



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction and Aim of Policy

Glenthorne High School aims to raise the achievement of all its pupils and to ensure that all pupils can thrive, feel safe, enjoy their education and are prepared for their future. The school recognises that attendance is a critical factor in pupil success. It therefore aims to achieve exceptionally high attendance levels for all pupils so they can thrive and succeed.

This policy takes into account the following Government documents:

- Working together to improve school attendance, May 2024
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_e.pdf
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance, Sept 2024
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf
- Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance
[Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf)
- Sutton Code of Conduct (2024)

Objectives

- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at the school. The school recognises that progress is severely hampered if they do not attend school.
- To create an environment in which pupils look forward to attending school and lessons
- To make attendance a priority for pupils, parents, staff and governors
- To create a framework which defines roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- To create a rigorous system for monitoring and analysing attendance across the school
- To provide support and advice to parents
- To recognise the needs of individual pupils when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence
- To ensure that attendance data is accurate and regularly generated so that:
 - Pupils can be praised/rewarded for their attendance
 - Parents/carers can be quickly informed of any attendance and punctuality issues
 - Individual pupils and groups can be monitored
 - Targets for individual pupils, groups of pupils and the school can be set and regularly reviewed

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governors will:

- Set targets for attendance and monitor progress towards meeting these targets
- Ensure implementation of this policy

The Deputy Head Teacher in charge of Behaviour and Attitudes, will take overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the Policy by:

- Developing and monitoring policies that create an environment in which all pupils feel valued and safe and in which they are encouraged and able to achieve success
- Agreeing targets with the Governors and report on progress

The Assistant Head Teacher in charge of attendance will ensure the implementation of the policy by:

- Giving attendance a high profile with pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Identifying clear roles and responsibilities and ensuring that staff have the time and resources to fulfil them
- Ensuring that there is sufficient funding to support reward systems
- Ensure that procedures are followed across all Year Groups through oversight of work carried out by Heads of Year
- Oversee the Heads of Year to ensure that attendance is regularly discussed in year group assemblies and that pupils with high levels of and/or improved attendance are praised and rewarded regularly
- Liaise weekly with the Attendance and Welfare Officer and Attendance Officer to ensure that pupils with low attendance are routinely identified and that appropriate action is being taken by the Head of Year or Attendance and Welfare Officer

The Heads of Year will:

- Ensure that attendance has a high profile within their year group.
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality procedures are followed across their year group
- Monitor for internal truancy. Look for patterns of absence and consider the impact of the curriculum upon attendance alongside other causes
- Ensure that pupils on long term absence/exclusion access the curriculum and are supported on their return
- Liaise weekly with the Attendance Officer, Attendance and Welfare Officer, tutors and SENDCo to ensure procedures are being followed for pupils with continued low attendance
- Assist the Attendance Officer where appropriate in meetings with parents and pupils within their year whose attendance is low and/or below 93% and/or where there is regular unauthorised absence within a 6 week period.
- Ensure that attendance is regularly discussed in Year Group Assemblies and that pupils with high levels of and/or improved attendance are praised and rewarded regularly
- Act on the attendance data to ensure that pupils with low attendance are detected early and appropriate action is taken.
- Be aware of school priorities with regard to attendance, persistent absence and punctuality, and plan interventions to secure improvements for targeted groups
- Ensure that tutors make contact with families and record and pass on information to relevant staff.
- Direct tutors to make subsequent contact for pupils with repeated absences.
- Be role models in terms of attendance

Heads of House will:

- Ensure that attendance has a high profile within their House
- Act on the attendance data to ensure that pupils with low attendance are directed to attendance club
- Be aware of school priorities with regard to attendance, persistent absence and punctuality, and plan interventions to secure improvements for targeted groups
- Liaise with Heads of Year to ensure pupils attend attendance clubs
- Make contact with families and record and pass on information to relevant staff.
- Make subsequent contact for pupils with repeated absences.
- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance

The SENDCO will:

- Support the school in giving attendance a high profile
- Support the Heads of Year to ensure that procedures are followed in their year groups by offering advice as appropriate
- Ensure that pupils with SEND on long term absence/exclusion are supported on their return
- Liaise with external and internal agencies to ensure that SEND pupils and parents/carers are given relevant support to improve their attendance, as directed by the Deputy Head Teacher
- Attend meetings for pupils with Education Health Care Plan as requested by the Deputy Head Teacher

Form Tutors will:

- Support the school in giving attendance a high profile
- Ensure that the register is taken daily at the correct time, using the correct codes
- Monitor early indicators of school avoidance and inform Heads of Year
- Liaise closely with their Head of Year and the Attendance Officer with regards to attendance issues
- Ensure that pupils who have been absent from the school are made to feel welcome on their return.
- Contact parents with concerns regarding attendance and the impact on attainment, as directed by their Head of Year
- Ensure that issues of bullying, difficulties with work/peers/travel etc. are dealt with effectively and that relevant staff are informed
- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance

Subject Teachers will:

- Support the school in giving attendance a high profile
- Ensure that the register is taken daily at the start of each lesson
- Notify on-call if a pupil is absent from their lesson when the register is taken
- Contact parents if attendance is having an impact on attainment in their subject, as directed by a Subject Leader
- Ensure that pupils who have been absent from the school are made to feel welcome on their return.
- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance

The Attendance Officer will:

- Monitor pupils attendance each day
- Make contact with parent/carers of pupils with unexplained absence on the day of absence
- Mark the pupil register with the appropriate code and forward information as necessary
- Inform the DSL of any pupils where there are significant concerns by 9.30am
- Meet with Heads of Year on a weekly basis
- Send appropriate letters to parent/carers of pupils to update them on the child's attendance
- Liaise with the Attendance and Welfare Officer and Head of Year regarding making home visits
- Attend fortnightly meetings with the Deputy Head Teacher responsible for attendance.
- Monitor the attendance register, alerting the relevant staff when concerns arise.
- Will make contact with parents of any child absent on the First Contact list at the very start of the day.
- Close registers at 9.05 each morning.

The Attendance and Welfare Officer will:

- Assist the Deputy Head Teacher, Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Officer to ensure attendance is high profile within the School
- Monitor and produce weekly reports on attendance
- Lead parental meetings for pupils with less than 90% attendance
- Provide data to SLT and external agencies, as required for the census etc.
- Correspond with parents where attendance is a concern
- Submit paperwork for Fixed Penalty Notices and/or legal action to the Local Authority
- Undertake home visits where deemed necessary

Pupils will:

- Arrive on site before 8.25 correctly dressed in uniform
- Be present for registration between 8.30-8.35 and 15.05-15.20 each day.
- Attend lessons and tutor time on time
- Sign in at the pupil office if they are late for school
- Be prepared to make up missed work and ask for help if this is required
- Stay on site during the school day
- Sign out at pupil office if they have to attend an appointment (evidence must be provided)

Parents/Carers will:

- Ensure pupils attend school
- If a pupil is going to be absent from school due to sickness or a medical appointment, parents must inform the school **only** using the school absence line via the school switchboard (option 2) by 8.25am, before the start of the school day. Parents should contact the school through the above method each day the pupil is going to be absent including where absence is on consecutive days. The Attendance Officer will process all absence as soon as possible each morning.
- Encourage pupils to leave home in plenty of time in the mornings
- Ensure that they are in the correct school uniform
- Inform the school if a pupil is unwell or going to be late through the school absence line (above). Give an indication as to when the pupil will be well enough to return.

- Provide medical evidence in support of any absences when the pupil has attendance of less than 93%
- Make routine medical/dental appointments out of school time
- Arrange for holidays to be taken out of term time.
- Attend any meetings requested by the Attendance Officer or the Welfare and Attendance Officer
- Adhere to the Home School Agreement

Use of data to monitor and improve attendance to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most

Termly analysis of attendance figures will be reviewed for the groups below:

- Gender
- Year group
- Ethnicity
- Pupil Premium
- EHCP/SEN
- Overall authorised and unauthorised absence by year group
- Persistently and severely absent rates by year group

This data will be analysed and compared to previous terms to reward attendance and identify areas to improve.

Promoting Attendance

The school will ensure all opportunities are utilised to promote and celebrate attendance. These will include, but will not be limited to:

- Striving to make the school a welcoming and caring environment
- Assemblies
- Attendance Clubs
- Using parents evenings to celebrate good attendance and raise any concerns
- Including attendance in reports sent to parents

Punctuality

The school recognises that poor pupil punctuality has a negative impact on achievement and can also disrupt the learning of other pupils. Pupils are expected to be onsite at 8.25am. Pupils are considered to be late to school if they arrive at school after the main gate closes at 8.25am. They will receive a detention which will take place on the same day. Registration takes place between 8.30-8.35 and registers close at 9.05 after which point student's will receive a late mark (U) which is recorded as an unauthorised absence. If a student has more than 4 (U) marks in a 6 week period, a warning letter will be sent. If a student has 10 late marks (U) in a 10 week period a penalty notice may be issued. Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with disabilities or caring responsibilities at the discretion of the Head Teacher

Where the lateness of a particular pupil is a particular problem, the Attendance and Welfare Officer will review with the Head of Year, and as appropriate, the following may be applied;

- Lunch detentions being issued
- Warning letter sent home
- Punctuality report

- Meeting arranged with Head of Year and parents/carers
- Meeting arranged with the Deputy Head Teacher and parents/carers

Unexplained and Continuous Absence

1st Day of Absence

All pupils not seen at registration should be marked as an unexplained (N) absence. A text will also be sent requesting explanation for the absence. The Attendance Officer will phone home on the first day of absence if no explanation has been received and there has been no response to our absence text. An absence text will be sent on each day of absence if reason for absence is not provided and there is no contact from the family.

3rd Day of Continuous Absence

If no contact with family is made to obtain a reason for absence on the third day of absence, the school will call all contacts listed on SIMs to raise concern and obtain information of pupil whereabouts.

5th Day of Continuous Absence

If no contact with the family has been made for 5 consecutive days and no further information has been received, a home visit will be undertaken by the Attendance and Welfare Officer and a referral to CFCS will be considered

10th Day of Continuous Absence

If the pupil has been absent for 10 consecutive days and no update provided to school in all the steps above the child will be referred to 'Children Missing in Education' to Sutton Local Authority.

For children where there are concerns regarding wellbeing or welfare, or for children who are subject to any safeguarding plan, we may conduct a home visit at any time to ensure that the child remains safe.

Children Missing Education

The school follows Sutton LA's Good Practice Guidance for Identifying and Safeguarding Children Missing from Education (CME). In line with these processes and following the statutory guidance set out in DFE 2016 we are in regular contact with the LA and provide them with information on changes to the roll as required. No child is removed from the school roll without first notifying the local authority and receiving their approval.

In line with practices agreed with the LA and the guidance first set out in DFE-00261-2016 'Children Missing Education' (September 2016), the Attendance Officer will inform the Attendance Service at Sutton LSCP of any pupil who has been absent from school for 10 consecutive days to report the pupil as missing from education. In addition, the attendance officer will inform the school's Designated Safeguard Lead. The DSL will then make an assessment of the child's vulnerability and, where appropriate, a CFCS referral to social care for that child will be made

Intermittent Absence

It is recognised by the school that pupils will on occasions be ill but expects pupils to be in good health and regularly attending the school.

For this reason, a number of measures are taken to minimise intermittent, short-term absences.

- Text messages are made daily to inform parents of their child's absence and request information to support it
- Phone calls made by tutors to encourage maximum attendance
- All reports contain attendance percentage to update parents and carers on their child's attendance record
- Bespoke programmes led by the Heads of House to tackle attendance issues with individuals

Letters will be sent to parents where attendance has been identified as below 96%. Further letters will be sent out to the parents of all pupils where attendance has been identified as below 93% and for any future absence medical evidence will be requested.

In occasional circumstances it may be deemed appropriate to not send out the letters outlined above although we expect the instances in which this to be the case to be minimal.

Persistent and Severe Absence

'If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence.' (Education Act 1996). From September 2015, Persistent absence has been defined by the Department for Education as all attendance falling below 90%. Severe absence is classified as those pupils missing 50% or more of school. A concerted effort will be made by all partners to prioritise support for these pupils in order to improve their attendance.

When difficulties arise with school attendance, the school will take a 'support first' approach in line with the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance guidance'. In the first instance, a meeting or phone call will be organised to identify any barriers to a student's attendance and reasonable adjustments will be discussed and implemented where appropriate.

If attendance remains a concern, an Attendance Support Plan will be offered to support an improvement in attendance. It is a written agreement between the pupil, parent/carer and school representative. It will involve reviewing the support available for the family, including to internal and external agencies where appropriate and formalise targets for attendance with a specific review date set.

If attendance still does not improve, a Notice to Improve will be sent and reviewed. A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent/carer to engage with support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If all avenues of support have been facilitated by the school, local authority and other appropriate education support has been provided but severe absence continues, it is likely to constitute neglect and will be referred to Sutton's social care.

Should there continue to be no improvement in attendance, the school will send a final warning letter to issue a Penalty Notice if there is further unauthorised absence.

In accordance with the Sutton Local Code of Conduct (2024), Glenthorne High School will seek to issue a penalty notice when the national threshold has been met. The national threshold has been met when a pupil has been recorded as absent for 10 sessions within 10 school week with one of, or a combination of, the following codes:

- a) code G (the pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday),
- (b) code N (the circumstances of the pupil's absence have not yet been established),
- (c) code O (none of the other rows of Table 3 in regulation 10(3) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies), and
- (d) code U (the pupil attended after the taking of the register ended but before the end of the session, where no other code applies)

Absence and Exceptional Leave Policy

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment Regulations 2013 state that Head Teachers will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school is clear that leave of absence during term time should be avoided as it can have a damaging effect on a pupil's education and overall achievement. The Head teacher's decision on what is exceptional will be final

On receipt of an application for leave on the appropriate form together with any supporting documentation, the Head Teacher will then consider the application. A letter outlining the decision of the school will be sent to the applying parent/carer within 7 days.

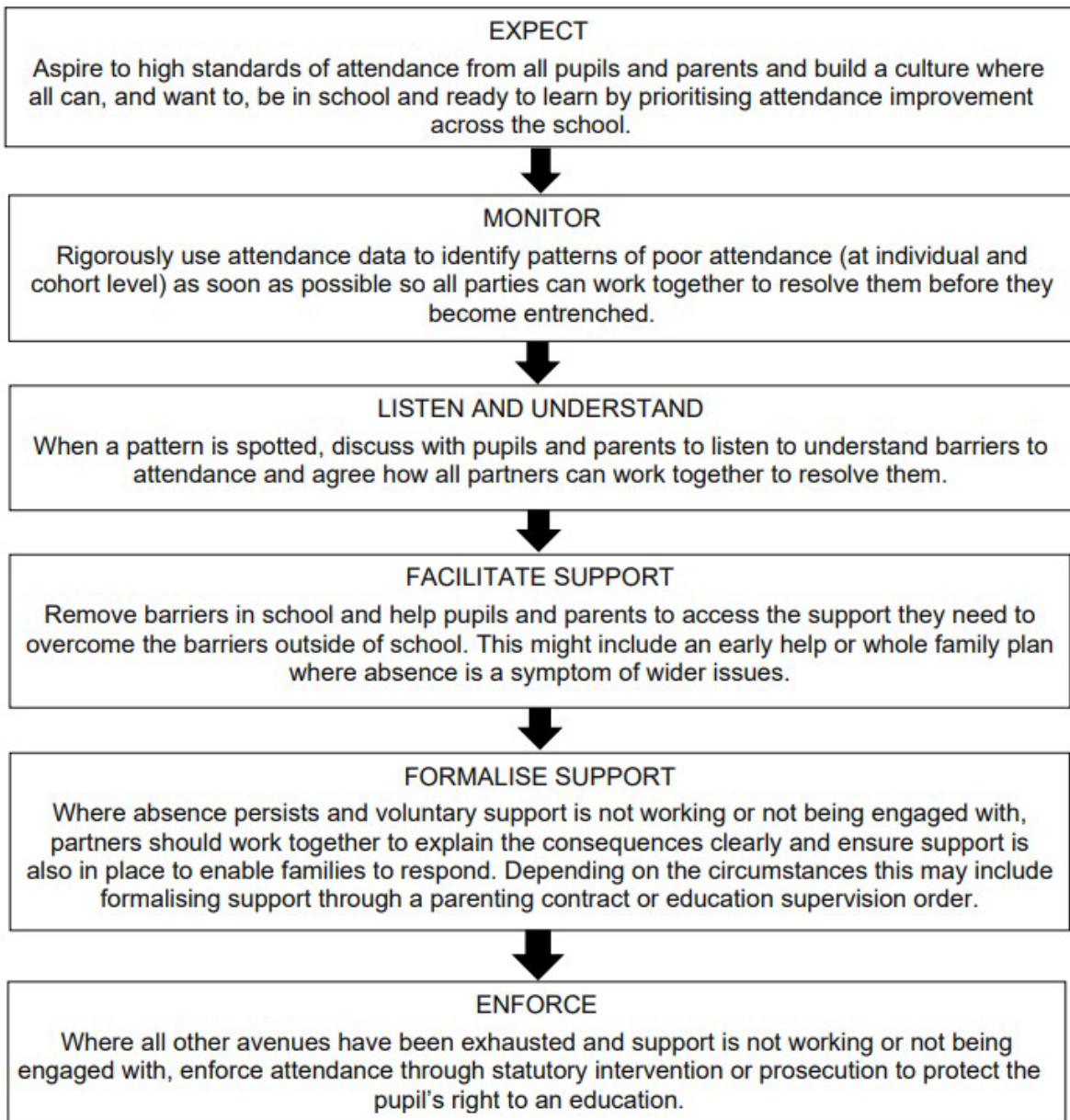
Due to the nature of Unauthorised Leave of Absence, the requirement for support to be offered to improve attendance is not appropriate. Any parent who takes a child out of school during term time for 10 consecutive sessions or more, not authorised by the Headteacher is very likely to be at risk of a Penalty Notice issued by the London Borough of Sutton.

- On the first offence, the penalty for each parents is £80 for each child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice.
- With any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period it will be charged at a higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.
- A national limit of 2 penalty notices can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence (s), another tool will be considered, such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions.

If a penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period, it is likely to lead to prosecution for irregular school attendance (Education Act 1996 Section 444). If convicted, a parent/carer will receive a criminal record and may be liable for a fine of up to £1000 and the Local Authority's costs for bringing the proceedings. There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

Working TOGETHER TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

In order to improve attendance, we aim to work with external partners and families in order to treat the root cause of poor attendance. We will analyse attendance data and implement the following as set out in the 'working together to improve school attendance' (2022):



Ongoing Health Needs

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have a special educational need or disability. The right to education is the same for all pupils and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as for other pupils.

Where a pupil displays any social, emotional or mental health issue which affects their attendance the school will work to ensure regular attendance. The school maintains high expectations for the attendance, engagement and punctuality of pupils who are anxious about

attending school. It is important to recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as much as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten their anxiety about attending in future. The school will work quickly to communicate this expectation to parent/carers and work together with them to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance. Any associated anxiety about attending should be mitigated as much as possible by introducing an attendance support plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. These adjustments will be documented in an attendance support plan and regularly reviewed with all parties, including parents/carers and will seek to maximise face-to-face attendance in school. If attendance is affected by a mental health condition, the school will where appropriate hold a meeting with parents/pupils/HOY/ Welfare and Attendance Officer to create an attendance support plan with 'reasonable adjustments' related to the child's barriers to attendance. This should be reviewed regularly.

Parents have a duty, under 7 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full-time education either by good attendance at school or otherwise, and so share in the responsibility of ensuring good and regular attendance in all circumstances. As such the school will work together with parents and pupils to reduce anxiety in relation to attendance through using an attendance support plan to overcome barriers and build confidence and reduce anxiety about attending.

Any reasonable adjustments or support put in place by school should ensure that the time the child spends in school is prioritised as much as is possible. Where support offered is not engaged with, or where all other options have been exhausted or deemed inappropriate, the school will pursue the legal process and work with Sutton LA to consider whether to formalise support or to enforce attendance through legal intervention in the normal way under their existing powers.

The school will inform the LA through either VPP, Attendance Panel or the Sutton AST team where pupils are likely to miss more than 15 days, and work with the family to provide educational provision whilst determining with the LA whether alternative provision should be provided under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.

The school will take forward attendance prosecution where all other options have been exhausted and deemed inappropriate. If in-school pastoral and/or external specialist support is facilitated but not engaged with voluntarily, the school will work with LA AST to consider whether to formalise support or to enforce attendance through legal intervention in the normal way under their existing powers. This includes instances where a mental health issue is affecting attendance.

Vulnerable Pupils

In addition to the steps taken for all pupils in line with this policy:

- For looked after children, attendance is shared with DSL on a daily basis.
- The Attendance and Welfare Officer liaises with the Attendance Officer on a weekly basis and is informed of any absences of pupils on a CP plan; action taken as required.
- The school maintains a vulnerable pupils list.
- Heads of Year have regular meetings with the Attendance Officer and discuss pupils who have been absent. They will cross-reference this information against the vulnerable list and their knowledge of current CP cases in their year group

- Heads of Year have regular meetings with their tutor teams. This enables them to communicate concerns about vulnerabilities and to gather information about any concerns. They will ensure at this meeting those tutors make contact as appropriate and in particular where pupils are vulnerable.
- Heads of Year and all staff have been made aware of specific risks such as forced marriage and FGM and are alert to these issues when analysing attendance data.

Pupils at Off-site Provision

- The Deputy Head Teacher in charge of Alternative Provision has oversight of these pupils.
- All pupils attending off-site provision do so at institutions that have school status in their own right.
- In line with LEA guidance, these pupils are marked with a 'D' code for dual registration or with a 'B' code when educated off site.
- Attendance of all pupils on Alternative Provision is tracked regularly. Records are relayed from each provider to the Attendance Officer on a weekly basis for those pupils B coded on the school register.
- This attendance data is interrogated fortnightly to identify any safeguarding concerns or CME; where appropriate our DSL will liaise with the off-site provision and make referrals to CFCS etc. where thresholds are met.
- The school holds a copy of each provider's safeguarding statement and require all providers to make interventions where pupils are absent.
- If a child is deemed medically unfit to attend mainstream education and is referred to a Medical PRU (such as STARS in Sutton or the Lavender Centre in Merton), then the child will remain on roll, but their attendance marked with a D code as they are unable to attend in line with DfE guidance. Their attendance to the assigned provision will be monitored on a half-termly basis.

Procedures for Pupils Removed from School Roll

- Any deletions from the admissions register will be done with reference to regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Pupils removed from the school roll are dealt with on a case-by case basis depending on the reason.
- The school Admissions Manager holds a file of evidence to show process for each pupil.
- Records held include details of school transfers, records to show that parents have taken responsibility for their child's education, evidence that families have moved out of the area, records of liaison with Attendance and Welfare Officer etc.
- The school Admissions Manager maintains a list of pupils taken off roll. This is held centrally and circulated to all staff for information on a half-termly basis.
- The school must notify the Local Authority on the day the pupil is removed from roll (using the pre-arranged process for this)

Review Date: September 2025

