



Triumph Trust

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2023

COURTHOUSE GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Date of Review	September 2023
Reviewed by	Triumph Trust Strategic Audit and Finance Committee
Agreed by	Board of Directors November 2023
Next full review	September 2026
Designated Safeguarding Leads for Child Protection	Courthouse Green: Kate Halfpenny
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Courthouse Green: Sarah Malam (Executive Headteacher) Claire Jones (Assistant Head), Vicky Dolan and Jodie McKim (Learning Mentor)
Named Director for Safeguarding (Triumph Trust)	LJ Winterburn
Chair of Governors:	LJ Winterburn – 024 76688022
Vice-Chair of Governors	Angie Paggett – 024 76688022

Whole School Attendance Policy

Policy Consultation and Review

This policy is a Triumph Trust Policy supported by Coventry City Council in accordance with the Department of Education's "Working together to improve attendance" (2022) guidance.

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. All parents are informed about the policy when their children join the school and on a regular basis through the newsletter and letters home where relevant.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on at least an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in September 2023, It is due for review on September 2024.

Signature _____ Headteacher _____ Date: _____

Signature _____ Chair of Governors _____ Date: _____

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1. Introduction/Aim

‘pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education’

Expectation

Every child in our schools should have high attendance (**above 96.5%**) to benefit from the high quality teaching and rich learning opportunities that we provide to enable them to achieve academic excellence and personal growth. We **EXPECT** all children in school every day and on time (**08:45am**).

Rationale

At Triumph Trust we value the attendance of all pupils. There is a strong relationship between good school attendance and achieving positive outcomes for children. It is recognised that attending school regularly can be a protective factor for children and young people. It is important that as a school we offer a safe environment, positive relationships, high quality teaching and learning opportunities to develop social and emotional skills.

Ensuring that children attend school every day will help achieve this ambition by maximising their education and social achievements as well as developing self-discipline, organisation and preparedness for the work environment. Improving attendance and reducing absence, especially persistent absence is a priority for our school and Coventry City Council.

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Support pupil’s achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences.
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

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 policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning.

2. Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at school. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- and act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A "Parent" is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

3. Attendance Objectives

Our aims

- All children achieve the Government minimum target of **96.5%** attendance in an academic year.
- Reduce the percentage of authorised absences to below **4%**
- Support parents in performing their legal duty by ensuring that their children attend school regularly (**96.5%+**)
- Follow the Government guidance (September 2022) to not authorise any request of leave of absence during term time for holiday purposes
- To proactively manage and improve attendance for all of our children
- To support families and work in partnership with them to improve attendance
- Reduce the percentage of persistent absences (below 90%) and ensure we have no severely absent children (below 50%)

Objectives

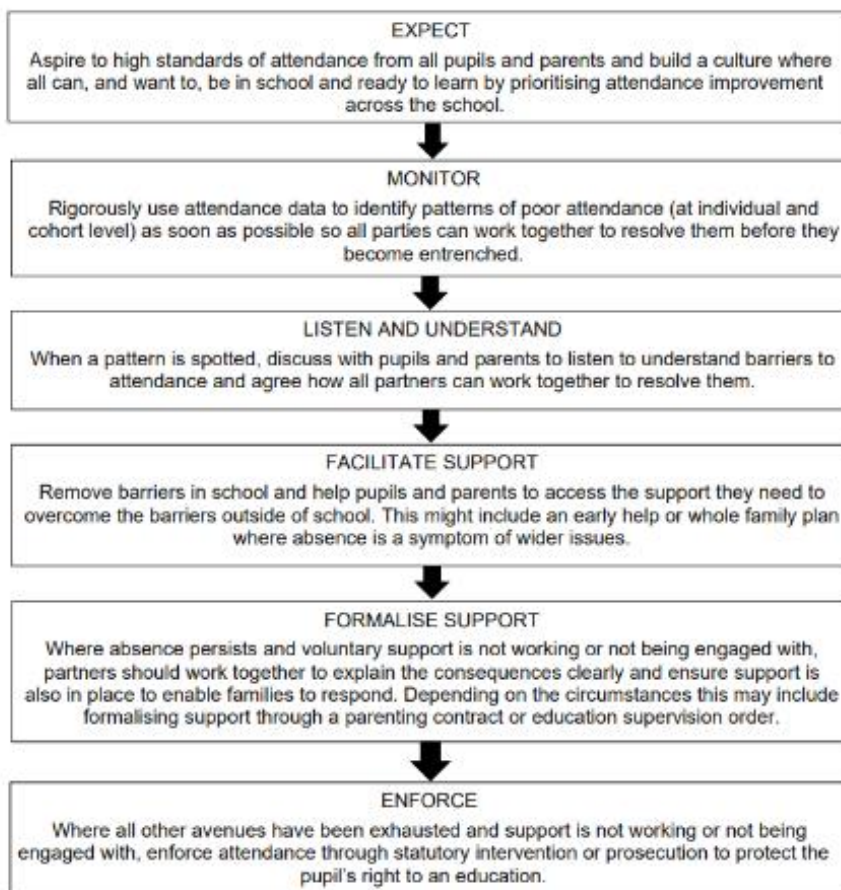
In order to achieve our aims the following objectives have to be put into practice: -

- Ensure all children feel safe, welcomed and are able to learn at school.
- Work in partnership with parents to ensure that education and school attendance is valued.
- Maintain an up to date admission and attendance register.
- Keep parents informed at all stages of attendance (at least termly updates).
- Ensure that school procedures are in place for the monitoring of pupil absence to keep parents informed.
- Ensure that school procedures are in place and reflect those of Government guidance (September 2022).
- Ensure that the school procedures are in place for working with the Health Service when a pupil has been identified as having persistent absences due to illness.
- Ensure that all attendance is above the Government threshold for being persistently absent from school (attendance must be 90% and above).
- To work with the local authority to formalise support and where necessary enforce attendance via statutory intervention to protect a child's right to an education

Partnerships

Our school values working in partnership with parents/carers and with the wider school community and sees this as an essential part of promoting good attendance. Partnership working will be promoted through discussion with the parents/carers, working with professionals e.g. Early Help Team, School Nurse etc; liaising with parents and organizing termly attendance awards for classes and individuals. Parents will receive regular communications from the school, some of which will include advice and support options within our community that are available to our families. Coventry prides itself on a multi disciplinary approach to family support and at Triumph Trust we excel in providing excellent pastoral support to all families regardless of a child's attendance level.

Children that are Looked After or have a social worker will have a closer scrutiny over their attendance data in order to ensure that those children are receiving the best possible support to improve life chances quickly. Our support will follow the flowchart below.



4. Roles and Responsibilities

At Courthouse Green, we believe that school attendance matters to everyone. School attendance is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.

Role	Name
Senior Leader for Attendance	Claire Jones
Attendance Lead in School	Vicky Dolan
Named Governor for Attendance	Justine Mckim (LJ Winterburn Triumph Trust)

The Local Governing Board of Courthouse Green recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Supporting the school to prioritise attendance and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensuring school staff receive training on school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

School responsibilities:

- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Ensure that the school is welcoming and every child feels they belong, are listened to, valued and feels safe in school.
- Ensure the regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance. This will be done by every class teacher every day.

- Ensure parents have up to date information about their child's attendance and are notified promptly when school have concerns over attendance levels. Arbor app provides live attendance information and attendance is included in termly reports.
- Work with families to overcome any barriers to poor attendance and support rapid improvements
- Regularly celebrate and teach children the importance of good attendance and punctuality routines.
- Provide personalised and individual support where needed to ensure all children can attend school.
- Signpost to external agencies where further support to improve attendance is required.
- Regularly monitor every child's attendance so any concerns are swiftly identified and addressed.
- Report attendance figures half termly to Governors and at the end of each academic year in the Headteachers Report to Governors and the Executive Headteacher's Report to the Directors of Triumph Trust.
- Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.
- Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.
- Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils with SEND and/or medical conditions and their parents to maximise attendance.
- Inform the pupil's social worker, where there is one, if there are any unexplained absences and if the child's name is to be deleted from the register.

Parents responsibilities:

- Parents are responsible for ensuring their children receive a full-time education, ensuring they are in school, on time and ready to learn unless they are too unwell to attend.
- Parents/carers should wherever possible make all medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for all parts of the day except the appointment time. Appointment cards should always be provided as evidence of medical/dental appointments.
- Always inform school before the start of the school day if a child will be absent from school and provide daily updates until the child returns
- Inform school promptly of any barriers preventing their child from having good attendance in school.
- Do not book leave from school during term time. If this is essential leave, an application must be submitted through the school office. Holiday leave will not be authorised and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued after 5 days.
- Proactively engage with the support offered to improve attendance working with the school, local authority or external agencies.

Child responsibilities:

- To do their best to attend school every day, coming to school unless they are unwell.
- Follow good routines at home to ensure they are ready to learn when in school
- Take responsibility for helping to be ready for learning and on time each day.
- Tell school staff or family if something is making it difficult to attend school regularly

5. Recording Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department of Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

5.1 Leave of absence

We aim to work with parents to ensure that all parents understand the importance of uninterrupted education. Leave of absence request during term time will not be authorised by the Headteacher. Amendments to The Education (Pupil registration) (England) 2006 regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. We do not believe holidays during term constitute as exceptional circumstance.

Parents are required to complete a form notifying the reason for the absence from school and the dates, including the expected date of return. The Headteacher will consider all requests on an individual basis and respond in writing with the decision. All absences authorised and unauthorised will go on a child's record. Long term absences will be tracked by the Governing Board and Triumph Trust. All absence due to holiday will incur a fine per pupil once the absence is

over 5 days. If a pupil fails to return (after one month) and contact with the parent has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education(Pupil registration)(England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child may lose their school place.

5.2 Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Absence from school

1. **Reporting absence** – we expect all parents/carers to notify school on the first day of absence and continue to keep school informed for the duration of the absence (speak in person or by phone to a member of office staff or leave message on school's answer phone).
2. Any **medical appointments** must be reported to the school office in advance of the appointment and evidence provided. Parents should avoid where possible booking medical appointments in the school day.
3. **Any child arriving after close of register (9.30am)** is marked with an unauthorised absence code (unless evidence of medical appointment provided).
4. **First day calling** – we call and text all parents on a daily basis if we have not been given a reason for a child's non-attendance, when we get no response from parents, we complete a home visit to ensure proper safeguarding action can be taken if required.

5.3 Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance

Triumph Trust acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

5.4 Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

a pupil's/family member's birthday, closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes, holidays taken in term time.

6. Our Procedures

6.1 Register Keeping and Recording

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, require schools to take an attendance register at the beginning of the morning session and once during each afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational activity or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Children absent/ missing from education

Where the parent of a child notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address and will move to a new school, we will record in the admission register the new address, and the date from when it is expected the child will attend this new school. The child will only be removed from register once the new school has confirmed their attendance. If we receive no such confirmation, we will continue to complete safe and well checks and will inform the local authority that the child is absent. Any child absent ten consecutive days of education shall be reported as absent to the local authority and they shall then begin to take action to ensure that attendance improves.

Home Educated Children

On receipt of written notification to home educate, we will inform the local authority that the child is to be deleted from the admission register. However, prior to submitting this we will make every effort to support the child being educated in school.

Safeguarding Procedures and Attendance

We set high expectations for attendance at school. As a result of this, we monitor carefully any period of absence and visit the family home of any child whose parent or carer has not contacted the school to explain the absence. After three days absence we will visit the family home regardless of contact made. If we are unable to locate a child, we will contact the police to complete 'concern for safety' checks. We will undertake every reasonable task to find a child and support them back into school, including - using all contact details supplied to us by parents and carers, asking friends and their parents for information and asking neighbours or siblings/relatives' schools or workplaces for further information. Should we have further concerns, and a child is absent for 20 days, we will complete the CME documentation as set out in DfE guidance - Children Missing Education 2019 DfE.

Where we have concerns that children and their families have moved out of the area, or are unable to attend school for reasons that cause concern – fleeing DV; FGM; criminal behaviour; substance misuse; poor mental health etc, then we will refer to MASH as appropriate. Staff are fully aware of all concerns that may lead to absences from school and receive regular updates on the various issues during staff training.

Guidance given in 2022 asks that we consider whether persistent or severely absent children are victims of neglect within the home and whether we should refer to Children's Services. At Triumph Trust, staff will work tirelessly with families to provide support but sometimes we may need additional support from other agencies, we will always seek consent from parents to make these referrals and will make it clear why we are referring and point out how it will help a family. It is not a punitive measure.

6.2 Late Arrival at School

At Courthouse Green all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. The school day begins at 8.45 am. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this, school gates open at 8.45 am. The school register will be taken at 8.45 am. All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parents who will be expected to provide a reason for their absence. If their arrival is before 9.30 am it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

Any child arriving after close of register (9.30am) is marked with an unauthorised absence code (unless evidence of medical appointment provided). Where a child is late due to issues with local authority transport then the child will not be penalised for this and marked as late.

6.3 Expected absence procedure for parents

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

If a child is absent, the following actions will be initiated by the school:

- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after close of register at 9.30 am and where no reason for absence is known.
- If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact will be telephoned.
- If school cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a pupil, a home visit may be carried out.

6.4 Rewards and Interventions

School Procedures to celebrate and encourage high attendance – maintaining a culture of high attendance

- Good attendance is a high priority in school as it will help children make the best progress socially and academically.
- Good attendance is celebrated weekly at whole school assemblies, as well as recognising pupils with significant improvement in attendance. Reward systems are reviewed regularly to ensure they are kept

fresh and motivational. They celebrate and reward whole class achievements and give individual recognition and awards.

- The school will look for every opportunity to raise the profile of the importance of good attendance with pupils and parents. Parents always have access to their child's attendance on the arbor app and attendance figures are shared in reports and parents evening meetings alongside the attendance tree.
- All staff in school take an active role in monitoring and promoting school attendance and punctuality and aim to help pupils develop their own motivation for daily, punctual attendance.

Monitoring attendance

All attendance records are monitored weekly to identify any areas of concern and agree any action to be taken. This is to ensure that our school's attendance figures are in line with and are meeting school's target for attendance (2023-24) it is **96.5%+**). The Pastoral lead and Attendance lead meet with external agencies on a half termly basis to discuss ongoing concerns. Weekly reports are provided to Senior Leaders of each class's attendance, individual pupil attendance is also closely monitored by senior leaders so any improvements can be celebrated, and concerns can be swiftly identified.

Procedures and strategies used to promote and encourage good attendance in our school will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Pastoral Manager with the support of Learning Mentor, Admin staff, Governors and the Directors of Triumph MAT. Actual attendance figures will be reported to the authority through Arbor on a weekly basis and biannually through the PLASC. We are required to regularly share and report attendance data with the Local Authority and take action as deemed necessary by them. The admissions register will be accurately kept and where a child moves schools or across authorities, their data will be deleted promptly and transferred to the onward school. Any deletion should be carried out on the day that they start their next school. No child will be deleted from Triumph Trust registers without receiving notification that it is to do so from either – the onward school; the local authority; the Missing from education team at Coventry City Council. There are several grounds upon which a child may or may not be deleted from registers, we will not undertake to do any other than to transfer a child unless given permission from local authority attendance team.

Actions to be taken if absence is a concern:

- Parents will be informed of any concerns of poor or declining attendance and will discuss this with; class teacher, school leaders or a member of the pastoral team.
- Learning Mentors will support children in school when their attendance begins to decline or reaches **94%**.
- When a child's attendance falls below **92%** a letter will be sent to parents requesting a further meeting to inform them that all future absences may require medical evidence. Failure to provide medical evidence may result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.
- When attendance drops below **92%** we will meet families to inform that there may be a referral to the Local Authority Attendance Support Officer and or a referral to Early Help to improve attendance.
- When attendance drops below **90%** we will inform parents that the Local Authority Attendance Support Officer will be supporting to improve attendance. Attendance will be monitored for a period of time and if there is no improvement then a Parenting Contract will be put in place to improve attendance and to avoid prosecution and Legal Proceedings.
- Chronic illness/special circumstances letter recognises that there are exceptional circumstances for a child's low attendance whilst informing parents of their child's percentage attendance it also offers support and a link with the Learning Mentor. Any child with ongoing medical issues or additional needs that prevent regular attendance will not be penalised as we recognise that this would be both unfair and go against our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

7. Tailored Support

At Triumph Trust we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Solution focused actions to support families to improve attendance.

All children and families will be supported in a personalised way to help them improve attendance and all improvements will be celebrated. Solutions offered to support may include:

- Providing an alarm clock, additional uniform or other practical support for family
- Social, emotional or ,mental health support.
- Support with establishing good sleep routines
- Routine charts to help with morning routines
- Sticker charts for home or school
- Offer of breakfast club support
- School nurse referral
- Learning mentor support in school

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. This may include a referral to Early Help or a Parenting Contract.

8. Persistent Absence and the use of legal interventions

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 40 sessions (20 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

8.1 Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed penalty notices will be applied for in the following circumstances:

- A child has a period of ten sessions of unauthorised absence in a 25-day period (5 school weeks)
- If a parent takes a child out of school that will incur 5 days absence from school
- If a pupil has not returned to school after a school holiday within 5 days

Lateness after **9.30 a.m.** will incur an unauthorised absence mark in the register and therefore count towards any fixed penalty application. The current fine for fixed penalty notices is £60 per parent, per child. Non payment of this amount within 21 days will lead to the fine doubling in amount. Non payment at this point will lead to prosecution.

Penalty Notices will issued by post to your home address to each parent or carer by the Local Authority.

9. Staged Reintegration/Reduced timetables

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to receive a suitable full-time education and the school and local authority have a statutory duty to ensure that all children in the area receive such an education. In very

exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so.

We will not use a reduced timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour. A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision where applicable. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carer and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family

We will notify the Attendance and Children Missing Education Team of all reduced timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed.

10. Related Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- medical needs
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- special educational needs
- teaching and learning
- Relational behaviour

11. Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, \(September 2022\)](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2022\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(July 2018\)](#)

12. Appendices

The following pages contain appendices relevant to this policy.

-Attendance Tree