



Attendance Strategy

**Improving attendance is everybody’s business.**

Our Vision and Values

At Highfield Farm we firmly believe in our vision that, “Together we will”.

In order for all pupils to realise the vision that we hold for their education, they need to be in school, accessing a high-quality education, at all times.

At Highfield Farm Primary School, we live our vales of kindness, respect and ‘keep trying’ in all that we do. This includes pupil attendance. This supports us to build a culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance:

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| **Belonging** | At Highfield Farm Primary School, we value the contribution every child brings to our school. Relationships and attitudes are positive and an ethos exists in which learning together is fostered through nurturing interactions and a breath of experiences. We strive to ensure that school becomes an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for all.  We welcome parents as partners so that, together, we can promote high standards of learning, behaviour and attitudes to enable every child to be the best that they can be, this starts with good attendance.  We want every family to feel welcome, happy and safe at our school. We support families and children to have good attendance in order to foster this. We recognise that some pupils find it harder to attend school than others therefore, all staff prioritise building positive relationships with all of our families, proactively finding relational moments with an open heart ready to empathise, care and support. We believe belonging starts in our learning community and that by attending well, our children will become equipped with the skills and knowledge they need for a successful life. |
| **Achievement** | Through an enjoyable, knowledge engaged curriculum, we want our children to be motivated to maximise their potential, achieve high standards in all subjects and aspire to reach their own personal goals. We have high expectations of all our children including around their attendance, in order that they have the opportunity to explore and achieve in their own passions. Through the exceptionality of our inclusive, unique learning spaces and genuine relationships we motivate children to want to come to school. Ambitious attendance goals help children develop the foundations for successful learning, in readiness for the next phase of education, |
| **Aspiration** | We aim for our children to be unique, independent learners who are able to communicate effectively, work as a team, believe in their own abilities and develop good physical and mental health knowledge for life long success. To achieve this, children need to be in school, building on their skills and knowledge daily. We encourage and promote collaborative work, celebrating all children’s successes. We want them to attend well so that they can adopt a positive attitude to all they approach, to become increasingly independent in their learning and to recognise all they can accomplish with a resilient approach, something that good attendance gives them the opportunity to grow. |
| **Kindness** | We aim for our pupils to have lots of happy experiences and build positive memories at our school. We want them to know the true value of friendship and kindness and what it means to support each other, developing mutually respectful, positive relationships. We know that social, emotional and mental health / well being factors are huge motivators for good attendance and that providing an ethos that is built on kindness and respect therefore supports good attendance. With strong attendance, we believe our children will learn to communicate effectively, build successful relationships and develop life-long skills for their journey through life. |

**The Law**

The law in the UK entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

**Our School Approach**

Our school approach is written in conjunction with the DFE ‘Working together to improve school attendance’. We work together with partners to ensure that we have the right culture in school to promote good attendance alongside the right support being offered at the right time to enable pupils to fully access education.

We recognise that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex and therefore remain professionally curious at all times, seeking to expose the barriers to school attendance. We build strong relationships with our families, ensuring that they know we are a source of support at all times, that we are approachable and that we genuinely want to achieve the very best for their children.

Below explains our school strategy:

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| **Expect** | * Our attendance policy sets out the clear expectations of the school. All staff are familiar with the policy because good attendance is everyone’s responsibility. This policy is shared with parents annually, is available on our website and is communicated with pupils in the appropriate ways * School attendance expectations are set at the point of admission to our school * Attendance expectations are reinforced at transition, SEND reviews and parent meetings * A colour coded system ensures clarity of expectations for parents, an helps them to understand where their child’s attendance falls against those expectations * Attendance forms part of parent meetings and our expectations are set out clearly * All children engage in Celebration Assembly each week which reinforces the school attendance target of 96% and celebrates class attendance * All winning class attendance is displayed in the classrooms to promote good attendance * The focus for celebration is on classes rather than individuals to ensure that pupils do not feel unnecessary pressure in unavoidable circumstances. Where there are long term individual circumstances in a single class, this is taken into account as part of the weekly celebration * Attendance data is communicated weekly with parents on Dojo * Attendance data, alongside our expectations, are included on annual school reports * Attendance expectations are shared with governors within Headteacher reports * Class teachers talk to their pupils about the importance of attendance regularly * All families are regularly reminded that term time holidays are not authorised under any circumstances and that holidays taken in term time may be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) * All families are aware that a leave of absence request needs to be submitted for any planned absence from school * First day calls are made where a child has not attended; this reinforces our expectation that children should be in school, acts in line with our safeguarding policy and is a first step in supporting families with attendance | | |
| **Monitor** | * Attendance is tracked on an individual basis. Any pupil who does not have attendance levels of 96% or more at the end of each half term is discussed by the parent support worker and Headteacher and appropriate actions are agreed and tracked for impact * Half termly attendance percentages are sent to families informing them of their child’s attendance level and any actions required * Adapted letters are sent to those families who are already working with school on a regular basis (e.g. children with a temporary long term illness, a partial timetable or a specific medical plan) to inform them of their child’s attendance * Attendance is monitored at each pupil progress meeting when discussing barriers to pupil progress and is also included on all SEND review paperwork * Communication is sent to families half termly where attendance has significantly improved * Each pupil is tracked across the year so that patterns can be monitored carefully. * Pupils who end the year being monitored for attendance become a focus family for the start of the new year. These pupils’ attendance will be monitored more closely and these families will be prioritised for support. * Pupils whose attendance is below 96% are monitored more closely and dips in attendance between monitoring points results in a school attendance discussion. Action is then decided based on the known circumstances. This is also discussed with families. These families are prioritised for support. * Attendance is tracked by year group and contextual factors (e.g. Pupil Premium) each half term, so that the parent support worker can monitor their levels of attendance and pursue enquiries and investigations for underperforming groups. * Staff are professionally curious, looking for patterns of absence to highlight to the parent support worker and senior leadership * Lateness is monitored to identify families who are frequently late and may require additional support. * RecordMy is used to record any discussions about attendance with families or professionals. | | |
| **Listen and understand** | * There is an attendance team made up of:  |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | **Mrs Mackinnon**  Head Teacher | **Mrs Thompson**  Office manager |  * Our Office Manager is a parent’s first point of contact when discussing their child’s attendance, including as first day caller. Her warm and supportive manner ensures families know we want to help them in ensuring their children attend well at school. * It is made clear on all communications about attendance that that aim of our systems are to support and empower families, rather than punish. * When a pupil’s attendance is identified as a concern by the attendance team, the relevant communication is shared with emphasis on supportive practice. At every step of monitoring attendance, families are made aware that they can speak to school. * Where attendance requires a formal attendance meeting (below 92%), our parent support worker meets with families to discuss barriers, ways to support and ensures school have all the relevant information. This is recorded in the form of an Attendance Contract, signed by both parties and revisited the following half term. * As a school we continually look to employ supportive strategies and techniques to improve pupil attendance. * The strategies and techniques and increase or decrease in significance as the child or family needs more or less informal support. | | |
| **Facilitate Support** | **Tier 4: Formalised Support**  Tier 3  Support  Tier 2  Support  Tier 1  Support | Tier 1 Universal Support | * Regular communication with parents verbally, via Dojo, text and email * Clear expectations shared throughout the year * Parents to inform school of the reason for absence or lateness * Attendance Meetings * Regular attendance communication on Dojo * Weekly Attendance Celebration in assembly * Attendance included at parents’ meetings, SEND reviews and on end of year reports * An onsite parent support worker |
| Tier 2 Targeted support for groups | * Key person welcome * Adaptive start/finish times * Priority list of morning calls where absence has not been reported by parents * Breakfast offering * Change of entry point/routine * Focused morning activities * Attendance contracts * Liaison with/referral to external agencies where required (Aspire, CAMHS, School Nurse) |
| Tier 3 Support is used for individual pupils | * Further liaison with/referral to external agencies where required (Aspire, CAMHS, School Nurse) * Separate entrance point/start time * Soft start activities for the day with a member of staff * Parenting courses * Temporary part time timetables * Bespoke SEND provision * Visual timetables * Reward charts * School based early help * Adapted attendance contracts * Parent meeting with LA attendance link worker Kate Pollard * Next step identified as formal pathway (LA) |
| **Formalise support** | Tier 4 is formalised support, where Tier 1-3 school based support has been ineffective | * School begins to issue attendance pathway letter 1 and letter 2 to reinforce the severity of the situation. * School seek support from the Local Authority Attendance Team. * Referral to Early Help (with consent) * Attendance below 50% - refer to MASH. |
| **Enforce** | * Formalised support continues throughout this stage. * Weekly attendance reviews. * Pathway letter 3 including a FPN is issued. * Following FPN, should attendance fail to improve, attendance pathway letters 2 and 3 are issued again and school seek to take a case to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) to seek an education supervision order. | | |