



An Active Learning Trust School

## Attendance Policy 2022- 2023



<b>DOCUMENT:</b>	<b>Attendance Policy</b>
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<b>Developed by:</b>	Nick Morley
<b>Approved by:</b>	Governors
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<b>Version No:</b>	1
<b>Review Timetable:</b>	Annually
<b>Review:</b>	The document should be reviewed by a nominated member of staff and updated annually if required; after ratification or earlier if there is any new local or national guidance, changes in process, or legislation.
<b>Purpose of Document:</b>	To give guidance on attendance procedures to ensure high standards are maintained.
<b>Implementation:</b>	The procedures will be accessed via the Staff Team
<b>Dissemination:</b>	The procedures will be available to all staff, teaching and non-teaching

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## 1. Policy statement and principles

Improving attendance is everyone's business.

At Neale Wade Academy we will develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages children to enjoy and excel in their education

We recognise that some children find it harder than others to attend school therefore the academy will build strong and trusting relationships with children and parents to:

- promote good attendance and remove any barriers to attendance
- act early to address patterns of absence

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance requires the academy and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families.

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.

Where a child is registered at this academy, parents have an additional legal duty to make sure their child attends regularly.

We will **expect** high standards of attendance, **monitor** attendance data, **listen** to children and parents to **understand** barriers, facilitate **support**, formalising it when necessary, and **enforce** attendance through statutory intervention when all other avenues have been exhausted.

## 2. Why regular attendance is important

Good attendance is essential for children to get the most out of their school experience, including their well-being and wider life chances.

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for effective learning; children with poor attendance achieve less in both primary and secondary age groups.

For the most vulnerable children, regular attendance is also an important protective factor.

### 2.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

Difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying a child and they and/or their family are in need of early help and support.

Lack of, or erratic attendance, persistent absence or children missing education are safeguarding issues and must act as a warning sign to a range of concerns including neglect, sexual abuse, child sexual or child criminal exploitation, and serious violence. They may also be an indication of child-on-child abuse including bullying and sexual harassment or significant mental ill health concerns. They must not be seen as purely isolated attendance concerns.

Where children have or have had a social worker or are in need of safeguarding support, this will inform decisions about attendance issues.

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

## **2.2 Vulnerable children**

It is important for parents/carers/social workers to let the academy know of any specific vulnerability in relation to their child or home circumstances. If you are uncertain about what would be considered a vulnerability, please contact the Vice Principal for Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes.

## **3. Context**

### **3.1 The Law Relating to attendance and safeguarding**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

*“the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:*

*(a) to age, ability and aptitude and*

*(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have*

*either at school or otherwise”*

### **3.2 Compulsory School Age:**

A child must start full-time education once they reach compulsory school age. This is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday - whichever comes first.

A child can leave school on the last Friday in June if they will be 16 by the end of the summer holidays. (see attendance coding guide in 'School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities')

They must then do one of the following until they're 18:

- stay in full-time education, for example at a college
- start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

### 3.3 Safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and children under the age of 18.

#### *Other relevant guidance/advice*

- Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2022- statutory guidance for schools [Keeping children safe in education 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2022.pdf)
- Working together to safeguard children – statutory guidance for safeguarding partners [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2018.pdf)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0-25 years SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/the-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-code-of-practice-0-25-years-send-code-of-practice-january-2015.pdf)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/2626/contents/made)
  
- [Working together to improve school attendance May 2022 Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-may-2022.pdf)
- [Looked After Children Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/looked-after-children-promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children-and-previously-looked-after-children.pdf)
  
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2013 [Additional health needs guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/additional-health-needs-guidance.pdf)
- Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities Sept 2016 [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/stat-guidance-template.pdf)
  
- [Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Students: supporting access to education - Case study - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-children-supporting-access-to-education)
  
- General information and advice for academies can also be found in the Government's publication [Missing Children and Adults - A cross government strategy \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/missing-children-and-adults-a-cross-government-strategy.pdf)
  
- [Statutory Guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/statutory-guidance-on-children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care.pdf)
- Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation [Department for Education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/department-for-education-child-sexual-exploitation.pdf)
  
- NSPCC [Protecting children from sexual exploitation | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learn/protecting-children-from-sexual-exploitation/)
  
- [Elective home education guidance for local authorities April 2019 Elective home education: departmental guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/elective-home-education-guidance-for-local-authorities-april-2019.pdf)
  
- Elective home education – a guide for parents April 2019 [Elective home education: guide for parents \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/elective-home-education-guide-for-parents.pdf)
- Alternative Provision Statutory guidance for local authorities Jan 2013 [Alternative Provision statutory guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106567/alternative-provision-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf)

- Cambridge County Council school attendance page  
<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/education-your-rights-and-responsibilities/school-attendance>
- LSCB Cambridgeshire & Peterborough  
<https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/>

#### *Related academy policies*

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

### ***4.1 People with responsibility for attendance***

Role	Name	Contact details
Principal	Graham Horn	<a href="mailto:ghorn@neale-wade.org">ghorn@neale-wade.org</a>
Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance	Nick Morley	<a href="mailto:nmorley@neale-wade.org">nmorley@neale-wade.org</a>
Academy Attendance Officer	Mark Loveday	<a href="mailto:mloveday@neale-wade.org">mloveday@neale-wade.org</a>
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Nick Morley	<a href="mailto:nmorley@neale-wade.org">nmorley@neale-wade.org</a>
Academy SENDCo	Kelly Wilshire	<a href="mailto:kwilshire@neale-wade.org">kwilshire@neale-wade.org</a>
Academy Mental Health Lead	James Crawley	<a href="mailto:jcrawley@neale-wade.org">jcrawley@neale-wade.org</a>
Academy CIC Coordinator	James Crawley	<a href="mailto:jcrawley@neale-wade.org">jcrawley@neale-wade.org</a>
Local authority named officer for the education of children with additional medical needs	Anna Wahlandt	<a href="mailto:Anna.wahlandt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">Anna.wahlandt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>
Local authority named officer for SEND	Jo Hedley	<a href="mailto:Jo.hedley@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">Jo.hedley@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>
Local authority named officer for	Karen Beaton	<a href="mailto:Karen.beaton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">Karen.beaton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>



elective home education		
Local Authority Virtual School Head	Claire Hiorns	<a href="mailto:Claire.hiorns@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">Claire.hiorns@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>
Other LA contacts	Claire Stanyer (Advisory SEND Teacher)	<a href="mailto:Claire.stanyer@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">Claire.stanyer@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>

### All children – roles and responsibilities

Governors	Academy	Parent/carer
<p>Recognise the importance of attendance and promote it across the academy's ethos and policies</p> <p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support the academy to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Regularly review attendance data; supporting and challenging leaders to focus improvement efforts on individual children or cohorts who need it most</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance, ensuring key attendance staff also receive bespoke safeguarding training to support their role</p> <p>Ensure that all governors have familiarised themselves with at least sections 1-3 of 'Working together to improve</p>	<p>Adhere to the guidance in 'Working together to improve school attendance' <a href="http://publishing.service.gov.uk">Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>Ensure strong relationships with families are formed to understand and remove barriers to attendance</p> <p>Has a coordinated, holistic approach which focuses on the individual needs of each child and ensures that all key staff i.e. DSL, SENCo, Mental Health Lead and LAC Coordinator are involved in attendance support</p> <p>Monitor and analyse weekly attendance and trends looking at individual children, cohorts and groups</p> <p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, children and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that</p>	<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>

<p>school attendance’  <a href="#">Working together to improve school attendance</a>  <a href="#">(publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p>	<p>promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p> <p>Shares information and works collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and partner agencies</p>	
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**Children at risk of becoming persistently absent (PA) – roles and responsibilities**

Governors	Academy	Parent/carer
<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the children who need it</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify children at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified child and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners.</p>	<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child’s barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>

	<p>Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service.</p> <p>Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	
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### Persistently absent children (90% or below) – roles and responsibilities

Governors	Academy	Parent/carer
<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the children who need it</p>	<p>Continued support as for children at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously</p>	<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>

	attended and the schools of any siblings	
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### Severely absent children (50% or below) – roles and responsibilities

Governors	Academy	Parent/carer
Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the children who need it	Continued support as for persistently absent children and:  Agree a joint approach for all severely absent children with the local authority.	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.  Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

### Children with lower attendance than their peers – roles and responsibilities

Governors	Academy	Parent/carer
Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the children who need it	Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.  Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.	Not applicable

### Children with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance – roles and responsibilities

Governors	Academy	Parent/carer
Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the children who need it	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with children and parents to maximise attendance.	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.

	<p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	Proactively engage with the support offered.
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### Children with a social worker – roles and responsibilities

Governors	Academy	Parent/carer
Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the children who need it	Inform the child's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>

### 5. Promoting regular attendance and punctuality

Helping to create a pattern of regular, punctual attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers/social workers, children and all members of academy staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide parents / carers with details on attendance in school reports
- Report to parents at half-termly intervals on their child's attendance and punctuality
- Celebrate improved attendance – this should be done sensitively and take into account individual children's circumstances

- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events - taking into account individual children's circumstances and barriers to attendance
- Run promotional events when parents, children and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school

## **6. Admissions and attendance register ('the school roll')**

The academy will keep an admission register and attendance register. The contents of which includes:

- All children on roll at the academy
- All children's personal details including full legal name
- At least two, and preferably three, telephone numbers for different trusted adults
- The date of admission (or re-admission)
- Information regarding parents and carers
- Details of the school last attended.

The academy will enter children on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the academy that the child will start, or the day that the academy has been notified that the child will attend the academy.

On each occasion, we will record children's attendance using the national codes. (For details of current national attendance codes see School attendance guidance [School attendance guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362222/school-attendance-guidance.pdf))

A child's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

## **7. Family contact details**

In order to allow us to safeguard children it is important that parents and carers provide the academy with their current contact details and provide at least two other contact numbers of trusted adults in case of emergency where possible.

## **8. The academy day**

The school day starts at 8.50am. We expect your child to be in school and at their allocated 'line up' areas at that time.

### **Late arrival before registers close**

Registers are marked by 9.00am and 12.45pm and your child will receive a 'late' mark if they are not in lesson by that time.

### **Late arrival after registers close**

At 9.15am and 13.00pm the registers will be closed. If your child arrives after that time, they will receive an unauthorised absence mark that shows them to be on site but not counted as a present for statistical / legal purposes.

Children arriving late to the academy should report to the student services area where a member of the student services team will provide the child with a slip. The child should then give this to the class teacher to confirm they have been registered by the academy.

## **9. Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information / instructions and news for the day. Late arriving children also disrupt lessons. It can also be embarrassing for the child; this can encourage absence.

### **9.1 How we manage lateness**

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Head of Year in the first instance to identify what the barriers are and together seek a resolution.

Please approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time so that we can work with you. The earlier we identify a problem the more chance of success we can have.

## **10.1 Support and Intervention**

Whilst having the highest expectations of attendance, the academy recognises that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual children and families.

The academy will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

We monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the year and understand that certain groups of children may be more at risk of poor attendance.

We will aim to build strong and positive relationships between the academy and families.

The academy will treat all children and parents with respect and dignity, considering circumstances holistically.

Early intervention can prevent poor attendance.

We will, in the first instance, support children and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.

Where barriers are outside of the academy control, the academy will work with the child, family and other partners to support them to access any support they may need voluntarily. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support.

When absence intensifies, so will the support provided. The academy will work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners.

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with, the academy will work with the local authority to put formal support in place e.g. parenting contract or an education supervision order.

Where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with, and it is likely to change parents' behaviour, a fixed penalty notice may be issued by the local authority.

The academy, working with the local authority may seek to intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).

The academy, working with the local authority, may seek to prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. Where a child or family needs support we will endeavour to ensure the best placed person in the academy works with them and remains their key point of contact.

**10.1 Effective School attendance improvement and management**





## 11. Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school is classified by the academy (not by the parents), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence, is always required, preferably in writing.

### 11.1 Severely absent

A child is considered to be severely absent (SA) if they miss 50% or more of their schooling across the school year for **whatever reason**.

These children will be given top priority for more intensive support across a range of partners.

All our SA children and their parents will be supported through an action plan. The plan may include:

- Allocation of additional support through a mentor
- Individual incentive programmes
- Participation in group activities around raising attendance

All SA cases are also automatically made known to the local authority to agree a joint approach and the number of cases are made known to the governing body.

The school's Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO) is Gianni Fasulo – [Gianni.Fasulo@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Gianni.Fasulo@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

### Safeguarding

If all avenues of support have been offered, but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect and the academy will consider whether there is a need to refer into children's social care.

### 11.2 Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A child is considered to be persistently absent (PA) if they miss 10% (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year) or more of their schooling across the school year for **whatever reason**.

Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that level, is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately.

PA children are tracked and monitored carefully through attendance meetings and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA children and their parents/carers will be supported through an attendance action plan. The plan may include:

- Allocation of additional support through a mentor
- Individual incentive programmes
- Participation in group activities around raising attendance

All PA numbers are made known to senior leaders and governors by the Vice Principal- Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes.

If your child has, or is at risk of, reaching the threshold for PA, you will be asked to provide evidence for any future absence. This may be medical evidence for illness which can be in the form of prescriptions, medicine packaging or hospital letters.

### **11.3 Authorised Absences**

An authorised absence is where the academy has either given permission in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered is accepted as satisfactory justification for absence.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness, medical or dental appointments for which the academy has granted leave (appointments should be made outside the academy day where possible)
- Unavoidable cause (which is expected to be an emergency and unavoidable)
- Days of religious or cultural observance for which the academy has granted leave
- Traveller child travelling for the purposes of parents' employment which has been agreed with the academy
- Other exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the principal i.e. funerals, weddings

### **11.4 Unauthorised Absences**

An unauthorised absence is where either no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is not considered acceptable by the academy

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children from attending the academy unnecessarily or without reason
- Parents / carers keeping children off school to assist with translation
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a late mark i.e. after registers have closed (see section 5 above for times)
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed by the academy
- Leaving the academy without permission during the school day (truancy)

If an absence is recorded as unauthorised and absence is causing a concern the academy may refer this to the Local Authority's Education Service at any point. (Processes for Child Missing Education are listed in section below)

The Local Authority can use various sanctions to promote regular attendance such as issuing a Penalty Notice Fine or initiate court proceedings.

Whilst any child may be absent sometimes, it can be that they are reluctant to attend or there are safeguarding concerns

Any problems with regular absence are best sorted out between the academy and the parents/carers and the child.

## **12. Absence Procedures**

If Children are absent, parents/carers must:

- Contact us as early as possible and at the latest by 8.50am on the first day of absence and give an expected return date.
- Contact can be made to the school in the following ways: telephone the Academy directly and/ or email into the academy
- Call every day thereafter to advise school of your child's progress
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;
  - or, you can call into the academy and report to reception, who may arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

### **12.1 Safeguarding**

To ensure that a child is safe and well, and to understand the reason for absence so that it can be recorded with the correct code on the register, any unexplained absences will be followed up immediately.

The senior leader with responsibility for attendance, liaising with the DSL, SENCo, Mental Health Lead, Child in Care Coordinator will ensure that children who are vulnerable are prioritised for contact.

A written risk assessment will be put in place to determine the type and frequency of safe and well checks that are needed and actions to be taken including referrals to Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) and the police if required.

Therefore, if a child is absent, we will:

- Telephone, text or email you by 10.00am on the first day if we have not heard from you with a reason for your child's absence. We may need to speak to your child to ascertain that they are safe and well
- Follow up email via SIMS Intouch to any parents/carers whom the academy are unable to contact via telephone by 10.00am
- Visit the home on the same day if there is continued lack of contact, to carry out a safe and well check on the child
- Carry out daily safe and well checks where appropriate, particularly for children at risk of harm

We may contact the police and/ or local authority staff to assist with safe and well checks, particularly if there are additional safeguarding or welfare concerns.

### **12.2 Following up**

- We will invite you in to discuss the situation with either the Head of Year/ Assistant Principal/ Attendance officer if absences persist.

### **12.2 Leave in Term Time**

There is no entitlement in law for any leave of absence from the academy in term time.

Taking leave in term time will affect a child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help them by not taking children away in term time.

We require parents to observe the term times of the academy. All applications for a leave of absence must be made in advance to the principal and will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances.

If the academy grants a leave request, we will determine the length of time that the child can be away from the academy. We do not have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time, apart from very rare occasions where it meets the exceptional circumstance criteria. This must be applied for in advance by the parent and agreed by the principal.

In making a decision, the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

Each request for absence under an exceptional circumstance category will be considered individually.

When making the decision the following factors may be considered:

- The amount of time requested
- The age of the child
- The child's general absence/attendance record
- Proximity to internal or external test/examinations
- Length of the proposed leave
- Child's capacity to catch up any work missed
- Child's educational needs
- General welfare of the child
- Safeguarding concerns
- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- Frequency of the activity, and
- When the request was made.

When leave of absence has been granted, the absence will be recorded as authorised, using the appropriate register symbol.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice.

### **12.3 Appointments**

As far as possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of the academy day. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the academy prior to the appointment.

Children must attend the academy before and after the appointment wherever possible. If the appointment requires the child to leave during the day, they must follow the academy's signing out procedure.

Should a child arrive late to the academy, following an appointment, they should report to the Student Services area where a member of the student services team will provide them with a slip. The child should then give this to their class teacher to confirm that they have been registered in school

### **12.4 Religious or cultural observance**

Parents must inform the academy in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance. The academy will authorise absences where a reasonable request is made. Parents should inform the academy PRIOR to any absence due to religious observance.

## **13. Children Missing Education (CME)**

Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities Sept 2016 [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544212/Children_Missing_Education_Statutory_Guidance_for_Local_Authorities_Sept_2016.pdf)

The Local Authority (LA) officers with responsibility for CME are Lesley High [Lesley.high@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lesley.high@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) and Helen Chandler [Helen.chandler@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.chandler@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

For the purpose of this policy, children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered students at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

Children who go missing from education are at significant risk of underachieving, and becoming victims of harm, exploitation, radicalisation or serious violence and/or becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training)

Children who are already known to children's social care, who are on a child in need or child protection plan or in the care of the local authority are additionally vulnerable and in need of robust protection.

Where a child has not returned to the academy for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from the academy without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days the child can be removed from the admission register, **but only** if the academy and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. Records of all checks must be kept on the child's file. Taking a child off roll must be seen as a last resort.

This only applies if the academy does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the child is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable causes

Before removing a child from the register, the academy will make reasonable enquiries, with the local authority, to ascertain the whereabouts of the child, compliant with GDPR, which could include:

- Making contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours, using known contact details
- Checking with agencies known to be involved with family
- Checking with the local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known
- Checking with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved

- Checking with the local authority where the child lives, if different from the academy's location
- Making home visit(s) if appropriate

All home visits will be risk assessed before being carried out.

No member of staff should enter a child's home on their own. 'Doorstep' only visits may be carried out by a lone member of staff if it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Other than in an emergency, staff must not enter a child's home if the parent/carer is absent. Staff should always make detailed records (NWA Home Visit form) including times of arrival and departure and ensure any behaviour or situation that gives rise to concern is discussed with a senior leader

The academy will treat each case on its individual merits and use their judgement, ensuring they have taken into account all of the facts.

### **13.1 Safeguarding**

For children at risk of harm or neglect:

- The DSL will ensure the academy response to identifying children missing from education supports identifying potential abuse or exploitation and also prevents them from going missing in the future
- The academy will follow local child protection procedures.

However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to children's social care Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the police as per the academy's safeguarding procedures.

### **13.2 Missing children/runaways:**

Should the academy suspect a child has gone missing/run away, the DSL will ensure the academy's child protection procedures are followed and the police and MASH are contacted.

### **13.3 Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System:**

LA youth offending teams are responsible for supervising children (aged 8 to 18).

Where a child is registered at the academy prior to custody, the academy will keep the place open for their return.

### **13.4 Children of migrant families/unaccompanied minors:**

There is an increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address or may have arrived in to an LA area without the authority becoming aware.

If the academy becomes aware of such families, they will notify the LA immediately.

### **13.5 Children of service personnel:**

If the academy is concerned about the continuity of education for a child leaving the academy, the attendance officer will contact the Ministry of Defence: Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) for advice

The most effective way to contact the CEAS team is via email: [DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk) CEAS helpline: 01980 618244 or 94344 8244

### **13.6 Children of gypsy, Roma and traveller (GRT) families:**

When a GRT child leaves the academy without naming their next destination school, the academy attendance officer will contact the LA. If necessary, the academy will consult the Beatrice White (LA Traveller team)

[Beatrice.white@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Beatrice.white@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) for advice on the best strategies to ensure minimal disruption to the child's education

## **14. Suspension and Permanent Exclusions**

All incidents where a child is sent home due to poor behaviour, will be coded on the register as an suspension, even if pre-agreed with a parent, i.e., children being sent home during lunch times. If a suspension is for part of the day (including lunch-time), it will be noted as a half day suspension. Suspensions will count towards absence on the register.

### **14.1 Safeguarding**

Whilst a child is suspended from school, parents have a duty to ensure that their child is safe and well and appropriately supervised at home.

A child must not be present in a public place during academy hours throughout the suspension period, unless there is reasonable justification for this. Parents may be liable to prosecution and/or receive a penalty notice from the local authority if their child is present in a public place during academy hours during the dates of the suspension. It will be for the parent to show reasonable justification.

The principal will take account of the legal duty of care when sending a child home following an suspension.

The academy will continue to ensure regular safe and well checks are completed. This is particularly important for additionally vulnerable children

Following a permanent exclusion, safe and well checks will be carried out by the academy until the result of any appeal is known.

## **15. Elective Home Education (EHE)**

(see also appendix 5 EHE Guidance)

Elective home education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home instead of sending them to the academy full-time.

Whilst many home-educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience this is not the case for all and can mean some children are less visible to services that are there to keep them safe and supported.

DfE guidance for local authorities sets out the role and responsibilities of LAs [Elective home education: departmental guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604222/elective-home-education-departmental-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf) whilst this guidance is primarily aimed at LAs, academies, our attendance staff and those maintaining the academy registers, will make themselves familiar with it. The academy will also follow the local authority policy and protocols

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/education-your-rights-and-responsibilities/elective-home-education-ehe>

The decision by parents as to how to educate their child, whether at a school or at home, should be an informed, active and positive one. It is important that parents obtain sufficient information when making that decision.

We advise any parent who wishes to educate their child at home to discuss their decision with the academy first. Please contact the Vice Principal- [nmorley@neale-wade.org](mailto:nmorley@neale-wade.org)

We will ensure we:

- Respond positively and constructively
- Take all necessary steps to resolve any issues in school that may be influencing parents' consideration of EHE
- Signpost the parent/carer to the local EHE Team, or the School Admissions team, who will provide further advice and guidance to help the parent to make an informed choice

### **15.1 Decision to home educate**

Parents must inform the academy in writing that they intend to educate their child at home.

Once the letter of notification, written by the parent/carer, to home educate has been received, the academy will immediately notify the local authority elective home education team via the following link:

[Elective home education deregistration form - Instructions and Data Protection - Self \(achieveservice.com\)](https://www.achieveservice.com/elective-home-education-deregistration-form-instructions-and-data-protection-self)

The child's place at the academy will remain 'open' for ten working days whilst the LAO verifies with parents that they have made an informed choice about educating their child at home

The parent and child will be offered the opportunity to discuss their decision with the principal

We will never seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion or because the child has a poor attendance record. In the case of exclusion, we will follow the relevant legislation and have regard to the statutory guidance.



If a child has a poor attendance record, the academy and, if appropriate, local authority will seek to address the issues behind the absenteeism and use the other remedies available to them.

### **15.2 EHE and SEND**

Parents' right to educate their child at home applies equally where a child has special educational needs (SEN), including if they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, but the education provided **must** be "suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and SEN". <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/SEND-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Parents may also home educate children who have SEN but do not have EHC plans.

### **15.3 Safeguarding**

The academy will complete a risk assessment for any vulnerable children for whom a parent elects to educate at home and will work closely with safeguarding partners if they feel that a child's welfare or safety is compromised.

## **16. Children with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities**

Children with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities are additionally vulnerable and face greater barriers to attendance than their peers.

The attendance ambition for these children will be the same as they are for any other child.

In working with their parents to improve attendance, the academy will be mindful of the barriers these children face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. In all cases the academy will be sensitive and avoid stigmatising children and parents and will develop individual approaches that meet each child's specific needs

The academy will ensure that children with additional vulnerabilities are accurately identified and have a named lead professional responsible for coordinating their holistic needs. This will include monitoring their attendance.

The academy will develop good support for children with these additional needs, for example by making reasonable adjustments e.g. for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in the academy and lunchtime arrangements.

If the needs and barriers are individual to the child this may include provision of mentoring, careers advice, college placements, 1-2-1 tuition or out of hours learning, or where appropriate an education, health and care plan or alternative provision. Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment.

We will ensure that joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to the academy would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.

The academy will contact their local authority named officer for the education of children with additional medical needs (Anna Wahlandt) when it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative due to health needs.

To support children with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities who cannot attend, the academy will:

- Put in place a comprehensive health care or similar plan in place which addresses medical, educational, social, emotional and mental health needs, has been contributed to by the child and parents/carers.
- For children already on other plans this can be an addendum to the existing plan where appropriate to avoid duplication of plans
- Ensure that cases are regularly reviewed and escalated if necessary. Records of decisions taken and the rationale for them should be recorded.
- Work with the local authority to deliver any provision specified on an EHC plan
- Liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child
- Have a designated member of staff who will be responsible for the child and act as the main point of contact
- Liaise with the local authority to monitor that the child receives full time education, which is of good quality, (as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2013)<sup>1</sup> which allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible (*full time is not defined in law but should equate to what the child would normally have in school- unless it would not be in the child's best interests, e.g. in KS4 this would be 25hrs a week*)
- Liaise with any alternative provision to ensure the child is safeguarded and carry out due diligence checks

## 17. Alternative Provision

All professionals have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The tracking and reporting of attendance at alternative provision is an essential component in achieving this.

Children at alternative provision are additionally vulnerable and will be closely monitored. The attendance ambition for children at alternative provision will be the same as they are for any other child.

The senior leader with responsibility for alternative provision is James Crawley, Assistant Principal.

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<sup>1</sup> DfE Statutory Guidance: Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs January 2013 [Additional health needs guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270202/additional-health-needs-guidance.pdf)

The arrangements for monitoring of attendance, contacting of parents and carrying out safe and well checks will form part of a written IEP plan, agreed with the child, parents and alternative provider before the child begins their placement.

Alternative providers are required to contact the academy on the first day by telephone whenever the child is absent.

Attendance at off-site alternative provision will be monitored daily by Mark Loveday, Attendance Officer who will ensure that swift action is taken when a child does not attend their alternative provision place.

The academy will make regular visits to the alternative provision to meet the child, their link tutor and to check on their well-being, attendance and academic progress.

The senior leader with responsibility for alternative provision will ensure arrangements are in place to formally monitor, report on attendance at alternative provision to SLT on a weekly basis, liaising with the DSL, SENCo, Mental Health Lead, LAC coordinator or other key colleagues as necessary.

Children whose attendance falls below the academy's target will receive support and intervention in line with this policy. The academy will work jointly with the alternative provision to put in place a comprehensive, regularly reviewed, written plan to support better attendance.

There is an expectation that any safeguarding concerns are raised with the designated safeguarding lead and that all alternative providers adhere to the child protection and safeguarding policies held by the academy.

Children attending alternative provision will be registered D code (dual registration). Neale Wade Academy will retain responsibility for monitoring attendance for those children accessing alternative provision. Home visits and other safeguarding checks will be carried out in line with policy for **all** children on roll.

### ***18. Part-time timetables***

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Academies have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all children

In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a child's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a child from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution. Any individual support programme or other agreement will have a time limit by which point the child is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a child's behaviour.

Part time timetables will be in place for the shortest time necessary and last no longer than 6 weeks before being reviewed. Formal written reviews will take place at least fortnightly and will include the child, parents/carers and other professionals as appropriate.

There will be an identified lead person with responsibility for monitoring the part-time timetable.

For a part-time timetable to be put in place an Individual Alternative Education Plan (IAEP) must be put in place between the academy, the child and the parent. It will record the details of the timetable, responsibilities for safeguarding, child targets and have clearly defined review dates. Records of all review meetings will be added to the plan.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, an academy has agreed to a child being absent from the academy for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

### **18.1 Safeguarding**

The academy will ensure that the DSL has been consulted, a risk assessment carried out and suitably robust arrangements are in place to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of any child on a part-time timetable.

## **19. School Targets and Initiatives**

The school has targets to improve attendance and everyone has an important part to play in meeting these targets. Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in the school and on the academy website.

We have set a whole school attendance target of 97% attendance and we will keep parents updated regularly about progress to this level and how their child's attendance compares. Details of our absence levels are available from Mark Loveday, Attendance Officer.

Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in school newsletters and letters.

Academy leaders, governors, DSL, SENDCo, Mental Health Lead and CIC Coordinator ensure that attendance data, particularly for identified vulnerable groups is closely and regularly monitored identifying trends or patterns and assessing the impact of actions taken.

## **20. Rewards**

100% attendance will be acknowledged in the following ways:

- Attendance Postcards
- Letters home
- Attendance certificates
- Reward trips/ incentives

Good/improving attendance and punctuality will be acknowledged in the following ways:

- Attendance Postcards
- Letters home
- Attendance certificates
- Reward trips/ incentives

## **21. Attendance Codes**

The academy will use the attendance codes as published by the Department for Education [School attendance guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) and will ensure any subsequent guidance is followed

## Appendix 1

### EXEMPLAR Prevention letter

Date

Miss XXXX

XXXXXXXXXx

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear XXXXX

**Re: (student) (form) DOB**

Each week I analyse the attendance figures for the students in our school and I am concerned that your child's attendance has fallen below 96% and currently stands at XX%. Neale-Wade Academy has an overall attendance target of over 97% this year and we are encouraging as many students as possible to attain, or better, this level of attendance.

As I am sure you are aware, it is important that **(student)** maintains regular school attendance, as good attendance has a tremendously positive effect upon academic attainment and social integration. You should also be aware that regular attendance is a legal requirement and a referral to the Education Welfare Service can now be made if attendance drops to below 90%. Please telephone on the day and send a note explaining any unavoidable absences to the tutor on the student's return.

I am sure you will work with us to improve the situation over the coming weeks and ensure **(student)** attendance improves considerably. By logging into your SIMS app you will be able to see the current attendance for your child. If you need a new password for the system then you can send an email to [office@neale-wade.info](mailto:office@neale-wade.info). I have enclosed a copy of the current attendance record. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter this further.

Yours sincerely

## Appendix 2

### EXEMPLAR Early intervention

Date

Mrs xxxx

Xxxxxxxx

Xxxxxx

xxx

**Re: (student) (form) DOB 11.3.2003**

On **(date)**, I wrote to you to express my concern that **(student)** attendance had fallen below 94% and is now currently standing at **XX%**. Obviously this is a continued cause for concern and will have a detrimental effect on academic attainment.

We understand that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, and that some children find it harder than others to attend. We would like to work with you to identify and remove any barriers.

I must remind you that regular attendance is a legal requirement and it is important that any issues that may be the cause of this poor attendance are addressed as soon as possible. You should be aware that a referral to the Education Welfare Service can now be made if attendance drops to below 90% and **from this point onwards school will no longer authorise medical absences unless accompanied by a note/appointment card from a doctor explaining that (student) will need to be absent from school for a specific amount of time.** Please ensure that you telephone on the day **and** send a note explaining any unavoidable absences to the tutor on the student's return.

Please could you contact xxxxxxxxxxxx to arrange a meeting to look at what support we can put in place to resolve any issues or concerns.

Please feel free to bring a friend or family member with you to the meeting. If you have any access requirements, please let us know

Yours sincerely

## Appendix 3

### EXEMPLAR Persistent Absence

«salutation»

«address\_block»

Child - «forename» «surname» - «reg»

Dear «salutation»

I am writing with reference to «chosen\_forename»'s continuing absence(s) from the academy.

«forename» attendance is currently «percentage attendance»% and we are now very concerned about this as it means they are at the threshold for persistent absence/ near the threshold for severe absence

Good attendance is essential for children to get the most out of their school experience. We understand that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, and that some children find it harder than others to attend. We would like to work with you to identify and remove any barriers together.

If «forename» is going to receive the support he/she/they need to improve his/her/their attendance, it is essential that we work together to identify what the barriers are, both in or out of school and avoid any legal action being taken.

Any absence xxx- child's name may now have, will be recorded as unauthorised and a doctor's note/medical certificate will be required to explain it

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 makes it parents/carers responsibility to ensure their child's attendance at the academy which they are on roll. Whilst we want to continue to support «forename» and the family to improve this/her/their attendance, we will now be seeking additional advice from the local authority attendance team

Please can you come into the academy to meet with xxxx on xxxx at xxxx or contact us to arrange a suitable alternative to look at how we can help avoid any deterioration in «forename»'attendance. Child's «forename» will also be invited.

Please feel free to bring a friend or family member with you.

If you have any access requirements, please let us know

Yours sincerely



## Appendix 4

### EXEMPLAR Severe absence concerns letter template -

«salutation»

«address\_block»

Child - «forename» «surname» - «reg»

Dear «salutation»

I am writing to let you know you that «forename»'s attendance is currently «percentage attendance»%. We are now very concerned about this as it means they are now close to/in the severe absence category.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 makes it parents/carers responsibility to ensure their child's attendance at the academy which they are on roll. Failure to do so may result in legal action being taken.

Whilst we want to continue to support forename and the family to improve this/her/their attendance, we will now be seeking additional advice from the local authority attendance team

#### ***Optional paragraphs – to be used depending on the specific case***

As there are also safeguarding concerns for forename we will also be seeking statutory support from the local authority children's services

If «forename»'s attendance is going to improve, it is essential that we work together to identify what the barriers are, both in and out of school and put in place any support that is needed for «forename» or the family.

Please can you come into the academy on with «forename»'to meet with xxxx on xxxx at xxxx or contact us to arrange a suitable alternative to look at how we can help avoid any deterioration in «forename»'s attendance

The following will also attend the meeting

Please feel free to bring a friend or family member with you.

If you have any access requirements, please let us know

Yours sincerley

## Appendix 5 EHE Guidance

<p><b>Definition of EHE</b></p>	<p>Elective Home Education (EHE) is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of SENDING them to school full-time (DfE Elective Home Education – Guidance for Parents 2019) <a href="https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/82222/elective-home-education-guidance-for-parents-2019.pdf">Elective home education: guide for parents (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>Background and context</b></p>	<p>The House of Commons report on Home Education (January 2022 - <a href="https://www.parliament.uk/document/committee-of-commons-report/2022-23/2022-01-13-home-education">SN05108.pdf (parliament.uk)</a>) estimates that in October 2021 there were around 81,200 children nationally registered for home education. This number is only an estimate as there is no legal duty on parents/ carers to register their child if they are receiving home education. Data shows that in 2019 (pre-Covid19 pandemic) there were 60,500 children nationally registered for home education.</p>
<p><b>DfE Guidance</b></p>	<p><b>EHE guidance stipulates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and guardians who choose to home-educate their children are responsible for ensuring that the education provided is efficient, full-time and suitable to the child’s age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have</li> <li>• They are not required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and do not have to follow the National Curriculum. Home educating parents must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including the cost of any public examinations</li> <li>• Local authorities have no formal powers or duty to monitor the provision of home education. However, they do have duties to identify children not receiving a suitable education, and to intervene.</li> <li>• The Department for Education (DfE) recommends that local authorities should contact people home educating their child on at least an annual basis, so they are aware of the suitability of the education being provided.</li> <li>• There are two key DfE documents that provide guidance to Local Authorities and parents on EHE:</li> <li>• <a href="https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/82222/elective-home-education-guidance-for-parents-2019.pdf">Elective home education: departmental guidance for local authorities (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://publishing.service.gov.uk">Elective home education: guide for parents (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Reasons for Elective Home Education</b></p>	<p>Local authority guidance states that parents may choose to Electively Home Educate (EHE) their child for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideological or philosophical views</li> <li>• Religious or cultural beliefs</li> <li>• Dissatisfaction with the school system, or the school which the child attends</li> <li>• Bullying of the child at school</li> <li>• Health reasons, particularly mental health of the child</li> <li>• As a short-term intervention for a particular reason</li> <li>• A child's unwillingness or inability to go to school</li> <li>• Special educational needs, or a perceived lack of suitable provision in the school system for those needs</li> <li>• Disputes with a school over the education, special needs or behaviour of the child, in some cases resulting in 'off-rolling'</li> <li>• Familial reasons which have nothing to do with schools or education (e.g. using older children educated at home as carers)</li> <li>• As a stop-gap while waiting for a place at a school</li> </ul> <p>Although some local authorities run voluntary registration schemes, there is currently no legal obligation for a parent to register or inform a local authority that their child is being home educated</p> <p><b>NB:</b> 19% of EHE in 2021 was attributed to Covid-19 and 19% attributed to philosophical/ lifestyle choice. (the DfE does not currently collect EHE data, therefore this data only represents those parents that responded to their local LA with the reason for their decision to EHE their child).</p>
<p><b>Removing a child from the school admissions register</b></p>	<p>All schools must follow the statutory guidance to remove a child from their admissions register. The guidance states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register after making reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child. This can only be applied if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or other acceptable and unavoidable cause.</li> <li>• Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their Students, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences.</li> </ul>

	<p>Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their Students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations (<a href="http://legislation.gov.uk">The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (legislation.gov.uk)</a>)</li> <li>• When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register</li> <li>• A pupil's name can only be removed from the admission register under regulation 8 if the school and the local authority have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts after jointly making <b>reasonable</b> enquiries. Local authorities and schools should agree roles and responsibilities locally in relation to making joint enquiries.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Special Educational Needs and Elective Home Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents' right to educate their child at home applies equally where a child has special educational needs (SEN), including if they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, but the education provided <b>must</b> be "suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and SEN".</li> <li>• Local authorities should work in partnership with parents to ensure that the SEND of these children are met when the LA already knows the children have SEN. LAs should fund the SEND needs of home educated children where it is appropriate to do so.</li> <li>• In cases where LAs and parents agree that home education is the right provision for a child with an EHC plan, the plan should make clear that the child will be educated at home. If it does then the LA, under Section 42(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014, <b>must</b> arrange the special educational provision set out in the plan.</li> <li>• In cases where the EHC plan gives the name of a school or type of a school where the child will be educated and the parents decide to educate at home, the LA is not under a duty to make the special educational provision set out in the plan provided it is satisfied that the arrangements made by the parents are suitable. The LA must</li> </ul>

	<p>review the plan annually to assure itself that the provision set out in it continues to be appropriate and that the child's SEN needs continue to be met. If it is, the LA should amend the plan to name the type of school that would be suitable but state that parents have made their own arrangements under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents <b>must</b> notify the school in writing that their child is receiving education otherwise than at a school and the school <b>must</b> then remove the pupil's name from the admissions register. If the school is a special school, the LA <b>must</b> give consent for the child's name to be removed.</li> <li>• If at any point the LA concludes that the home education for a child with an EHC plan does not meet the child's needs, the LA is required to intervene through the school attendance order framework. This should be a step of last resort after all other avenues of support have been unsuccessful.</li> <li>• Parents may also home educate children who have SEN but do not have EHC plans. LA should work with parents and consider whether to provide support in the home to help parents make suitable provision.</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/SEND-code-of-practice-0-to-25">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/SEND-code-of-practice-0-to-25</a> (10.30 - 10.38)</p>
<p><b>Ofsted</b></p>	<p>Ofsted undertook a study into Elective Home Education in 2019 <a href="https://publishing.service.gov.uk">Exploring moving to home education in secondary schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>In this study Ofsted state their position with regards to Elective Home Education and how they will review this as part of the inspection process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our new education inspection framework explores how the school's curriculum is helping disadvantaged Students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to overcome barriers to learning.</li> <li>• We will carefully evaluate the reasons for Students leaving when pupil movement is unusually high. Where off-rolling is found, we will continue to report on this clearly and are likely to judge leadership and management as inadequate.</li> <li>• We will explore an inspection methodology that enables, where appropriate and where pupil movement into home education is very high, inspectors to take the views of parents who have moved their children into home education into their inspection evidence.</li> </ul>

	<p>The Leadership and Management section of the Ofsted School Inspection Handbook, section 'Inclusion and off-rolling' 298, clearly details how inspectors will judge whether schools have an 'inclusive culture' <a href="http://www.gov.uk">School inspection handbook - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>NWA policy</b></p>	<p>Guidance on EHE can be found earlier in this policy.</p> <p>Key points to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents must inform the academy in writing that they intend to educate their child at home.</li> <li>• Once the letter of notification, written by the parent/carer, to home educate has been received, the academy will immediately notify the local authority LAOO</li> <li>• The parent and child will be offered the opportunity to discuss their decision with the principal</li> <li>• NWA will never seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion or because the child has a poor attendance record or has a special educational need. In the case of exclusion, we will follow the relevant legislation and have regard to the statutory guidance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Approaches and strategies</b></p>	<p>Below are a range of strategies to be employed as part of the EHE process to avoid, whenever possible, a child being removed from roll and being electively home educated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key member of the senior team to be involved in initial parent meetings and conversations to establish the reasons for the preference to home educate</li> <li>• DFE guidance to be shared with parents when the academy is informed of the preference to home educate</li> <li>• Letter to be sent to parents outlining the safeguarding responsibilities and offering the opportunity to discuss their child's individual case. NWA template may be used, but this should not be a generic letter.</li> <li>• The Local Authority EHE team representative to be invited to all parent meetings</li> <li>• Local Authority EHE paperwork to be completed with relevant risk assessments for those learners that are deemed vulnerable. Academy SENDCo to be involved in the referral process to ensure that additional</li> </ul>

	<p>needs are recorded and shared appropriately with the Local Authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All EHE discussions to be recorded onto MyConcern via the EHE category at the earliest possible opportunity</li> <li>• From the point the parent first decides to EHE, to the point that the child is removed from roll, the child will be coded 'O' if they do not attend (Unauthorised absence)</li> <li>• The academy will accept the child back onto their roll if the decision to EHE is reconsidered by the parent. (Provided there is a place)</li> <li>• All safeguarding checks, including home visits, will continue until the child is removed from roll.</li> <li>• Staff training to be delivered to middle and senior leaders on additional safeguarding risks for children who are home educated</li> <li>• Leaders should review EHE data and look for trends in EHE cases, particularly for children with SEND, Pupil Premium, behaviour concerns, and high numbers of exclusion.</li> </ul>
<p><b>NWA support and guidance</b></p>	<p>Additional support and guidance can be obtained from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vice Principal for Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Elective home education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://publishing.service.gov.uk">Elective home education: guide for parents (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>

## Appendix 6

### Learning from serious case reviews

[CHSCB-Local-Review-Chadrack-Report-FINAL.pdf \(chscp.org.uk\)](#)

[2019NottinghamshireChildKN15Overview.pdf \(nspcc.org.uk\)](#)