

Educational Diversity

Pupil Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Date:
Last reviewed on:	March 2022 (rewritten)
Next review due by:	March 2023

'With **confidence** we learn, through **challenge** we grow, with **commitment** we achieve,
together we take **control** and realise our dreams'



All of our young people have the right to access education. Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to receive the care, guidance, and support they require to maximise their educational opportunities and achieve their potential.

Good attendance also ensures that the welfare and safety of our young people can be monitored and acted upon appropriately and effectively.

We value all pupils and will actively work with, and if necessary challenge, families/parents/carers to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

This policy will aim to

- Demonstrate a strong attendance ethos that improves the overall attendance of pupils and reduces the number of persistently absent pupils.
- Develop a framework that identifies the roles and responsibilities of the whole school community.
- Highlight a clear structure for promoting good attendance and tackling absence.
- Encourage the young people to see the value in regular attendance at school
- Establish/re-establish the habit of regular school attendance
- Build/rebuild positive relationships with pupils, parents and school
- Provide continuity of teaching and learning
- Enable young people to achieve their true potential
- Quickly and effectively identify and help resolve any difficulties which may be contributing to poor attendance
- Promote the general importance and legal requirements of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Enable early intervention when an individual pupil's absence gives cause for concern.
- Install clear support systems for vulnerable pupils.
- Reward and celebrate good and improved attendance.
- Promote effective partnerships with external support agencies and the Local Authority.

The Law on School Attendance and Right to a Full-time Education (from DFE Working Together to Improve School Attendance)

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

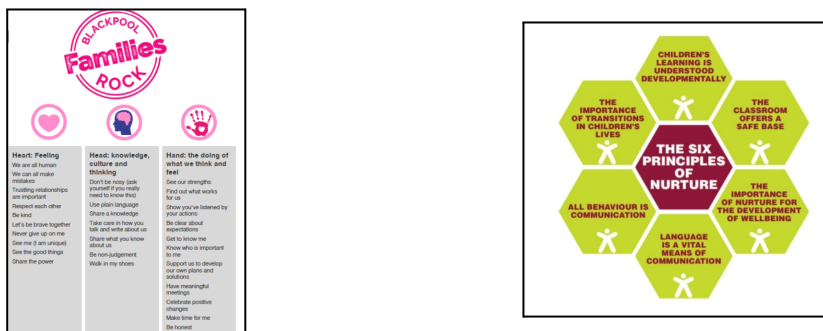
Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend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

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%). At KS4, pupils not achieving grades 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grades. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grades 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grades 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).

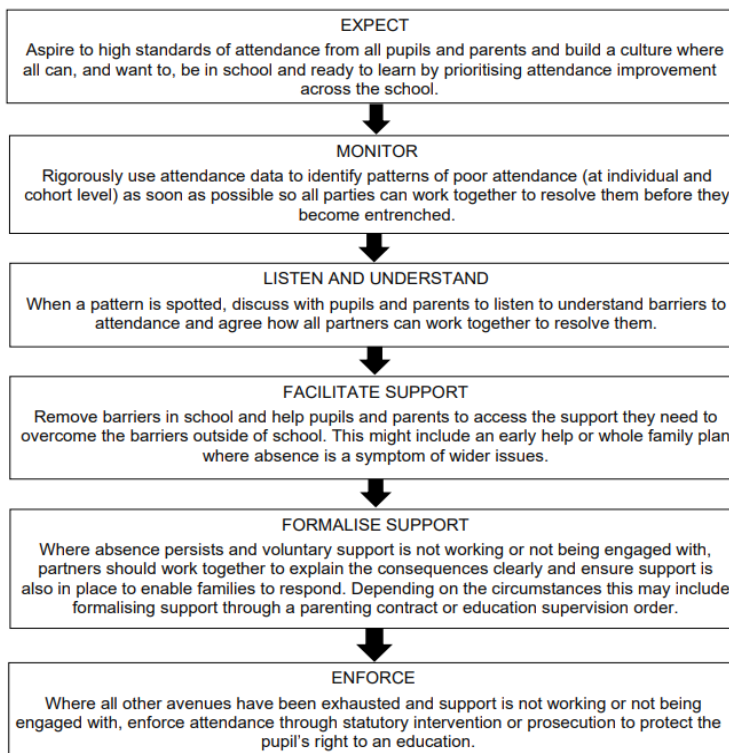
For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent) and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study)

Working Together

We work with pupils and their families and other agencies to improve school attendance. Underpinning our work is the Blackpool Families Rock Approach and The Six Principles of Nurture



We need to remove barriers to attendance by working together on



Expectations

Good attendance is a learned behaviour and we encourage this at all opportunities. Attending well and on time prepares our pupils for their future education and employment.

We expect all pupils to attend for their agreed timetable hours. These are reviewed regularly (See Progression Plan Policy)

All pupils are placed on our school roll (SIMS)

Attendance registers are taken at the start of each day and in the afternoon. (Session registers are also completed by staff)

We actively encourage all students to be punctual and arrive on time at school and to their lessons.

Absence During Term Time:

If pupils are not present they are marked with the relevant register codes from the current DFE Guidance

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been absent from school and the Headteacher or Attendance Lead is satisfied that there has been an unavoidable reason.

Unauthorised Absence

An unauthorised absence is any absence that the Headteacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent

In consultation with the Attendance Lead, the Centre Lead Teacher will plan relevant Rewards and Actions for their centre.

Lates

Pupils are expected to arrive at their agreed arrival/start time. Pupils are marked as late if they arrive after their agreed start time and before registers are closed.

U Marks

Our registers close 30mins after the agreed arrival time (or start time for students on a Bespoke Timetable/Progression Plan)

Where a pupil arrives later than 30 minutes after the registers have closed (or after their agreed start time) and no satisfactory reason is provided for the lateness a 'U' mark is given.

For further Attendance and Absence Codes please refer to

 Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance (1).pdf

Roles & Responsibilities:

At Educational Diversity we believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, management committee, parents/carers, pupils, and the wider school community.

As such, the Management Committee will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance are promoted to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Identify a member of the Management Committee to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Agree internal school attendance targets.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead on attendance.

- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record, and monitor the attendance of all, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

All Staff will:

- Be responsible for setting a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.
- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole-school approach that reinforces good school attendance. Good teaching and learning experiences are delivered by enthusiastic staff within a caring, nurturing environment and encourage all pupils to attend and want to achieve.
- Ensure that attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Ensure that a register is taken on SIMS each day/session to record attendance.
- Contribute to a whole school approach that reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Implement systems to report, record, and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Follow the non-attendance procedure if a pupil is absent (see below).
- Ensure that, where possible, early identification and intervention are deployed.

In addition

The Core Leadership Team - Attendance Lead will:

- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- As the strategic lead for attendance, devise and implement the attendance action plan.
- Give regular feedback and updates to Core Leadership Team, Management Board, and other team members.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure staff are accountable for the implementation of the attendance policy.
- Lead on partnership work with PWS.
- Ensure attendance processes are effective and run efficiently.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence and reported to the Headteacher, half termly.

Our Senior Leadership Team - Lead Teachers will:

- Liaise with Attendance Lead regarding implementation of policy.
- Liaise with Attendance Lead regarding cases/new concerns
- Ensure information regarding start dates and times is shared with the Admin team/relevant staff
- Daily management of pastoral team/issues that may involve attendance
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions with Attendance Lead.

- Ensure that attendance is promoted in their part of the service
- Collaborate with other Lead Teachers and Attendance Lead regarding service-wide publicity (including website) regarding attendance.
- Collaborate with other Lead Teachers and Attendance Lead to implement consistent rewards and consequences.
- Managing staff within their centre to ensure attendance procedures are in place.
- Ensure that systems to report, record, and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site, are implemented.

Our Exams/Admissions Officer will

- Liaise with relevant agencies and colleagues regarding pupil information
- Maintain our admission register as per the following guidance
 - ▀ Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance (1).pdf

Our Data Manager will

- Work with CLT and SLT to produce required reports to support the work of the team.
- Produce reports to identify patterns and trends.
- Support with the collation and analysis of data.

Our Admin will

- Update registers with late arrivals and those on agreed reduced hours/progression plans.
- Make follow up phone calls to parents/carers of absent children and record on SIMS.
- Alert relevant pastoral team members/DSL/DDSL to any information that needs to be followed up/visits to be made/discuss patterns arising and record this on CPOMS.
- identifying any potential issues emerging with a pupil.
- Support with identifying patterns and trends for absence and sharing this information with the pastoral team.

Our Pastoral Team will:

- Liaise with Admin, Form Teachers, School Home Support Worker, and Key Workers regarding attendance issues/patterns.
- Follow up on any issues with phone calls, visits, or contact Pupil Welfare Service.
- Work in partnership with parents to support the identification of difficulties and strategies to overcome issues around attendance.
- Record their actions on CPOMS.
- Liaise with Admin regarding pupils hitting trigger points and follow up accordingly.
- Alert DSL/DDSL if required.
- Attend PWO meetings to discuss open cases and identify new caseloads alongside a member of the leadership team.
- Contribute to relevant meetings such as CMOCs and ensure paperwork is uploaded onto CPOMS.
- Share information regarding attendance at other meetings such as CP Conferences, and Early Help Meetings.
- Contribute to the analysis of attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated (on CPOMS).
- Document interventions used to a standard required should legal proceedings be instigated (on CPOMS)

We request that parents/carers will:

- Ensure we have up to date contact numbers for them and emergency contact numbers.
- Contact us as soon as possible, on the first day, if their child is absent to let us know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note if appropriate and where possible.
- Talk positively to their child about school and why they should attend. Take a keen interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Support school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with the school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance and punctuality within the home environment
- Inform us of any change in circumstances that may impact their child's attendance
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists, etc. outside of school hours
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home, or to look after other members of the family
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time, where this is unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances send an '**Application for leave of absence**' to the Headteacher who will consider the application and agree on the length of the absence, this would only be in exceptional circumstances.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties and work with agencies that can support them.
- Encourage a positive routine at home that enables regular and punctual attendance.

Rewards & Actions for Punctuality and Attendance

Rewards:

Positive communication with pupils/parents/guardians via

- Texts can be emailed to the admin who will send them out to parents/carers
- Phone calls can be made by any staff member
- Letters can be sent through communication with the Lead teacher
- Certificates are given out in weekly assemblies by the Lead teachers
- Reports containing attendance percentage
- Notice Boards that display rewards and attendance
- Rewards including gifts and off-site trips

Actions:

Communication on poor attendance with pupils/parents/guardians via

- Texts
- Phone calls
- Reports
- Meetings
- Home visits
- Detentions
- PWO referral/Involvement
- Legal proceedings

Non-attendance Procedure:

Day	Communication	Yes	No
Day 1	Efforts made to contact parent/guardian	<p>Recorded and logged. If on PWS caseload informed PWO if appropriate.</p> <p>When speaking to parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure appropriate challenge given - If applicable/medical evidence requested - If possible view attendance print visible to support - Record reason given. - Encourage the pupil to attend - can the pupil still make it in later that day? - Medical evidence to be requested if appropriate. ie: On PWO caseload or attendance - is of concern and it is deemed appropriate to now challenge further absences. - Pastoral team DSL/DDSL - alerted of an absence of any high priority pupils 	<p>If possible, leave a message to make contact.</p> <p>Call logged and other numbers attempted. Further phone calls made</p> <p>If on PWS caseload, PWO to be informed and they will make appropriate next step</p>
Day 2	Efforts made to contact parent/guardian	Repeat as per day 1	See day 1
Day 3-4	Efforts made to contact parent/guardian	<p>Repeat as per day 1</p> <p>In addition</p> <p>Alert key pastoral team workers for follow-up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare visit dependant on need - Agree on return to school date - Recorded and logged on CPOMS. 	<p>Recorded and logged on CPOMS. If on PWS caseload inform PWO</p> <p>In addition</p> <p>Alert key pastoral team workers for follow-up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare visit dependant on need - Leave a note to contact the school - Are other agencies involved <p>i.e. SC, Early Help, Awaken, etc. – Liaise with to establish any sightings of pupil</p>
Day 5	Efforts made to	Repeat as per day 1	Recorded and logged on CPOMS.

onwards	contact parent/guardian	Alert key pastoral team worker for follow-up. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare visit if not already seen during absence - Agree on return to school date - Discuss with PWO - Recorded and logged on CPOMS. 	If on PWS caseload inform PWO Pastoral staff to complete a welfare visit to the family home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree to return to school date/next steps - Consider the use of PWS and/or if safeguarding concerns exist consider requesting a Police for welfare check
Day 10		Recorded and logged on CPOMS. If on PWS caseload inform PWO. Alert key pastoral team workers for follow-up. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare visit - Agree on return to school date/next steps - Discuss with PWO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PWS support - Police for welfare check as the pupil is now missing in education - Contact CSC duty team to seek advice as a possible missing person
For pupils where non-attendance is ongoing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure sighting of the pupil every 10 school days - Working with multi-agencies - continue to offer opportunities to support re-engagement 			
Child Missing in Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We liaise with our Pupil Welfare Officer and follow DFE Guidance regarding Children missing in education 			

Pupils with Medical Conditions or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We recognise that some of our pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil. That said, we are mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This includes:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, schools should work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Please see further details on SEN support.

- Establishing strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensuring joined up pastoral care is in the place where needed and considering whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.
- Ensuring data is regularly monitored for these groups including at board and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.

We are sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents and talk to pupils and parents and understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance to develop individual approaches that meet an individual pupil's specific needs as pupils access our provision because they have struggled in mainstream provision.

Pupils are placed on a Progression Plan to support their move to our service. These are reviewed regularly to support increasing timetables and their attendance.

Dual Registration including Respite Pupils:

For pupils who are dual-rolled or currently attending on respite, we would liaise with the relevant personnel at the pupil's school regarding whether they are present, it is then the responsibility of the school to follow up on absences.

Educational Diversity has a named school/home support worker who works alongside the pastoral team to increase attendance and punctuality.

School Home Support

We currently have a School Home Support Worker linked to Educational Diversity who works across our provision. Pupils and their families who are struggling with school attendance are encouraged to access the School Home Support services on offer.

Blackpool Council Support – The Role of the Pupil Welfare Service (PWS)

Referrals to PWOs are made by schools. However, PWOs do consult with other professionals and can be contacted directly by parents/carers for support.

Before we make a referral to the PWO, we will first undertake a number of steps to address the pupil's non-attendance such as meetings and attempted contact with parents by telephone, text, and letters. A parent/carer may be contacted by a PWO if:

- The pupil has a pattern of irregular attendance (broken weeks);
- The pupil has had a period of non-attendance with no explanation or justifiable reason;
- The pupil has been regularly absent and communication between parent/carers and school has met with little or no response/improvement;
- The pupil is moving to another area and the school does not have a confirmed destination school/provider where the child will resume their education (such pupils are treated as "children missing education");
- A pattern of persistent lateness has developed;
- There are child protection concerns alongside poor attendance patterns;
- There are identifiable welfare issues, which are preventing a child from accessing education.

The main role of a PWO is to work with schools and families to help raise attendance levels for individual pupils, individual schools, and for Blackpool as a whole to ensure that all pupils of compulsory school age are in receipt of a suitable education. PWOs also work with other professionals such as Health to promote regular school attendance for pupils.

PWOs will assist in identifying and removing barriers that may be preventing a pupil from receiving education in a number of ways, initially by undertaking individual casework with children of poor attendance and their parents/carers. The PWO will recognise and take account of the individual circumstances and will respond accordingly. Speedy return of the pupil to regular attendance will always be the prime concern.

In some instances, PWO intervention may be limited to a single PWO home visit in order to remind parents/carers of their legal responsibilities or to help resolve a particular difficulty.

When, in some instances, there may be complex reasons why a pupil is not attending school the PWO may negotiate a plan of support. This might involve referring for the involvement of other agencies through Early Help and holding multi-agency meetings. All PWO casework will involve close and continuous liaison with the pupil's school. PWOs will ensure that schools receive regular, written feedback on pupils with whom work is being undertaken.

Where the main causes of non-attendance may be school-related (e.g. alleged bullying or racism, peer pressure, difficulties with a particular lesson or teacher) the PWO will discuss with the school in order to develop strategies to overcome these difficulties.

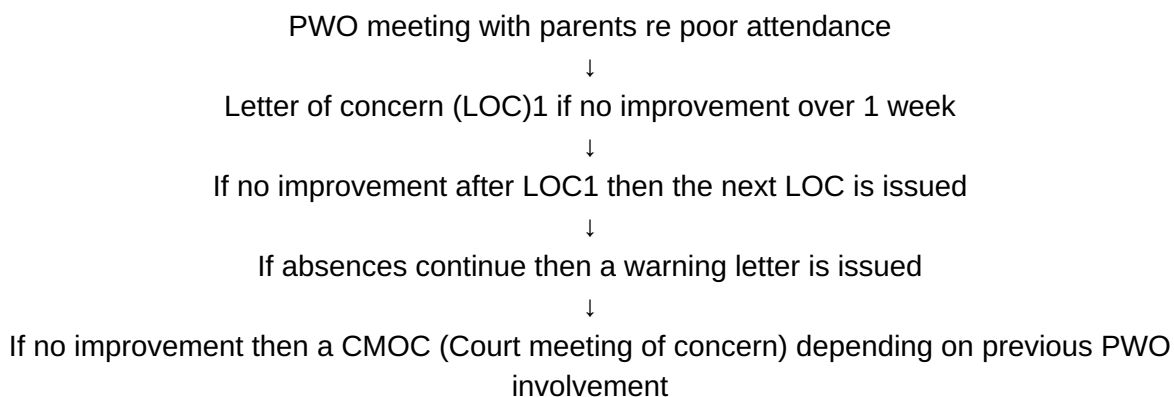
The PWO will employ a range of strategies with the parent/carers in their casework to bring about the pupil's regular attendance and will, when necessary if no improvement occurs, refer the matter to the Magistrates Court. Fines may also be issued.

PWO Procedure: (This procedure is a general guide but is subject to change depending on individual circumstances)

Educational Diversity work in partnership with Blackpool's Pupil Welfare Service.

Educational Diversity has support from a PWO who monitors pupil attendance through regular inspection of the school register and liaison with school staff.

The PWO works closely with Lead teachers and members of the pastoral team and takes a supportive role before having to at times follow legal procedures.



↓
If no improvement then a FWL (Final warning letter)

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If no improvement then a NIP (Notice of Intent to Prosecute)

Elective Home Education (Please see Appendix 1)

When parents suggest they may want to educate their child at home we

- Issue a letter explaining government guidelines regarding Elective Home Education
- Invite parents to attend a meeting with the Headteacher
- Need written confirmation from parents with a signed letter saying parents accept full responsibility for their child's education and what date they want their child removing from roll
- Send a Form 5A to the Local Authority
- Take the pupil off roll on the agreed date

Policy Evaluation

When evaluating success, we will consider whether

- Attendance has improved
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absence has improved
- Educational Diversity has raised the profile of attendance
- Pupils are aware of the importance of attendance

Attendance at Educational Diversity

Our School Day

	Arrival Time	Finishing Time
Pegasus KS2	8.45	2.15
Pegasus KS3 and KS4	9.00	2.30
Athena	9.00	2.30
Willows	9.00	2.30

Our Attendance Strategic Lead is

Simon Coulter

Who to contact if you are worried about your child's attendance please contact us

	Phone Number	Who to speak to
Pegasus KS2 and KS3	01253 476660	Kerry Ashton, Gina Barton or Hayley Wootton
Pegasus KS4	01253 476660	Lewis Sowerby, Rachel Ellis or Hayley Wootton
Athena	01253 476663	Carol Bramhall, Becky Kenyon or Mike Power
Willows	01253 476661	Jordana Roskell or Michelle Mortimer

Our extended team who also support attendance, include our

School Home Support Worker and Pupil Welfare Officer

Direct Line: 01253 476660/476691

Email: vofarrell@eddiversity.blackpool.sch.uk

Date: DATE

Dear parent/carer of NAME,

You have recently written to me requesting that I take your child off our roll. You have expressed the wish to Electively Home Educate (EHE) your child. I know that you would not have taken this decision lightly but I have a duty to ensure that your decision is fully informed.

The government guidance on Elective Home Education (EHE) outlines what parents need to think about before deciding to educate their child at home. I have summarised their points below:

Commitment: It will mean a major commitment of a parent's time, energy and money. Parents will need to think hard before making a final decision.

Curriculum: It is especially important that parents consider the nature of the education they intend to provide for their child before they begin to teach him or her at home. Parents will need to think about the curriculum they will provide, and whether it will allow their child to reach his or her potential now and in the future, including whether they expect their child to sit public examinations such as GCSEs or not. Also to consider whether home education is in their child's overall best interests, including social development.

Disagreement with the current provider: If parents are considering home education for their child due to a disagreement with the school or a teacher, parents should talk to the teacher concerned, or to the head teacher if appropriate, before you make your decision. This is particularly important for children in years 10 and 11 who are already preparing for public examinations. If parents genuinely believe that their child's current school is not suitable, then they should also discuss with the local authority what alternatives might be available before taking any decision as to home education of their child.

Finances: If parents choose to educate their child at home, they must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility for their child's education, including bearing the cost of any public examinations (which would have to be entered via an external examinations centre, which may be some distance from their home). Other costs to consider include books, paper, IT and other equipment, and educational visits and sporting activities. Local authorities can consider giving support when special educational needs are being met through home education and additional costs are incurred as a consequence of those special needs. Even in these cases, assistance is discretionary. Some local authorities operate support groups or forums for home-educating families, or provide access to advice; but again, this is discretionary.

Future change of mind: If parents remove their child from a school in order to educate at home, but then change their mind, there is no guarantee that a place would still be available at the school; an application would have to be made in the usual way through the local authority's process for in-year admissions – or if applicable, direct to the school. If no place was available at their child's former school, the local authority would then be obliged to find a state school place, or arrange for education to be provided otherwise than at school.

In summary, therefore, as parents **I advise you to consider:**

- a. Why am I thinking of educating my child at home?
- b. What does my child think about the idea?

- c. Do I have the time, resources and ability to teach my child properly?
- d. Is my home suitable for undertaking teaching and learning, in terms of noise, space and general environment?
- e. What support do I have from others? What would happen if I was unable, perhaps through illness, to provide teaching for my child for a period of time?
- f. Can I provide social experiences, access to cultural and aesthetic experiences and physical exercise, to help my child develop?
- g. Do I envisage educating my child at home for the whole of their time of compulsory school age, or only temporarily? What are my long term intentions for the education of my child?

You can access further information and guidance here:

<https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Education-and-schools/Home-schooling/Home-schooling.aspx>

If you would like to discuss your request with me upon receipt of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me. If I do not hear from you within 5 working days, I will uphold your request.

Yours sincerely,

Victoria O'Farrell

Headteacher