

Vranch House School

Attendance Policy





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Statement of Intent

Every child has a right to access education, and **everyone** is responsible for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality. Vranch House are committed to providing the highest quality of education and therapeutic inputs to all our pupils and we recognise the clear link between attendance and the achievement.

The aim of this Attendance Policy is to enable Vranch House School to provide a consistent practice that actively encourages and supports the highest possible levels of attendance for all our pupils.

We take a whole-school approach to maintaining regular attendance and to achieve this, all members of our school community have an important contribution to make. It is vital that we work in partnership to ensure that any in-school or out-of-school barriers are removed at the earliest opportunity, this is achieved through early and meaningful support.

We are committed to taking positive action in the line with the Equality Act (2010) regarding the needs of people with protected characteristics. These are age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnership. We make reasonable adjustments to avoid anyone with a protected characteristic being placed at a disadvantage. Our relentless approach to ensuring our pupils attend school and receive the education that they deserve, and are entitled to, is central to our school values.

This policy has been created to help support the school in effectively managing absences so that our pupils (your children) can make the most of the educational and life opportunities available to them.

In summary, Vranch House aims to meet its obligations relating to school attendance by:

Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence by effectively removing the barriers to attendance

Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

Acting early to address patterns of absence

Minimising the disruption caused by late arrivals or non-attendance to the quality of the education and provisions for all pupils



1 Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all school leaders, staff, parents, and pupils.

- 1.1 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'teachers' include all paid staff responsible for the supervision of pupils.
- 1.2 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'pupils' include all learners in our school.
- 1.3 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'school' refers to all education settings, regardless of type.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this policy and the procedures, we refer to Section 576 of the Education Act which defines the 'parent' of a pupil or young person as:
 - Both of their natural parents, whether they are married or not.
 - Any person who, although they are not the natural parent, has parental responsibility for the pupil or young person, as defined in the Children Act (1989).
 - Any person who, although not the natural parent, has the care of the pupil or young person i.e., a person with whom the pupil lives, irrespective of their relationship to the pupil.

2 Legal Framework

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act (1996)
- The Education Act (2002)
- The Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (2006)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2010)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2011)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2016)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3 Responsibilities



- 3.1 All children aged 5 - 16 years must receive suitable education. (Section 7, *Education Act (1996)*). A pupil of compulsory school age who is registered at a school must, by law, attend regularly.
- 3.2 By law, parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that pupils of compulsory school age attend regularly. (Section 576, *Education Act (1996)*).
- 3.3 The Local Authority (LA) must offer educational provision for all children of school age.
- 3.4 By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed or has been notified that the pupil will attend the school.
- 3.5 Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
- 3.6 By law, all schools must keep an admissions' register, the contents of which includes all pupils, their personal details, (including at least two telephone numbers for different safe adults, to ensure that we can always contact someone in the event of an emergency), the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and details of the school last attended.
- 3.7 Pupils will be removed from roll only when they complete their education stage, transfer to another school, move out of the area or emigrate or following a parental request for elective home education. We follow statutory guidance for removing pupils from roll and notifying the local authority. Further information can be found in Appendix 6.
- 3.8 There is a clear link between attainment and attendance. Under **section 444 (1)** of the **Education Act 1996** (EA 1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school where the child is registered. We therefore enforce the use of statutory action to encourage and promote attendance, this is done to ensure that all pupils can benefit from their legal right to receive an education.
- 3.9 School will communicate attendance concerns to the pupil's social worker, if they have one or The Virtual School Head, if the pupil is a looked after child. This will be done as soon as there is an attendance concern and immediately upon becoming a persistent absentee. Unexplained absences will also be communicated to the social worker and Virtual School Head, where relevant.
- 3.10 We have a roles and responsibilities framework outlined in Appendix 3 to complement this policy. This defines agreed roles and responsibilities for parents, pupils and staff.



4 Definitions

- 4.1 A pupil is classed as 'Late' if they arrive after the register has closed or 'Absent' if they do not attend for any reason.
- 4.2 An authorised absence is when approval has been given in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent for a specific (legal) purpose, or we have accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence from a parent or carer. This may include:
- An absence for illness, including acute symptoms of existing medical conditions, for which we have granted leave
 - Medical or dental appointments where the NHS clinics run at Vranch House during school hours have not been able to cover the medical need identified, or where the appointment is a genuine emergency
 - Religious or cultural observances for which leave has been requested and we have granted. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents or pupil belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance
 - An absence due to a change to exceptional circumstances
 - Attendance to Hospice or other registered Respite provision
- 4.3 An unauthorised absence is defined as one where we are not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Reasons may include:
- Parents keeping children from attending unnecessarily or without reason
 - Absences which have never been properly explained
 - Day trips and holidays in term time, other than agreed Respite 'short breaks', that have not been agreed by the Head of Education
- 4.4 Persistent Absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.
- 4.5 Persistent lateness is defined as pupils who have five or more late marks recorded in a single half-term.

5 Monitoring and Reviewing Attendance

- 5.1 We monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the year. We recognise that certain groups of pupils may be more at risk of low attendance and will provide support and assistance wherever possible.
- 5.2 Pupil-level absence data is collected regularly and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. We compare our attendance data to the national average
- 5.3 Specific measures are taken to monitor attendance. These processes are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the effective safeguarding of all pupils through specific tailored interventions. Data on attendance is collected and analysed a minimum of once a half term. Key analysis is made of:



- Patterns of absence
- Patterns of lateness
- Patterns of medical appointments
- Correct and consistent use of absence codes
- Trends in reasons for absence, for example, use of the C code, leave of absence and exclusions
- Trends in particular groups of children for example, pupils with acute medical conditions

5.4 Attendance data informs action planning and supports the identification of key priorities in our school development plan and future revisions of this policy. The attendance data will be reviewed by the Management Team and the Head of Education will feedback on this review with all other relevant staff, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.

6 Reviewing this Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As a result of any other significant change or event
- If the policy is determined not to be effective

Policy issued: September 2023

Review date: September 2025



Appendices

Appendix 1

1. Key Personnel –

Head of Education		<i>Insert name</i>
Contact Details	Email	@vranchhouse.org
	Telephone	01392 468333
Executive PA to the Chief Executive		Tracey Ward
	Email	mail@vranchhouse.org
	Telephone	01392 468333

Appendix 2

2. Maintaining an Attendance Register

2.1 The attendance register will be using My Attendance Tracker (MyAT) at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the pm session. It will mark whether each pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to pre-explained circumstances

2.2 Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person making the amendment

2.3 The school day starts at 09:00. All pupils should be in their classroom by 09:10.

2.4 The first (morning) registration session starts at 09:10. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their designated classroom by this time. The register closes at 09:20. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that the pupil 'Late' (L), but will count as 'present'.

2.5 Pupils arriving late should report to the main Reception office and sign in via the late arrival book.

2.6 The second (afternoon) registration session start at 13:00hrs.

2.7 If a pupil needs to leave school during the day, they must sign out at main Reception office with a parent once authorisation has been given from Head of Education or the Executive PA to the Chief Executive.

3. Recording Attendance



- 3.1 The national absence and attendance codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the Census. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for absence. See Appendix 4 for the DfE attendance codes.
- 3.2 The Executive PA to the Chief Executive will check the missing register report throughout the day and report any registers that have not been completed.

4. Reporting Absence

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the parent to inform us of a pupil absence and to inform us of any changes to contact details.
- 4.2 Parents are expected to inform us of their pupil's absence before 9.00 a.m. on each day of absence providing the reason for absence and when their pupil will be returning to school. We will contact parents and/or other listed emergency contacts where no contact has been made. Where required, we may conduct reasonable enquiries with friends or neighbours and will carry out welfare home visits as necessary. If no contact is made and we have cause for concern, we may request a welfare check from the Police.

5. Reasons for Absence

5.1 Appointments

- 5.1.1 As far as possible, medical, and dental appointments should be kept to those NHS clinics arranged and held at Vranch House or made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment letter should be sent to us prior to the appointment.
- 5.1.2 Pupils must attend before/after the appointment wherever practicable. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the day, they must be signed out by an adult at Reception. Should a pupil arrive late following an appointment, they should report to the school office to be signed in by the Executive PA to the Chief Executive.
- 5.1.3 Absences for all medical appointments will be recorded with an M code.

5.2 Religious Observance

- 5.2.1 Parents must inform us, in advance, if absences are required for days of religious observance. We will authorise absences where a reasonable request is made. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
- 5.2.2 Absences for religious observance will be recorded with the R code.

5.3 Illness



- 5.3.1 In order to make informed decisions about their pupil's fitness for attending parents are encouraged to refer to the NHS guidance '*Is My Child Too Ill for School?*'. Any authorisation of absence through illness is done so at the discretion of the Head of Education or Class Teacher delegated to carry out this task.
- 5.3.2 In the case of an illness which lasts for five days or more (or four days in the event of an INSET day or Bank Holiday), parents may be asked to provide additional medical evidence before authorising the absence, however this will only be requested if there is any genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. In this instance, if medical evidence is not provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.
- 5.3.3 Where attendance is of a serious concern, we may require medical evidence to authorise any further periods of absence through illness. This will be determined on an individual basis. Parents will be notified of this by letter. Telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent will not be accepted as medical evidence when attendance is a serious concern. For the purpose of this policy, 'serious concern' may be defined as: repeated unexplained/unauthorised absences or 3 x separate illnesses within a half term where no medical condition or underlying health issues have been identified.
- 5.3.4 Acceptable forms of medical evidence include:
- Medical card with one appointment entered with the pupil's name and surgery stamp included, signed by the receptionist
 - Letter from a professional such as a hospital consultant
 - Evidence of consultation with NHS 111
 - Medication prescribed by a GP
 - Copy of prescription
 - Print screen of medical notes / call log
 - Letters detailing hospital appointments Doctor or GP 'sick notes' are not required, and we do not expect parents to request these from their GPs.
- 5.3.5 In some cases, a pupil may be absent for long term due to an illness or injury. Where it is expected that a pupil will be absent for a fixed periods longer than 2 weeks, home-schooling may be offered. The frequency and duration of home-school inputs will be mutually agreed between the parents/carers and the school. We will liaise with families to ensure children return to school quickly and that there are no safeguarding concerns.

5.4 Traveller Pupils Travelling for Occupational Purposes

- 5.4.1 Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes covers Roma, English and Welsh Travellers, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Circus workers, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers), Showman and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with us, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

The aim for the attendance of Traveller students, in common with all other students, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.



To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act (1944), Section 86, states that a Traveller parent/carer is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e., 200 half days) in a year. It is important to note that this is only relevant when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is regularly attending school when that trade/business permits following a request from parents (and the minimum 200 session criteria is met).

It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller pupils is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents/carers of their duties to ensure that their child is receiving a suitable education when not at school.

It is parent's responsibility to:

- Ensure that your child's ethnicity has been registered with the school. You can ask the school to correct this or update it.
- Ensure you tell your child's school ahead of time. 2 weeks' notice is useful.
- Your children should attend as much school as possible.
- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child is accessing at least 100 days (200 sessions) of school in any 12-month period.
- To have regular contact with their child's school whilst travelling. Once a week is suggested.
- To support their child to complete the work set by schools whilst travelling.
- If staying in a new area for a week or more, the parent/guardian can register their child for a temporary place at any school – called 'dual registration'.

It is the school's responsibility to:

- Allow Traveller pupils to travel with their parents for work purposes.
- Create work packs for their pupils to complete when away.
- Arrange times for at least a weekly 'check in' with the family. This can be through a call or email.
- Contact the Local Authority if they have concerns.
- Mark pupil's work and provide valuable feedback.
- Ensure missed opportunities such as parents evening, vaccinations and careers advice are supported on the pupil's return.



5.4.2 Pupils with medical conditions or acute special educational needs and disabilities

Although all pupils at Vranch House have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have acute physical difficulties which necessitate a high frequency of hospital appointments or admissions

School will:

- Work with parents to make reasonable adjustments and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. It is also expected that parents will engage with the support offered both internally and with external partners to ensure our children have all the support they need to thrive.
- Consider possible explanations for absence including Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). **See page 24 for further information.**
- Work with parents to consider whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.

6 Requesting Leave in Term Time

- 6.1 Absence for purposes of leave during term time can only be authorised by the Head of Education within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations (2006). "Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional." Under the Regulations, retrospective authorisation for leave in exceptional circumstances is not permitted.
- 6.2 The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional circumstances' are that they are: 'rare; significant; unavoidable and short'. The following guiding principles apply:
- The decision to authorise a pupil's absence is wholly at the Head of Education's discretion based on their assessment and merits of each individual request.
 - If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term-time, then it would be normal to authorise absence for such an event – holidays are therefore not considered 'exceptional circumstances.'
 - It is acceptable for the Head of Education to take a pupil's record of attendance into account when making absence-related decisions.
 - We will take the needs of the families of service personnel into account if this prevents them from being able to take family holidays during scheduled holiday time.

7 Persistent and Severe Absence

- 7.1 Pupils with 85% or less attendance are classified as Persistently Absence (PA). PA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences.
- 7.2 Pupils with 50% or less attendance are classified as Severely Absence (SA). SA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences
- 7.3 All PA pupils will have bespoke action plans to try to improve their attendance to above 90%. This will be monitored by the Head of Education, with the support of the Executive PA to the Chief Executive.



Pupils who are PA will be discussed as a potential concern at least fortnightly Safeguarding review meetings. Where pupils have an identified medical need, the school Nurse Team may also provide support, so that the impact of needs are clearly understood and appropriate, supportive actions are taken.

7.4 The school's strategy for tackling persistent absence, can be found in Appendix 7.

8 Following Up Absence and Taking Statutory Action

- 8.1 We will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason. Any pupils who fail to attend regularly or who are absent for more than one week will be referred to Head of Education as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Chief Executive as Deputy DSL for the School.
- 8.2 Unexplained absences will be followed up on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence and the school will identify whether the absence is approved or not. The school will identify the correct code to use and will input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained. This will take no longer than 5 working days after the session.
- 8.3 In the case where the reason for absence cannot be ascertained by the school and no reason has been issued for the pupil's absence, the school will initiate safeguarding procedures and the DSL will decide on the best course of action to ensure the safety of the pupil, following procedures for children missing in education as outlined in the document from the Department of Education.
- 8.4 It may occasionally be necessary to inform parents that no further absences will be authorised for a particular pupil unless medical evidence is provided. This decision can only be made by Head of Education in consultation with Chief Executive.
- 8.6 It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send children to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence. The Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their pupil, where the pupil is of compulsory school age.

9 Children Missing from Education (CME)

- 9.1 We have due regard to our statutory duty to safeguard pupils who are CME. We follow the Local Authority's processes for reporting pupils missing from education. [The DfE guide can be found here.](#)
- 9.2 If a pupil fails to return following a period of absence, investigations will be made by staff to their whereabouts. If our investigations fail to contact the parents/pupil the case will be referred to the Local Authority Children Missing Education (CME) Team within 20 days.

10 Attendance Causing Concern

- 10.1 Specific measures to monitor attendance are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils through specific and tailored interventions.
- 10.2 Vranch House records and collects attendance data using MyAT. We recognise that there are particular groups who nationally, and within our local setting, are more vulnerable and susceptible to lower attendance patterns such as children who are



defined as Pupil Premium, and pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities. We work with families to overcome any specific barriers that children may be facing regardless of these needs to ensure that pupils access all their education.

- 10.3 Staff make daily use of the Home/School Communication diaries to report to parents on trends and patterns in attendance.
- 10.4 Where attendance is deemed to be a concern, we talk to pupils and parents. From this, there may be one of three Early Help outcomes:
- Initiate simple reasonable adjustments
 - Develop a school focused plan with the pupil and their parent as appropriate
 - Initiate a multi-agency Early Help Assessment (EHA)
- 10.5 If the conversation with the pupil indicates a serious safeguarding concern, we will follow our safeguarding procedures as set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

11 Ethnic Minority Pupils

- 11.1 Pupil registration regulations states that absence should only be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all.
- 11.2 The following might be considered as exceptional circumstance for ethnic minority pupils:
- Religious festivals: the school should authorise any absence where the parent/carer's religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival.
For example: There are two key festivals in Islam, Eid-ul-Fitr (celebration that takes place at the end of Ramadan, the period of fasting) and Eid-ul-Adha (festival of sacrifice). The dates of these key events are set according to the Islamic calendar. Muslim families usually need to take one or two days to celebrate these important festivals. Absences may be recorded as R.
 - Religious rites e.g. Bar Mitzvah, Holy Communion. The Headteacher will consider each request for leave of absence individually to determine the number of days approved.
 - Close family wedding if dates cannot be during school holidays.
 - Illness or death of an immediate family member; the head teacher should consider time needed for the length of journey when child needs to travel abroad.
 - Child, parent/carer requires medical treatment overseas or elsewhere in the UK due to language barrier or requiring specialist treatment elsewhere.
 - Length of journey from abroad; the Headteacher will consider length of journey or limited regional flights.
 - Cultural celebrations such as Chinese New Year or Diwali. Cultural celebrations give children a feeling of belonging and make them feel part of their culture. This sense of identity is like a natural buoy for a child's emotional health.
 - Children attending their annual exam in their home country. There are exams which are compulsory in some EU countries. They are normally during holidays but can occasionally be requested during term time.
 - Child, parent/ carer's visa have been revoked and they need to return to their birth country whilst pursuing the renewal of a visa.



Appendix 3 – Framework of Responsibilities

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, therefore, Vranch House School expects everyone to uphold their responsibilities for promoting attendance at school.

To do this everyone must understand their role in promoting a positive culture of attendance and be clear about what is required of them individually as well as how they need to work together in partnership with others.

Parents

- Ensure pupils attend regularly and punctually.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- Do everything you can to prevent unnecessary school absences
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact for your child.
- Provide proof of medical appointments that can only be attended during the school day.
- Make early contact with us when you become aware of problems with your child attending school.
- Attend meetings if concerns are identified.
- Participate in Early Help Meetings if required.
- Support attendance contracts where appropriate.
- Support us in actioning agreed interventions/action plans.

Please follow this process if your child is going to be absent from school:





Teachers

- Understand that promoting pupil attendance is the responsibility of all staff. Be curious, aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- Ensure attendance has a high profile within the class
- Consider whether a pupils known, or not yet identified, SEN could be impacting on attendance and whether provision and/or further reasonable adjustments should be made
- Take registers at the beginning of every lesson including when the lesson is also the legal registration session
- Treat all pupils and parents with dignity and model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school
- Challenge parents when they do not provide a reason for absence
- Escalate concerns as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Participate in training relating to attendance as appropriate

Executive PA to the Chief Executive

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Offer support and guidance on attendance where needed
- Monitor and analyse attendance data and ensure these are sent regularly to class teachers
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and report concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader and Governor responsible for attendance
- Monitor pupils with attendance below 90% with regular communication with both the pupil and their parents, holding attendance meetings where required and agreeing individual action plans
- Attend welfare home visits where required
- Escalate concerns where required as per the Safeguarding and Pupil Protection Policy
- Work with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advise the Principal and Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Head of Education

- Take a lead in promoting pupil attendance ensuring it is the responsibility of all staff. Be aware, vigilant, well-informed and listen to what children say about the barriers to accessing education
- Ensure the attendance policy is implemented consistently across the school
- Ensure attendance is a target in performance appraisals
- Ensure attendance has a high profile across the school in all communications
- Work with the Lead Teachers for Early Years and Secondary, to ensure any acute SEND/Medical needs are fully understood, including how these may impact on attendance, and to ensure that the provision in place meets needs and supports good attendance



- Monitor daily attendance for vulnerable pupils and track weekly attendance patterns and trends for all pupils, delivering intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This needs to include patterns of attendance for individual pupils, cohorts, and groups but particularly for pupils with attendance below 90%
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends including analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented ensuring there is regular and positive communication with parents
- Work with the LA, agencies, and safeguarding partners to overcome barriers to attendance
- Attend welfare home visits where required
- Lead attendance training for staff and governors
- Communicate attendance concerns to the pupil's social worker, if they have one or The Virtual School Head, if the pupil is a looked after child. This will be done as soon as there is an attendance concern and immediately upon becoming a persistent absentee. Unexplained absences will also be communicated to the social worker and
- Decide whether to grant leave during term time for exceptional circumstances

Governors

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Review the implementation of the School Attendance Policy
- Ensure the school fulfil their statutory duties
- Ensure the importance of school attendance is promoted across policies and procedures
- Ensure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Discuss the targets for attendance with the Head of Education and review progress towards these at Governors meetings.
- Regularly monitor attendance figures through data analysis at Governors meetings. Ask questions about attendance trends and be curious about what is being done to challenge and prevent persistent poor absence



Appendix 4 – Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late Arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstance
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study Leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school



Code	Definition	Scenario
Unauthorised Absence		
G	Unauthorised Holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Other		
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel because of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half term/bank holiday

Appendix 5 – Creating a Positive Attendance Culture

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, therefore, Vranch House School expects everyone to uphold their responsibilities for promoting attendance at School.

To do this everyone must understand their role in promoting a positive culture of attendance and be clear about what is required of them individually as well as how they need to work together in partnership with others.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

Initiatives for improving attendance within the school may include:

- Ensure there is graduated follow-up for example, if there is no improvement quickly, arrange another meeting
- Ensure that meetings are supportive and identify barriers, both in school and out of school. Send the action plan and a thank you as follow up
- Send whole school / year group attendance data to all staff – this can be discussed in tutor time



- Ensure there is a regular review of meetings and outcomes and ensure they are all logged on your school information system

Appendix 6 – Removing a child from the school roll

(It is vital that you are always professionally curious when following these processes)

Best practice processes

Elective Home Education (EHE):

The Statutory Notification and the EHE form, together with the Safeguarding form must be submitted on the day of receiving the de-registration letter from the parent with a copy of the letter. The pupil should be taken off roll from the day the school receives the letter or in cases where the parent is giving advance notice of the date requested. Do not backdate it to an earlier date than receipt of the letter even if the parent requests this. The school should confirm that the pupil has been registered with the LA as EHE to ensure that they have assumed responsibility for the pupil. Do not just assume that because the school has submitted the paperwork it has all gone through.

Pupil Moves Out of Area: unreasonable distance to travel. Submit the Statutory Notification as soon as the school finds this out. Continue to track destination and liaise with LA admissions team. They will advise the school when a pupil may be removed from roll if it has been established that the pupil/family have left the last known address and their new location is known. They may allow the school to backdate the leaving date if they or the school receives confirmation of the pupil starting at another school or within the care of a different LA. The school must have written confirmation from the LA to backdate the leaving date. If the school does not receive this and the school has no other confirmation of where the pupil is the school must keep them on roll for 20 days.

Pupil Emigrates: The school must follow the procedure above for moving out of area but also need to have ascertained from the parent the forwarding address, details of destination school and moving date.

Pupil Transfers to a New School: Confirm the pupil's start date at the new school and that the pupil has started there. Submit the Statutory Notification on the day the school has it confirmed that the pupil started at their new school. The school can take the pupil off roll from the confirmed start date or the last school day if it precedes it e.g., a Friday and they started on a Monday. If the start date is the first day of a school term the school can back date the leaving date for the school's pupil to the last day of the previous term. If the school must investigate in the new term to find out why the pupil is 'absent' keep them on roll until the school gets a confirmed start date at the new school. If there is a gap between the leaving date the school has been given by a parent and the start date for a pupil, the pupil should remain on the school's roll, marked absent, until the transfer school confirms the pupil has started there. If after ten days, the pupil has still not started, the school should submit a CME form.

Appendix 7 - Strategy for reducing persistent

- Attendance of the whole school is reviewed half-term by the Head of Education



- Where absence is 'unexplained' (U), the Head of Education will make a welfare phone call to the parents/carers of pupil concerned
- Remedies for poor attendance will be discussed with parents/carers in the first instance. Where a Social Worker is assigned to a pupil, they too may be contacted at the point where absence becomes persistent