

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

<b><u>Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
1. Statement of intent	2
2. Legal framework	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Definitions	4
5. Attendance expectations	4
6. Absence procedures	5
7. Attendance register	7
8. Authorising parental absence requests	8
9. SEND and health related absences	9
10. Leave during lunch times	10
11. Truancy	11
12. Missing children	11
13. Attendance intervention	12
14. Working with parents to improve attendance	12
15. PA	13
16. Legal intervention	14
17. Monitoring and analysing absence	14
18. Training of staff	15
19. Monitoring and review	15

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

**1. Statement of intent**

The schools in our federation believe that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is the Assistant Headteacher for Vulnerable Pupils Emma Bestford. Each school in our federation has a PSA who works in partnership with the school attendance officer and the Local Authority attendance team. At Golden Flatts the PSA is Clare Taylor and at Lynnfield the PSA is Diane Youll. The school's attendance officer can be contacted via the appropriate school office. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

**2. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Mental Health and Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Attendance Officer Home Visit Policy

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across each school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through each school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the Strategic Team to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Executive Headteacher in partnership with the Head of School is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the Strategic Team to the attendance officer role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance across the federation.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance and ensuring this is understood by all stakeholders.
- Line managing the work of the PSA in each school and ensuring that through them the federation's attendance policy and procedures are consistently applied.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

#### 4. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

**Absence:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

**Authorised absence:**

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

**Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

**Persistent absence (PA):**

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

#### 5. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

Doors open to pupils at 8:30am. The school day starts promptly at 8:45am, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by 8:40am. Pupils will have a morning break of 15 minutes which will be identified on the class timetable. For Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils the lunch break will start at 11:30pm, which will last until 12:30pm. The Key Stage 2 lunch break will start at 12:00pm and last until 1:00pm. Pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by 8:45am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.
- At 8:45am the entrance doors will close. For pupils arriving after this time at Golden Flatts they will need to go to the main office and at Lynnfield they would need to go to the late door (PSA Mrs Youll's office). Pupils arriving after this time would be marked in the register as late.
- The morning register will close at 9:15am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- The afternoon register will be marked by 12:30pm in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 1:00pm in Key Stage 2. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close at 1:30pm in Key Stage 2 and 1:00pm in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

## **6. Absence procedures**

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 8:45am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, the PSA will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

We will closely monitor ongoing absence. On the third day of a pupil absence parents will be contacted again so we can be updated on the welfare of the child and to ascertain a likely return to school date.

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school buys into the LA attendance package. Register checks by the LA attendance team will take place every 4 weeks. Working in conjunction with the LA attendance team, the PSAs and attendance officer will identify the most appropriate course of action for pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. We will also seek advice for any pupil above 90% whose attendance shows a declining picture or demonstrates an emerging pattern of absence that needs to be addressed.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

To enable us to closely monitor attendance and enable us to act in a proactive manner we group attendance into 4 waves:

- **Wave 1: Children whose attendance is above 96%**  
Children in this category will be awarded attendance certificates across the academic year. We carefully review the attendance of those children falling between 96% and 98% and where appropriate offer advice and guidance to parents and carers to ensure their child's attendance percentage does not move into wave 2.
- **Wave 2: Children whose attendance falls between 93% and 95.9%**  
The parents and carers of children in this category will be contacted by the PSA offering support and practical advice to improve attendance on a termly basis. Contact will be made at or around parent consultation meetings. This will be in addition to the contact made by the PSA due to an ongoing absence. The importance of moving into 'wave 1' will be stressed.
- **Wave 3: Children whose attendance falls between 90% and 92.9%**  
The parents and carers of children in this category will be contacted by the Assistant Head for Vulnerable Pupils or the PSA offering support and practical advice to improve attendance on a half termly basis. The initial meeting will be a face to face meeting where reasons for absence will be discussed. This will be followed by half termly check-ins. This will be in addition to the contact made by the PSA due to an ongoing absence.
- **Wave 4: Children below 90% attendance**  
If a pupil's attendance drops below 90% the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents/carers at the school. The attendance of pupils below 90% is monitored on a weekly basis. The monitoring record identifies actions that have been taken to improve attendance and shows the impact of these actions. This information is shared with the Strategic Team on a weekly basis. Parents will be given a half termly update on their child's attendance. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement. The school will work with the LA attendance team and formal attendance procedures will be put in place. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the attendance officer working in partnership with the LA attendance team

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents/carers.

## 7. Attendance register

The school uses SIMs to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

## **8. Authorising parental absence requests**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Executive Headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the Executive Headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The Executive Headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

### **Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the Executive Headteacher in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Executive Headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Illness and healthcare appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

### **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:



The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Executive Headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

#### **Religious observance**

The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals.

#### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

### **9. SEND and health related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Mental Health and Behaviour Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

#### **10. Leave during lunch times**

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the Head of School – it is at the Head of Schools discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents will need to meet with the Head of School to discuss their request so we can fully understand the reasons why the child is leaving the premises during lunch time. The Head of School will set out the procedures for collecting and dropping off the child to make sure that it is done safely and does not impact on curriculum time. When permission has been granted parents will need to sign to say that they take responsibility for their child during the lunch period.

Pupils will leave the school premises within 10 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch.

Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office at Golden Flatts or the Late Door at Lynnfield when taking them off the premises. The pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register. A member of staff will be available before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the identified member of staff has given their permission.

The Head of School reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns linked to the late return of the pupil for the start of the afternoon session. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the Head of School's decision.

Permission will be updated on a termly basis – letters will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

## **11. Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8:45am and 12:30 / 1:00pm depending on the Key Stage, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school and sign back in again.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Executive Headteacher and Head of School are notified. Incidents of truancy are very infrequent, therefore, when the school is made aware of a child truanting a risk assessment will take place to determine the underlying reasons why this has happened and the appropriate course of action to take. The following procedures will be followed:

- Contact will be made with the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school. If it is determined that this is an incident of truancy advice and support around next steps will be gathered from the LA attendance team. The matter will be discussed with the DSL to identify if there is a safeguarding concern. In this case the LA Chub may also be contacted for advice. If appropriate the school will make a safer referral. If the child / family have social care involvement the social worker will be contacted.
- If further escalation following the risk assessment is not appropriate in the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school. The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.

## **12. Missing children**

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school and are collected by a parent or guardian or an appropriate adult who has been identified by a person who holds parental responsibility. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the Head of School / Executive Headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Head of School.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Changing rooms
  - The library
  - Any outbuildings

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

- The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after **10 minutes**, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will record on CPOMs all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The Head of School will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Mental Health and Behaviour Policy.

The Head of School will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. This investigation will be shared with the Executive Headteacher and where appropriate recorded on CPOMs. Any actions that need to be taken as a result of the incident will be done in line with the school's appropriate policies. Any policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

### **13. Attendance intervention**

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the Strategic Team, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

### **14. Working with parents to improve attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Executive Headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the Head of School and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

#### **15. PA**

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.

#### **16. Legal intervention**

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the LA attendance team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Executive Headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

#### **17. Monitoring and analysing absence**

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a termly and annual basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

This analysis will be reported to governors through the Executive Headteacher's report. Through their meeting cycle the governing body will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the Strategic Team in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The PSAs will send a weekly attendance update to the Executive Headteacher and the attendance officer providing the following information:

- Whole school attendance percentage from the start of term to date
- Whole school attendance percentage for the week
- Record of pupils whose attendance falls below 90% detailing school actions and impact
- A record of pupils with a Friday absence

On a fought nightly basis, the Executive Headteacher will contact the PSAs in order to compare the school's attendance percentage on a specified day with the national figure.

#### **18. Training of staff**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing body will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing body will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

The Federation of Golden Flatts and Lynnfield Primary Schools  
Attendance and Absence Policy

**19. Monitoring and review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Headteacher and AHT for Vulnerable Pupils (schools attendance officer). The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2023.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

**Review Date: August 2022**  
**Reviewed by: S. Sharpe**  
**Approved by Governors:**  
**Next Review Date: August 2023**