Skegness Infant and Junior Academies Attendance Strategy

2022-2023

The strategy is based on guidance produced by the Department for Education which can be found here: Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities.
https://bit.ly/3BOc7Ix

Leadership and Management

Our vision for attendance is:

Many of the reasons for poor attendance at the academy begin early, so we need to ensure we have an effective long-term strategy focusing on access and inclusion in early years, supporting children's transition into reception and throughout each key stage. We need to gather the views of children to fully understand their access to learning needs, feelings of safety, and emotional wellbeing and in order to deliver sustainable improvement in levels of attendance. If a pupil's absence from school is 10% or higher, they are classed as a persistent absentee. We need to identify the reasons why children are absent and provide support to prevent them falling into the PA (Persistently Absent) category. We will do this through setting clear expectations, identifying who is at risk of PA, exploring underlying causes, ensuring effective systems are in place, engaging with all stakeholders and using rewards and incentives. Moving into September 2022 we are committed to raise whole school attendance to 95% (pre-Covid levels) by the end of the academic year of 2023. When children are within the academy grounds, they can begin to achieve their potential and become RICHER.
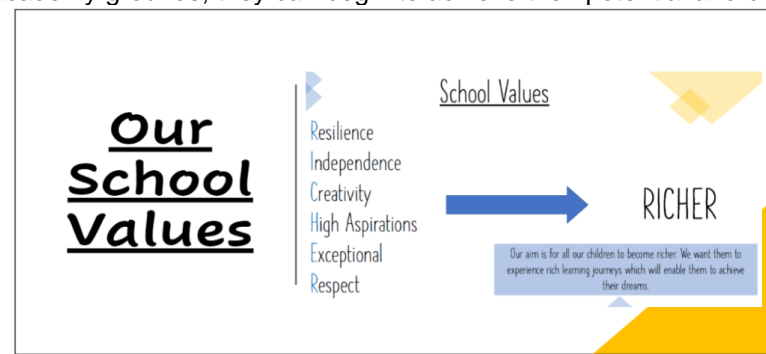
Our targets for attendance are:

- To improve the overall attendance from 91% to pre-Covid levels of 95%
- To review the attendance of key groups to identify target families to work with

- Reduce persistent absence to below 10%
- Improve the attendance of key focus groups

Our Education Welfare Officer's responsibilities are-
- Monitoring the academy's attendance policy to ensure it is used appropriately.
- monitoring attendance and reporting to the Executive Principal
- Liaising with the academy office staff responsible for attendance;
- Devising, implementing and monitoring any interventions or escalation procedures;
- To support all attendance strategies and monitor impact

We ensure that the Trust has an accurate view of attendance at our school so that they can offer effective support and challenge. We keep them informed by:
- Allowing access to all attendance data systems
- Engaging with our AAC (Academy Advisory Council) with termly attendance updates in meetings;
- Planned visits to site

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:
- offering a variety of extracurricular activities so that pupils can build better relationships with each other in a range of contexts;
- ensuring that strong pastoral systems are in place so that pupils and families are supported when needed;
- organising a range of social events for parents to build a sense of community;
- ensuring that staff contact families with positive news, rather than only contacting them when there is a problem.

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); regular telephone contact, including welfare calls and texts to parents; face-to-face interactions, such as parents' evenings, information sessions and parenting workshops.
- using interpreters;
- Visits arranged to parent/carers home if convenient

When required, we work with partners to promote good attendance. Examples include:
- Family Action,
- Safer Families,
- social workers and Early Help Workers
- BOSS (Behavioural Outreach Support Services) (Behavioural Outreach Support Services)
- Lincolnshire Pupil reintegration unit

Systems and Data

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 (English as an Additional Language));
- children who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

Attendance data is available to staff to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement appropriate support:

- All class teachers have access to attendance data on SIMS and Insight. These reports can be accessed at any time and attendance is discussed during Pupil Progress Meetings 3 times per year or with individual staff when needed.

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. We do this by:
- School Attendance Panel meetings
- Action plans developed in liaison with parents and carers
- Discussion at fortnightly safeguarding meetings

Intervention

We will use the following data to identify where attendance interventions need to be targeted:
- register reviews carried out by the Attendance Officers
- analysis of punctuality data;
- analysis of trends in attendance (on an individual, group and whole-school level);
- information recorded on the school safeguarding systems;
- records of home visits and their outcomes;
- records of interventions offered to individuals and groups and their outcomes;
- information provided by pastoral and other staff.

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

We use specialist staff to support pupils and their families to identify and overcome barriers to attendance. Specific roles and responsibilities include:
- Education Welfare Officer – responsible for overseeing attendance remains at a high level and reducing PA
- Family Key Worker- works directly with hard to engage families in the community to address barriers to school attendance amongst other things.
- Attendance Offices based in each academy to support the work of the EWO (Education Welfare Officer)

- Pastoral team who delivers specific interventions such as counselling, Theraplay, ELSA, Lego Therapy

We will create action plans in partnership with families and also include agencies that may be supporting families. These contain
- Targets for attendance improvement
- Reasonable deadlines for improvement
- Details of supportive measures
- Any further identified support

We will implement a range of strategies to support pupils and families who require this. Examples include:
- Referrals into partner agencies
- Signposting to services to support families
- Praise and reward for children where attendance improves

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:

- The Education Welfare Officer

This strategy will be reviewed termly.

By the Executive Principal, SLT (Senior Leadership Team) members and EWO

Date of review:

Action Plan		
Leadership and Management		
Aim	Action needed	Deadline/who?
To communicate our vision and targets to staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders by raising the profile through:	- Increase the frequency of messages via newsletters,Tweets and direct communication with parents/carers - Improve the communication available via the school website; - Ensure attendance is on the agenda at school events including parent/carers evenings - Attendance focused assemblies encourage discussion in class time (Oracy link)	

	• Gather children's views on how to improve their own and others attendance (use forms in KS2 (Key Stage 2), address through pastoral monitoring/class discussion/School Council) • Increase rewards and praise for **improvements** in attendance. Reward after shorter timeframe so children feel motivated to continue to improve. Rewards should not involve spending big amounts or increase workload for staff.	
To 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:	• Timetable regular training through twilights and Inset days to keep the profile high. • Clarifying our attendance expectations at timely intervals through the academic year including risks to children not attending to children, staff and p/c • Update all information leaflets available as hard copies or from the website • Revisiting attendance messages during all contact with parents/carers to raise awareness (drip feed effect) • EP to meet with EWO to identify targeted support for families • Ensure all staff are aware of the importance of good attendance by raising the profile and monitor closely. • Up to date information available to staff via the academy Safeguarding Channel- 1 x per term • Increase regularity of information/messages shared in assemblies and class time.	
To promote good attendance and punctuality from our pupils. We use the following strategies to ensure that pupils understand this expectation:	• Increase positive praise/appropriate rewards and incentives for good attendance especially improvements. • Increase regularity of information/messages shared in assemblies and class time. • Clear messages from pastoral staff for pupils with poor attendance; • Develop personal attendance plans after discussion with children and reward at successful completion	
To empower staff to take responsibility for attendance by:	• Improve staff understanding on the consequences of poor attendance offering relevant training to help staff to promote good attendance • sharing relevant data so that they know which groups are most at risk of poor attendance • Share information on improving PA and attendance • encourage class teachers to talk to their pupils about attendance. • encouraging staff to chat informally with parents/carers about attendance.	
To demonstrate our commitment to school improvement by addressing attendance issues and making sure it is resourced appropriately, to create, build and maintain systems to promote good attendance. We do this by:	• Share the AIP key priorities ensuring copies are placed in the staffroom. • Communicating everyone's responsibility to promoting attendance and punctuality during training workshops and their role in school improvement • Hold regular office meetings across sites. Invite EWO to attend. • Ensure PP plan links to attendance strategy and ensure all staff are aware of poor attendance PA of PP cohort	

To ensure that our staff are trained to use our attendance systems effectively and promote good attendance in school.	- Use Insight system to demonstrate the link between attainment and attendance. - Offer follow up sessions to ECTs (Early Career Teachers) and RQTs. - Book EWO to demonstrate how he uses data analysis. Include examples of case studies where there is a clear impact and improvement. - EWO to track attendance/PA of key groups, details of interventions and impact. Share results with staff at the end of each term.	
**Relationships and Communication**	
To communicate effectively with staff, pupils and families so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.	- Improve all written communications, such as letters home and information leaflets; - Increase frequency of online communications, such as the school website, emails and the use of social media; - Ensure all contacts are up to date and we have at least 2 contacts per child on each site. - Let pupils know the academy attendance expectations/rules/routines/consequences and impact of not conforming. Encourage regular attendance discussions via School council, class discussion to promote and encourage ideas for improvement	
To understand that some families will face barriers with communication.	- Translate information sheets into languages that are commonly spoken by families; - Ensure that open evenings and information-sharing sessions are recorded for those unable to attend where possible; offer the option of attending meetings virtually (for example, to support those with work commitments or mobility issues).	
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 should: - 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. - Place the above into Safeguarding channel and in shared spaces such as the staff room. This is from the DFE (Department for Education) guidance and needs to be feedback to staff during training sessions	
To encourage good relationships with parent carers	- Communicate the academy expectation that parent/carers must inform us as soon as possible when there are issues which may affect absence. - Encourage them to ask for support when this is needed for attendance related issues. - Use Home school agreement to remind p/c of their duties - Remind them of the multiple ways they can communicate with the academy - Support p/c with FKW when needed.	
**Systems and Data**	

To analyse attendance data regularly to identify issues and facilitate early intervention. This includes raising concerns with partner agencies that work with families.	• Ensure EWO has access to a range of attendance data platforms such as Perspective Lite, FFT to use data to show impact and improvement. • Plan in catch up meetings with office staff and EWO to review attendance, strategies, impact and intervention needed • Prepare case studies ready for Ofsted to support success stories.	
To ensure that every member of staff in our school has a role and responsibility in promoting good attendance.	• Discuss attendance during line management meetings to keep the profile high • Ask site-based attendance staff to give staff regular updates on best attending classes, year group etc • Book regular slot during staff meeting to discuss attendance issues during staff meetings.	
All staff to understand the escalation procedures to address absence.	These are the suggestions in the guidelines offered by the Department for Education. **To ensure this by:** • providing information about escalation procedures and attendance interventions on the school website, information leaflets, open evenings and via any other relevant means; • 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; • providing training and support for staff who are directly responsible for improving attendance • gathering data on the escalation procedures to address absence; • using this data to analyse whether the current systems are working and to identify areas for further development; • senior leadership team to review escalation procedures regularly either during fortnightly CPOMS or through planned office meetings. • Ensure all processes are understood by pupils, parents and carers; implemented consistently; reviewed regularly.	
Intervention		
To monitor the impact of any interventions, making adjustments if necessary, and use the findings to inform future strategy. **Where interventions fail to address attendance issues, we will identify the reasons why and, where appropriate, change or adjust the intervention.**	• EWO and office attendance team to regularly analyse data and compile a red list to keep under review • Decide criteria for red list and actions needed as a result of being on it. • All interventions will be monitored 2 x term and discussed via planned office meetings. • All action plans created at SAPs will be kept in a central area to monitor progress. Use the Teams Safeguarding channel files. • Interventions will be decided using • analysis of data from school registers (including analysis of absence codes); • analysis of punctuality data; • benchmarking across key groups and particular days in year groups/classes. • analysis of trends in attendance (on an individual, group and whole-school level); • information recorded on the school safeguarding systems; • records of interventions offered to individuals and groups and their outcomes; • information provided by pastoral and other staff.	