

## PENWORTHAM GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

# ATTENDANCE & CME POLICY

“A pupil who is not there cannot learn”

(October 2021)

**Updated Annually**  
**Next review: Autumn 2022**

### THE MISSION

To prepare  
Articulate, Questioning, Tolerant and Independent Women  
for the future.

pghSuccess

## Our Aim, Mission and Core Values

### **PGHSuccess:**

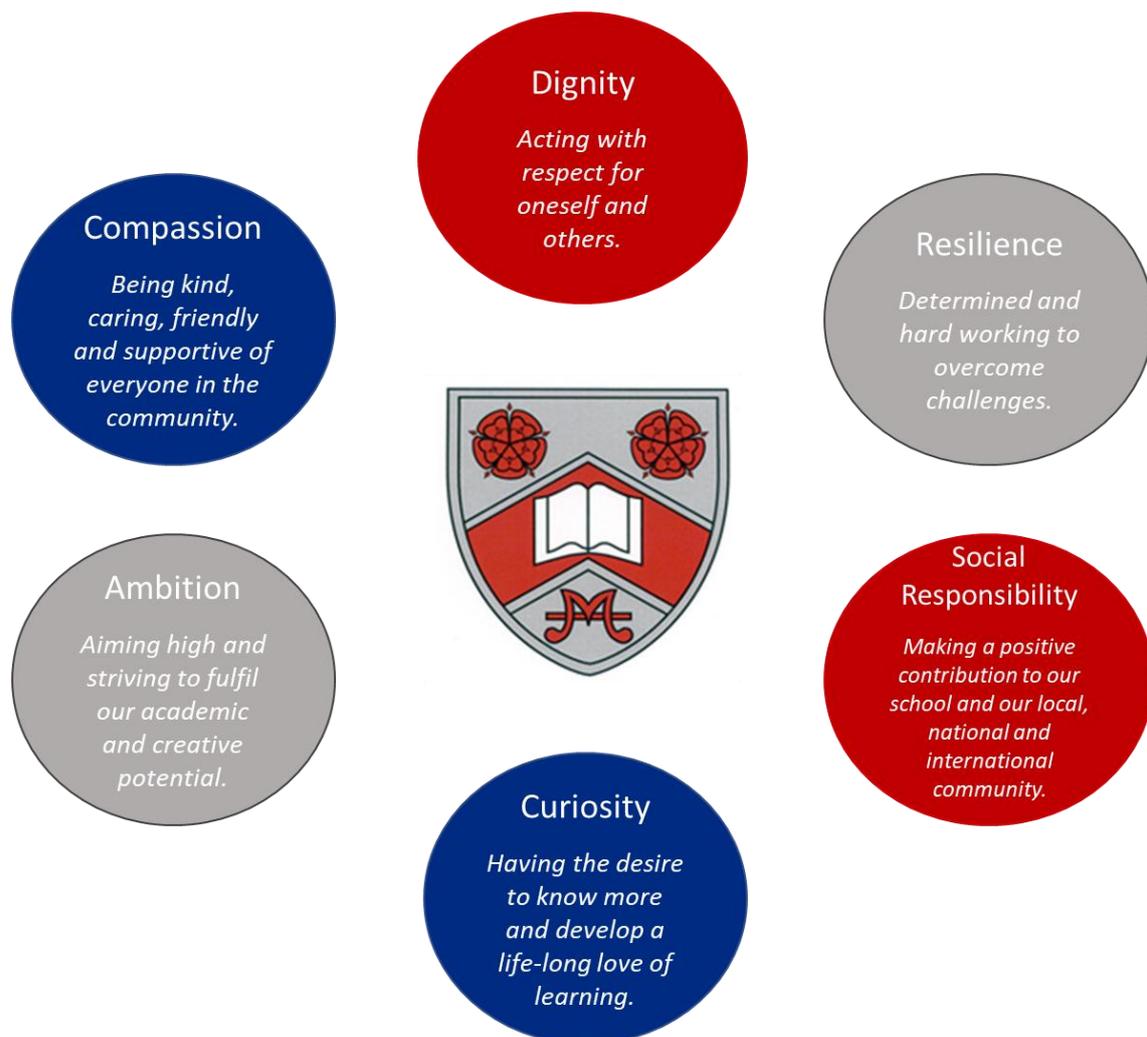
It is our aim to make all our students a PGHSuccess. A pupil becomes a PGHSuccess when they have the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes required to achieve their ambitions; academically, creativity and socially.

### **Our Mission is:**

To help our students to achieve their version of PGHSuccess, we have set ourselves the mission of *'preparing articulate, questioning, tolerant and independent women for the future'*, as we believe that these qualities which are central to success in our modern society.

### **Our Core Values:**

In order to achieve our mission statement, our policies and actions are guided by six core values. These core values are interwoven throughout all we do in school, including forming the basis of our pastoral care.



**Related Policies and Documentation**

- a) Safeguarding policy / procedures
- b) DfE - Keeping Children Safe in Education
- c) Attendance of Pupils with Health Needs Policy
- d) Behaviour policy
- e) Attendance Improvement Worker (AIW) Procedures
- f) PGHS Attendance Procedures Overview
- g) Haven Information
- h) Penalty Notice Procedures and Documentation
- i) Governors Attendance Reports
- j) RACs Monitoring Reports
- k) Covid Attendance Procedures Appendix for 2021-22
- L) Covid Recovery Plan 2021-22

## 1.0 Policy Rationale

The aim of this policy is to maximise pupil attendance, punctuality and outcomes. This policy aims for as many pupils as possible to attend every school day (190 days).

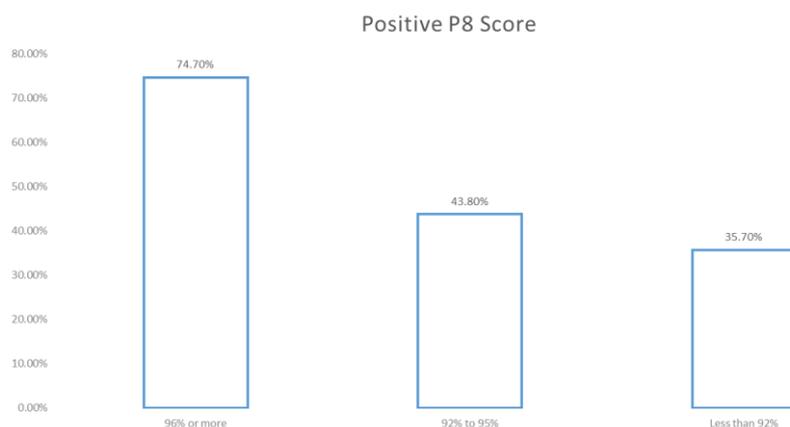
**Our aspiration is for all students to meet or exceed our 97% attendance target.**

We believe that great attendance is the first step towards success both within and beyond the classroom. Great attendance enables pupils to take a full part in the school community and to take maximum advantage of the opportunities available. As well as being a legal requirement, there is a strong evidence base, both nationally and at school level, which shows that regular absence has a significant negative impact on both learning/outcomes and the Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) of the individual.

**School performance data shows that the pupils who make the most progress consistently have impeccable attendance. Additionally, each year the majority of pupils who fall short of their full potential have low, or irregular, attendance.**

National data consistently demonstrates a clear link between attendance and achievement. Government analysis shows that 70% of young people with absence rates below 85% fail to achieve five or more good passes at GCSE, including English and Maths; and, around one third achieve no GCSEs at all. A number of reliable studies have suggested that a pupil who misses 10% of their KS4 education through absence is likely to attain a grade below their potential in each of their subjects. This figure increases with further absence.

Our school's performance data confirms these national trends. The graph below shows the impact of attendance on pupil performance. This graph shows a clear link between attendance and progress. Students at PGHS with an attendance rate in Year 11 of 96% or above are more than twice as likely to achieve a positive progress score than a persistently absent student. Individual progress figures indicate that students with strong attendance typically achieve a grade higher across all their subjects than those with regular absence.



Declining, low, or irregular attendance can be a contributing cause, or an indicator of, an emotional, health and wellbeing (EHWB) issue or safeguarding concern. We strongly believe that school is the safest environment for our students and the best place for them to develop positive, healthy, and strong relationships. A secure and growing evidence base demonstrates a clear correlation between absence and poor mental health. Research often concludes that young people are happiest when they feel part of a community and their lives resemble that of a typical teenager.

## 2.0 Legal Duties / Responsibilities

This section outlines the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance. These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006  
- Amendments made in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016.

Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. “All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have” (Education Act, 1996).

### 2.1 Attendance Registers

PGHS is required by law to maintain an accurate record of attendance. As a school we are legally instructed to follow-up any absence. When a pupil is absent from education, the pupil’s school is legally required to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school’s register.

#### 2.11 Reporting Attendance figures

Regulation 12(1) (2006) requires all schools to make a return to the local authority giving details of all pupils who regularly fail to attend school and/or who have a continuous period of unauthorised absence (10+ days). In the case of Lancashire, schools are required to submit this data on a termly basis. In the case of prolonged unauthorised absence the authority suggests that individual submissions are made as soon as possible.

In accordance with the school’s legal responsibilities, pupils who are recorded as unauthorised absent for 10 days or more will be reported to Lancashire’s ‘Children Missing Out’ (CMO) team; if the days are consecutive, if the pupil is believed to be missing or to have left the area, a ‘Children Missing from Education’ (CME) referral will be submitted.

## 2.2 Unauthorised absence

In line with government and local authority guidance, if a pupil is taken out of school without pre-authorisation or school being informed of a valid reason, or if the pupil is kept away for longer than was agreed, we are required to register the absence as unauthorised.

NB: Government regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for a leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

PGHS is legally required to investigate all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. We are committed to making every reasonable effort (parentmail, phone calls, letters) to establish why a pupil was absent. However, when no reason for the absence is provided, government policy requires us to record the absence as unauthorised.

Additionally, there may be circumstances where we are not satisfied with the reason given for an absence, in these situations we are again required by law to record the absence as unauthorised. Pupils with a high level of absence are required to provide medical evidence\*<sup>1</sup> (appointment cards, prescriptions etc...) to explain any further missed sessions. Failure to provide appropriate evidence will result in the attendance being unauthorised.

NB: Evidence of a medical appointment or a prescription can be used to authorise a short-term absence. If the absence continues, or additional absences occur, updated medical evidence will be required. If a student is required to have an extended period of absence due to a physical or mental health related condition, authorisation will only be given if the school receives written confirmation from a medical consultant – See our 'Pupils with Additional Health Needs' policy.

In line with local authority guidance, any absence prior or following a school holiday or period of religious observance will be unauthorised without medical evidence, regardless of the pupil's current overall attendance.

\*<sup>1</sup> To aid parents, medical evidence cards can be collected from reception or downloaded from the school's website. NB: Only stamped and dated cards will be accepted as medical evidence. Medical evidence cards can be provided instead of a medical certificate as school acknowledges that these are not always available and can incur a charge.

## 2.3 Purpose and scope of legal measures

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority (section 444 of the Education Act 1996). Penalty notices are fines of £120 imposed on **each** parent (The fine is reduced to £60 if paid promptly).

According to government guidance, the term ‘parent’ means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

As a school we work closely with the local authority to ensure government guidance relating to attendance is consistently and fairly applied. In cases of significant absence - either an extended unauthorised period of 10 sessions or more, or regular absence resulting in the individual pupil being classified as persistently absent (below 90%) – the school will work with the local authority to use legal interventions to promote better attendance, including penalty notices and prosecutions.

In a case of persistent absence, parents will receive a written warning of the possibility of a penalty notice. The poorly attending pupil will be set a monitoring period of 15 days. Any further absence during this period will result in a penalty notice being issued. Penalty Notices are issued by the court officer to the family’s home. Non-payment of the penalty notice within the 28-day time limit will trigger the prosecution process under the Provisions of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

### 2.31 Term time absence: Final position following Isle of Wight Council v Platt decision in Supreme Court

The Supreme Court delivered its judgement in relation to the Isle of Wight Council's appeal which sought clarification on what is meant by “fails to attend regularly” in the context of a prosecution for unauthorised non-attendance at school.

The Supreme Court said that “regular” means “in accordance with the rules published by the school” and rejected the view that regular meant “sufficiently frequently”. This clarifies the position regarding term time absence. The judgement confirmed that schools can determine whether an absence is authorised or not.

## 2.4 Elective Home Education (EHE)

Although we acknowledge that parents have the right to home educate their children, as a school we believe that in almost all circumstances the best place for a child to learn and develop is a mainstream school.

There is evidence that a sizeable number of EHE children do not receive a suitably broad education and that this is negatively impacting on their academic and social development, as well as limiting their future opportunities.

In cases of low attendance, the school will work with parents to improve their daughter's attendance. We strongly discourage parents from opting for EHE to avoid attendance related legal actions. Where it is believed that the potential of court action may have contributed to the decision to home school, this will be communicated to the local authority's EHE team.

### 3.0 Responsibilities

#### 3.1 The school will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently;
- Attendance expectations are clearly and regularly communicated to parents and pupils;
- Attendance targets are set for individual pupils;
- Attendance and punctuality data is regularly monitored at all levels;
- The pastoral team and senior leaders will work with pupils and their parents to reduce absence wherever possible;
- Attendance data patterns are monitored and used to identify wider pastoral issues, including EHWP and safeguarding concerns;
- Teaching staff work with pupils to minimise the impact of any absence;
- Attendance data is submitted to the local authority in a timely and appropriate manner; and,
- Legal interventions are applied in line with government and local authority guidance to ensure consistency and fairness.

#### 3.2 Pupils are expected to:

- Aspire towards perfect attendance;
- Work with their teachers to minimise any lost learning;
- be punctual to school and their lessons; and,
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

#### 3.3 The Parents / Carers are expected to:

- Aspire towards perfect attendance;
- Make every reasonable effort to ensure their child is able to attend school, e.g. ensuring suitable transport;
- Only allow their daughter's to be absent in unavoidable circumstances;
- Inform the school on each day of absence and give a specific reason;
- Avoid making routine appointments (e.g. orthodontists) during school time;
- Ensure the minimal amount of time is taken when an unavoidable absence occurs;
- Provide appropriate medical evidence to confirm both physical and mental health related absences;
- Seek permission for any planned 'Leave of Absence' in good time;
- Work with their daughter and the school to minimise the impact of any absence; and,
- Understand that they have a legal responsibility to ensure their child is in education and that schools are obliged by law to do all they can minimise absence.

#### 3.4 The school's Governors are expected to:

- Monitor the attendance of pupils through regular updates and reports;
- Support the school in the implementing its attendance procedures, e.g. lead Attendance panels as and when requested; and,
- Review policy updates to ensure legal requirements are met and best practice followed.

### 3.2 School Roles

#### 3.21 ALL Staff will:

- Help to create an atmosphere which is inviting, where pupils feel secure and comfortable;
- Work to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils;
- Encourage pupils to be involved in all aspects of school life;
- Accurately record attendance/punctuality to lessons;
- Take appropriate action to sanction poor punctuality;
- Ensure pupils are adequately supported when they return after an absence; and,
- Comment on attendance/punctuality at parents' evenings and on school reports where these factors have hindered progress.

#### 3.22 Form Tutors will:

- Register pupils accurately and on time (Complete reg at 8.55, save and close at 9.00)
- Promote great attendance at every opportunity;
- Ensure great attendance is acknowledged and rewarded (passport criteria, individual and form competitions etc...)
- Ensure pupils are provided with appropriate attendance and punctuality data;
- Tackle pupils who persistently arrive late;
- Complete 'return to school interviews' with members of their form;
- Notify the appropriate HoY when punctuality/attendance deteriorates;
- Work with pupils to improve punctuality/attendance; and,
- Collect in and pass on letters and medical evidence to the Attendance Officer.

#### 3.23 Subject teachers will:

- Monitor pupil attendance in their lessons and take appropriate action to ensure any knowledge gaps resulting from absence are addressed;
- Liaise with their HoD and/or HoY when appropriate, to ensure students have the opportunity to access missed resources; and,
- Ensure, when appropriate, that absence is raised as a barrier to progress in all communications with parents, including the student's written report and Parents' Evening consultation.

#### 3.23 HoY will:

- Monitor and report on attendance (Termly HoY Cohort Review);
- Ensure the Attendance Officer has an up-to-date list of students with high level EHWP concerns (High Risk).
- Identify students with attendance concerns on the Vulnerable Pupils TEAMS tracker. RAG rate according to severity of attendance issue.
- Complete attendance interviews with pupils with deteriorating attendance, a pattern of missed sessions or a concerning number of broken weeks (See attendance intervention guidance);
- As directed by the SLT Attendance Lead, support pupils with persistent attendance issues.
- Record and track attendance interventions relating to their year group (SharePoint Tracker);
- Respond to parental queries relating to attendance interventions;
- Review attendance figures to identify patterns of absence which could indicate an EHWP issue or safeguarding concern – record concerns on CPOMS;
- Ensure excellent and improving attendance is celebrated and acknowledged; and
- Work with the pupil, parents, form tutors, SLT and the AIW where attendance issues persist.

**3.24 Attendance Officer will:**

- Ensure attendance and absence is correctly recorded and categorised;
- Contact parents/guardians when reasons for absence are unknown, or unauthorised;
- Ensure letters are sent home when no explanation is given for a new period of absence;
- Provide data updates as requested by HoY and SLT;
- Report school attendance statistics to the LA and DfE as requested;
- Raise concerning attendance patterns with HoY, SLT, AIW, and DSL as appropriate;
- Record any safeguarding concerns resulting from attendance patterns or interactions with parents on CPOMs;
- Immediately notify linked staff of absence of high-risk students (list of students to track provided by DSL, SLT, AIW, and HoY);
- Record information relating to attendance interventions on the SharePoint Tracker;
- Work with the AIW to ensure priority pupils are acted upon.

**3.25 SLT Attendance and Punctuality Lead will:**

- Monitor attendance figures;
- Record the issuing of intervention letters on the SharePoint Tracker;
- Review attendance policy annually and assess its impact;
- Monitor attendance/punctuality procedures and ensure correct implementation;
- Provide governors with a termly 'Attendance and Punctuality' report;
- Add attendance and persistent absence data for key pupil groups to the Data Dashboard;
- Support HoY, the Attendance Officer and the AIW, when working with 'difficult' parents;
- Oversee the authorisation of 'agreed' absence and 'educational visits';
- Lead on attendance focused CPD;
- Regularly communicate attendance ambitions and policy expectations to parents;
- Liaise with the Safeguarding and Pastoral teams to ensure students absent due to EHWB issues or safeguarding concerns are appropriately supported, during their period of absence and when they return to school; and
- Oversee the work of the AIW to ensure action is taken against persistent non-attendeess;
- Ensure the Attendance Officer has an up-to-date list of students receiving AIW support.
- Oversee the RAG rating of students with attendance concerns on the Vulnerable Pupils TEAMS tracker.
- Oversee the completion of legal documentation for the issuing of PN2s; and,
- Support in the production of legal documentation related to the issuing of PN1s and prosecutions.

**3.26 AIW (Attendance Improvement Worker) will:**

- Track and monitor persistently absent pupils;
- Work with families to improve attendance;
- Ensure the Attendance Officer has an up-to-date list of students receiving AIW support;
- Ensure all interventions and communications are recorded on the SharePoint tracker;
- Inform parents of their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school;
- Communicate with parents when Penalty Notices and Prosecutions are issued;
- Support the SLT lead in the completion of legal paperwork for Penalty Notices and Prosecutions;
- Work in partnership with the pastoral team to ensure parents receive a consistent expectation;
- Evaluate and report back on the impact of attendance procedures & legal interventions;
- Ensure an update knowledge of the attendance legal framework;
- Authorise agreed absences and education visits; and
- Record any EHWB / Safeguarding concerns (CPOMS) which become apparent through the provision of attendance interventions and alert the HOY, SLT attendance lead or DSL as appropriate.

**3.27 DSL**

- Ensure all members of the attendance team have adequate safeguarding training;
- Review attendance concerns recorded by HoYs and SLT on the Vulnerable Pupils tracker;
- Ensure the Attendance Officer has an up-to-date list of high-risk students with safeguarding concerns;
- Contact parents and the allocated social worker of students who are on a CIN or CP plan, where necessary on the day of absence;
- Provide appropriate information to the pastoral and attendance team when a student with safeguarding concerns is absent;
- Ensure attendance issues are raised at multi-agency meetings relating to students with safeguarding needs and worrying attendance patterns. Ensure a written record of these discussions is kept and that appropriate information is recorded on cpoms and shared with SLT attendance lead
- Provide guidance and support when attendance measures, including legal interventions, are applied to students with safeguarding concerns.

## 4.0 Attendance Related School Procedures

### 4.1 Registering Attendance and Reasons for Absence

- Each pupil is officially registered twice a day – once by the form tutor at 8.55 and then by the Period 4 teacher at 1.20. In addition, each pupil is registered by their class teacher at the start of Periods 1, 2, 3, and 5.
- Latecomers, pupils who arrive after the main entrance has been locked at 8.50, are signed in via the late room (Dining Room). If no valid reason is given, the student will be issued with a break time detention.
- Arrivals after 9.30 are considered as absent and must be explained by parental contact. Otherwise unauthorised absence is recorded.
- Any absence must be specifically explained by parents as soon as possible (a statutory requirement). Parents are required to contact the school with the precise dates of any absence and the exact reason.
- Contact with the school should be made on each day of absence. Where parents fail to make contact, the School Attendance Officer will endeavour to contact them. If contact isn't possible on the first day of absence, a letter will be sent requesting confirmation of the reason for absence. A record of letters sent will be logged on CPOMs.
- When contacting school, a clear reason for the absence must be given, otherwise the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If when a parent is contacted, the whereabouts of the student is unknown, the caller should advise the parents to contact the police and the attendance officer should notify the Heads PE who should also log the missing child with the police. This should be recorded on CPOMS.
- Absences are categorised into one of the following groups:
  - Illness
  - Medical Appointment\*<sup>1</sup>
  - Permitted religious observance\*<sup>2</sup>
  - Unauthorised absence (truancy or not allowed)
  - Authorised absence – only issued in exceptional circumstances

\*<sup>1</sup> If a medical appointment cannot be scheduled out of school hours, we ask that parents send a copy of the appointment letter/card for our records. Alternatively, parents can submit a dated and stamped medical evidence card. These can be picked up from the school's reception or printed from our website. Where appropriate, we expect students to attend school before, and/or return to school after, the appointment. If no evidence of the appointment is provided, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

\*<sup>2</sup> LA guidance allows pupils to take a maximum of two days per academic year for religious festivals e.g. Eid. As a school with a multicultural cohort, we have decided to allow an extra day (i.e. a maximum of three) for religious observance per academic year. This extra day is an acknowledgement that many of our girls visit family during periods of religious observance, and therefore may require additional travelling time. If this extra day is not required, pupils should be return to school immediately. Any absence over this threshold will be classed as unauthorised absence.

- Absence of pupils who take part in a supervised educational activity outside of school, but which has been authorised by the school, is recorded as an "approved educational activity". This is the equivalent of 'present' for the purposes of the annual absence return and performance tables. Such pupils must be recorded as being off-site for health and safety reasons or in the event of an emergency.

- NB: Medical evidence will be requested if a pupil is absent either side of a school holiday, or day of religious observance.
- Medical evidence will be required for any pupil who is absent for more than two consecutive days. This should be given to the attendance officer upon the pupil's return to school. Failure to produce appropriate evidence (e.g. appointment cards or prescriptions) may result in the absence being unauthorised.
- In the event that the school has to close due to severe weather conditions, fire, heating failure or other structural damage, no attendance registers are completed.
- If at any point, an attendance related communication or enquiry identifies an EHWPB issue or safeguarding concern, this should be recorded on the appropriate systems (CPOMs / SharePoint) and key staff notified.

## 4.2 Attendance Interventions

### 4.21 Absence Checklists

- Pupils returning to school following an absence are supported with an Absence Checklist. This document has been designed to help a pupil catch-up on any missed work, important notices or homework instructions.
- Pupils are then expected to act independently to ensure their absence doesn't hinder progress. In some cases, the pupil may need to liaise with their subject teachers to double check details.

### 4.22 Attendance Letters

- The attendance of all pupils is monitored by the SLT Attendance Lead. Where a pupil's attendance profile causes concerns, a formal letter will be sent home to parents.
- An attendance letter may be triggered by one, or a combination of, the following concerns:
  - A pupil's overall attendance has suddenly fallen without a valid reason
  - A pupil's overall attendance percentage has fallen below a key milestone, e.g. below 90% the threshold for Persistent Absence.
  - A pupil's pattern of absence raises concerns (e.g. absence only on specific days)
  - A pupil has had regular broken weeks
  - A pupil has had unauthorised absence
- Students receiving an attendance letter should also be informally spoken to by either their form tutor, HoY or the AIW depending on the student's individual circumstances.
- The aim of these letters is to:
  - Raise the student's attendance record with their parent/carer
  - Ensure the parent/carer is aware of our school's attendance target
  - Highlight the school's legal responsibilities are regards to attendance
  - Initiate the opportunity for a more detailed discussion
  - Offer additional help and support, such as access to the Haven or assistance catching up on missed work.

NB: To ensure AIW interventions can be implemented in a timely manner, and with consistency, it is important that before any pupil who reaches the PA threshold, their parents have had at least two earlier official attendance related communications from school.

### 4.23 Administration of Attendance Letters

To ensure attendance letters can be used as legal evidence if the pupil's case eventually requires court action (a penalty notice or prosecution) all official attendance letters must be:

- Printed on official school headed paper;
- Dated;
- Addressed to ALL legal parents – staff member issuing the letter must check the pupils record on SIMS to identify if there are any legal parents living at different addresses;
- Written specifically about the target pupil – including individual attendance data;
- State that legal action may be considered / taken if absence continues, where appropriate identify the consequence of the action likely to be requested, e.g. the size of the fine;

- Offer the opportunity for any of the addressed parents to make contact / visit school to discuss their daughter's absence.

#### 4.24 Pastoral Support

- Student with concerning absence rates may be supported by a member of the pastoral (HoY), SEND or SLT team. The attendance link will work closely with the student and their family to raise attendance. Support from an attendance link could include:
  - Return to school interviews after every period of absence
  - Direct support with the completion of missing work
  - Regular communication with parents both to discuss issues in school and to identify the reasons for ongoing absence.
  - Creation of an attendance focused PSP to ensure the student is supported in school. This could include school-based counselling support and/or access to The Retreat /The Haven.
  - Liaison with the school nurse service to ascertain medical needs and to ensure adequate support.
  - Creation of a CAF to access appropriate Early Help.

#### 4.25 Governor / Headteacher Attendance Panels

- The school holds termly attendance panels. These are led by either a member of the school's governing body or the Headteacher. These panels give parents the opportunity to help school to understand the specific issues which are leading to their daughter's absence. At these panel meetings, school will explain the wide range of support measures (both pastoral and academic) available in school for pupils struggling with attendance, such as access to our Inclusion facility.

#### 4.26 Home Visits

- In cases where the exact location of an individual pupil has been impossible to ascertain, or where the school has safeguarding concerns (e.g. unclear if the pupil is being appropriately supervised during an absence), the school will complete a home visit. In cases, where nobody appears to be at home, a letter notifying parents that a home visit has been completed will be posted.

#### 4.27 Welfare Checks

- In cases where home visits have been unable to ascertain the location of the individual or where safeguarding concerns persist, school will request that the police carry out a welfare check. Repeat checks will be requested until the school is satisfied that the pupil is safe and appropriately supervised.

#### 4.28 Local Authority Submissions

- Students who have a continuous period of unauthorised absence of 10 days or more will be reported to the Lancashire County Council. In cases where we believe the individual is at home, a notification will be made to the 'Children Missing Out on Education' team. Where the exact location of the individual is unknown, a referral will be made the 'Children Missing Education' team. Submission to either CMOE or CME teams to be recorded on CPOMs.

#### 4.29 AIW Procedures

- If a pupil's attendance falls close to 90%, our Attendance Improvement Worker (AIW) will open a file on the individual and closely track their attendance. Students who miss 10 or more percent of their time in school are classified by government as being 'persistently absent' (PA). Students who fall into this category are proven to significantly underachieve in school and often experience other problems.
- If a pupil's attendance falls below the 90% persistent absence threshold, the AIW will write to parents to ensure they are aware of their daughter's high level of absence. This letter will clearly state that the school will use legal intervention if the identified pupil's attendance rate fails to improve. The AIW will work with the school's attendance team to improve attendance.
- If the pupil's attendance rate continues to deteriorate, and in cases where parents fail to cooperate, the AIW will take a number of actions to improve attendance. Typical actions include: Formal meetings in school, the setting up of parenting contracts, requests to attend a Governors' or Headteacher's attendance panel and home visits to check upon the individual's circumstances when not in school.
- In cases where the attendance of a persistently absent pupil continues to decline, or fails to show the expected improvement, a school actioned monitoring period will be established. Monitoring periods extend over 3 school weeks. Any further unauthorised absence during this timeframe will result in the school applying to the Court Office for a Penalty Notice.
- If a pupil's absence fails to improve after the issuing of a Penalty Notice, or in cases of rapid attendance decline, the school will liaise with the Court Office and where appropriate will support the initiating of Prosecution proceedings.

Penwortham Girls' High School is reluctant to initiate legal proceeding against parents. Legal measures are only ever used as a last resort once in-school interventions have failed to deliver the required improvement in attendance. However, school attendance is a statutory obligation under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Education Act 1996 and as such the school is required by law to work with the court office to ensure all pupils are able to attend school.

#### 4.3 Safeguarding Concerns

Where attendance interventions identify safeguarding concerns, these will be recorded on CPOMS and the DSL will be notified. The DSL may seek to work with the attendance team to provide any necessary support.

NB: In cases where safeguarding concerns have been identified, attendance procedures should continue in line with the processes outlined in this policy. In these cases, it is often of the utmost importance that the pupil attends school.

## 5.0 Leave of Absence

Leaves of absence are only authorised in exceptional circumstances. In accordance with government and LA guidelines, **the school does not authorise holidays or family visits**. Factors which are considered when deciding whether a leave of absence should be authorised are:

- The stage of a pupil's education and current progress;
- The pupil's attendance and punctuality record;
- The length and timing of the absence requested;
- The special reason(s) supporting the request;
- Previous requests for absence.

Parents who wish to apply for a leave of absence must complete the official request form. This form can be collected from reception or completed via the school's website. Completed forms should be returned to the school's Attendance Officer as early as possible, ideally at least 3 months prior to the proposed absence.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice. NB: In some cases, part of a requested leave of absence may be authorised due to exceptional circumstance, with the remainder of the requested absence being unauthorised. In this situation, the pupil's parents will still be fined if the unauthorised period exceeds the 10 sessions (5 days) threshold.

In line with Lancashire County Council procedure, when a request for leave is rejected and the proposed period of absence, if taken, would result in the issuing of a penalty notice, the school is required to notify the local authority who will send a 'warning letter' to the pupil's parents. A penalty notice request will only be submitted to the court office if the pupil is absent as originally proposed, or if the period of absence is extended. If a request for absence is made with insufficient time for a county warning letter to be actioned (usually two school weeks in advance of the first day of absence) school will write directly to parents stating that the absence has been unauthorised and that completing the trip as outlined will result in a penalty notice.

In certain circumstances, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Re-admission cannot be guaranteed. Absent pupils who can't be contacted and/or who are known or suspected to be out of region (or have left the country) will be registered as 'Missing from Education' (CME) with the Local Authority. This can result in the pupil being removed from the school's roll. The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (i-iii) of the Education (pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013)

### 5.1 Externally Arranged Educational Visits

Each year school receives a relatively large number of requests for absence for students to attend externally arranged events such as dance competitions, gymnastic training camps, acting auditions and netball tournaments.

If parents wish their daughter's to be granted leave of absence to attend these events, the event leader must provide an official communication which covers:

- The event leader – name and position.
- The dates and times they expect the student to be absent from school
- The venue where the event is being hosted
- The transport arrangements for accessing the event
- An outline of the activities to be completed and their value to the individual
- If appropriate (e.g. for adventure related activities), a risk assessment written by either the event organiser or site manager.

Where the above information is provided in advance of the absence, school will reflect on the event's potential benefits, the likely opportunity cost of missing time at school, and the individual's past attendance record before making a judgement. If authorised the event will be recorded as an educational visit rather than an absence.

NB: If the above information isn't provided in full in advance, or the absence taken doesn't reflect the event described in the letter, the absence will be unauthorised.

NB: If the pupil has low attendance, the request is likely to be rejected.

## 6.0 Tracking of Attendance Data

Attendance data collated and distributed to Pastoral Leadership on a **weekly** basis:

- A daily absence list is circulated to all pastoral leaders and SLT members.
- Cumulative attendance figures for whole school, year groups and PP cohorts; and
- Individual weekly figures for whole school, year groups and PP cohorts.

Attendance data included on the **half termly** Governors' Dashboard:

- Cumulative attendance percentages for whole school, PP and SEN cohorts; and
- Persistent absence (<90%) percentages for whole school, PP and SEN cohorts.

Attendance data reviewed on the **termly** HoY Report.

- Summarises year group level data;
- Identifying pupils with regular missed sessions, broken weeks, unusual absence patterns;
- Lists pupils close the persistent absence threshold (<92%);
- Outlines reasons for absence / lists interventions.

A full Attendance Review is completed **three times a year** for the Governor's Curriculum Committee. This report includes:

- Whole school attendance and trend tracking;
- Reasons for absence - compared with previous years;
- Year group attendance breakdowns and trend tracking;
- Punctuality reports – overall and year group specific;
- Subgroup analysis (Ethnicity and SEN breakdowns);
- Disadvantaged data – whole school and year group;
- Persistent absence data and trend tracking;
- An assessment of the current attendance situation;
- A summary of recent attendance / punctuality related policy / procedural developments;
- An outline of AIW interventions; and
- A log of PN requests (where appropriate).

## 7.0 Individuals Supported by Other Services

School attendance is a statutory requirement. The attendance procedures and interventions outlined in this report proceed parallel to any other support an individual may be receiving in school or through an outside agency. The law clearly states that the involvement of social services, CAMHS and other external agencies should not halt or delay attendance measures. In these circumstances, the school will work collaboratively, where appropriate, with any linked outside agencies but will also continue to implement the actions outlined in this report, including the issuing Penalty Notices and Prosecutions where pupils are persistently absent.

<b>This policy has been agreed by the Governing Body</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Reviewed - Curriculum	October 2015
Reviewed - Curriculum	January 2017
Reviewed – Curriculum	January 2018
Reviewed - Curriculum	January 2019
Reviewed - Curriculum	September 2019
Reviewed - Curriculum	October 2020
Reviewed - Curriculum	October 2021

Appendix:

Daily procedure for absent students without parental contact:

