



Attendance Policy

INSPIRE TO LEARN, ACHIEVE TOGETHER

(for The Deepings Cluster of Primary Schools)

Article 28 (Right to education): Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free...

Article 29 (Goals of education): Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Deepings Cluster of primary schools have worked together to produce this policy with the aim of having a common and united approach to maximising the attendance of pupils in the Deepings area.
- 1.2** The Deepings Cluster of primary schools are Baston Church of England Primary School, Deeping St. James Community Primary School, Langtoft Primary School, Market Deeping Community Primary School and William Hildyard Church of England Primary and Nursery School.

2. Aims and objectives

The Government states that an attendance rate of less than 95% will have a detrimental effect on a child's education. It is therefore Deeping St James Primary School's aim that each of our pupils should have an attendance rate as high as possible with our target for attendance being at least **96%** each academic year unless there are exceptional circumstances, out of the child's control, that affect their attendance at school. If a pupil's attendance falls below **95%** at any measured point, the school will support that child and their family to ensure that their attendance rate is as high as it can possibly be, working in partnership with external agencies to provide support where necessary.

3. 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 (2022) Working Together to Improve Attendance
- DfE (2015) Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England
- DfE (2022) Keeping Children Safe in Education
- DfE (2016) Children Missing Education

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it
- Ensuring school staff receive training on attendance

4.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the 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
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they are being educated from home; have an authorised medical note; have been permanently excluded

4.3 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
- Raise concerns they have in relation to a child's attendance with the Attendance leader informing them of any absence which appears irregular, shows regular patterns, is unexplained or unauthorised.
- 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

4.4 Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details and informing school if these change
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number
- Ensure their child attends school every day and punctually
- Promoting good attendance with their children
- Notifying the school by **09:00** whenever their child is unable to attend, giving details of the reason for the absence and the expected length of time the child will be away
- Ensuring that their child arrives well prepared for the school day
- Contacting the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's attendance in school
- Only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance
- Book medical appointments around the school day where possible
- Accepting an invitation to meet with a school leader to construct an Attendance Support Plan (see Appendix 1) and proactively engage with the support offered to increase the attendance of children who are persistent absentees.

4.5 The school expects pupils to:

- Attend school every day unless they are ill
- Arrive on time between **08:40 and 08:50**
- Tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that is affecting their attendance

5 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.

Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

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.

6 Pupils at risk of persistent absence

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary.

The School Leadership Team (SLT) will:

- Establish a range of 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 termly attendance review
 - using fixed penalty notices

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. Children's Services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

Where a pupil becomes at risk of PA, the school will:

- Welcome pupils back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning
- Meet with pupils and parents/carers to discuss patterns of absence barriers to attendance and any other problems they may be having
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups

The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups including:

- Children in need
- LAC / PLAC
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND

7 Children at risk of missing education

Schools and their governing bodies must have regard to the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

8 Admission and Attendance Register

The law requires that all schools have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both.

8.1 Admission register

The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the last school attended. Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupils will attend the school.

Schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held with the admission register about the pupil.

Where the parent/carers of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address, school must record in the admission register: (a) the full name of the parent/carers with whom the pupil will live; (b) the new address; and (c) the date from it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the name of the other school, and (b) the date of when the pupil first attended, or is due to start attending, that school.

On receipt of written notification to home educate, the school must inform the local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record.

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

8.2 Attendance Register

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

- Present
- Absent (authorised or unauthorised)
- 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.

A record of the number of pupils present in each class during registration will be kept on a laminated sheet positioned next to the classroom's fire exit. This is taken outside on evacuation and raised only when a head count has been carried out.

9 Absence Procedures

Parents/carers are required to contact the school office via email/telephone/in person by **09:00** on the first day of their child's absence.

Parents/carers are required to continue to inform school on **each day** of their child's absence if this exceeds more than 1 day, with the exception of sickness/diarrhoea which requires an absence of 48 hours from the last bout of illness.

9.1 Responding to non-attendance

A telephone call will be made by **09:30** to the parent/carer of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's system

Where there is no response by **12:00** (emergency contact list has been exhausted), there will be a home visit from a member of the school staff in line with our school's safeguarding and child protection policy. If the school are unable to raise any response at the home, they may request the police carry out a 'safe and well check' to the property.

If any pupil is absent for a period of 10 days (particularly when we have had no contact from parents/carers) the absence will be unauthorised and notified to Lincolnshire County Council's Pupils Not Attending Regularly (PNAR) service.

For pupils where non-attendance continues or irregular patterns of attendance are causing concern, the case will be discussed with the school leadership team and further action planned in line with the Attendance Flow Chart (Appendix 1).

Attendance will be monitored by the school. If a pupil's attendance falls below **90%** for any reason (including illness or holidays), they will be classed as Persistent Absentees (PA). A letter will be sent to parents to make them aware of this. If attendance does not improve within two weeks of a school notifying parents of poor attendance, they will be asked to attend a School Attendance Panel meeting. This meeting will include the appropriate staff, parent/carer and pupil and will aim to identify and solve any problems that are preventing the pupil from attending school. Parent/carers are obliged to attend.

The case will continue to be monitored and if there is no improvement, a penalty warning letter will be issued. Failure to improve attendance will result in a Penalty Fine from the Local Authority under Section 444(b) of the Education Act 1996. If it is felt that the pupil's attendance is not improving due to lack of support or

engagement with either the parent/carers or the pupil, consideration will be taken as to submitting a file to the Local Authority to initiate proceedings before a Magistrates Court.

9.2 Reintegration

The return to school for a pupil after long-term absence requires planning. Designated staff will be responsible for deciding on a programme for return and for the management of that programme. Programmes will be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in class as appropriate. Programmes will be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

9.3 Lateness

The school regards punctuality as of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated. Pupils should be in their classroom at the start of the school day at **08:50**. Children arriving at school between **08:50 and 09:30** will be marked as late. Children arriving after **09:30** with no specific reason will receive an unauthorised absence mark.

In the event that a child fails to attend punctually on 10 or more occasions, a letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting that they attend a meeting in school to discuss the matter further and to offer support as necessary. Failure to improve punctuality could lead to further action being taken.

9.4 Term time leave

Only the headteacher has the authority to authorise an absence and will only be allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

Applications should be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave. It is at the headteacher's discretion to determine whether the absence will be authorised or not. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents will be considered.

9.5 Family holidays

Parents/carers should not take pupils on holiday during the school term. If a request is not granted and the parent/carers takes the child on holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and this may be referred to Lincolnshire County Council and could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine under Section 444(b) of the Education Act 1996.

Where a pupil was removed from school for a holiday during the previous academic year, and then is absent due to a holiday in the current year, the case may be automatically be referred to Lincolnshire County Council for a Fixed Penalty fine.

Where a pupil fails to return within 10 school days of a previously notified date schools have the power to remove the child from the school roll and report them to Children Missing Education at Lincolnshire County Council.

9.6 Appointments

As far as possible, parents are encouraged to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, an appointment card/letter must be shown to the school office.

If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office. Pupils will be expected to attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

9.7 Religious observances

Parents will be required to inform school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

9.8 Sport and other performances/activities

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain permission in writing from the headteacher who authorises the school's absence.

9.9 Young carers

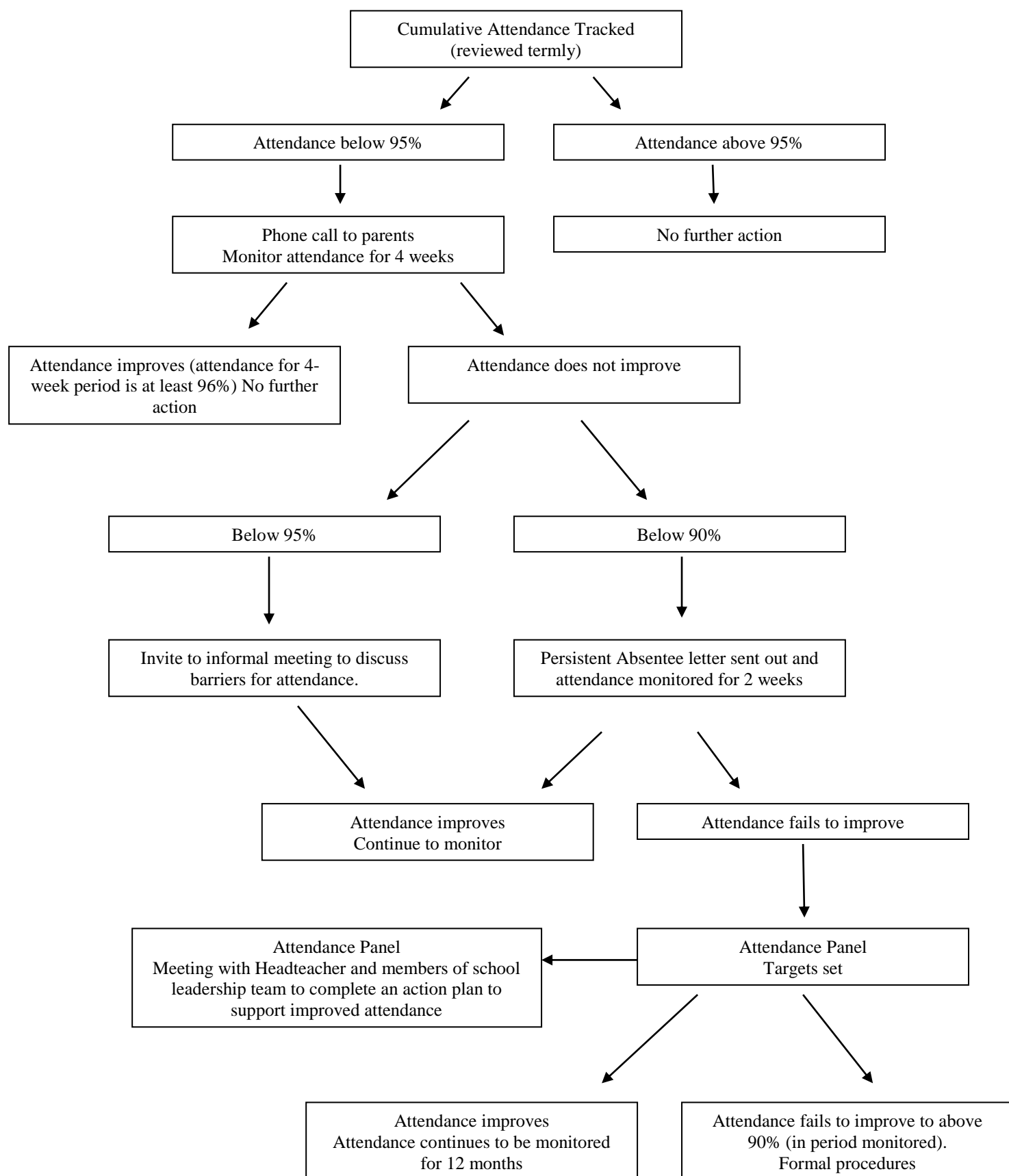
The school understands the difficulties that face young carers, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as through their time at the school. A caring and flexible approach will be taken to the needs of the young carer and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

10 Encouraging Rewarding good attendance

Attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:

- accurate completion of the registers within 20 minutes (maximum) of the start of a morning and afternoon session
- identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3 by sharing relevant information with the destination school
- establishing a mechanism for working with those parents/carers who express a concern that their child is experiencing difficulty in attending school
- use of year group, class, identified groups (for example, pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)) and pupil level attendance data which enables analysis and a timely response by the school

APPENDIX 1 – Attendance Flow Chart



Each attendance case will be reviewed on its individual merits, along with medical referrals/reports and advice from other professionals involved with the family

APPENDIX 2

DEEPING ST JAMES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Support Plan for INSERT NAME, Y123456

Agreed at meeting on INSERT DATE

Historic Attendance data

2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022

What is going well? Home/School/Medical etc	What are our main concerns? Home and School	What can be done at school to further support attendance?	What can be done at home to further support attendance?

