



# Edmondsley Primary and Nursery School

## Attendance Policy



**Signed: A Rees      Date: October 2021**  
**Date Reviewed by Curriculum, Standards and Wellbeing Governor Committee:**  
**Autumn 2021**

Edmondsley Primary and Nursery School seeks to ensure that all of its pupils receive an education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

We believe that all students benefit from the education we provide, and therefore from regular attendance. Regular school attendance plays a vital role in children's wellbeing and their education, ensuring that their current learning needs are being met but also building their future ability to learn.

From September 2020, it will once again become parent's legal duty; to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. As a school we will work pupils and their families to support parents to meet these legal duties and to ensure children can benefit from attending school regularly.

The school has established an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

This policy has been reviewed and rewritten in line with the DfE 'School attendance Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' (October 2014), 'School attendance parental responsibility measures' (January 2015) and DfE 'Guidance for full opening of school' 31 July 2020.

This policy is supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning.

### **1. Attendance and Attainment**

We recognise that the relationship between attendance and achievement of our students is inextricably linked.

Regular school attendance is crucial to maximise pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to.

#### **We will ensure that:**

- All students have an equal right, and access to, an education in accordance with the national curriculum, or agreed alternative.

- Students will not be deprived of their education opportunities by, either their own absence or lateness, or that of students.
- Action is taken where necessary to secure an improvement in attendance.

## **2. The Law**

You need to make sure your child attends school regularly and on time. Because parents are responsible for this duty in law, you will be **breaking the law** if you do not do this and there are no good reasons for missing school.

The School and Local Authority **want to help you if you have a problem.** If attendance does not get better or you do not accept help and support offered, the Council may issue you with a warning notice, Penalty Notice or ask you to attend an interview to ask you questions about whether you have broken the law.

If you go to court and are found guilty of an offence, you could be fined up to £1,000 for a less serious offence or up to £2,500 if the law breaking is more serious. **In very serious cases, the court may involve the probation service or consider up to 3 months in prison.**

## **3. Attendance Procedures**

### **a) On the first day off**

If a child is absent for any reason, parents or carers are asked to phone the School Office giving a reason for the child's absence. If a child is absent from school and there is no phone call from home then school will phone home to inform parents that the child is not in school and enquire about a reason why.

Doctors and dentists appointments should be made outside of school time. If this is not possible, your child should miss the minimum amount of school time necessary. If they are well enough to come back to school following the appointment they need to.

### **b) Coronavirus symptoms**

If your child, or a member of your household, has any of the following symptoms; new and persistent cough, a high temperature or loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell then you must **immediately take the following actions:**

- Report the reason for absence to school
- Self-isolate
- Arrange a coronavirus test
- Provide school with the results of that test

**Self-isolating** - the person with symptoms must self-isolate for 10 days.

If you are self-isolating you should not leave your home. This includes going to work/school, going shopping even for medication, going for exercise (this can be done in your garden). You should also not have any visitors.

#### **How we will support you as a school:**

- We will be asking why your child is off and ask for test results to be provided, so that we can protect all of our pupils, staff and families.
- We will make sure the reasons for absence are correctly recorded on the register. Where parents have done all that has been asked in reporting absences and providing test results, these absences will be authorised by the school.
- We will follow all safety measures set out by the government.
- If any additional support is needed please contact school.

#### **Periods of extended absence (not related to coronavirus)**

If a child's absence continues beyond 3 days then parents are requested to notify the school to update them. If a phone call is not received then the school will contact home to verify the absence.

If the school receives no reason for any absence then an unauthorised absence will be recorded. Continued absenteeism and unauthorised absences could result in further action such as referral to the Attendance Improvement Team to consider enforcement action and possibly a fixed penalty notice (this includes unauthorised absences accrued through leave of absence taken during term time).

#### **c) Help & Support:**

If you need help with attendance, it is important that you contact school about the issues as soon as possible. The quicker we know what the problem is, the quicker that we can work together to solve it, and put a plan together which will meet your child's needs and ensure your child can benefit from all that school has to offer.

Where needed we can also involve other services to make sure that your child and your family gets the right support, at the right time from the right people.

#### **d) Communication:**

We are asking all parents to please remember to report and explain the reasons for absence and to make sure your contact and emergency contact details are up to date.

It is vital, that school can contact parents if their child becomes unwell during the school day or in order to discuss the reasons for absence.

The School will analyse absence across the school. As a result of this, some families will receive letters to inform them if their child's absence is lower than it should be if no prior discussion has taken place (unless this is due to coronavirus/frequent hospital appointments and/or long term medical needs). If we have concerns

regarding your child's attendance then we may contact you by phone, letter, invite you to a meeting or make a visit to your home.

As a parent you may identify concerns about school attendance early on if you have seen a change in your child's attitude to school or in their willingness to attend. If this is the case, please share your concerns with us and we can work together to ensure that school attendance doesn't ever need to decline. The quicker that concerns are shared, the quicker they can be resolved.

The school will work with you to discuss ways that we can offer support in finding a way to improve attendance.

**e) Enforcement Action:**

If, following the school's attempts to intervene there is no significant improvement and no good reasons for absences (i.e. absences are not supported by relevant evidence), or you have not co-operated with the school's attempts to improve the situation the school are required to consider referring the matter to the Local Authority for enforcement action.

The High Court has confirmed that the school's Head Teacher authorises absences. If your child misses school a lot because of illness, or if school do not know of any serious health issue that would mean your child could miss school a lot, the school may ask to you to provide medical evidence to authorise absences.

We are committed to supporting your child effectively, to ensure that they get the very best education possible and therefore have the best life chances. All challenges made concerning persistent absences, will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

**f) Punctuality:**

Registration time is at **9.15am** and **1.30pm**. **Gates will be locked at 9:30** so any pupils who are late must enter by the main entrance. It is so important for all children to be on time, as missing the first few minutes of any lesson can be disruptive and unsettling, both for children and for the rest of the class. If a child arrives in school up to 15 minutes after this time then a late mark will be recorded in the register (L). Registers will be closed at this point and any children arriving more than 15 minutes late will be recorded as (U) which is a late after registers close mark and this is classed as an unauthorised absence (a number of these marks can also contribute to a fixed penalty notice being issued).

**If your child is late for school:**

All children arriving late at school will be asked the reason for their lateness and this will be recorded on the school's attendance data base (SIMs).

**1. If a child is late (after registers close) for school on a number of occasions;**

A letter will be sent home from school to parents to say their child's punctuality is causing some concern. An appointment with the Head will be offered to discuss ways that the school can offer support in finding a way improve this. Incentives to

improve punctuality may also be offered to pupils e.g. improving their punctuality over 2 weeks to earn a school alarm clock.

**2. If lateness becomes persistent** with no identifiable reason –

A letter will be sent home from school with a specific appointment given to meet with Head Teacher or deputy head for a ‘planning meeting’. This will aim to address any issues which may be behind this pattern of poor punctuality.

**3. If the school continues to have concerns about a child’s punctuality;**

Then a referral may be made to the Attendance Improvement Team to consider if enforcement action is required.

**g) Leave of Absence in Term Time**

Head teachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence during term time **unless there are exceptional circumstances**. The school will consider each request of absence individually; taking into account the circumstances, such as; the nature of the event for which leave is sought, the pupil’s prior attendance and any important events taking place in school at that time e.g. termly tests.

An application for leave of absence must be made well in advance via a form which is available from the school website or in person from the school office. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher’s discretion. As stated in the most recent DFE guidance on attendance, if an application for leave of absence is not made prior to the time of the required absence then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised regardless of circumstances.

**Please note that absence will not be authorised under any circumstances during any period of public examinations or internal assessments.**

**5. Promoting good attendance and punctuality**

Attendance percentages will be shared with parents on a weekly basis on the school newsletter, at termly parents’ meetings and also annual reports to parents will contain a record of individual pupils’ attendance.

**6. Children Missing from Education:**

If you move from the area and your whereabouts are unknown, the school can legally remove your child from the roll after 20 school days of unauthorised absence. It is **vital that if you keep school informed of any change of details** and regularly update them if details change. Your child may be at risk of losing their school place if your whereabouts are not known.

It is also important that emergency contact information is kept up to date and that if you are leaving the area, you provide details of where and how you can be contacted. If you do not do this and the school is unable to trace your child, this would be treated as a **safeguarding matter**.

**7. Roles and Responsibilities**

**Governing Body:**

As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed to parents and staff.
- Annually review the school's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents, and students to implement the policy effectively.
- Ensure regular meetings of the Committee take place and they will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance. The governor's meetings will review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to be fully aware and supportive of expected attendance targets for the year.
- Ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off site.

**School Leadership Team:**

As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, the leadership team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with students and their parents.
- Ensure the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the policy and its effectiveness, with annual review of full policy.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance policy and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Ensure government legislation on attendance is complied with and that the leadership team are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them.
- Nominate or appoint a senior manager to take responsibility for overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to the job. At Edmondsley, this is the Office Manager and Head Teacher.
- Report to the Committee meeting each term on attendance records.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively.

**Teachers and support staff:**

As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, the teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with students and their parents.
- Ensure the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular

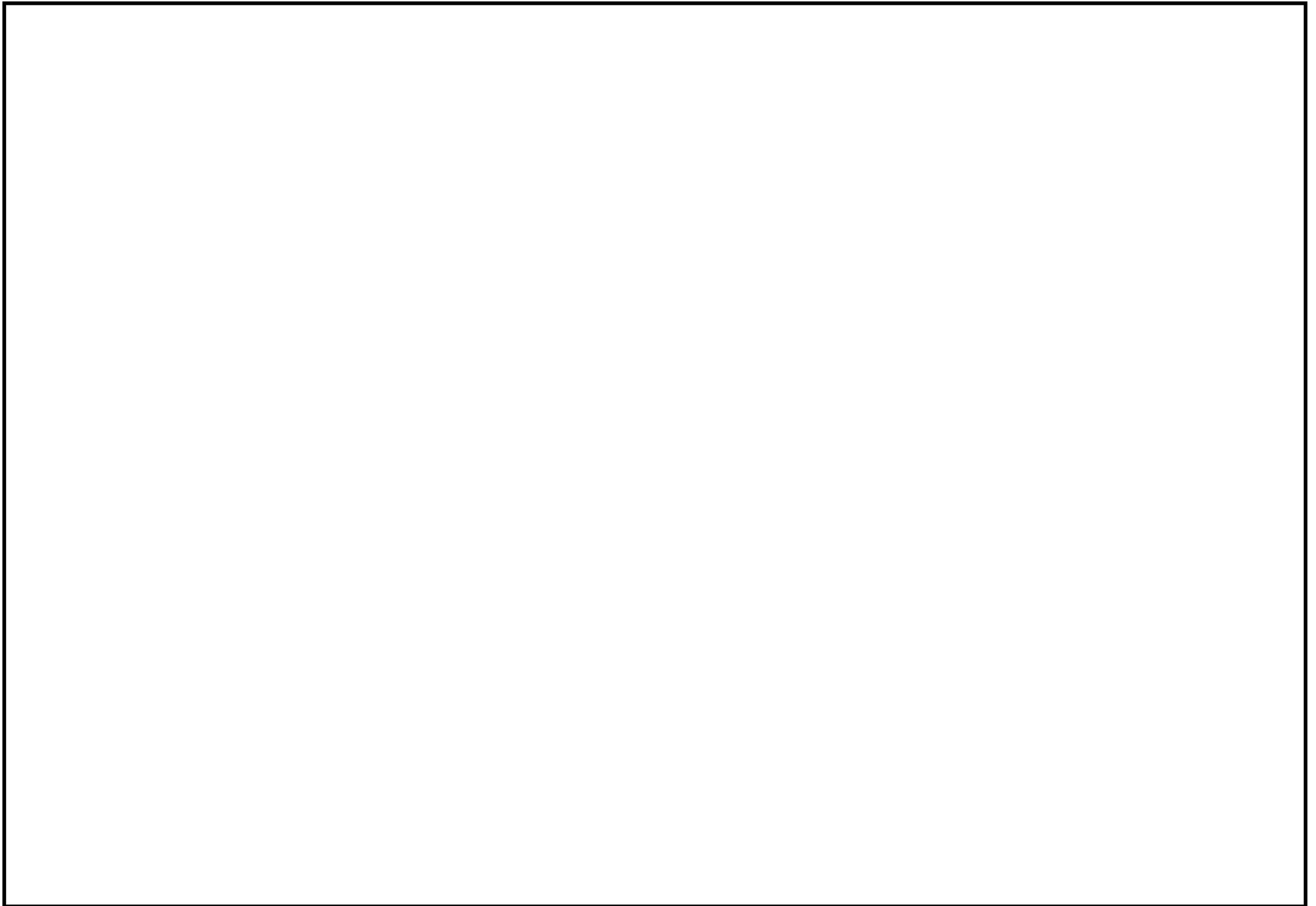
attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.

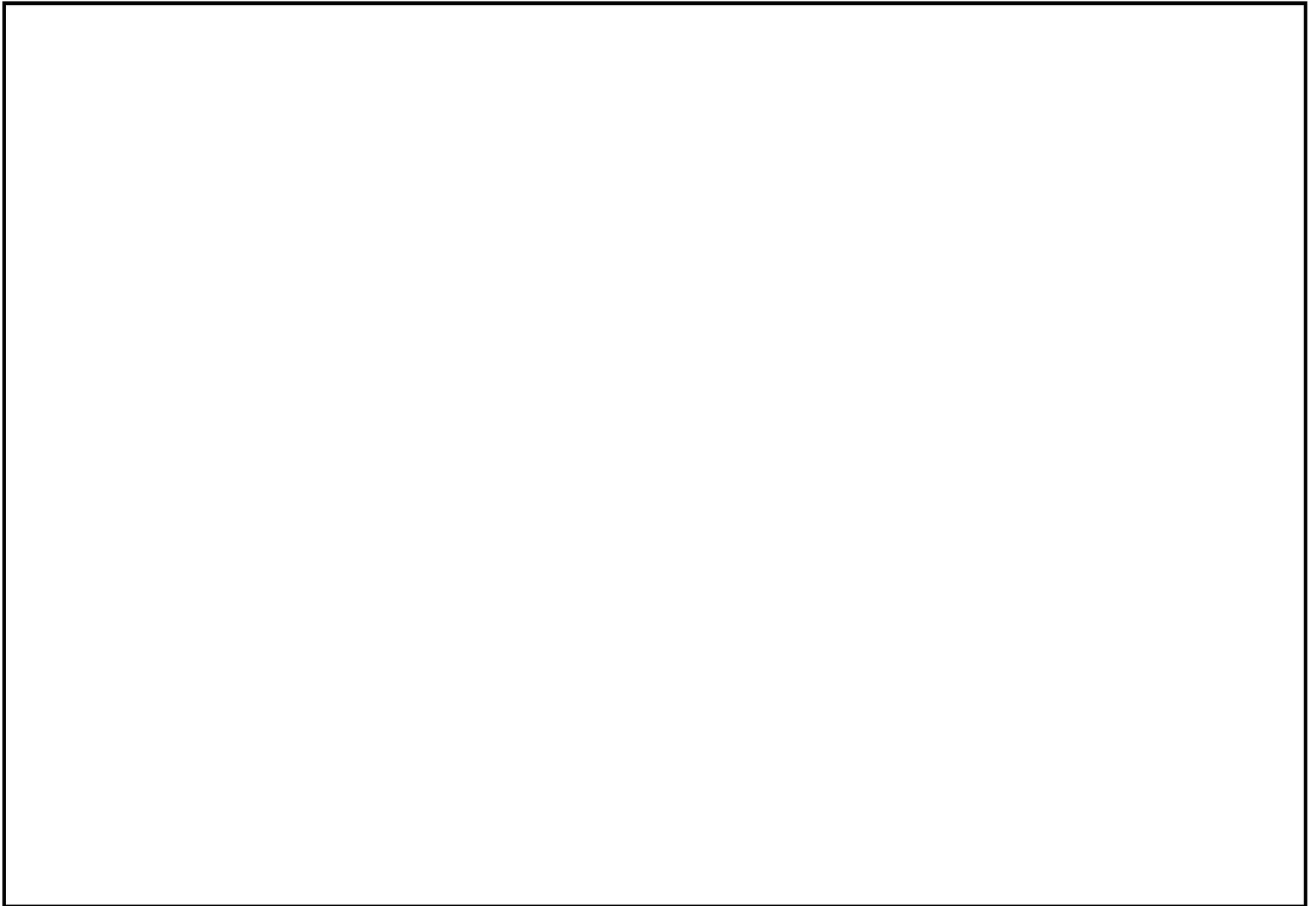
- Ensure the senior manager responsible for overseeing attendance and any other relevant personnel are kept fully aware of and up to date with any concerns relating to students that may impact on their attendance.
- Ensure compliance with regulation and guidance on attendance.
- Work professionally with parents, carers, students and relevant agencies to secure improvements in attendance via appropriate support or enforcement measures.
- Ensure understanding and are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken each lesson and session.

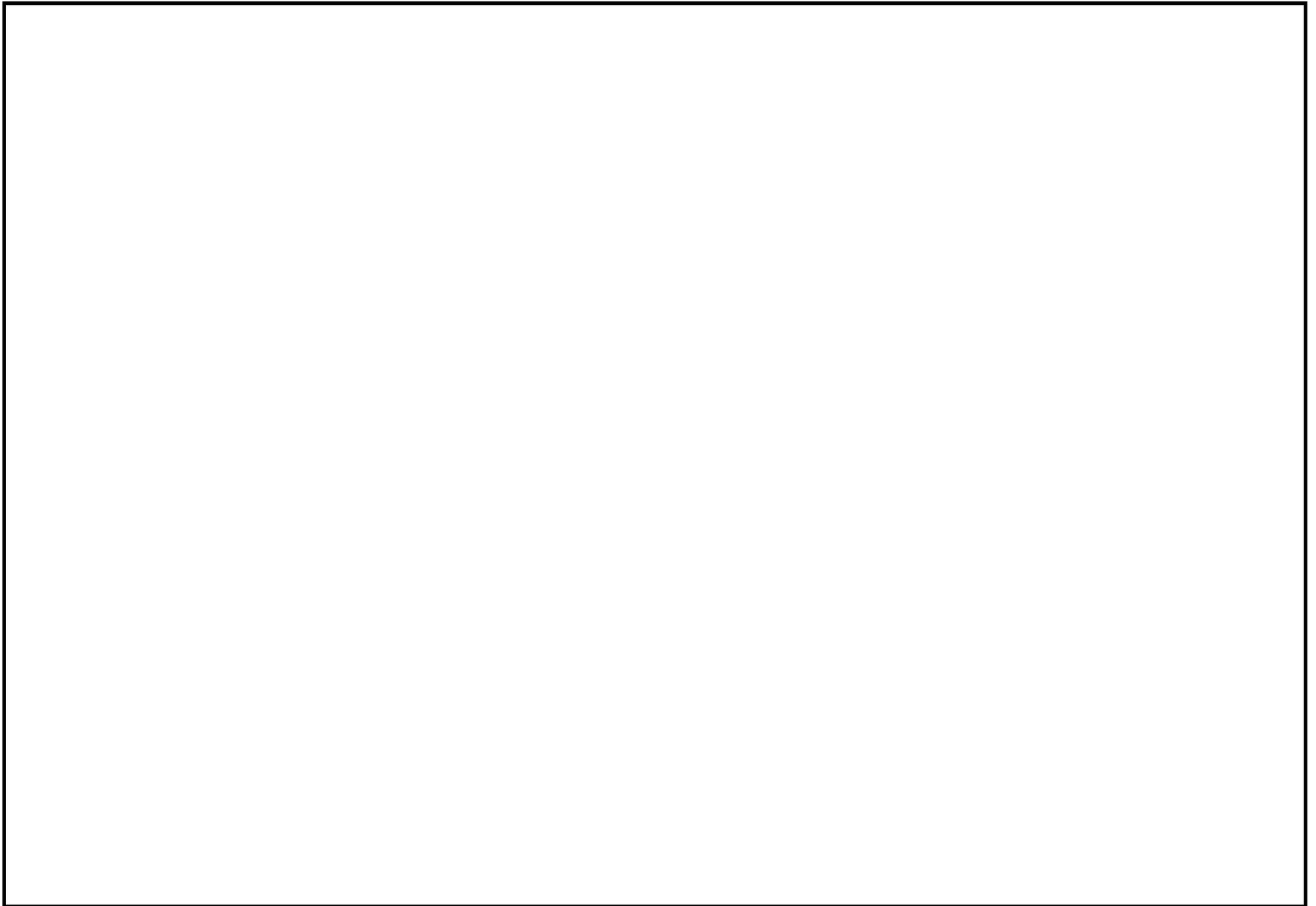
### **Parents / Carers:**

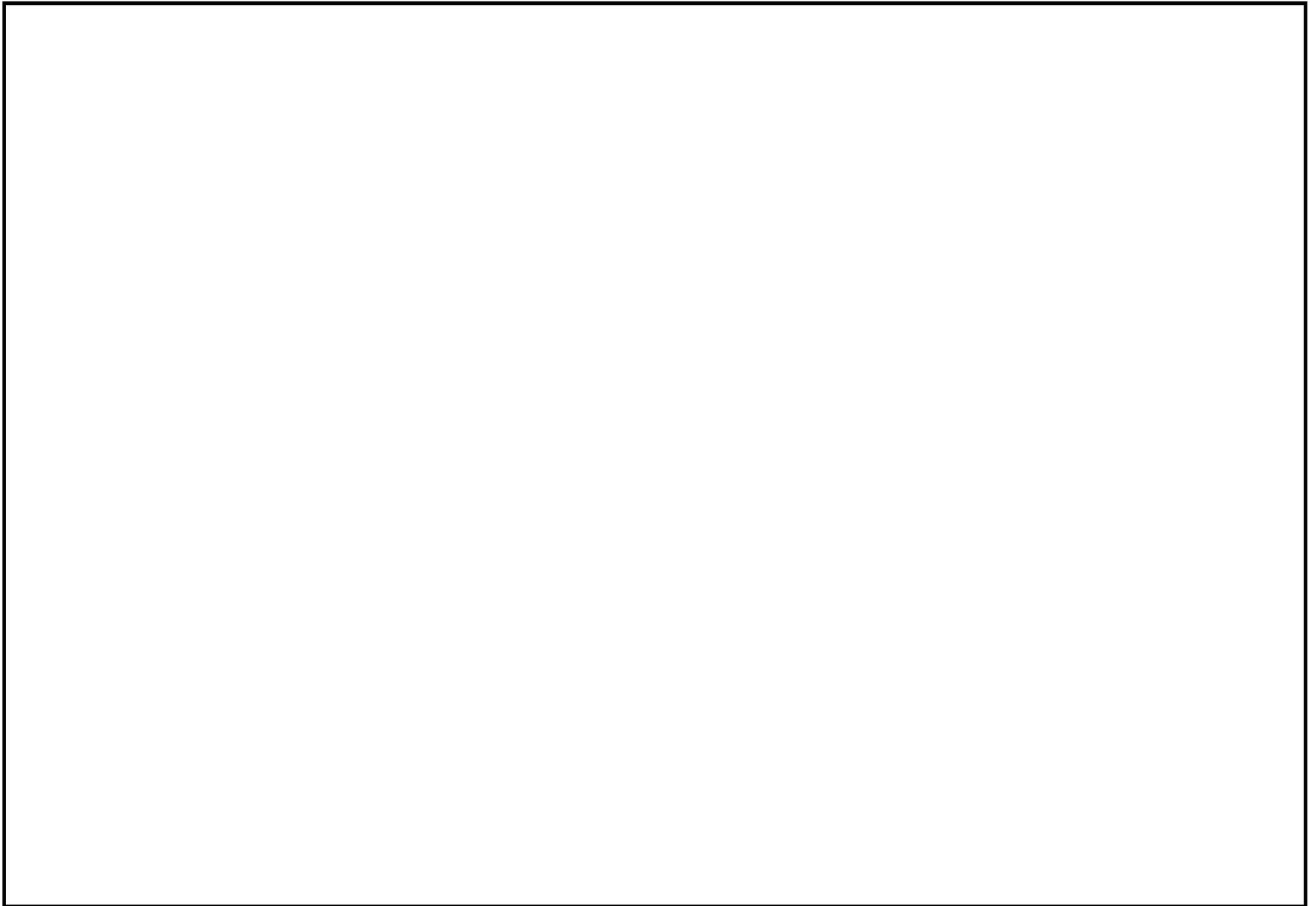
As part of our school approach to maintaining high attendance, we expect that parents / carers will:

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy regarding absences, ill health, medical or dental appointments, leave of absence in term time and punctuality.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences.
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance and work with staff in resolving any issues that may be having an impact on their child.
- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime etc so that the child is used to consistency and the school becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same messages at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance.











## School - Return to School Plan

Date of Contact:	Click or tap to enter a date.
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Pupil Forename:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Pupil Surname:	Click or tap here to enter text.
D.O.B:	Click or tap to enter a date.

School:	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Year Group:	Choose an item.
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Name of Adult spoken to:	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Relationship to pupil:	Choose an item.
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Contact details (telephone number / email address)	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Have parents received school information (phased return, uniform, transport, meals etc) / FAQ sheet /where to get advice and support: Any specific queries and questions?	Choose an item.
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If Yes, is there any other information which would have been useful?	Click or tap here to enter text.
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If No, is there any information which would have been useful?	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Preparation and key contacts: Potential issues anticipated / issues experiencing,	Click or tap here to enter text.
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support may require / support required,  
who will be the key contact in school?  
Concerns / worries / issues?

Other discussion points: may include  
health / bereavement / significant events /  
education that has been delivered:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Are any referrals to support services  
required?

Click or tap here to enter text.

If Yes, has consent been obtained?

Choose an item.

If No, reason consent not obtained?

Click or tap here to enter text.

If Yes, which Service(s) is / are required?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Has client been signposted to any  
Services?

Choose an item.

If Yes, for which Services has information  
been provided?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Any other agreed actions (may include  
targets if appropriate, health liaison,  
consents etc):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Any additional comments:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Name of person completing form:

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Will school attendance be mandatory from September 2020?**

Yes, the Government have advised that school attendance will be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term.

### **Which of the usual school attendance rules will apply in September 2020?**

All of the usual rules will apply including:

- **parents' duty** to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- **schools' responsibilities** to record attendance and follow up absence;
- **the availability to issue sanctions**, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

### **What about pupils who are shielding or self-isolating? Will they be expected to attend in September?**

The Government state that now much more is known about COVID-19, in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. However:

- **a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend** in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19);
- **shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August**, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the [current advice on shielding](#) ;
- **if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield** during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below);
- **some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school** in September (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

### **What if a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and / or public health advice?**

The Government expects schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education and schools should monitor engagement with this activity as set out in Government guidance.

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence **will not be penalised**.

### **What about pupils and families who are anxious about returning to school / their educational setting?**

The Government have made it clear that all other pupils must attend school. They state that schools should **bear in mind the potential concerns** of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and **put the right support in place to address this**. This may include pupils who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable, or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, we **recommend settings discuss their concerns and provide reassurance of the measures** they are putting in place to reduce the risk in school. Settings should be clear with parents that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, if the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance).

The Government recognise that some children and young people with **EHC plans will need preparation for their return** to full provision. This might include, for instance, visits to the setting, social stories, and any other approaches that settings and local authorities would normally use to enable a child or young person with SEND who has spent some time out of education, to return to full time attendance.

### **What actions are schools and local authorities expected to take?**

The Government are asking schools to **work with families to secure regular school attendance from the start of term** as this will be essential to help pupils catch up on missed education, make progress and promote their wellbeing and wider development.

The Government are also asking schools and local authorities to:

- communicate **clear and consistent expectations** around school attendance to families (and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate) **throughout the summer ahead of the new school year**;
- **identify pupils** who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and **develop plans for re-engaging them**. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic;
- **use the additional catch-up funding** schools will receive, as well as **existing pastoral and support services**, attendance staff and resources and schools' pupil premium funding to put measures in place for those families who will need additional support to secure pupils' regular attendance;
- **work closely with other professionals** as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to notify the child's social worker, if they have one, of non-attendance

