St Winifred's Catholic Primary School

Whole-School Attendance Strategy

Leadership and Management

Our vision for attendance is:

St Winifred's Catholic Primary School is committed to continually raising the achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. We aim for all children to have good school attendance so they can participate in the broad and balanced curriculum that we offer to our pupils.

Our targets for attendance are:

We aim for all children to attend school at least 95% of the academic year

We will communicate our vision and targets to staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders by:

- Letters and emails to all families ensuring they are aware of our expectations and processes regarding attendance
- Update the school community each week through the school newsletter our attendance and punctuality figures for the week
- Display 'Moments matters, attendance counts' posters around the school
- Contact any families whose children are not attending school at least 95% of the time and closely monitor their attendance, arranging a meeting if necessary
- Discuss the importance of all staff focusing on attendance and punctuality through staff meetings and INSET days and reporting any concerns to the attendance champion
- Log any letters sent to parents on CPOMS so staff are also aware of concerns being raised

We recognise that absence from school can pose a safeguarding risk for our pupils. We will make sure that our staff, pupils and families understand these risks by:

- Communicating our school values to the school community through our website, social media accounts, newsletters etc
- Letters and emails to all families ensuring they are aware of our expectations and processes regarding attendance
- Display 'Moments matters, attendance counts' posters around the school
- Contact any families whose children are not attending school at least 95% of the time and closely monitor their attendance, arranging a meeting if necessary
- Discuss the importance of all staff focusing on attendance and punctuality through staff meetings and INSET days and reporting any concerns to the attendance champion
- Log any letters sent to parents on CPOMS so staff are also aware of concerns being raised
- Offer family thrive where appropriate
- Organise TAS (Team around the school) meetings/ TAC (Team around the child) meetings if appropriate and sign post families to support agencies where necessary

We expect good attendance and punctuality from our pupils. We use the following strategies to ensure that pupils understand this expectation:

- Closely monitor attendance and punctuality each fortnight and contact any families who are a concern
- Send letters/make phone calls to families to inform them that we are concerned about their child's attendance/punctuality
- Arrange meetings if attendance/punctuality doesn't improve
- Offer support for families who have poor attendance/punctuality
- Create personal attendance plans where appropriate for families who require it

Absence from school affects pupils' attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. We communicate this to our school community via:

- Our weekly newsletters
- Mental health week etc
- Assemblies
- PSHE work

We empower staff to take responsibility for attendance by:

- Discussing the importance of attendance and punctuality during our INSET days and staff meetings
- Sharing relevant data so appropriate staff know which children are most at risk of poor attendance and punctuality
- Encouraging teachers to talk to their pupils about attendance and punctuality
- Enabling staff to talk to parents/carers informally about attendance and punctuality

We recognise that attendance is an important area of school improvement. We demonstrate our commitment to this by making sure it is resourced appropriately, to create, build and maintain systems to promote good attendance. We do this by:

- Ensuing appropriate time is timetabled to monitor and check attendance and punctuality
- As a school we buy into SLA support from Lewisham council
- Our attendance champion attends any attendance conference/meetings throughout the cadmic year

Our designated attendance champion on the senior leadership team is:

Michelle Carey

Their responsibilities include:

- Developing and monitoring the school attendance policy
- Regularly monitoring attendance and punctuality for the whole school
- Liaising with Lewisham council where appropriate
- Working with the office staff ensuring all appropriate documentation is received by parents regarding attendance and punctuality
- Meet with parents and carers when required

We ensure that our governors have an accurate view of attendance at our school so that they can offer effective support and challenge. We keep governors informed by:

- Headteacher's reports;
- Discussing attendance and punctuality at appropriate governor body meetings
- Regular attendance updates in our weekly school newsletter

Relationships and Communication

As a school, we understand that developing a welcoming and positive culture is important in building trust and engagement and therefore promoting good attendance. We do this by:

- Ensure that strong pastoral systems are in place so that pupils and families are supported when needed;
- Have an open-door policy where families are welcome to arrange a meeting/phone call if they would like to
- Offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

We strive to communicate effectively with staff, pupils and families so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. Our strategies for doing this include:

- Written communications, such as letters home;
- Online communications, such as emails;
- Telephone contact, including welfare calls to parents;
- Face-to-face interactions, such as parents' evenings.
- Home visits where appropriate

We understand that some families will face barriers with communication. We take the following measures to ensure that our communication with parents is inclusive:

- Using a wide range of methods to inform parents (not written communications alone);
- Translating information sheets into languages other than English, i.e. Spanish;
- Offering the option of attending meetings over the phone (for example, to support those with work commitments or mobility issues).

When required, we work with partners to promote good attendance. Examples include:

- Lewisham attendance team
- New Woodlands, Drum Beat and other schools
- Lewisham outreach
- Team around the school
- Family thrive
- Social services
- Tidemill Attendance Hub
- Lewisham SEN services

We strive to model respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture.

All staff members:

- Treat pupils with dignity, build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries;
- Take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively;
- Understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity;
- Communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and wellbeing.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Treat staff with respect;
- Actively support the work of the school;
- Ask staff for support when this is needed;
- Let us know as soon as possible when there are issues which may affect absence.
- Try to make any medical appointments outside of school hours where possible
- Provide supporting documentation about their child's absence if it is below 90%

We communicate this expectation by:

- Using home-school agreements;
- Having a dedicated attendance phone line;
- Making it easy to contact school when there is an issue;

Systems and Data

We use clear and consistently applied systems and processes to improve attendance and to address absences. Our systems include:

- Scholar pack
- Emails/Telephone calls
- School ping
- Attendance phone line

We use robust school systems to provide useful data at cohort, group and individual levels to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups. These groups include:

- Children who have a social worker, including looked-after children;
- Young carers;
- Children who are eligible for free school meals;
- Children who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL);
- Children who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

We analyse attendance data regularly to identify issues and facilitate early intervention. This includes raising concerns with partner agencies that work with families.

Every member of staff in our school has a role in promoting good attendance. We help staff to know and understand this responsibility by:

- Making specific reference to attendance in staff roles and responsibilities descriptions;
- Talking about attendance during INSET days and staff meetings;
- Discussing attendance issues during staff meetings;
- Using CPOMS to express concerns

Attendance leaders provide the following information to staff to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement appropriate support:

- Access to scholar pack
- CPOM alerts of parents who have been contacted regarding attendance/punctuality concerns

Our school attendance and safeguarding policies clearly outline:

- The key principles related to attendance and punctuality;
- Rules pupils and parents need to follow;
- Routines;
- Who to contact if there are any problems
- Consequence systems.

The escalation procedures to address absence are:

- Communicated to parents and carers;
- Implemented consistently;
- Reviewed regularly.

We ensure this by:

- Providing information about escalation procedures and attendance interventions at the beginning of the school year;
- Explaining the systems in place during targeted attendance meetings with families;
- Monitoring the use and effectiveness of interventions to ensure that these are implemented consistently;
- Gathering data on the escalation procedures to address absence;
- Ensuring that a member of the senior leadership team has responsibility for reviewing escalation procedures regularly.

We make sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and that their impact is reviewed regularly.

Intervention

We will use the following data to identify where attendance interventions need to be targeted:

- Register inspections;
- Analysis of data from school registers (including analysis of absence codes);
- Analysis of punctuality data;
- Analysis of information recorded on the school safeguarding systems;
- Records of home visits and their outcomes;
- Information provided by other staff.

We will monitor and analyse this data regularly to ensure that interventions are delivered quickly to address absence.

We will implement a range of strategies to support pupils and families who require this including:

- Meetings with key staff
- Offering family thrive support

We will monitor the impact of any interventions, making adjustments if necessary, and use the findings to inform future strategy.

The following person is responsible for monitoring our attendance interventions:

Michelle Carey

Where interventions fail to address attendance issues, we will:

- Identify the reasons why;
- Where appropriate, change or adjust the intervention;
- Work with Lewisham attendance team for further advise and support
- Escalate concerns where appropriate to the local authority who will explore barriers and follow statutory attendance processes including legal action if appropriate

We will follow local authority codes of conduct, policies and procedures and make referrals for statutory intervention when school-based interventions have not resulted in improved attendance and relevant triggers/thresholds are met. The person responsible for this is:

Michelle Carey

This strategy will be reviewed every: 2 years

By: Michelle Carey

Date of last review: September 2024