Sudley
Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY
2025-2026

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1.0 Introduction

Sudley Primary School recognises the link between the attendance and attainment of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within our school to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding. It is important to see our children every day and provide a safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should attend every day that the school is open. As a school we set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance, with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%.

As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our polices on admissions, safeguarding, behaviour and inclusion.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to meeting the requirements laid out in the Department for Education statutory guidance August 2024 "Working Together to Improve School Attendance".

2.0 Aims

- Provide a framework to support building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Ensure every pupil has access to a full-time education
- Have clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for all pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data is in place
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

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3.0 Legal Framework

This policy is based on the Department for Education statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance August 2024"
The guidance is based on the following legislation

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance Pupil (Pupil registration) Regulations 2023
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
- EYFS Statutory Framework 2025

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governance

The governing board is responsible for:

- Making sure leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Ensuring the school has high aspirations
- Regularly analysing attendance data and reviewing the school's performance
- Ensuring all staff receive adequate training on their role in supporting pupil attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of the attendance policy

4.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy
- Reporting school level performance data to governors
- Ensuring effective communication between school and the local authority
- Ensuring effective communication with parents/carers for all pupils where there are barriers to attendance

4.3 The role of the Designated Attendance Lead - Mrs P Mylett

The designated attendance lead is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Ensuing all staff are aware of their role in supporting pupil attendance
- Ensuring all staff receive annual training on attendance procedures, safeguarding implications, and strategies for engaging families
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the school's process and procedures for managing attendance
- Implementing specific strategies to address poor attendance identified through the analysis of data
- Coordinating targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

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5.0 Promoting regular Attendance at Sudley Primary School:

This is the responsibility of all members of staff, parents and pupils.

The school will ensure:

- There is a designated attendance lead (DAL) for championing and improving attendance.
- Effective strategies are in place to support all pupils to arrive on time for school.
- An engaging curriculum is provided
- High quality teaching and learning is delivered throughout the school
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to ensure regular attendance at school regardless of whether the child is statutory school age
- Pupils who experience difficulties in attending school are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is monitored rigorously
- Effective partnerships with parents are encouraged through regular contact and communication
- Parents are kept informed of pupil attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, individual letters and meetings when required
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual pupil incentives
- Attendance and punctuality are regularly discussed with children in assemblies
- Attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff ensure that these are followed

6.0 Safeguarding

A child not attending school, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding issue if this places the child at risk of harm. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence from school is required.

To safeguard all the children in our care, it is important that parents provide the school with their current contact details and provide additional contact numbers in case of an emergency.

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the school's Child Protection Policy.

7.0 Expectations of Parents & Carers

- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parents' legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

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- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is going to be late.
- Routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments should be made whenever possible outside of school hours. Confirmation of any appointments within school hours should be provided.
- Contact school by 9am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend, providing the reason, an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a phone call/SchoolPing message or email is made by the school due to your child's absence it is important that you respond promptly to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the attendance officer or Designated Attendance Lead if the reason for absence requires a more personal discussion.
- In case of emergency, school must have up to date contact numbers. Please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of two emergency contact details be provided).
- Requests for leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances must be in writing to the headteacher via the online form from the school website and can only be authorised by the headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, visiting family, shopping, concerts and birthdays.

7.1 If a pupil is absent, we will:

- Telephone and message parents on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9.15am.
- If no response is received, a member of school staff may conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible. This may be followed up with a Safeguarding referral to social services.
- If a pupil's absence continues, or there is a concern about the amount of absences, the parent will be invited to meet the Designated Attendance Lead and any barriers to the child attending school can be discussed and support put in place. This may include:

- reintegration support packages
- Family Help assessment or referral to appropriate support services
- Attendance Contract

- If unauthorised absences persist the Designated Attendance Lead will discuss actions with the school's Education Welfare Officer.
- If the parent does not attend the meeting or engage in any support the school has offered and the pupil has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period, the parents may be issued with a Notice to Improve, in accordance with Liverpool City Council's Penalty Notice Local Code of Conduct.

8.0 Understanding types of Absence

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Sudley Primary School must legally record the reason for all individual pupil absence. Therefore, it is important for parents to directly inform school of the reason for absence, on the first day a child is absent.

8.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence - the school accepts the explanation offered as satisfactory. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the school:

Illness
In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by parents following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised unless, the school has a genuine concern regarding the authenticity of the illness.
The school follows Department for Education statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' 2024[i] which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.
We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some exceptional circumstances, we may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or we may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual pupil.
If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description to best support the child and to be able to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parents aware of this expectation in advance.
The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.
If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school on each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

Mental Health and Wellbeing
Our school supports pupil mental health and wellbeing following DfE guidance Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools.
Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Attendance/Designated Safeguarding Lead/SENDCo for further information on the support available.

Pupils taken ill during the school day
If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be

collected from the school office by a parent or another authorised adult and signed out of school. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Medical/Dental Appointments
Parents should always try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are urgent or unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day of schooling for an appointment, unless necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult and signed out of school. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation**.**

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment information – only then will the absence be authorised.

Religious Observance
Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Traveller Absence
The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In such situations the child will be dual registered at that school and this school will remain their 'main' school.

Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as all other peers. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

Exclusions
If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as an Exclusion. The school will follow the current DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions.

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All exclusions **must** be agreed by the headteacher.

The school will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. For children in the care of the local authority the school will notify the pupil's carer, the Section 19 Team, social worker and the Virtual School.
In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The pupil must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult and signed out of school. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

8.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence - when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence following a parental request.
This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive late after the close of registration.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child

Unauthorised absence may lead to the use of penalty notices or other legal interventions from the Local Authority. Sudley Primary School, in agreement with the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Notice to Improve to parents (in accordance with the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the Local Authority Code of Conduct) where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period.

The Notice to Improve period will cover 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time, the school will refer the case to the Local Authority requesting a penalty notice be issued.

Penalty notices are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if the local authority considers an Education Supervision Order or a prosecution to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.

Penalty notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child.

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8.3 Persistent Absence

Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects schools to intervene early to prevent pupils becoming a persistent absentee (PA).

Attendance is monitored and parents/carers are notified when attendance falls below 95% and 92%. Support is offered to attempt to prevent pupils falling into the category of persistently absent. The Designated Attendance Lead and Education Welfare Officer discuss these pupils on a regular basis.

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they may be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school at the earliest opportunity to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parents are asked to contact the school office in the first instance.

8.4 Severe Absence

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department for Education (DfE). This cohort of pupils are a priority group for Sudley Primary School and additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child and improve their attendance. It is essential that parents work in partnership with school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

9.0 Why regular attendance is important

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have regular time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

If attendance over the school year is:	**…a pupil will miss this many days:**	**…and this many lessons:**
100%	0	0
95%	10	50
90%	19	95
85%	29	145
80%	39	195
75%	49	245
70%	58	290

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

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10.0 Pupils on reduced (part- time) timetables

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, we will work with the pupil, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time provision as soon as possible.

11.0 The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) – will work with parents to support their child in overcoming any barriers in attending school, The EWO will always try to resolve any issues by working in partnership with the school and family. If a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists and the parent has refused or not engaged with support that has been offered, the local authority will be required to consider penalty notices or the instigation of legal proceedings.

11.1 Penalty Notices:

Liverpool City Council (LA) on receipt of a request from Sudley Primary School, will issue a penalty notice to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child.

Before issuing a penalty notice the LA will consider:

- If the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met, 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period
- If issuing a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve the attendance of the pupil
- If appropriate support has been put in place
- Consideration of the obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 that would make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate
- Each parent who is liable can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually be the parent who allowed the absence
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil in the rolling 3 year period is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is no opportunity to pay a reduced amount.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years,

alternative action will be taken. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

The Local Penalty Notice Code of Conduct is published on Liverpool City Council's website.

11.2 Leave of absence requests in term time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

At Sudley Primary School, leave in term time requests for the purpose of a holiday, will not be authorised by the school**.**

Parents can receive a penalty notice for taking unauthorised leave in term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively.

If leave of absence is deliberately taken in term time, without school permission, creating a period of unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more; and it can be shown that the parent understood that permission had not or would not be given. In such cases, the local authority will issue a penalty notice without a Notice to Improve period being issued.

Any application for leave in term time must be in only exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Parents should complete a leave of absence request form which is available from the school. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence to support your request.

If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding concerns, we will follow the necessary protocols, including taking advice from Children's Services..

For Children in Care, any period of leave taken without the agreement of the Virtual School Head, Service Manager and Director of Children's Services, will be classed as unauthorised.

12.0 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable**.** If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

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12.1 How we manage lateness

The doors open at 8.40 on both sites and close at 8.55am. The school day starts and registers are taken at 8.55 am by the class teacher; pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. School recommends that pupils arrive by 8.50am.

- If a pupil arrives late to school, a record will be taken in the office of the time of their arrival.
- Late arrival (after 8.55am) before the close of registers (9.25am) is classified as code L.
- Late arrival to school following the close of registers (9.25am) is classified as an absence (code U or code M if this is due to a medical appointment and evidence of this is provided). If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register and there are no barriers preventing the child from arriving on time, the school, following a Notice to Improve period, may request the local authority issue a penalty notice.
- The official close of registration for Sudley Primary School is 9.25am.
- The number of times a child arrives late is recorded on their end of year report.

If a parent has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the Designated Attendance Lead who will offer support to resolve the problem.

12.0 People Responsible for Attendance at Sudley Primary School

All school staff, parents and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support therefore is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success.

See attached appendices.

13.0 Removal from Roll

From the 1st of September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As a school we are now required to: Inform the LA in ***every*** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register. Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.

All schools must complete an Exit form and submit to the **CME@liverpool.gov.uk** inbox.

All schools must provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

- Provide the attendance officer with comprehensive information about their plans, including, any date of a move, new address and telephone numbers, your child's

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new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing.

- If a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child may be considered to be a 'child missing in education'. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try to locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

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Appendix 1

Key Contacts

Designated Attendance Lead: Mrs P Mylett

School Attendance Officer: Mrs C Brown

Inclusion Manager: Mrs S O'Rourke

SENDCo: Miss L Muchmore

All named staff can be contacted via

Telephone: 427 2941
Email: contact@sudleyprimary.com

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Appendix 2

Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

When	Who	Actions Expected
DAILY	Pupil	• Be in class on time for registration at 8.55 am
	Class Teacher	• Registers are completed on the MIS system each day on time • Ensure attendance has a high profile in class • Discuss absence with pupils returning to school • Be alert for any patterns of absence or lateness and alert Designated Attendance Lead
	Attendance Officer & Admin Team	• Ensuring staff have completed am/pm registers • Ensuring input of accurate attendance coding in the register via MIS • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (before 9.15am) • Log on MIS, parental voicemails and emails regarding student absences • Ensure all late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is entered on to MIS • First day absence phone contact with parents, following up unexplained absences where no message/phone call has been returned. • Supporting staff with registration queries • SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required • Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or other circumstances • Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure am and pm registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the first day contact systems. • Daily Late process, log and send actions for relevant staff. • Daily Attendance SA/PA report sent to DAL for attendance & SLT. • Inform Designated Attendance Lead of any requests for leave of absence. Respond to parental requests for leave of absence.

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	Designated Attendance Lead	• Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with Safeguarding requirements. • Manage level of support and challenge in place for individual families to follow up attendance queries or issues and agree future action required. • Liaison with EWO, Senior Leadership Team, Attendance Officer, Admin team, Senior Management Team regarding support work with identified pupils. • Offer support to families via phone calls or attendance meetings as necessary. • Liaise with Headteacher and Attendance Officer about leave of absence requests.
	EWO	• Safeguarding home visits as required. • Focused casework interventions with SA/PA pupils and families. • Phone call contact with pupils/parents • Home visits • Instigation of legal proceedings • Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to staff.

When	Who	Actions Expected
WEEKLY/FORTNIGHTLY	**Class teacher**	• Alert Designated Attendance Lead about any pupil absence patterns or attendance concerns.
	Attendance Lead/Admin Team	• Informing DAL of pupil patterns of absence. • Discuss punctuality issues with DAL • Provide weekly punctuality data • Produce letters for families in response to attendance levels- 95%, 92% 90%
	Head of Year	• Organise support for pupils to catch up on missed work due to prolonged absence where appropriate (intervention sessions)
	Designated Attendance Lead	• Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for admin team, highlighting pupils currently below 92% attendance • Provide fortnightly pupil attendance figures for each class in preparation for EWO visit • Liaison with EWO, SLT and Heads of Year/SENDCo regarding support work with identified pupils • Determine priority actions for the following week- letters/calls/meetings

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When	Who	Actions Expected
HALF TERMLY	Designated Attendance Lead	• Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement • Use attendance data to identify and act to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils • Monitor and track attendance SA/PA • Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re action plans and pupils causing concern • Determine priority actions for the next half term

When	Who	Actions Expected
TERMLY	Designated Attendance Lead	• The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those attending off site provision • School attendance review alongside the EWO • Ensure attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to SLT, for plans to raise attendance • Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and systems are operating effectively • Report to Headteacher & Governors on attendance matters • Ensure school prospectus, parents' welcome booklet and school newsletters, promote attendance • Ensure attendance features at ALL parents' evenings • Determine priority actions for the next term
	Headteacher	• Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors