



Charles Darwin School

Attendance Policy

Persons Responsible:

Governors: Full Governors

SLT: Mrs Louise Rees

Formally approved: March 2011

Reviewed and readopted: 12 March 2018

Reviewed and readopted: 27 April 2020

Reviewed and readopted 18 November 2021

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1. Mission statement

- 1.1. Charles Darwin School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a fulltime education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their true potential.
- 1.2. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment and make each member of the school community feel wanted and secure.
- 1.3. All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. Improving school attendance is everyone's business.
- 1.4. The school will establish 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.
- 1.5. We will work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.
- 1.6. To meet these objectives Charles Darwin School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.
- 1.7. Following 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance Dfe 2022, the school will further enhance methods to prevent poor attendance, intervene early before absence becomes habitual and target re-engagement of persistently and severely absent pupils.

2. The law on school attendance and right to a full time education (from Working Together to Improve School Attendance Dfe 2022)

- 2.1. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. 10.
- 2.2. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.
- 2.3. This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment
- 2.4. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent) and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study).

3. Whole school policy for school attendance

- 3.1. To continue to improve the overall percentage of attendance for pupils at school: Charles Darwin School target is 95% and/or above national average
- 3.2. To reduce the number of Persistent Absentees (PAs) and Severe Absentees (SAs): Charles Darwin School target is less than 5% and/or below national average.
- 3.3. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and Governors.
- 3.4. To maintain a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks. (See Appendix 1 and 2 - Guidance on Registration).
- 3.5. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and children.
- 3.6. To have a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data.
- 3.7. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- 3.8. To encourage pupils to be more aware of their own percentage attendance figure through the Attendance ladder [from September 2016].
- 3.9. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions to recognise high attendance.
- 3.10. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.
- 3.11. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning re-integration following significant periods of absence.
- 3.12. To reduce the number of children and families requesting leave of absence during term time.
- 3.13. See Appendix 3 – Working together to improve attendance Dfe May 2022. This illustrates how all partners should work together collaboratively to maximise our school attendance. This appendix will be sent home to parents/carers at least annually

4. Process aiming to improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils at Charles Darwin School

- 4.1. Apply Whole School Attendance Policy consistently.
- 4.2. Proactively manage lateness. Pupils are expected to attend am registration at 8.30am and pm registration at 1.50pm. Registration closes at 9.30am every day after which a pupil will be marked as absent
- 4.3. Expect parents to contact the school when their child is absent to explain the reason. The Attendance Office will contact parents on the first day of absence where a reason has not been provided.
- 4.4. Where reasonably possible, the school will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.
- 4.5. Regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- 4.6. To ensure a senior member of staff has overall responsibility for whole school attendance [currently Mrs Rees, deputy headteacher].
- 4.7. To ensure an external educational welfare lead is employed by the school for input one day a week.

- 4.8. To be aware of the guidance outlined in the current Children Missing Education policy and ensure that all students are monitored through strict attendance protocols with the support of the Education Welfare Officer and the LEA.
- 4.9. Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
- 4.10. Relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- 4.11. Monitor progress in attendance measurable outcomes.
- 4.12. To unauthorise request for leave of absence during term time in Years 7 to 13 unless authorised in exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher.
- 4.13. To track families requesting leave of absence with consideration to using a penalty notice.
- 4.14. Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible.
- 4.15. Support pupils back into school following a lengthy period of absence (see item 13).

5. Reduce the number of persistently and severely absent pupils at Charles Darwin School (PAs and SAs)

- 5.1. Identify pupils who are PAs (at or below 90% attendance) SAs (at or below 50% attendance) or at risk of becoming either.
- 5.2. To ensure Pupil Premium PAs/SAs are a priority for intervention in school
- 5.3. Inform the Borough of the percentage of PA pupils when requested.
- 5.4. Raise awareness of PA and SA pupils in pastoral teams and set targets where necessary.
- 5.5. To frequently review strategies to review PA and SA totals to ensure they are relevant and have an impact on reducing totals across every year group.
- 5.6. EWO to meet with Achievement Co-ordinators and with target families to set strategies to improve attendance, particularly focusing on reducing PA and SA numbers.
- 5.7. To maintain whole school awareness of PA students by having this as a target to reduce PA totals in the whole school improvement plan.

6. Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors

- 6.1. Use staff/school handbook to ensure all staff are aware of policies regarding authorised and unauthorised absence and holidays in term time.
- 6.2. Produce termly/annual reports to parents/governors.
- 6.3. Discuss attendance at Parents' Evening and include Attendance Certificate with school report, e.g. EWO meets identified parents if attendance is a concern on school report.
- 6.4. Make attendance and punctuality a feature in The Link on a regular basis.
- 6.5. Provide INSET training for appointed/promoted staff through partnership with the EWS.
- 6.6. Display materials at focal points: form rooms, electronic presentations in Student Services entrance and attendance noticeboard.
- 6.7. Discuss attendance issues in Education Welfare Service/pastoral meetings and/or in relevant staff meetings.
- 6.8. Maintain award systems, e.g. badges, house trophies, certificates, 100% attendance draws, reward trips and treats, etc.
- 6.9. Frequently reinforce and revise punctuality sanctions within whole school system.
- 6.10. Ensure a member of student services is visible on late gate duty on a daily basis.

7. Maintain agreed roles and responsibilities, and promote consistency in carrying out designated tasks

- 7.1. Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration and ensure use of mandatory codes.
- 7.2. Make contact, using designated school staff, on first day of absence via Truancy Call.
- 7.3. Make contact, using designated school staff, on first day of absence via First Day Calling for identified vulnerable children.
- 7.4. Ensure clearly defined late registration procedures.
- 7.5. Monitor late students at the gate regularly, text sent from Truancy Call.
- 7.6. Hold regular Late Gate using senior staff to target persistent latecomers.
- 7.7. Students to be sanctioned for repeated lateness and lateness after 9:30am via the whole school detention system and senior staff detentions. To be notified via designated school staff in Student Services and via form tutors.
- 7.8. Timetable staff to meet with Education Welfare Officer, making best use of EWO time.
- 7.9. Have clear procedures prior to referral to Education Welfare Service.
- 7.10. Review attendance regularly in SLT and pastoral meetings.
- 7.11. Be familiar with the Education Welfare Service's referral and recording system.

8. Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and Children

8.1. Highlight attendance in:

- PHSE through tutor programme
- Attendance ladder
- Assemblies
- School notice board
- Staff available to talk to pupils
- "Mentor" system including SLT mentoring
- Parents' Evenings
- Pupil planners

8.2. Publicise support offered by schools.

8.3. Set aside area/time for parents to speak to staff.

8.4. Maintain regular communication with parents, e.g. letters/phone calls home.

8.5. Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents via planner.

8.6. Involve parents from earliest stage. Collaboration is essential between home and school and early intervention is crucial. (See Appendix 3)

9. Maintain a systematic approach in gathering and analysing attendance related data

9.1. Standardise recording of:

- authorised/unauthorised absence
- educational activity

- presence

9.2. Be consistent in the collection and provision of information.

9.3. Decide what information is provided for:

- Governors
- pastoral staff
- other school staff
- parents
- pupils (individual or groups)
- Education Welfare Service

9.4. Identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

10. Develop positive and consistent communication between home and school

10.1. Initiate first day absence contact.

10.2. Make full use of computer generated letters and Truancy Call/Parent Call.

10.3. Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents.

10.4. Explore the wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships (see Item 4).

10.5. Provide information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written).

10.6. Encourage all parents into school to work in collaboration.

11. Implement a system of rewards and sanctions

11.1. Use pastoral budget for a system of rewards. Each year group is also allocated reward funding.

11.2. Actively promote attendance and associated reward and effective sanctions.

11.3. Promote use of attendance Ladder for rewards [September 2016].

11.4. Ensure fair and consistent implementation.

11.5. Involve pupils in system evaluation.

11.6. Make use of effective and immediate sanctions.

11.7. Take action which accords with objectives agreed between school and others, e.g. Education Welfare Service, parent, Social Services and Looked After Children Team.

12. Promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies

12.1. Designate key staff for liaison with Education Welfare Service and other agencies.

12.2. Give priority to timetabled meetings with Education Welfare Service.

12.3. Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.

12.4. Gather and record relevant information to assist completion of Education Welfare Service referral.

12.5. Hold weekly attendance review with key school staff and Education Welfare Service.

- 12.6. Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate, e.g. for PA pupils and families.
- 12.7. Each Severely Absent to have a support plan in place with regular Targeted Support Meetings (at least termly) with EWO, SLT leading on Attendance.
- 12.8. Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community, e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team, Safer Transport Team.
- 12.9. Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school e.g. Youth Policing Team.
- 12.10. Develop understanding of agency constraints and operating environments.

13. Recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning re-integration following significant periods of absence

- 13.1. Be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning pupils.
- 13.2. Involve/inform all staff in re-integration process.
- 13.3. Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback.
- 13.4. Consider peer support and mentoring.
- 13.5. Consider use of the Student Learning Zone.
- 13.6. Involve parents as far as possible and school lead on attendance.
- 13.7. Agree timescale for review of re-integration plan.
- 13.8. Include Education Welfare Officers, parents and pupil in Re-integration Plan.

14. Alternative provision [as statutory guidance taken from Keeping Children safe in education 2022]

- 14.1. When the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider we will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will need to be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil.
- 14.2. The school will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment.
- 14.3. The school will need to ensure attendance records at the alternative provision are recorded and maintained for the duration that the pupil remains on a dual registration.

15. Part-time timetables

- 15.1. It is understood that all pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil 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 used to manage a pupil's behaviour.
- 15.2. A part-time timetable will only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There will also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part time timetable,

a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore will treat absence as authorised.

- 16.** This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding policy when considering patterns of absence over a period of time. Judgement can then be made regarding involvement of the EWO, opening a CAF on a family or considering referrals to other external agencies i.e. Social Care.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the latest Keeping Children safe in Education document provided by the DfE and the latest Guidance on Children Missing in Education. See Appendix 2: Attendance and Punctuality Overview.

Registration

- Registers will be taken punctually each day at 8.30 am and 1:50 pm.
- If a pupil arrives after the registers close at 8.35 am and 1.55 pm, s/he should be marked as late.
- When a pupil misses registration altogether and fails to provide an adequate explanation, the pupil will be marked as an unauthorised absentee for this session.

Authorised Absences

Medical evidence will be required for the school to authorise any absence due to illness for pupils with attendance at or below 90%. Absences may be authorised for pupils for the following reasons:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (whenever possible made outside school hours)
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances.

Unauthorised Absence

Absences will not be authorised for:

- Truancy
- Arrival (without justified reason) after registration period has closed
- Shopping
- Looking after family members (save in exceptional circumstances)
- Minding the house
- Birthdays or similar events
- Any work (paid or unpaid) undertaken during school hours
- Family holidays during term time.

When considering individual cases of absence, the school will consider:

- The nature of the event
- Frequency of absence
- Whether advance notification is given
- Overall attendance record of the pupil.

If a pupil is persistently absent and the school's efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service through the Attendance Officer or Achievement Co-Ordinator.

The head teacher can authorise leave of absence requests at his discretion.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY – OVERVIEW OF ROLES

Concentrate on:

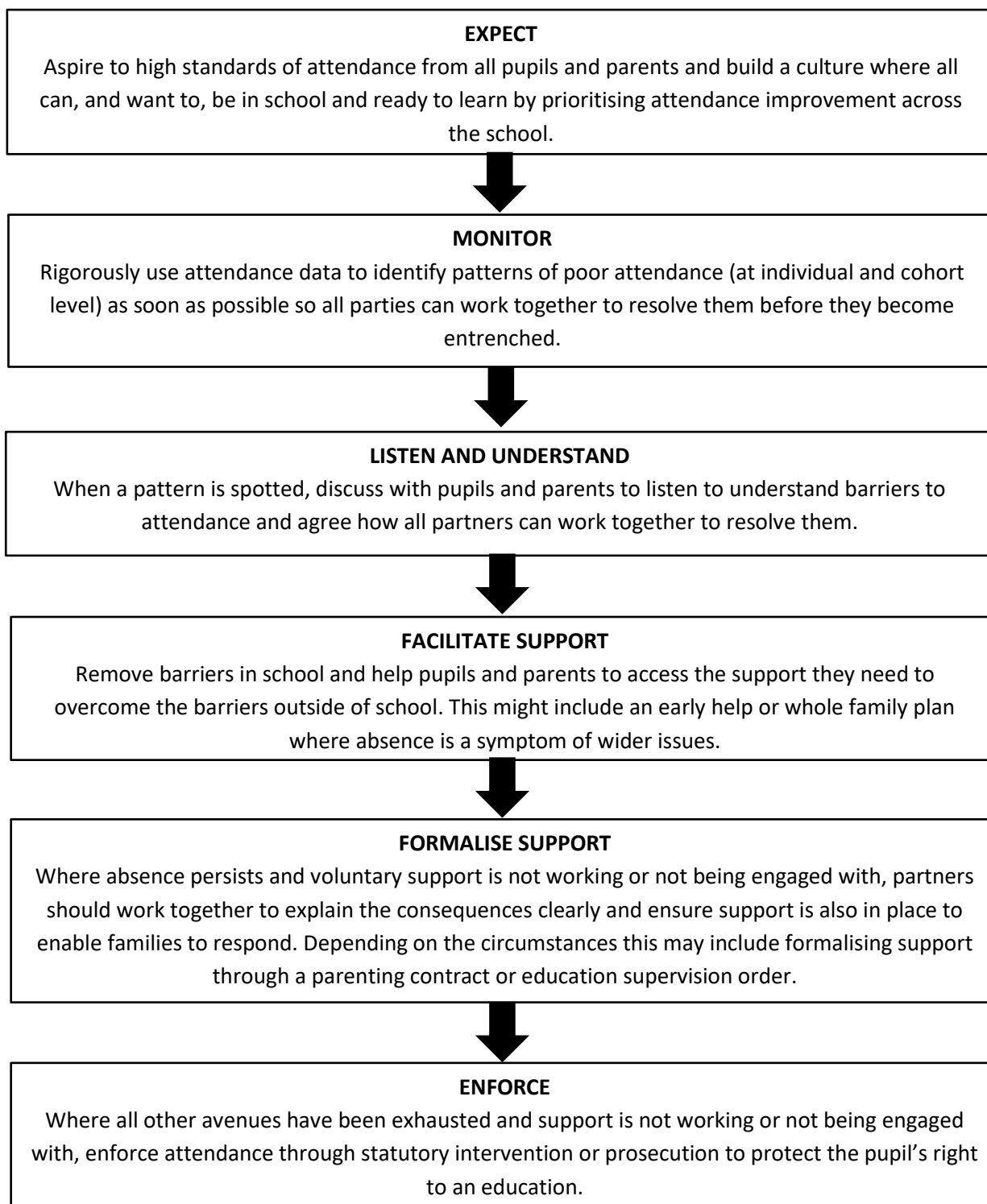
- Improving the average attendance percentage
- Prompt arrival to school
- Prompt arrival to lessons
- Reducing the % of Persistent Absentees (PA's)

Pupils	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive to school by 8.15am each day. • Home to notify school with reason for absence. • Aim to achieve 100% attendance. • Seek to book any medical appointments outside of school hours. • Catch-up on all missed work due to absence. • Ensure that arrival to lessons is prompt.

Staff	Responsibility	First Line Support
Form Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on time to registration. • Ensure that register is taken promptly at every session. • Notify pupils in their form of attendance and encourage this to be recorded in planners each week. • Challenge any late comers and seek explanations. • Check student planners and lesson monitor to review punctuality to lessons. • Liaise with Attendance Officer and Achievement Co-ordinator to identify pupils with attendance concerns including unaccounted absences. • Liaise with Attendance Officer and Achievement Co-ordinator to reward pupils with a good attendance and punctuality record. • Encourage good attendance and importance for achievement in school. 	ACO
Subject Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on time to all lessons. • Take a register every lesson on Lesson Monitor (SIMS). • Start the lesson promptly - challenge any late comers and detain if necessary. • Inform HoF of regular lateness and detail if necessary. • Ensure that all lessons are ended promptly. • Ensure pupils move swiftly to and from lessons by being out in the corridor between lessons moving pupils along. • Check that any pupil late for Period 1 has signed in at Student Services 	Head of Faculty

Achievement Co-ordinator (ACO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise systems of rewards for pupils with high attendance and punctuality. • Ensure presentation of certificates for 100% attendance each term and promote good attendance and punctuality in assemblies. • Check registers on a weekly basis, take action on any concerns and liaise with Attendance Officer. • Conduct truancy spot checks - particularly targeting pupils with poor attendance/truancy records. • Meet Attendance Officer and EWO each week to discuss pupils with poor attendance/ punctuality. 	SLT
Attendance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks Absence Line each morning and update records to authorise absence. • Liaises with Achievement Co-ordinators on a weekly basis to discuss targeted pupils/concerns. • Liaises with EWO on a weekly basis to discuss concerns. • Have an overview of Persistent Absentee (PA) students in Years 7-11 and Sixth Form. • Ensure correct pupils are being mentored. • Maintain/update notice board to notify pupils and teachers of attendance trends. Complete truancy checks. • Produce the annual Truancy Return for DFE. • Provide Registration Certificates for individual students when required. • Have overview of Lesson Monitor (SIMS) across the school. • Provide weekly reports on attendance and punctuality to ACOs. • Calculate lates and determine sanctions for lateness – WSD/SSD/learning recovery time. 	SLT Line Manager
SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Attendance Officer on a regular basis. • Review Attendance Policy on an annual basis. • Liaise with ACO's to identify suitable strategies for improvement in attendance rates, e.g. PA mentoring programmes and other monitoring and engagement strategies. • Be aware of percentage of PA students and ensure family meetings are organised with EWO present to discuss strategies to improve attendance. • Ensure Pupil Premium students remain a priority for any mentoring or strategies to reduce PA levels. • Inform Headteacher and Governors of attendance percentage at any given time. 	Governor
Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Governor is identified each year with the responsibility of regularly monitoring attendance. 	

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



All Pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<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>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that 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>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<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>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil 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. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<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>	<p>Continued support as for pupils 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 attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children’s social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<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>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

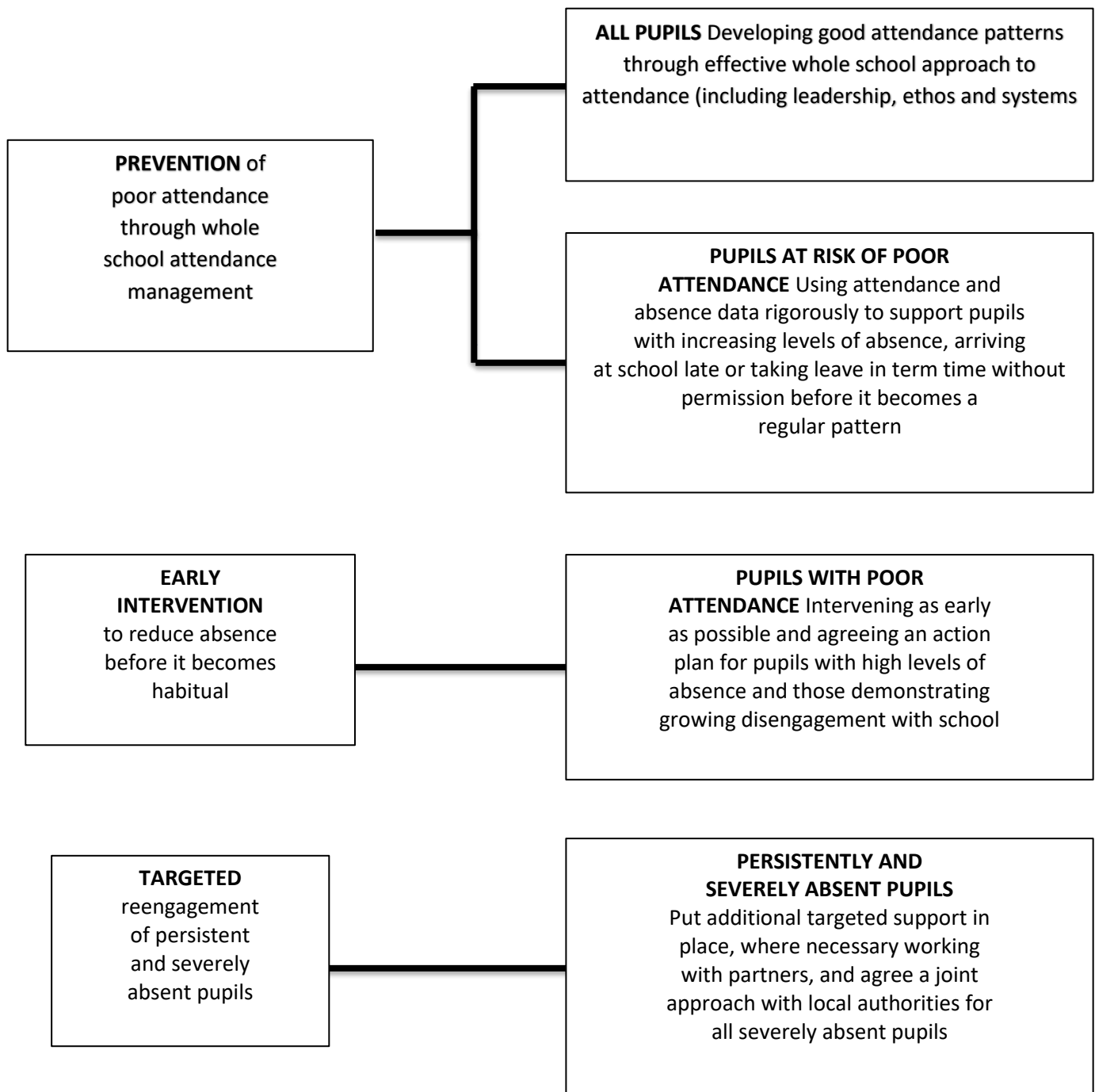
Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<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>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <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>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<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>	<p>Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it</p>	<p>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.</p>

(From Working Together to Improve School Attendance Dfe 2022)



The following information is based on the guidance from:

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for schools about temporarily closing

Updated 9 April 2020 – To be maintained September 2021 in case of further temporary closing during academic year.

What are schools responsible for?

Schools are responsible for providing places to vulnerable children, and children of workers critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response, while schools are closed due to the outbreak. Whilst every attempt will be made to remain open, in the event that Charles Darwin school cannot remain open, the Headteacher will work with local authorities to agree the provision needed locally to support the needs identified.

Are schools expected to share resources?

If some schools are experiencing high demand for places, or severe staff shortages, local authorities will coordinate support from other schools in the area. Charles Darwin School is expected to be flexible and work together with other schools where required.

Local authorities should consider working with neighbouring local authorities, while keeping in mind the impact on children.

Prioritising Charles Darwin school pupils to attend childcare arrangements in school

The first aim of the partial school closure measures, set out by the Secretary of State for Education, is to reduce the overall population of children moving around local areas as far as possible, in order to further reduce the number of social interactions, and thus flatten the upward curve of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

However, the second aim is to continue to care for children who are vulnerable, or whose parents are critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response, so that they can continue to work where alternative childcare arrangements cannot be made.

How are critical workers defined?

Children with a parent or carer who is listed as a critical worker (see latest government guidance for latest definition) should be considered for a school place, so long as their job cannot be done from home.

Many parents working in these sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

How are vulnerable children defined?

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker, and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan, and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need, or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan should be risk-assessed by their school/college in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school/college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Charles Darwin School may also want to support other children who are vulnerable where they are able to do so. Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself will not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Charles Darwin School will liaise with families and social workers to identify the children who most need support at the time of school closure. Looking after these children will enable schools to support the country during challenging times.

Is it compulsory for critical workers to accept their place offer?

No.

Many parents working in these critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

When making alternative arrangements, parents should not rely upon those outside their household for childcare.

Is it compulsory for parents of vulnerable children to accept their place offer?

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend provision, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Charles Darwin school should explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting the virus, the school should talk through these anxieties with the parent following the guidance for educational settings about COVID-19 set out by Public Health England.

Charles Darwin School may also want to consider how to encourage vulnerable children and young people to attend.

How will Charles Darwin school identify pupils who are the children of critical workers?

The Headteacher will contact all parents/carers via email and request that an 'Attendance During School Closure' proforma is completed and returned to a specified mailbox.

This proforma will request the reason for the child to continue attending school during closure e.g. parent is a Key worker.

Children with at least one parent/carer who is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response can attend school if required. However, many families with one parents working in critical sectors will be

able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

Do schools need to take an attendance register?

During this period, schools do not need to take an attendance register. For administrative purposes Code # (planned whole or partial closure) should be used.

However, Charles Darwin school will submit a short daily return, reporting whether they are open, and how many children and staff are in school. This will allow for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes, and allow schools to provide accurate, up to date data to the government. This will also help DfE to track capacity in the system, enabling the department to feed into wider tracking of the impact of the virus to support scientific advice.

If other agencies request an additional attendance return e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team, then the school will also provide this where capacity allows.

Staffing school closure

The Headteacher and Deputies will organise staff supervision during the period of school closure. This is likely to be on a rota basis of available staff.

Expectations on Charles Darwin school regarding staying in touch with parents whose child is at home

The school have already established resources in place for children who are completing work at home e.g. Show my Home Work, My maths, Microsoft Teams etc.

The Department for Education is working with the BBC, and other partners, to provide advice and support directly to parents, including online resources they can access for their children at home. They have published an initial [list of online educational resources](#) to help children to learn at home.

Safeguarding (see amendment to policy in Safeguarding and Child Protection 2021 policy for further details)

Charles Darwin School will continue to monitor the welfare of vulnerable children who are not attending school, and other pupils they might wish to keep in touch with, for safeguarding purposes.

This will be done via a variety of means, including:

- Phone conversations on a weekly basis with parents/carers. Summary of conversation logged centrally (DSL or Pastoral managers)
- Phone conversations on a weekly/twice weekly basis with key children. Summary of conversation logged centrally (DSL or Pastoral managers)
- Liaison with social workers
- Remote contribution to all Child in Need and Child Protection meetings (DSL, SENCO or Pastoral managers) as requested
- Remote contribution to all Looked After Children PEP meetings (Designated Teacher, SENCO or Pastoral managers) as requested.

Policy update completed 18 November 2021 for circulation to Governors and SLT

L Rees (Deputy Head and DSL)