



INSPIRE
Connected Communities Trust

Attendance Policy



Statement of Principle

INSPIRE Connected Communities Trust (INSPIRE) is committed to providing an appropriate and effective education for all pupils and students, in a safe and happy environment. Our aim is to empower all pupils and students to gain the essential skills both academically, personally and sociably, that will equip them for their future. INSPIRE believes sincerely that all pupils and students benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. Non-attendance at school for any reason is an important issue that must be treated promptly and seriously. To this end INSPIRE will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils and students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

All schools within INSPIRE will maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and will have robust daily processes to follow up any absences.

Interesting fact: 'if a pupil was absent from school for two weeks every year from their reception year to 18 years of age, they would miss the equivalent of one whole year's school education'

Aims

All pupils and students at statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with National Curriculum regulations, therefore;

- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure attendance at school as required by law
- Situations may exist beyond the control of parents/carers and pupils/students which may need to be addressed in partnership by the schools and external agencies
- Most pupils/students want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

Expectations:

Parents/carers and pupils/students can expect the following from our schools:

- Regular, accurate and efficient recording of attendance
- Prompt contact with parents/carers when a pupil's/student's absent, if no message is received by telephone or no prior notice has been given, this is daily and is recorded
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to the school
- Encouragement and tailored support to pupils/students towards good attendance
- Bespoke support plans for pupils/students that are unable to access school for reasons such as medical recovery etc
- Regular monitoring of attendance by the Headteacher who is responsible for a strategic approach to attendance in the role of Attendance Champion.
- Regular monitoring of data to target attendance improvement for those who need it with a clear strategy and processes to reduce persistent and severe absence.
- Detailed support for attendance through our attendance flow chart.



The schools have the following expectations from parents/carers:

- That they ensure their child attends school regularly
- That they will contact the school by telephone or in person at the start of the first day of absence; whenever their child is unable to attend school
- That they will ensure their child arrives in school on time and prepared for the school day
- That they will contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- To avoid taking any planned absence during term time
- They will inform the school of any planned medical procedures/circumstances that may result in a child's long-term absence to ensure an appropriate support plan can be established
- That they will inform the school of any planned appointments in advance and provide evidence of an appointment if necessary.

The schools have the following expectations from pupils/students:

- That they attend school regularly
- That they arrive at school on time and are appropriately prepared for the day
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problems or reasons that may hinder them from attending school

Responding to Non-Attendance:

Parents and carers are expected to ring and inform the school if a child is going to be absent. On the day of the absence, if a telephone call or prior notice has not been received from parents/carers the receptionist will;

- Attempt to contact parents/carers by telephone to obtain an explanation for the absence, this will be logged and monitored
- If parents/carers are non-contactable the pupils/students emergency contacts will be contacted to enquire about the absence
- If there is no response, the Senior Leadership Team will determine whether it is necessary for a staff member to carry out a safe and well check, a home visit on the third day of absence or earlier where appropriate
- If a pupil/student is absent long term, a bespoke support programme will be established with the school team and, where appropriate, regular home visits will be carried out
- If a pupil is admitted to hospital, the school will liaise with parent/carer and the hospital to determine the most appropriate course of action to support the child's recovery, education and reintegration into school

School/Trust Organisation

For this policy to be successful every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils/students the importance of attendance in accessing the quality education being provided.



INSPIRE Trust Board:

- Ensure that the school adhere to statutory government guidance
- Receive regular attendance progress reports in preparation for all meetings

Local School Committee:

- Receive regular attendance progress reports in preparation for all meetings

Headteacher:

- To oversee the implementation of the attendance policy
- To report to the Local School committee
- To support the Attendance Champion with parent/carer meetings where there has been an ongoing attendance concern
- Make a formal request to the Local Authority where there is sustained and unresolved persistent absence
- Organise a parent/carer and young person (if applicable) meeting taking place after this request
- To oversee the reintegration process and plan for the return of long-term absences including reintegration meetings following a fixed term suspension

Attendance Champion:

- Monitor, produce and analyse whole school attendance data
- Report to the Headteacher for all attendance matters
- Initiate contact with parents/carers in cases of prolonged explained and unexplained absence to enquire where support can be provided to encourage their child's return to school where indicated
- Make home visits with pupils/students that are absent from school long term
- Liaise with parents/carers regarding pupil's/student's attendance concerns
- Produce attendance letters and analysis of attendance figures when required
- Liaise with stakeholders regarding a pupil's/student's attendance concerns
- Maintain up to date records of attendance analysis and consequent interventions and actions to address identified absence patterns and/or persistent absentees
- Liaise with pupil's/student's SEND caseworkers regarding any changes to a child's circumstances that may impede their regular school attendance
- Liaise with the Attendance and Inclusion Team and refer to the Education Welfare Service when necessary

Class Team:

- To complete registers accurately and on time both AM and PM
- To record any reasons for absence on the registers
- To inform the Headteacher/SLT of any concerns

Administration Team:

- Update registers
- Note telephone messages and mark absence accordingly in registers



- Highlight irregular absence and inability to contact parent/carer to Senior Leadership Team

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The Department for Education has deemed pupil's/students with attendance less than 90% are 'persistent absentees' and follow up is necessary.

What is an Authorised Absence?

Authorised absence is where approval has been given in advance for a pupil/student to be away, or the school has accepted an explanation offered as satisfactory reason for absence. All other absence must be regarded as unauthorised.

The following may be reasons for authorising absence:

- Illness
- Family bereavement
- Medical or dental appointment
- Days of religious observance
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removal from roll or reinstated

As an organisation we ask that we are informed of any unavoidable absences as soon as possible and we reserve the right to ask for evidence of appointments such as doctor's appointments.

What is an Un-Authorised Absence?

Absences are unauthorised when the explanation for an absence is deemed an unsatisfactory or unnecessary reason to be absent from school.

Absences will not be authorised under the following circumstances:

- Family holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Shopping trips/birthday outings
- No parent/carer communication
- Lateness; arrival 30 minutes after registration closes without parental explanation

What is good attendance?

Attendance is categorised as below;

Attendance Percentage	Category of Attendance
100%	Excellent attendance
95% +	Good attendance
91% - 94%	At risk of persistence absence
80% - 90%	Persistent absence
51% - 79%	At risk of severe absence
Less than 50%	Severe absence



Irregular Attendance/Refusal to Attend

Parents/carers of pupils of compulsory school age are responsible for making sure their child receives a fulltime education and can be prosecuted for irregular attendance under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1). Where a child has not attended regularly at school the Local Authority have the options of issuing a fixed penalty notice in respect of the parents/carers of the child, bringing proceedings before the family courts for an Education Supervision Order or prosecuting the parents/carers under Section 444 before the Magistrates Court. Fixed Penalty.

Notices can be issued for persistent lateness where the child arrives after the closure of registration. As a Trust we endeavour to support all our pupils/students to attend school every day, we therefore ask that parents/carers act upon any concerns they have regarding their child's attendance and contact the school at the earliest opportunity to prevent any attendance issue worsening.

The Local Authority's Code of Conduct and details on Fixed Penalty Notices can be located at:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/fixed-penalty-notices-code-conduct/print>

Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have removed the reference of holidays during term time and now provides that a leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

The onus is on the parent/carer to present the case in writing at least two weeks before the event. Retrospective granting of permission should only therefore be on rare occasions.

Change of Address/contact details

Parents/Carers must inform school immediately if they have a change of address or contact details. In case of emergency, we must be able to contact the parents, carers or a third named person. Parents/Carers must provide this information when they first register their child and keep information updated.

Removing a Pupil/Student from Roll

The school will only remove pupils/students from roll when this has been agreed by the local authority. In the instance a change of school placement is required, an emergency review will be held with parents/carers to change the named school on the Educational Health Care Plan.

Parents/Carers moving out of the area are required to inform their child's SEND caseworker of this as the earliest opportunity, and inform school in writing, detailing their new address, proposed last day in school, new school, if a placement has been found, and potential schools if a placement has not been confirmed. School will continue to support with the education and well-being of the child whilst still on the school roll.



Reintegration

The return to school for a pupil/student after long-term absence requires careful planning. This will be supported with dedicated pastoral support as appropriate. The success of the pastoral support will require the involvement of appropriate school staff,

other agencies and parents/carers using the one team approach. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary. The Headteacher, will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme. All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be reported to the responsible staff member as soon as possible. Programmes may need to be tailored to individual needs and may involve a phased return, part-time or re-entry with support back into school as appropriate. Staff will be notified of the return of the long-term absentees via staff email notices/ briefings/meetings, by the Headteacher.

Children Missing in Education (CME)

Arrangements for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing, or at risk of going missing, from education are paramount. As defined in the Section 436A of the Education Act 1996, CME are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. This includes children who are awaiting a school place and children in receipt of unsuitable education, including those children, local authorities are supporting to place into suitable education. Our schools recognise the entitlement that all children have to education and will work closely with the local authority to share information about pupils who may be missing out on full time education or who go missing from education.

The Local Authority will also be informed where children are to be removed from the school register a) to be educated outside the school system; b) for medical reasons; c) because they have ceased to attend; d) because they are in custody; e) because they have been permanently excluded. We also recognise that children who go missing is a sign that they may have been targeted by Child Sexual Exploitation perpetrators and/or drug related criminals (County Lines). Children may also be groomed into participating in other forms of criminal exploitation including cybercrime, serious violence and violent crime. All cases of children missing in education will be reported to Lincolnshire County Council.

Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a term used to describe a child or young person who has severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors. This can result in prolonged absences from school. EBSA can occur suddenly or develop gradually over time. Behaviours can also range from occasional reluctance to attend school to complete avoidance resulting in non-attendance. EBSA should not be thought of as a deliberate act of defiance as it is a complex issue with no single cause. Reasons are often complex and multi-faceted across environmental factors (both at home and school) as well as individual child factors.

There are several risk factors that can influence EBSA. These can include, but are not limited to, difficulties with managing and regulating emotions, low levels of self-confidence or self-



esteem, high levels of family stress, relationship difficulties or academic demands. It is often the interaction between risk factors (across school, family and child or young person) that results in EBSA behaviours. While risk factors have been identified that place children at greater risk of EBSA, it is important to also consider, identify and build areas of strength or resilience available for the child, family and

school. These resilience factors help to protect children and young people from maintaining EBSA behaviours and promote successful school inclusion. Resilience factors can include, but are not limited to, emotion regulation strategies, motivation for change, willingness to work in partnership and an openness and commitment to trying to understand how the child or young person may be different and how this may affect them at school. Anxiety may be the trigger, but also a maintaining factor of EBSA. The greater the avoidance of situations that cause fear or distress, the more difficult it will become to deal with it. With each individual situation, it is therefore crucial for all stakeholders to work together with the child or young person and their family and as early as possible to understand why the child or young person is reluctant to attend school.

EBSA Pathway

Lincolnshire's EBSA Pathway clarifies what schools can expect of the local authority and what the local authority must expect from schools in relation to these duties. This, in turn, guides all stakeholders, not least children and families, in understanding what support they should expect to receive, when, where and from whom.

The EBSA Pathway is a graduated response (follows an assess, plan, do, review cycle) that is focused on:

- meaningful and robust early intervention through effective whole school systems
- clear understanding of individual needs and contexts
- collaborative, person-centred working with parent and carers and the child or young person

The pathway considers each stage of EBSA, from indicators of risk of EBSA, through early indicators of EBSA to EBSA occurring, and provides steps to be taken. The EBSA pathway is a wraparound approach of proactive support. Throughout this, there is an emphasis on the need for a return to school, alongside support strategies and interventions and adaptations within the school and home environment.

Reduced Timetable

All pupils/students at compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's/student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet their individual needs. A reduced timetable will only be in place for the shortest time necessary and will be regularly reviewed with the pupil/student and their parents/carers with the intention of reintegrating the pupil/student to attend full time. In the event of a reduced timetable being implemented, a meeting will be held with parents/carers and the pupil/student to discuss and agree an action plan. All reduced timetables will be reviewed fortnightly and reported to the Local Authority upon implementation and review.

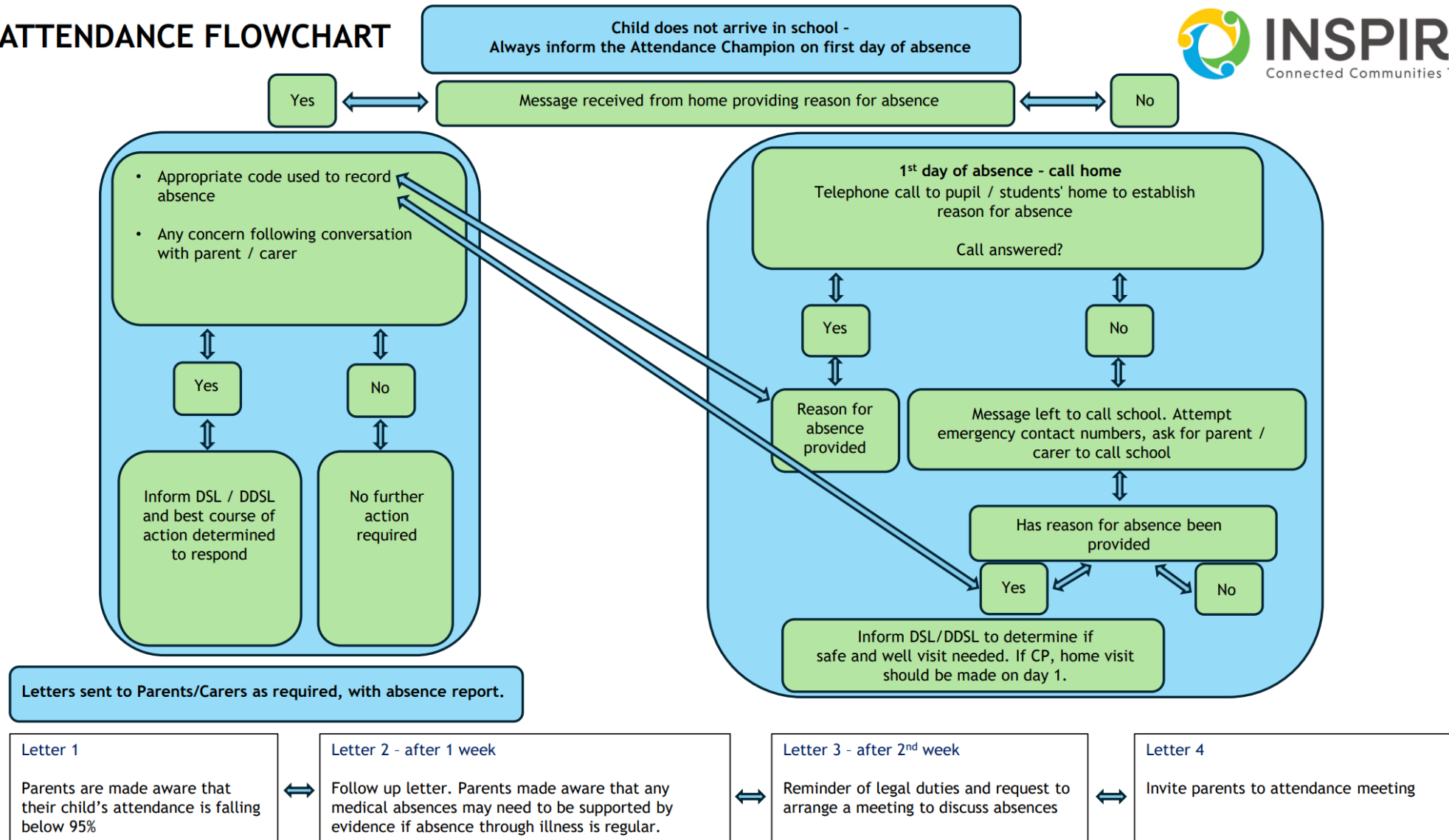


Rewards for good attendance

At the end of the year a certificate is awarded in the main school's assembly to all pupils with 100% attendance. We will Recognise and celebrate individual and group efforts. Pupils will learn about the importance of good attendance during lessons and will be praised for good attendance throughout the year.



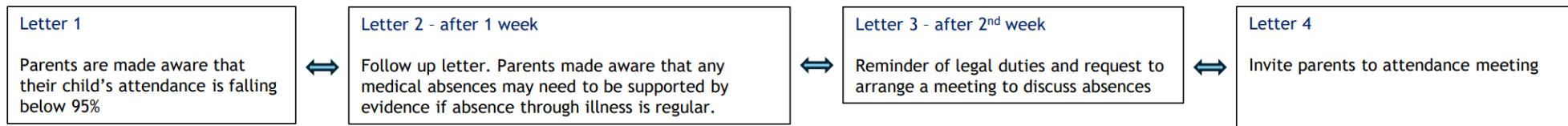
ATTENDANCE FLOWCHART



We aim for a minimum 95% attendance rate

<p>Authorised Absence Some absences are allowed by law and are known as ‘authorised absences’”. For example, if a child is ill, family bereavement, or for religious observance.</p>	<p>Term-time Leave of Absence We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils/students miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term-time, in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the Trust Board.</p> <p>It is our policy that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> requests for term-time holidays will not be authorised once children reach statutory school age. Absence taken and not authorised could be liable for a Fixed Penalty fine; parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence for term-time holidays need to fill in an application form well in advance and before booking. Please ask the school office for a form; the Headteacher will consider your request and advise you of their decision, (possibly asking to meet with you to discuss) - further time than allowed will be unauthorised; The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have removed the reference of holidays during term time and now provides that a leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances relating to that application. The onus is on the parent/carer to present the case in writing at least two weeks before the event. Retrospective granting of permission, should only therefore be on rare occasions. if the school does not agree and you take your child on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised.
<p>Unauthorised Absence There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are <i>not</i> permitted by law. These are known as ‘unauthorised absences’.</p>	
<p>Punctuality It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day. Pupils arriving after registers have closed will be marked as ‘L’ Late</p>	

Letters sent to Parents/Carers as required, with absence report.



<p>Support offered to Parents and Carers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Help Assessments Parent/Carer Workshops Team Around the Child Referrals to other agencies e.g. Sensory Integration/OT/Sleep Clinics Behaviour support/Establish Routines and Boundaries from Team in school 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Other support/monitoring includes: 3 x annually Meetings with LCC and SLCP referrals.</div>
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