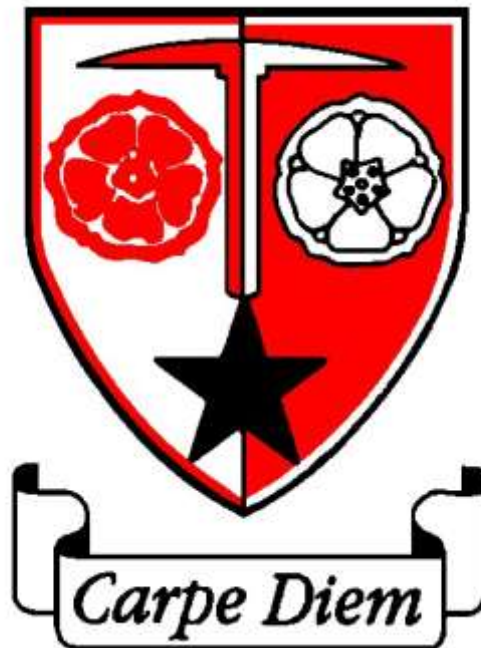


Audenshaw School



Attendance Policy

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Standards Committee.

History of Document

Issue No	Author/Owner	Date Written	Approved by the Standards Committee	Received by Governors	Comments
1.5	Jimmy Watt	03/08/2021	28/09/2021	28/09/2021	Minor amendments
1.6	Kelly Breakell	29/04/2022	29/04/2022	29/04/2022	Reviewed and updated
1.7	Kelly Breakell	19/07/2022	14/12/2022	14/12/2022	Complete review of policy in line with improving school attendance: Support for schools and local authorities. DfE May 2022.

OUR MISSION

Our school aims to provide a quality education in a caring community based on values of respect, responsibility and resilience and a relentless pursuit of excellence in all that we do.

OUR VISION

Our School will be recognised as a fully inclusive, aspirational, high achieving centre of excellence, firmly rooted in the local community.

We will create, develop and maintain a challenging and stimulating personalised learning environment where no student is overlooked or left behind and where teaching and learning is high quality, inspirational and innovative.

We will consistently have high academic standards and expectations for every individual and continue to place considerable value on sport and healthy living and developing strong links with the community.

All members of our school community will be valued and every success will be celebrated.

Our School will maintain a safe, secure and caring environment in which to work and learn.

AUDENSHAW SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The most important factor contributing to a student's success at our school is regular attendance. The link between attendance and attainment is firmly established. Those students who attend more achieve better qualifications and are more able to access higher education, employment and training. Regular attendance is vital if students are to achieve their full potential.

We believe that regular attendance is the key to enabling students to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

We seek to ensure that all students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for all.

We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels safe and valued.

School staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends regularly and punctually.

We will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

We will recognise and reward all students who strive for high levels of attendance and punctuality including those who make improvements.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning.

2. AIMS

To improve the overall attendance of students

To reduce the number of students classified as persistent absentees and those students on track to become persistent absentees; that is, those students whose attendance falls below 90%, the equivalent to 19 days absence in a school year.

To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, staff and governors.

To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students.

To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance and punctuality related data.

To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.

To implement a system of rewards and sanctions relating to attendance and punctuality.

To promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority and other external agencies.

To recognise the needs of individual students when planning reintegration following a significant period of absence.

3. ROLE and RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of the school.
- Ensuring that the 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 Principal is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of the school and distributing these to parents.

Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Following the attendance policy, and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance and punctuality behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Designated members of staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of each afternoon session.
- The school will ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

- The school will inform the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:
 - Are being educated at home.
 - No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
 - Have an authorised medical note.
 - Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
 - Have been permanently excluded.

Parents will be expected to:

- Take responsibility for their children's attendance during term time.
- Promote good attendance and ensure their children attend school every day.
- Contact the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am (on each day of absence).
- Parents must provide accurate and up to date contact details.
- It is parents' responsibility to update the school if contact details change.
- Parents must provide the school with more than one emergency contact number.

Students are responsible for:

- Their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.
- All students are responsible for their punctuality to school and to lessons.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

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)
- DfE (2019) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'

Parents have a legal obligation to ensure that their children attend school.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that; children must attend full-time, regular education from the term after their fifth birthday to the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach their sixteenth birthday.

The Children's Act 1989 devised the notion of parental responsibility, giving the role of a parent a formal legal status, however; in education law the term parent is much broader applying to any adult with day to day care and control of a child e.g. step-parents, grandparents who assume a parenting role etc.

The Education Act 1996 defines a parent as,

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

5. DEFINITIONS.

The school defines "absence" as either:

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

The Principal will only grant a leave of absence during term time if they consider this to be exceptional circumstances.

The school defines an "authorised absence" as:

- An absence for illness for which the school is satisfied the student is not fit to attend school.
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged at another time and for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.

The school defines an "unauthorised absence" as:

- A child who is absent from school without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not 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 legitimate reason during the day.

- Any absence where a student is identified as PA (90% or below)

The school defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:

- Missing 10 percent (19 days) or more of school across the academic year for any reason.

6. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Parents are required to contact school before 8:30am on the first day of absence to provide a reason for absence. Parents should try to avoid using words such as “poorly” or “ill” and be prepared to give details about their child’s absence.

A text message and/or telephone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day when they do not attend school.

If a reason has not been provided or there is no response to contact made by school, the attendance office will send a letter home at the end of the week to obtain a reason for absence.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, unannounced home visits may be carried out by the Attendance Officer to the home of any child who is absent where we have been unable to establish a reason why.

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

- Establish the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the whereabouts of all children in line with the safeguarding policy.
- To establish whether the absence should be authorised or not.
- To determine the correct code to record the absence in the register
- To ensure appropriate support for a return to school is in place (see students with medical conditions policy)

In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Attendance Officer.

The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.

If a pupil’s attendance drops below 90 percent, the Attendance Officer will be informed, and a formal meeting may be arranged with the parents.

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

7. ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, requires schools to take an attendance register twice each day; once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

The designated member of staff takes the AM (morning) register at 8.20am at the start of registration and the PM (afternoon) register at 12.00pm at the start of lesson 4.

The register must record whether the student was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at an approved educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to enable the school to record and monitor attendance and absence 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 Authorised absence
- E Excluded but no alternative provision made Authorised holiday
- I Illness
- M Medical or dental appointments
- R Religious observance
- B Off-site educational activity
- G Unauthorised holiday
- O Unauthorised absence
- U Late Arrival after the register has closed (after 9.30am)
- N Reason not yet provided
- S Study leave
- T Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- W Work experience
- V Educational visit or trip
- P Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- J At an interview another educational establishment
- D Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y Exceptional circumstances e.g. snow
- Z Pupil not on admission register
- # Planned whole or partial school closure e.g. INSET or school holidays

8. LATENESS

At Audenshaw School we monitor the punctuality of all students carefully as this has been shown to have a significant impact on their learning. Children who are

late just 5 minutes every day lose the equivalent of three days' schooling every year.

School starts at 8:20am and all students are expected to be in their form room before this time. Registers are taken promptly and students will be marked late if they are not there at this time.

Students who are late to school will be required to attend a 'late check' at lunchtime to discuss their punctuality. Failure to attend will result in a yellow card detention.

Students who arrive late without a good reason will be addressed via the school detentions system.

9. TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as any absence of part, or all of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the reason behind such absence.

All staff are responsible for ensuring students' regular attendance to lessons and highlighting those students who may be missing during the school day.

All students are expected to be in their classroom by 8:20am and in each lesson where the registers will be taken electronically by the class teacher.

Any student with permission to leave school must sign out at Reception and sign back in on their return.

Immediate action will be taken where there are concerns that a student may be truanting.

Any student found to be truanting during part, or all of the school day will be recorded with an unauthorised absence.

Where a student is believed to be truanting from school for part, or all of the school day, parents will be contacted. A red card detention will be given and served that day. Repeated truancy will result in a letter home and a parental meeting where necessary.

10. LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

Any time missed from school is damaging to a student's learning and will impact on their progress and achievement.

All leave of absence should be booked during school holidays. All term dates can be found in advance on the Audenshaw School website

www.audenshawschool.org.uk

The amendments to the Education (pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Where parents believe that there are exceptional circumstances for taking their child out of school during term time they must make a written request to the Attendance Officer for authorisation of the period of absence as far in advance of the leave as possible stating:

- Student's Name and Year Group
- The first day of absence and date the student will return to school
- The reason for the request, giving as much detail as possible
- Providing supporting evidence where available

Failure to receive a response from school to a request should not be considered authorisation of the absence and parents are advised, if in doubt to check with school.

Exceptional circumstances will not be considered after the leave has been taken.

Where a student is believed to be on holiday and a request for leave of absence has not been received from parents or another reason for absence has been provided, staff may carry out a home visit to establish if the student is away.

If it is not possible to establish an alternative reason for absence, the student will be recorded as though they have taken leave without permission and a letter sent to the home address. In this case it will be necessary for the parent to provide evidence to show that the child was absent for a different reason.

If the permission for leave is not granted by school and the student is absent, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised using code G. In such cases the school will refer the case to the Education Welfare Service for issue of a penalty notice.

If a student fails to return from leave of absence – even if permission for a set period of leave has been granted, school may remove the student from the school roll in compliance with the Education (Student Registration)(England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their place at the school. In this case an application will need to be made to Tameside Admissions on their return.

11. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Audenshaw School acknowledges the diversity of its school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall within term time and this requires consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

- The day of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong.
- Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.
- In the interests of fulfilling academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, the school will authorise no more than one day for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than two days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

The school reserves the right to request supporting evidence for any absence immediately before or after a day of absence for religious observance. Failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

12. ILLNESS & MINOR AILMENTS

In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable.

Parents may be asked to provide supporting evidence in the form of an appointment card/letter or copy of prescription/prescribed medication clearly labelled with their child's name, where there is continuing absence or where there are repeated absences due to reported illness.

Absences due to minor ailments such as a headache, cough, cold, sore throat, etc are not typically accepted and may be marked as unauthorised.

Students who have been absent due to vomiting may return to school as soon as they feel well enough to attend. If in doubt parents should contact the attendance team.

In the event that a student is feeling unwell before the start of the school day, it is parents' responsibility to decide whether the student is well enough to attend school.

Where parents decide that a student is well enough to attend school, students will be expected to attend morning lessons before a decision to send home will be made.

If school staff agree to send a student home due to illness or other reason their absence will be authorised.

There are times when students may need to take medication during the school day e.g. to finish a course of antibiotics, medication associated with a medical condition. Students may leave medication at Student Services providing a note has been signed and completed by the parent.

Medication must be in the original container, clearly labelled with the child's name.

School is unable to provide over counter medications to students unless they have been provided by the parent.

13. APPOINTMENTS

Parents are expected to make medical appointments outside of the school day where it is possible to arrange. School finishes at 2.40pm.

With some forward planning, routine appointments such as opticians and dental appointments can be made after school or during school holidays.

Where appointments are allocated e.g. by the hospital or orthodontist, students should attend school before and/or after the appointment if it is practical to do so.

Where a student is required to leave school for an appointment or other matter during the school day, they should show their appointment card/letter to Student Services. They must be signed out of school by a parent.

14. PROVIDING MEDICAL EVIDENCE

We understand that doctor's appointments can be difficult to make and some medical situations can be managed by speaking with the pharmacist or administering over counter medicine.

Where a student has had a period of absence for which medical advice would normally be sought or where they have had several odd days off for reasons of illness, school may request medical evidence in order to authorise that absence or future absences.

As a rule of thumb, the following evidence is acceptable to authorise absence

- Appointment card/letter clearly showing your child's name
- Prescription
- Copy of prescribed medication clearly labelled with your child's name

Repeat prescriptions for manageable medical conditions may not be considered acceptable as a form of supporting evidence. They will be assessed on a case by case basis.

School staff never routinely request medical sick/fit notes from the doctor.

Where a student falls into the Persistent Absentee category a medical appointment card may not be sufficient and clarification from the doctor that the student is too ill to attend may be necessary.

Parents may be asked for written permission to contact medical professionals to establish how a child's medical condition affects their ability to attend school and to obtain appropriate advice.

15. Young Carers/Looked After Children

The school understands the difficulties young carers and Looked After Children face, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as throughout their time at the school.

The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

16. Suspension from School

Where a student receives a suspension this is recorded as an authorised absence from school.

Parents have a duty to ensure that the student is not present in a public place during school hours for the period of a suspension unless there is reasonable justification for this. If a child is found present in a public place during school hours on the dates of the exclusion and it will be for the parent to show reasonable justification. Failure to do so may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued by the local authority.

A period of external seclusion or 'step out' may be required as part of a student's suspension. This will require the student to attend another local secondary school within the area on a temporary basis. In this case the student will be recorded as educated off site.

Where a student fails to attend an alternative school as part of an external seclusion arrangement the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

17. Unauthorised absence

Where students of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have:

- provided an explanation for the absence to school and;
- that reason has been accepted as a satisfactory explanation for absence by the school.

Some examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but is not limited to:

- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- Woke up late
- Minor ailments where a child is considered well enough to attend school
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school
- Looking after/dropping off siblings

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the student's absence has been received.

18. Support Systems

Audenshaw School recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school to identify any additional support that may be required.

Audenshaw School also recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee students and students in the care of the local authority.

The school may implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance such as:

- Discussions/meetings with parents and students
- Attendance panels
- Attendance improvement plans
- Early Help Assessments (EHA's)
- Referral to School Counsellor
- Referral to external support agencies
- ESBA Planning

- Friendship group support (via Form Tutor)
- Rewards systems
- Time limited individualised timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Detentions/Reflections
- Internal exclusion

Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and students.

Where a student has been absent from school for 3 consecutive days or more and school has been unable to make contact with home to obtain the reason for absence then staff may arrange/carry out a home visit.

If on visiting the home there is no answer or staff have been unable to speak to the child during the visit then school may request a welfare check from the police 101 non-emergency number. This will involve the police visiting the child's home address to establish their whereabouts.

Where parents refuse or fail to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Audenshaw School will consider the use of legal sanctions

19. Legal Action (Prosecution for non-school attendance)

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered student at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

Where intervention has failed to secure an improvement in a student's attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to regular education.

Parents who fail to secure regular school attendance are guilty of an offence under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996. This carries a maximum £1000 fine.

Where it can be proved that a parent knows their child is not attending school and does not try to bring about an improvement in school attendance, the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444(1a). This offence carries a potential custodial sentence of 3 months imprisonment or a £2500 fine.

Alternatives to section 444 include: Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts or an Education Supervision Order.

The definition of “regular attendance” as decided by the Supreme Court means in accordance with the school rules. At Audenshaw School, a student is considered to attend regularly if they attend on each and every day that the school is open for instruction, with the exception of those absences that are considered acceptable by the school and as such are recorded as authorised absences.

Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)

At Audenshaw School, we believe that any absences from school, for whatever reason, can be detrimental to a child’s long term life opportunities, so should be avoided if at all possible. Missing school can damage a student’s attainment levels, disrupts school routines and can leave a student vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime. For these reasons, the powers given under **section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003** have been adopted by Tameside Local Authority.

What is a Penalty Notice?

Parents can be prosecuted if their child does not attend school regularly, and the absences are recorded in the register as unauthorised.

Why Use Penalty Notices?

Penalty Notices are used as a way of enforcing attendance where it is reasonable for school to expect that their use will improve attendance.

What is a Penalty Notice issued for?

A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence where your child has had 5 days/10 half days of unauthorised absence in a twelve week period. Penalty Notices are used in cases of:

- Truancy
- Parentally Condoned Absence
- Holidays in term time
- Lateness after the register has closed

How much is a Penalty Notice?

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £120 per child/per parent, which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. The penalty notice has to be paid in full within 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice will result in prosecution.

Written warning

Penalty Notice or Penalty Notice Warnings are sent through the post to parent’s home address. Parents will receive a written warning from the Local Authority

advising that a Penalty Notice may be issued*. This letter is not a fine. The warning states that the child's attendance will be formally monitored. No further absences from school will be authorised unless they are supported by additional medical evidence. If a child is absent during the monitoring period and evidence is not provided, a fine will be issued.

* Where a referral is made by the school for unauthorised leave in term time ,i.e. for a holiday, no warning will be given and parents will receive a fine.

Can I receive more than one Penalty Notice?

There is no limit to the number of warnings that a parent can receive however, where there are ongoing issues with school attendance parents may instead be prosecuted and will be expected to appear at the Magistrates' Court.

For absences due to leave of absence/holidays in term time, any absences longer than 10 school days will not be referred for penalty notice and instead will be referred to Magistrates' Court.

Is there an appeal process?

There is no statutory right to appeal once the Penalty Notice has been issued, but on receipt of the warning parents can make representation to Tameside Council. Parents are advised to contact school as soon as possible upon receipt of a warning letter where there is a dispute or to query the absences.

A Penalty Notice can only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:

- The Penalty Notice has been issued to the wrong person
- The Notice has been issued incorrectly as no offence has been committed

Paying a Penalty Notice

Payment is made to the local authority and not to the school. Details of how to pay will be included on the Penalty Notice. **Payment in part or by instalments is not an option.**

Unpaid Penalty Notices

Parents have up to 28 days from receipt of the Penalty Notice to pay in full. After this time, the Authority is required to commence proceedings in the Magistrates' Court for the original offence, which is the non- school attendance of a child. If proven, this can attract a fine of up to £2500 or a range of other sanctions such as parenting orders or a community sentence depending on the circumstances. The offence also carries a potential custodial sentence of a maximum of 3 months

Parenting Contracts (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003)

A parenting contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent. It can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

20. In-Year Transfers between schools

Where a transfer to another school is requested, parents should ensure that their child continues to attend school every day as instructed until a place at the new school has been allocated and a start date has been agreed that their child continues to attend school every day as instructed until a place at the new school has been allocated and a start date has been agreed.

21. Deletions from the register

In accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, students will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The student has ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and appeals procedures have been completed
- Death of a student
- Transfer between schools
- Student withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the student
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to school before the ending compulsory school-age
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with the Youth Offending Team)
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence where both the school and local authority have tried to locate the student

The school will follow Tameside MBC's guidance on deleting/removing a pupil from the attendance register and children missing in education.

22. Elective Home Education

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the parents' duty:

"... to cause (the child) to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his(or her) age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he (or she) may have either by regular attendance at school or 'otherwise."

Parents who decide to home-educate a child who is registered at a school must inform school formally, in writing, of their intention to de-register in accordance with Section 8(1) (d) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Written notification should be sent to the school Attendance Officer.

Parents will be invited to attend an intervention meeting with the school and a representative from the Education Welfare Service to discuss the circumstances surrounding their wish to home educate before their child will be removed from the school roll.

If, on considering the education provision, the LA do not feel that a suitable and efficient education is being provided then they will take steps to return the child to mainstream education.

It is up to parents to show the LA that the programme of work is helping each child to develop according to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs they have.

Parents are advised that any child returning to mainstream education from a period of home education will be returned to the last school they attended.

Formal attendance procedures in accordance with the provisions of section 437 of the Education Act 1996 may be used where a parent refuses to return their child to a school as instructed by the LA.

Parents should be aware that if they choose to home-educate, they assume financial responsibility for their child's education, including the cost of public examinations, and that the child must continue to receive suitable education until the end of 'compulsory education' i.e. the last Friday in June of the academic year that they reach age 16.

23. Children Missing from Education

School will give due regard to Thameside LA's guidance on 'Children Missing from Education (CME)'.

The national definition of a child missing from education is:

"All children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as 15 school days or more)"

School is required to inform the LA about the details of:

All pupils admitted or removed from the roll of their school in accordance with The Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

If the pupil's whereabouts are not known, the school and LA will make joint reasonable enquiries.

School will complete a referral to the LA's CME Officer for any student who has been absent without school's authorisation for a continuous period of 20 days or more.

Where school has any safeguarding concerns about a student, school's safeguarding procedures will be followed.

School will carry out the following checks where a student is thought to be CME:

- Carry out routine checks with the student's named emergency contacts/telephone numbers/text message/email to try to establish the student's whereabouts.
- Carry out a home visit and write letters to the student's last known address.
- Where there are siblings at other schools, contact will be made to see if they are attending school and to obtain further information.
- Ask the friends of missing students for any information

Where school staff have been unsuccessful at locating a family and after a period of no less than 10 school days, a CME referral form will be completed and sent to the LA.

Where school staff have located the family but they are out of borough and a school place has not been allocated in that borough, a CME referral form will be completed and sent to the LA.

School will not remove the student from roll until this is advised by the CME Officer at the LA.

24. Monitoring and Review

Audenshaw School monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

Our attendance target is 100 percent each year. We realise for some this is not achievable and so we expect all students to aim for a minimum 95%.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal, Vice Principal, Assistant Principal and Attendance Officer.

Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff, students and parents.

Appendix 1

Attendance Thresholds

