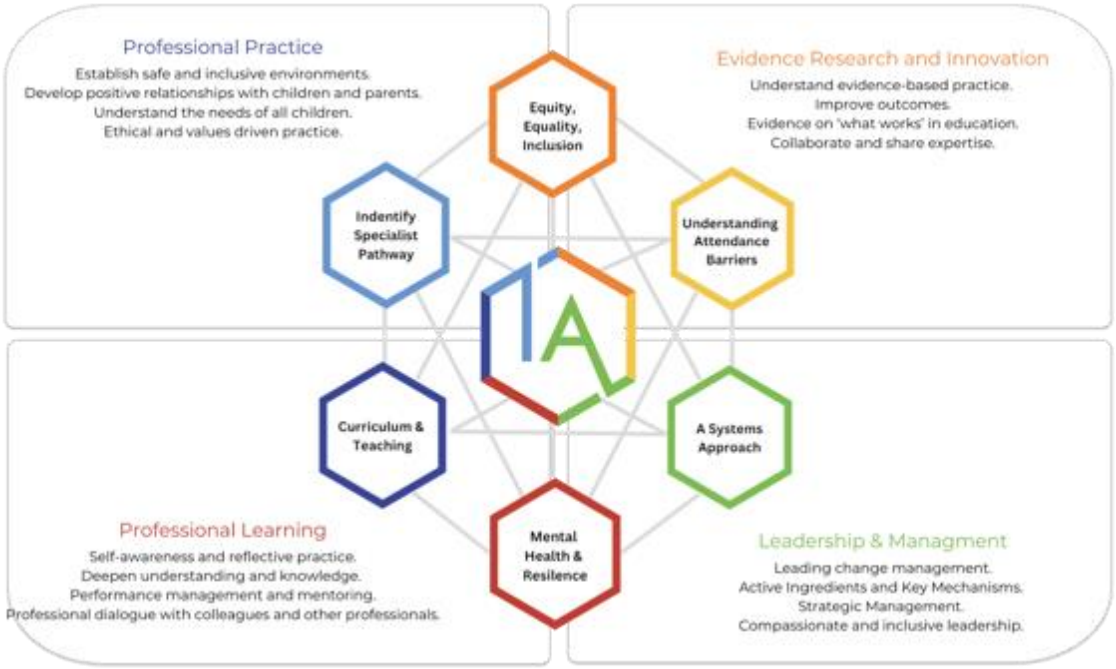
# *Attendance Policy*

| Policy Version Control | |
|---|---|
| Policy type | LGB |
| Policy prepared by (name and designation) | Emma Bestford<br>Assistant Head |
| Last review date | |
| Description of changes | WTTISA – July 2026 |
| Date of LGB Approval | 16th September 2026 |
| Date released | 16th September 2026 |
| Next review date | Autumn 2027 |

Lynnfield Primary School is proudly recognised as an Inclusive Attendance school. Our unwavering commitment to attendance centres around child-centric actions, evidence-informed practices, and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote exceptional attendance.

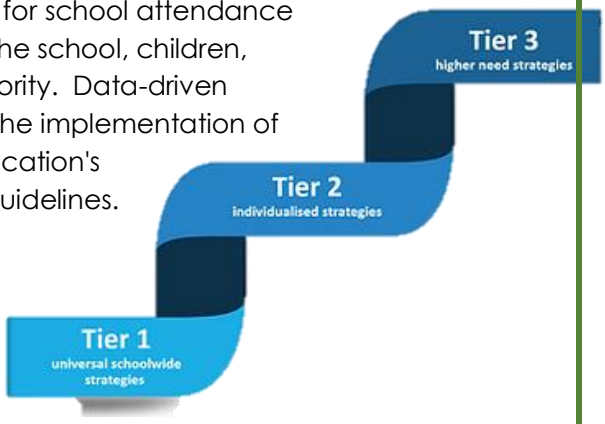
Our attendance approach is fundamentally guided by the Inclusive Attendance professional development model. Comprising six tailored Learning Modules, this model empowers us to deepen our understanding by facilitating continuous professional learning for all staff. Within this model, the four domains of practice ensure the provision of professional learning, professional development, evidence-based practices, and exemplary leadership and management to seamlessly integrate theory into practice.

We will apply this policy fairly and consistently while recognising its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and considering the individual needs and circumstances of pupils and families.

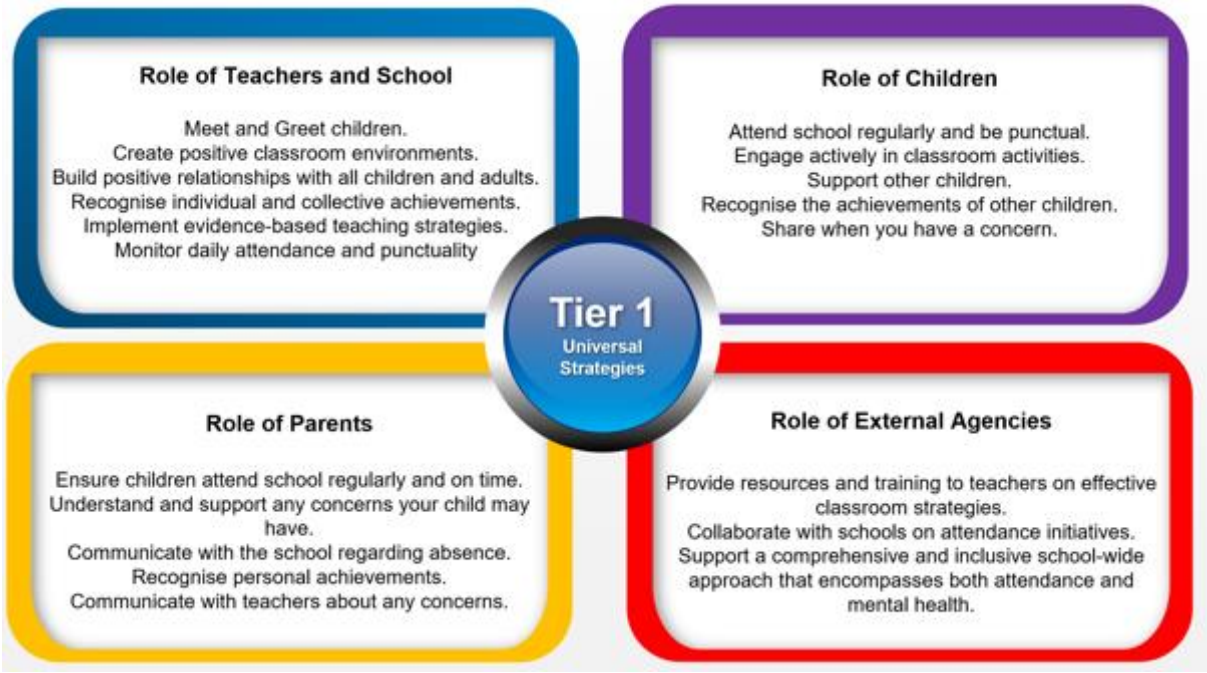


**Our Tiered System of Attendance Support**

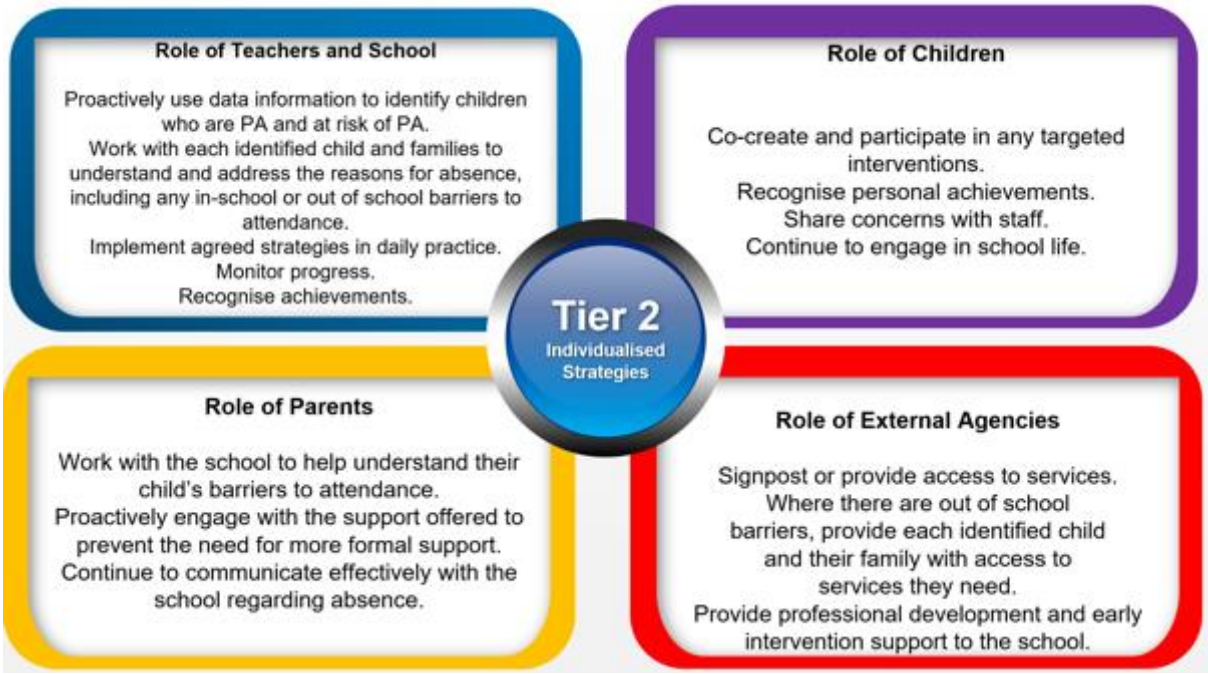
To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance, we implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children, parents, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of the system. The system aligns with the Department for Education's (DFE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" guidelines.



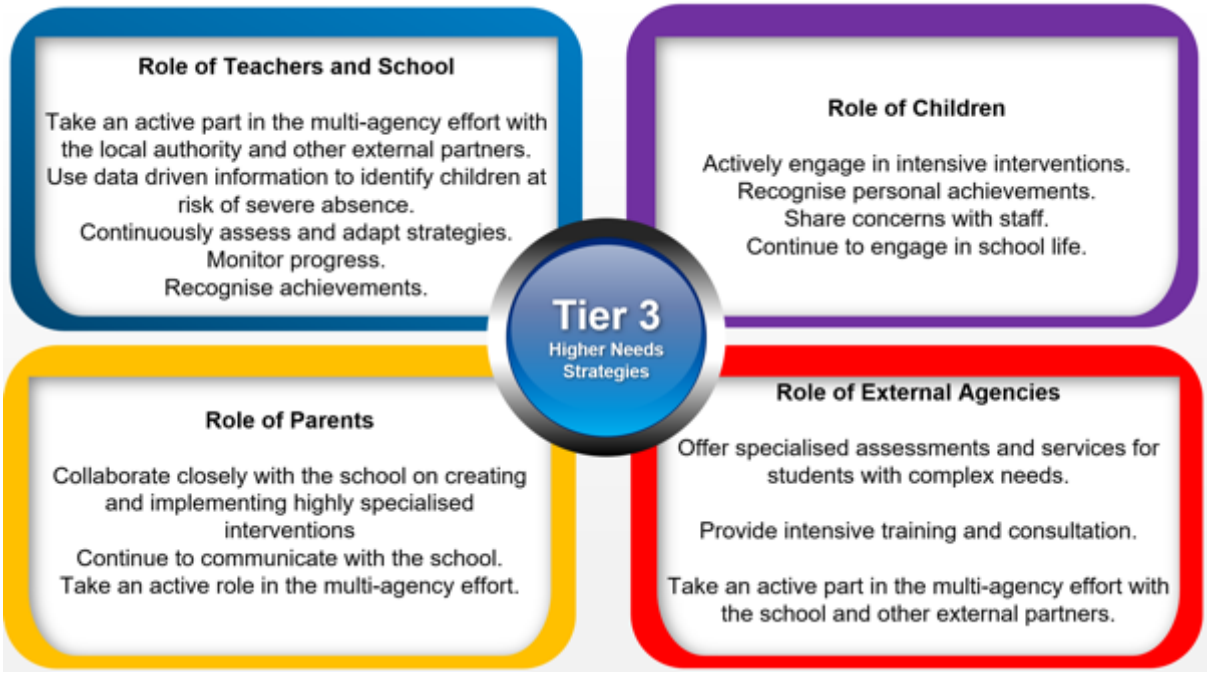

## Tier 1 - Universal Approach: Establishing a baseline universal attendance approach that benefits all children.



**Tier 2 – Internal individualised Strategies and Early Help Support: Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.**



**Tier 3 - Higher Needs Strategies Support: Furnishing specialised support for children, young people, and families with complex attendance requirements, including access to external agency support when necessary.**




# The Importance of School Attendance

Lynnfield Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities in ensuring that pupils attend school and are punctual; therefore allowing pupils to access learning for the maximum number of days and hours. This policy applies to all children registered at this school and it is accessible to parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on the school website. This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority:

- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance, July 2026

Additional Policies aligned to the Attendance Policy

- Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- SEND Information Report
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy

- Children Missing in Education

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors at this school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Children who are persistently late or absent soon may fall behind with their learning and may develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.

Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

**Relationships:**
School provides a vital social environment for children to interact with their peers, develop friendships and learn essential skills. Through consistent attendance children remain connected with their peers.

**Teacher Interaction:**
Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions and relationships. Teachers can provide personalised learning, support, address any questions and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend school.

**Well-being:**
High levels of school attendance contribute to the overall wellbeing.

**School Engagement:**
Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.

**Academic Achievement:**
Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.

**Sticky Knowledge:**
School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days or even being late means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.

**Preventing Knowledge Gaps:**
Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.

**Building Routine:**
School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.

**Legal and Parental Responsibility:**
Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.

To address any identified attendance issues effectively, we will implement a range of strategies such as early intervention, support for vulnerable families, intervention programmes, and creating a positive and inclusive school environment. Understanding the specific factors affecting attendance for individual children and families is crucial for developing any targeted interventions and support systems to improve attendance outcomes.

# School Details

**Contact Details**

| Name of Staff Member | Roles and Responsibilities | Contact Details |
|---|---|---|
| Beth Turner | Inclusion and Family Support Assistant (Attendance Champion and DDSL) | 01429 275122 |
| Emma Bestford | Assistant Head (DDSL) | 01429 275122 |
| Carolyn Lakin | Head of School (DDSL) | 01429 275122 |
| Sue Sharpe | Executive Head Teacher (DSL) | 01429 275122 |
| Liz Cairns | Governor for School Attendance. | 01429 275122 |

**School Times**

- The school day starts at 8.55am and ends at 3.20pm
- Doors open for the children to come in early from 8.45am
- Registration begins and school starts promptly at 08:55am.
- All children are expected to arrive on time.

We employ a flexible arrangement at the start of our school day. Classrooms are open from 8.45am and all children need to be in class no later than 8:55am.

At 9.00am the school gate will be locked. If a child arrives after 9.00am, a late mark will be recorded against their name, and they must enter the school via the school office and sign in with a member of Office staff. The register closes at 09:30am. If your child arrives after the close of the register an unauthorised late mark will be recorded. Unauthorised late marks can contribute to Formal Action from the Local Authority. Other absence codes may be used

where they are more appropriate i.e. Arriving late due to attending a medical appointment, for which evidence should be provided.

If your child arrives late for class, they miss out on important learning, which could affect their achievement. They don't have the social time to settle into class, like the other children and this can make them feel left out. It can be embarrassing for them, walking in while all the other children are learning, as well as the impact it may have on the rest of the class. Therefore, good punctuality at school is essential for children to achieve their full educational potential. It is also vital for children to form good habits for later life. Therefore, it is important that your child arrives at school, and on time.
If your child regularly arrives late to school, this will be addressed by the Headteacher. Formal attendance procedures may be initiated in response to unauthorised late marks.

**Promoting Good Attendance**
We are committed to developing a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. Attendance is promoted through assemblies, newsletters, curriculum activities, parental communications, positive relationships with families and celebration of attendance improvements. We recognise that attendance is everyone's responsibility and seek to build strong partnerships with pupils and families to ensure that all children attend regularly and feel included, supported and successful in school.

# Daily Process for Managing Attendance

**Any notifications of absences from telephone calls and emails will be uploaded Arbor and recorded with the reasons for the absence.**

Absences need to be reported to the school office prior to the commencement of the school day, with a reason for the absence. At times it may be necessary for parents/carers to supply medical evidence in the form of appointment cards or prescribed medication.

**Child is absent from school**

1. If an absence has not been reported to school, the office staff will make a first day call if parents/carers have not contacted the school regarding their child's absence by 9.15am.
2. If no contact has been made by 10am, the second / third contacts for the child will be contacted.
3. If no contact cannot be made with the family, SSLT must be informed. A decision will made whether a home visit is required.
4. This process will be repeated for each day of absence, until the Currently Missing Education procedures are enacted (10th day of absence). See below. Prior to this 10th day cut off, the Head of School will contact Hartlepool Chuldren's Hub on 01429 284284 to share information and concerns regarding the child's whereabouts. The Headteacher will also contact local schools if it is believed that the child may have moved setting.

# Attendance Monitoring and Intervention

1. **Attendance falls below schools expected attendance level of 96% (183/190 days)**

A conversation will be had with parents/carers of the concerns related to school attendance. It is likely that this will be done by the class teacher. Where a pattern of absence has arisen, you may be contacted by telephone to discuss. If this point is early in the year, for example after only one half-term, the class teacher may be asked to speak with parents in the first instance.

2. **Attendance continues to deteriorate / Risk of Persistent Absence (175/190 days(92%)**

If concerns continue and/or your child is it risk of becoming a persistent absentee, a 2nd attendance letter will be sent to parents informing them of their child's dip in attendance, this may also involve inviting them into school to discuss their child's attendance with a member of the Senior Leadership Team/Learning mentor and/or Attendance & Welfare Officer and an improvement plan may be put in place. Permission to contact the school nurse maybe obtained and you may be asked to provide medical evidence to support absences. If this point is early in the year, for example after only one half-term, the class teacher may be asked to speak with parents in the first instance.

3. **Attendance has fallen to 90% or below (171/190 days (90%)**

At 90% and under your child is considered a persistent absentee. At 50% and below, they are considered severely absent.

A planning meeting invite may be sent inviting parents into school to discuss their child's attendance with the Headteacher/AWO and an Improvement plan put in place. A copy of the written letter shared is retained on the child's file. The planning meeting gives school and parents the opportunity to discuss the concerns & offer support if needed to improve their child's attendance. A Multi Agency approach is adopted, and referrals to other services made where necessary. Attendance targets are set, and a review meeting will be held 6-8 weeks later. Further medical evidence may be requested for future absences.

A referral may be made to the Attendance & Welfare Officer if your child is persistently absent for which you will be informed by letter. Planned intervention will take place which will include a planned home visit or a meeting in school to discuss any barriers to your child's regular school attendance with a multi-agency approach where applicable. An Improvement plan will be put in place and reviewed.

**Attendance Contracts**

Where a pupil's attendance continues to be a concern despite the provision of early help and school-based support, the school may work with parents/carers and Local Authority to formalise support through an Attendance Contract. An Attendance Contract is a voluntary written agreement between the parent/carer, the pupil (where appropriate), the school

and, where involved, the Local Authority. The purpose of the contract is to identify the barriers affecting attendance, agree clear actions and responsibilities for all parties, and set realistic attendance targets and review arrangements to support improvement. Attendance Contracts are intended to provide a structured and supportive framework to secure better attendance and prevent the need for legal intervention. Progress will be reviewed regularly, and where agreed actions are not engaged with or attendance does not improve, further support or statutory attendance interventions may be considered in line with local authority procedures and the National Framework for Penalty Notices.

**Unauthorised Absence**
Unauthorised absence process begins including legal procedures and multi-agency professional involvement if attendance remains below 90%.

**Data Monitoring**
The school use both the DFE Attendance Portal and The School Data Company attendance materials to analyse attendance data forensically, to identify trends, individual children or pupil groups or cohorts which require intervention. In school, this data is analysed weekly, with issues identified and discussed at the weekly pastoral meeting.

Attendance group analysis includes disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, young carers, pupils eligible for free school meals and any other identified groups whose attendance may require targeted support.

Full group analysis is reported to the LGB and Trust board each term. Trust Regional Hub Directors interrogate school attendance termly as part of their school visit.

**Lateness and Punctuality**
We employ a very flexible arrangement at the start of our school day. Classrooms are open from 8.45am and all children need to be in class no later than 8:55am. **At 9am the school gate will be locked**. If a child arrives after registration, at 9:00am, a late mark will also be recorded against their name and they must enter the school via the school office and sign in via the 'late book'. Any child arriving after 9:30am will be signed in and an unauthorised absence mark will be recorded which could result in a referral to the Local Authority and legal action taken. If there is an unavoidable reason for your child getting to school late please telephone us to let us know.

Punctually is tracked as rigorously as overall attendance, with appropriate identification letters, support and challenge in place for identified families.

**Details of the National Framework for Penalty Notices**
To provide consistency, the Government have introduced a new national framework for schools and Local Authorities. All schools are now required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 sessions (5 school days) for unauthorised reasons.

**Leave of Absence & Term time holidays**
Students should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable. If you wish to request leave of absence in term time for any reason, you are required to complete a leave of absence request form (available via the school office) and submit this to the

Headteacher 4 weeks Prior to the absence. We will endeavour to inform you in writing regarding the outcome of the request within 15 school days of the request.

Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time, although a family holiday is not an acceptable reason for a child to miss school. If a student is absent for 5 days or more (10 sessions or more in a rolling 10 week period) then the school is expected to refer the matter for the consideration of a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

Fines are issued by the Local Authority and with effect from August 2024, the fine for school absences for each parent is £80 per child if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped at two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

# Safeguarding Children and Attendance

The school has a duty to safeguard the welfare of all students. Any concerns about a child's attendance will be investigated promptly to ensure their well-being.

Unexplained or extended absences will trigger safeguarding procedures, including home visits and communication with relevant agencies.

We follow Keeping Children Safe In Education guidance to ensure safe practices.

**Currently Missing Education Procedures**
https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/schools-education/school-attendance-absence

What 'children missing education' means
All children of compulsory school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. 'Children missing education' are those who are not registered at a school, not receiving a suitable education otherwise (i.e. Elective Home Education or alternative provision), are not regularly attending the school where they are a registered pupil or cease attending and/or their whereabouts or destination school is unknown. These children can be at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and in later life becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Tracking and Monitoring
Information sharing between parents, schools, the community and the local authority is therefore crucial to ensure that these children are kept safe and are receiving the education they are entitled to. In accordance with DfE Statutory guidance, Children Missing Education (Sept 2016) the Local Authority has effective tracking and enquiry systems in place and an appointed named person to whom schools, other agencies and the public can make referrals regarding children who they believe are missing from education. Joint reasonable enquiries can then be made as quickly as possible by schools and the LA. Joint working arrangments are also in place with agencies and services such as, Housing, Health, the Police, and other local authorities.

Other LA Responsibilities

The local authority also has other duties and powers to support their work on CME which include:

- making arrangements to establish (wherever possible) the identities of children in the area who are not registered pupils at a school and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise (e.g. Elective Home Education - EHE)
- arranging education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth day
- safeguarding children's welfare and the duty to protect them from harm and neglect
- serving Notices and issuing School Attendance Orders to parent/carer(s) who fail to evidence that their child is receiving a suitable education by registering at a school or otherwise. Pursuing a prosecution or an Education Supervision Order for those who do not comply with the Order
- issuing a Penalty Notice, pursue an Education Supervision Order or prosecution of parent/carer(s) who fail to ensure that their child(ren) attend regularly at the school or alternative educational provision where they are a registered pupil

Who should be notified of a child missing education?

Jackie Webb (CME Co-ordinator):
Tel: 01429 266255 or e-mail: AttendanceTeam@hartlepool.gov.uk or jackie.webb@hartlepool.gov.uk

**Attendance Support for Pupils with SEND, Medical Needs and Mental Health Needs**

We recognise that some pupils face additional barriers to regular attendance due to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), physical health conditions, mental health needs, or emotional difficulties. Whilst the school maintains high expectations for attendance for all pupils, we are committed to working in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and external professionals to understand individual circumstances and provide appropriate support to enable pupils to access their education successfully.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school will seek to identify the underlying barriers affecting attendance and will work collaboratively with families to implement supportive strategies. This may include pastoral support, individual attendance plans, reasonable adjustments, support from the SEND team, phased returns to school, adapted routines, adjustments to the school environment, and referrals to appropriate external services. Any adjustments will be agreed with the pupil and their parents/carers and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective.

For pupils with SEND, the school will work closely with parents/carers and relevant professionals to ensure that any provision outlined within an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is appropriately implemented and that barriers to attendance are identified and addressed. Attendance concerns will be considered as part of any SEND reviews and, where necessary, additional attendance support will be incorporated into existing support plans.

Where a pupil experiences mental health difficulties or medical needs that affect attendance, school staff will work with families and external agencies to support regular attendance whilst recognising the pupil's individual needs. The school will consider whether reasonable adjustments, pastoral interventions, temporary phased reintegration arrangements or additional support services may be appropriate. Medical evidence will only be requested where this is necessary to better understand a pupil's needs or to inform suitable support arrangements.

The school recognises that attendance is often improved through early intervention and collaborative support. Where concerns persist despite support being offered, the school will

work with the Local Authority and other relevant agencies to ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place. Attendance data for pupils with SEND, medical needs and mental health needs will be monitored regularly to ensure that these pupils receive timely and effective support whilst maintaining their entitlement to a full-time education wherever possible.

**Young Carers**
We recognise that some pupils may have caring responsibilities for a family member, which can create additional barriers to regular school attendance, punctuality and engagement in learning. We are committed to identifying and supporting young carers sensitively and appropriately. Where caring responsibilities are impacting on attendance, the school will work in partnership with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant agencies to understand their circumstances and provide appropriate support. This may include pastoral support, flexible interventions, Early Help referrals and signposting to specialist young carers' services. Attendance will be monitored carefully to ensure that young carers receive the support they need to access education successfully and achieve their full potential.

# Definitions

Authorised Absence
An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised Absence
An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.
Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

In the context of school attendance and education in the UK, the terms "Persistent Absence," "Risk of Persistent Absence," and "Severe Absence" are used to describe different levels of irregular attendance by students. These terms are important for tracking and addressing attendance issues.

Persistent Absence (PA):

Definition: Persistent Absence is a term used to describe a level of student absence from school that is considered to be a significant cause for concern.

Threshold: In England, a student is considered to be persistently absent when they have an attendance rate of 171/190 days (90%) or below. This means they have missed 10% or more of their school sessions.

Risk of Persistent Absence:

Definition: The term "Risk of Persistent Absence" refers to a situation in which a student's attendance is at a level that suggests they are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Threshold: While there is no specific threshold for "Risk of Persistent Absence," it is typically used to describe students whose attendance is consistently low and becoming a concern, as the school communicates to parents in days, we identify 10 days or more as Risk of PA and we will follow internal school procedures.

Severe Absence (or Severe Persistent Absence):
Definition: The term "Severe Absence" or "Severe Persistent Absence" is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance.

Threshold: Particular focus and support will be provided to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 95/190 (50%) or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of external agency partners.

**Review**
This Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually by the school's governing body to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with statutory requirements. Any amendments will be communicated to staff, parents, and carers as necessary.