



**VAUGHAN**  
Primary School

# ATTENDANCE PARENT FORUM

TUESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2024



# Aims

- Explaining how attendance and punctuality links to schools safeguarding duties
- Understand national and local attendance challenges
- To explain why attendance and punctuality is important and how this affects a pupil's education
- To explain why attendance matters for a pupil's wider life chances
- To understand Government and LA expectations in respect of school attendance
- To demonstrate how this shapes the school's attendance policy and procedures
- How do we approach attendance and punctuality priorities at Vaughan?
- To clarify when attendance becomes a concern
- How can I tell if my child is too ill to attend school?
- Moments Matter, Attendance Counts Campaign
- Opportunity to provide Q&A



# Why is attendance & punctuality considered part of safeguarding?

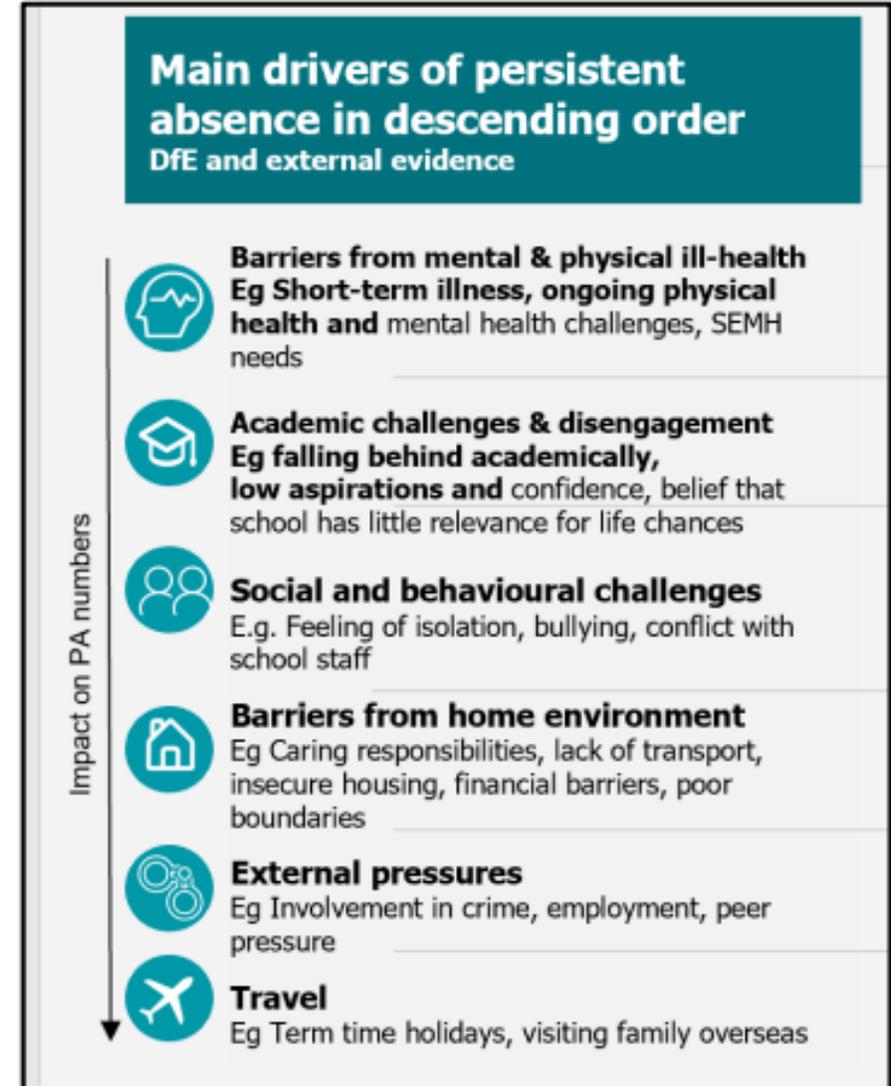
- The **law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient education** suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.
- It is the **legal responsibility of every parent** to make sure their **child receives that education either by attendance at a school** or by education otherwise than at a school.
- Where **parents decide to have their child registered at school**, they have an **additional legal duty to ensure their child regularly attends** that school.
- It is **important that we see pupils and their families regularly**, so that we can **build good relationships** to provide not only education, but **support where it is needed**.



# Attendance Challenges

Reasons for persistent and severe absence are often broad and complex and reflect wider family circumstances, requiring a whole family response.

- Parental attitudes have shifted
- There are higher rates of illness and parents are more likely to keep children off school for minor illnesses
- Schools and councils are grappling with trickier cases of emotionally based school avoidance
- There is increased economic pressure on families





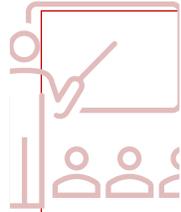
# Why is attendance & punctuality important?

- Pupils miss out on work and fall behind
- Pupils have lower motivation to attend – could become a school refuser
- Pupils could be more likely to have poor behaviour
- Pupils miss out on social interaction and extra curricular opportunities – could affect friendship groups
- There is a clear link between poor attendance and lower academic achievement
- 90% of pupils with absence rates below 85% fail to achieve 5 or more GCSEs at Grades A-C and around one third of these pupils do not achieve any GCSEs at all

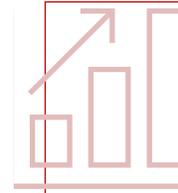




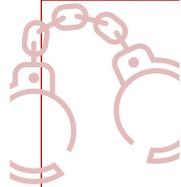
# Why attendance matters



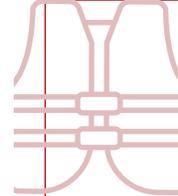
Improving  
attainment



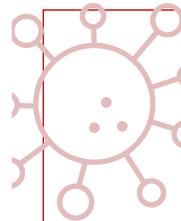
Reducing  
disadvantage



Preventing risky  
behaviours



Lifeline for the  
most vulnerable



Recovering from  
covid

**This is why all children have a legal entitlement to a full-time education and it is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure this happens**



# Government & LA Expectations

- The DfE has published [working together to improve school attendance](#), with updated guidance having come into effect from September 2023
- [School attendance policy](#) has been revised to take account of new guidance, based upon a new model provided by the Local Authority
- Harrow Council was keen to see that all schools in the borough adopt model policy to ensure policy and processes were consistent

Vaughan Primary School

Primary Attendance and  
Absence Policy

Signed by:

K Jones	Headteacher	Date: 18.07.2023
N Anthony	Chair of governors	Date: 18.07.2023

  
Department  
for Education

**Working together to  
improve school  
attendance**

Guidance for maintained schools,  
academies, independent schools, and  
local authorities



# Government Guidance: Key Headlines

- The thrust is very much **on identifying specific barriers for individual pupils or groups of pupils**, including analysing data. Schools should “**build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them**”.
- Schools are expected to “**monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families**”. This should go beyond headline attendance percentages and look at individual pupils, cohorts and groups (including punctuality).
- It adds that schools should: “**Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data**. This may, for example, include pupils in a year group with higher-than-average absence or for pupils eligible for free school meals if their attendance falls behind that of their more advantaged peers.”
- It also includes a list of what **school attendance policies** must include, such as **the point at which Fixed Penalty Notices for absence** and **other sanctions will be sought**.
- Government attendance target 96%



# Attendance Priorities

## Culture & Ethos

- Introduction attendance & punctuality weeks
  - Assemblies
  - Certificates
  - Medals
  - Amazon Prize Draw
- Weekly attendance competitions & class trophies
- Celebrating improved attendance
- Named Attendance Champion
- Role modelling
- Regular newsletter articles

## Policies & Legislation

- Working together to improve school attendance guidance
- School attendance policy
- Use of Local Authority Attendance Intervention Model

## Analysing & Acting Upon Data

- Accurate attendance registers and effective processes to follow up when absence occurs
- Monitor and analyse attendance data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support
  - Persistent Absentee – where attendance < 90%
- Severely Persistent Absentee – where attendance < 50%
- Develop strategies to improve attendance

## Stakeholder Relationships

- Build strong relationships with families, seek to understand & remove barriers to attendance
- Share info & work collaboratively with other schools, LA's, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe
  - Inform a pupil's social worker if they have an unexplained absence or leave the school roll

**Improving attendance requires curiosity and tenacity; it is never finished**



# When does attendance becomes a concern?

0 days of school	100%	Perfection
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%	Excellent
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%	Good
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%	Slight Concern
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%	Concerned
Equates to 30 days off school each year	85%	Very Concerned

- Anyone with attendance less than 90% will be getting monitored regularly
- Persistent Absentee - where attendance < 90%
- Severely Persistent Absentee - where attendance < 50%

## Process

- 1st reminder letter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> reminder letter
- 3<sup>rd</sup> letter inviting to meeting
- Possible attendance contract implemented
- Escalation to LA Court Attendance Officer



# Is my child too ill for school?

- It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell. The NHS has published official guidance should you be unsure: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
- There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.
- If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

UK Health Security Agency

NHS

## Should I keep my child off school?

**Yes**

	Until...
Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

**No**

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek

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SCAN ME

Advice and guidance  
To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfoc>.



# Moments Matter, Attendance Counts

- Government is launching a national campaign to remind parents and carers of the importance of school attendance.
- Campaign messages aim to primarily reach those parents and carers whose children are taking preventable odd days of absence – or “avoidable absence” – rather than children who face greater barriers to attendance.



A photograph of a classroom full of children in school uniforms. The image is tinted with a reddish-pink color. In the foreground, a boy on the left is smiling and looking towards the right. Next to him, a girl is laughing with her mouth open. In the center, a boy is smiling and has his right hand raised high. To his right, a girl with glasses is looking towards the right. The background is filled with other children, some also raising their hands. The text 'Questions?' is overlaid in large white font on the left side, and 'PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND' is written in smaller white font below it.

# Questions?

PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND