Trust Attendance Strategy

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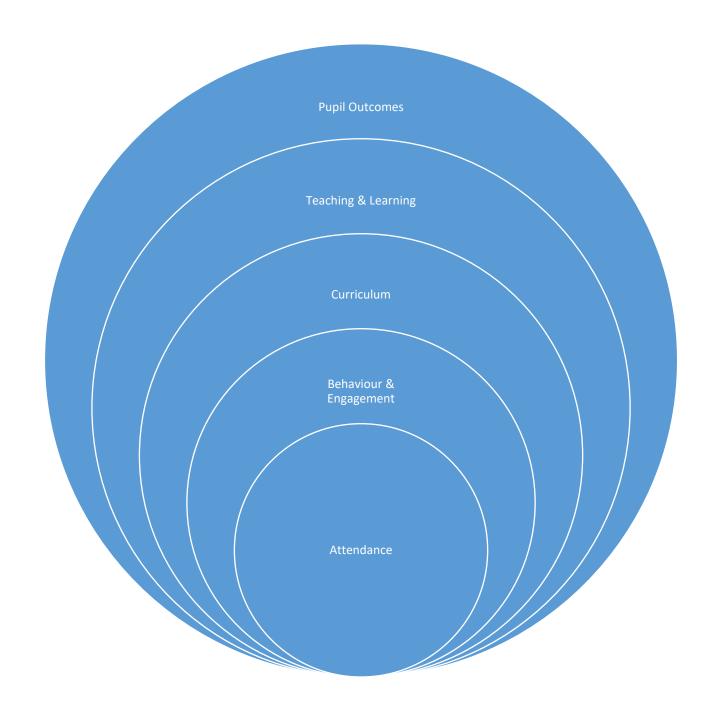| Review Date:	Reviewed By:	Changes Made

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Vision

We are committed to ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education and has the chance to make the most of the opportunities our schools provide. This begins with regular and punctual attendance. We believe that consistent attendance is fundamental to academic success, personal development, and future opportunities.

Pupil Outcomes

Teaching & Learning

Curriculum

Behaviour & Engagement

Attendance

Strategic Objectives

Our ambition is to have every child in school every day. In order to achieve this senior leadership teams strive to develop a culture where all stakeholders are clear on their roles and responsibilities, and we have clear systems and procedures in place to support this. Our approach is based on the principle that attendance is everybody's business and follows the Norfolk Children's Services Attendance Strategy and the 'working together to improve school attendance' statutory guidance.

Our main strategic priorities are to:

- Promote a culture of high attendance across all our schools.
- Identify and address barriers to regular attendance.
- Build strong relationships with families to support good attendance.
- Use data effectively to monitor, intervene, and improve attendance.
- Ensure accountability for attendance at all levels of leadership.

Key Principles

In order to achieve the strategic objectives, our approach has a strong focus on preventative measures coupled with swift intervention. Our aim is to follow the steps outlined in 'working together to improve attendance'. This states that 'successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools to work in partnership with families'.

The key principles which support our strategic objectives can be summarised as:

- Early and Effective Intervention: Address issues before they escalate.
- Whole-School Approach: Embed attendance into the ethos of each school.
- Inclusive Support: Tailor strategies to meet the needs of vulnerable groups.
- Collaboration: Work with the local authority, external agencies and families.
- Consistency: Apply policies fairly and transparently.

Roles and Responsibilities

In order to maintain high levels of school attendance parents, school staff, trust staff, governors and trustees should follow the responsibilities outlined in the DfE statutory guidance. These are summarised below:

- Parents: ensure their child attends school every day, notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent, e.g. due to illness. Only request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Book all medical appointments around the school day. If attendance drops, work with the school to help them understand the barriers to better attendance. Proactively engage with any support offered.

- Schools: have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which staff, pupils and parents understand. Develop a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers. Have a robust daily process to follow up absence. Regularly monitor attendance data to identify patterns and trends. Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for improving attendance. Where absence becomes persistent, put in targeted support, working with the local authority and other partners. Where there is a lack of engagement, hold formal meetings with parents and be clear about the potential need

for legal intervention. Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.

- Governors/Trustees: take an active role in attendance improvement, supporting their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work with leaders to set whole school cultures. Ensure that school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. Ensure school staff receive training on attendance. Use data to understand patterns of attendance, identifying areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.

Core Strategies

Regular attendance is a prerequisite to an outstanding education and securing this for our pupils is a high priority for the Trust. Our core strategies support this aim through a range of targeted child centred activities, evidence informed practices and a shared understanding of how to promote good attendance.

Prevention

A positive school culture plays a pivotal role in fostering regular attendance. Our schools aim to create a welcoming and inclusive environment giving pupils a sense of belonging.

- All staff are ready to welcome pupils into the school buildings.
- Clear, uncomplicated attendance policies and expectations.
- Regular engagement with families about the benefits of good attendance.
- Positive reinforcement with rewards for good attendance.
- Engaging curriculum and inclusive teaching so pupils want to attend school.

Monitoring

The rigorous use of attendance data sits at the heart of identifying patterns of pupil absence. This allows early identification so everyone can work together to resolve absence before it becomes habitual.

- Daily registration and real-time tracking of absence and lateness to school.
- Safeguarding reactive procedures to address current absence concerns.
- Attendance lead analysis and identification of patterns.
- Regular attendance team meetings and reports to the senior attendance lead.
- Fortnightly Trust update to schools in line with the DfE statistical release.
- Half-termly trust-wide attendance reviews using DfE VYED data and reports.

Intervention

All pupil absence is followed-up using a comprehensive, multi-tiered approach. Our tiered response model involves three separate stages which are similar to the Norfolk guidance 'staged approach to managing school attendance'.

Tiered response model:
Tier 1: Universal support and addressing emerging needs
Tier 2: Targeted support for persistent attendance challenges.
Tier 3: Intensive intervention and higher needs strategies.

Tier 1 Universal School Strategies
- Meet and greet pupils, building positive relationships.

- Create positive classroom environments to develop a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Establish robust daily processes to follow-up absence. This can include phone calls home, home visits and regular meetings.
- Where absence occurs, support pupils and parents to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Consider the use of fixed penalty notices (FPN) as an early intervention tool for parentally condoned absence, such as unauthorised holidays.

Tier 2 Targeted support for persistent absence challenges.
- Proactively use data information to identify pupils who are PA.
- Work with each individual child and their family to understand and address the reasons for absence.
- Formalise planning for children where informal interventions and support have not improved attendance, utilising an early help assessment plan (EHAP) where appropriate.
- Hold weekly or daily check-ins to review progress and the impact of support, recognising achievements.
- Contribute to multi-agency meetings where applicable.
- Provide catch-up support for pupils returning to school after a long period of absence.
- Contact the county attendance team to discuss legal intervention where support is not working.
- Consider consultation with CADS where barriers to school attendance indicate risk of harm and early/informal multi-agency support and intervention measures have been consistently applied and not effective.

Tier 3 Intensive support and higher needs strategies.
- Use data to identify pupils at risk of severe absence or severely absent.
- Continue to offer a range of supportive and formal interventions.
- Take an active part in multi-agency work with the local authority and other agencies. Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.
- Follow LA safeguarding procedures in all cases where the barriers to non-attendance indicate a safeguarding concern.

Evaluation and Review

School attendance polices should be reviewed and updated annually to ensure they remain relevant and effective. Policy reviews should assess if it aligns with current legislation, guidance, and the school's specific context. This Trust strategy will be reviewed annually to reflect any changes to school procedures or legislation that are necessary.

- Annual review of Trust attendance strategy and school attendance policies.
- Attendance data reported to the school local governing bodies and Trust Board for review at their scheduled meetings.
- DfE 'attendance summary reports' and 'similar schools comparison reports' reviewed at school and Trust level each half-term.