# Effective Academy Attendance Improvement & Management

## Primary Academies

DELTA
Academies Trust

...Changing lives.

# Vision: *all schools are expected to*

**Recognise improving attendance is a school leadership matter and must have a designated Senior Leader (SL) with overall accountability for championing and improving attendance in school.**

Responsibilities should include offering a sharp vision for attendance improvement, communicated through a straightforward policy and strategy.
Additionally, evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes, an oversight of data analysis, and communicating messages to pupils and parents, staff and external agencies.

# Implementation at Delta Academies Trust

**Our ambition is to have every child in school every day. To facilitate this, there must be a robust and effective attendance strategy in place.**

Attendance is everybody's responsibility and senior leadership teams strive to develop a culture where all parties are clear on their role and therefore can be held to account. To enable all parties to fulfil their role, clear systems and procedures are implemented which are understood by all and applied consistently.

*Academy Attendance Responsibilities*

Our approach has a strong focus on preventative measures and swift intervention. This allows leaders to plan for contextual challenges, alongside educating parents on the impact of absence from school, both academically and socially.

The key principle, underpinning our approach of early intervention, is to develop a voluntary partnership with both parents and pupils with the aim to understand barriers and work with families to remove them.

*...Changing lives.*

# Tools included to support

Academy Attendance Responsibilities

Academy Attendance Rewards

Flow Chart: Attendance Triggers

Letters & Meetings Timeline

Letter 1

Letter 2

Letter 3

Top Tips for Attendance Assemblies

Top Tips for Parent Workshops

Proforma A: Listening and Understanding

Proforma B: Early Intervention Plan

Proforma C: Attendance Support Plan

Annual Overview

Attendance Tracker

Academy Development Plan (ADP)

Examples of Communication

Children's Commissioner:
Response to Persistent Absence Inquiry

# System:
## *effective communication with stakeholders*

# Staff

**Plan an annual programme for attendance and punctuality events over the year, share with all staff and parents.**

- Create a yearly overview                                                    *Annual Overview*
- Include events such as; assemblies, parent meetings, targeted workshops
- Other events are planned according to contextual need and arising issues across the academic year
- Pre-empting poor attendance patterns – e.g. **monitor first week of term**,    *CC: Persistent Absence Inquiry*
  check local factors that may affect attendance such as secondary
  school INSET dates, popular holiday in term time dates and then plan
  incentives to attend school.

**Induction**

- Ensure all expectations are shared with all stakeholders
- A comprehensive induction policy.

**Weekly Reporting: headline data**

- All pupils and groups
- Risk of persistence absence (RPA)
- Persistence absence (PA)
- Severe absence (SA)
- Persistent lates
- Watch list
- Attendance Tracker is shared with teachers on a weekly basis.              *Attendance Tracker*

## The Power of Welcome

- All staff are ready to welcome the pupils into the building
- Soft start to the day to alleviate any anxieties for children and families
- Leaders at gate, including attendance and DSL, welcoming pupils and parents
- Class teacher: create a welcoming inclusive environment for all
- Hold catch up conversations for absent/late pupils so they are aware of what they have missed
- Regularly interact with pupils thoughout the day, take an interest in them as individuals
- Challenge pupils who are late sensitively whilst celebrating they are in school.

# Pupils

**Share expectations termly, and revisit where appropriate.**

- Weekly assembly: set expectations and celebrate          *Academy Attendance Rewards*
- Senior member of leadership team to walk around daily first thing to check on every class and their attendance, praising those that are there, following up on those absent
- Involve pupil leadership team with attendance strategy
- Posters: child friendly, sign posting for explicit support re. underlying issues (link with Safeguarding team/attendance lead and ATTEND Framework)
- Worry box
- Attendance display board centrally, updated weekly and discussed in assemblies.

# Parents

**Develop effective relationships to educate and support.**

- Social media, website, school apps, texts, face to face, (formal/informal)          *Examples of Communication*
- Invite to selected celebration assemblies, plan to incorporate key messages
- Workshops: in-house and external agencies, planned and reactive, to support parents e.g. sleep workshop, anxiety workshop
- Attendance display board centrally, updated weekly and discussed in assemblies
- Attendance is featured on every newsletter
- Parents of all new starters are spoken to regarding our commitment to attendance and expectations.

# AAB/Governors

**Report, collaborate and challenge to improve attendance at a local level.**

- Regular updates and challenge
- Named member's responsibility, including visits into academy, PA/ SA meetings.

# Trust

**Report, collaborate and challenge to improve attendance at a regional level.**

- Trust-wide designated staff sharing national updates and collaboration
- Agenda on half-termly Head of Academy meetings
- Resource storage for Heads to collaborate and pool resources.

# Other

**Website: agreed attendance page for a transparent approach.**

- Including start of day
- Clear, uncomplicated attendance policy
- A simple visual guidance re. impact of absence and lateness
- Clear academic calendar: 2 years in advance.

# Prevention:
## *of poor attendance through whole school attendance management*

## Monitor

**Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance, lateness and term time holidays (at individual, cohort and group level).**

**Agree Data to be monitored (incorporate into Annual Overview)** *Annual Overview*

- Pupils absent/ late today
- Vulnerable Groups
- Weekly/half termly reports: RPA, PA, SA
- Start of year: historic PAs
- Start of term: first week absence *CC: Persistent Absence Inquiry*
- Holidays.

**Robust systems for collating data.**

- Power Bi
- Bromcom
- Attendance tracker. *Attendance Tracker*

**Early identification systems must be in place so all parties can work together to resolve absence before it becomes entrenched.**

- SLT/SENCO/pastoral team discussions and create mini action plans, reviewed routinely, Academy Development Plan updated regularly *Academy Development Plan*
- Attendance Lead and Admin meet weekly to discuss families and data.

# Early Intervention:
## *to reduce absence before it becomes habitual*

# Monitoring of absence data

**Daily**
**Safeguarding reactive procedures to address current pupil absence.**

- Daily attendance meeting: 9:20 - 9:40 (communicated with HOA if not in)
- Agree codes
- First day phone calls for all pupils
- Home visits where appropriate
- Identified list of vulnerable pupils for immediate action (e.g. PAs/ safeguarding concerns).

**Weekly**

- Update Attendance Tracker                                             *Attendance Tracker*
- Share with staff
- Agree next steps: e.g. letter, invite to meeting
- Reference Annual Overview.                                             *Annual Overview*

# Early Intervention:
## *develop voluntary partnership to address absence concerns*

*Letters and Meetings Timeline*

## Initiate

**'Listening and Understanding' meeting to identify barriers.**

- Agree lead staff member to meet with parent and pupil
- Complete - listening and understanding summary
- Follow ATTEND FRAMEWORK: use as appropriate
  - Pupil view
  - Parent view
  - Practitioner view.

*Proforma A: Listening and Understanding Summary*

## Identify

**In school and/or outside school barriers.**

Create an Early Intervention Plan involving all practitioners.

*Proforma B: Early Intervention Plan*

- Agree actions or interventions, including referral to services
- Record and share with all relevant staff
- Monitor, over an agreed time, the impact of the interventions, adjust where necessary in discussion with pupil, parents and any other partners involved
- A member of staff is allocated to the family based on relationship and the family; this member of staff then liaises with family.

# If absence does not improve

- If the plan is failing, after an agreed period, a 'Team around the Family' approach should be implemented to identify why and adjust accordingly
- A voluntary Early Help Referral may be appropriate if the needs are wider and/or whole family response is required.

# Targeted re-engagement of persistent/severely absent pupils

- Where engagement of support is proving challenging, the senior attendance lead must organise a formal meeting, using the Attendance Support Plan, clearly explaining consequences of persistent absence and the potential need for legal intervention in the future
- Put additional targeted support in place, working in tandem with local authority and other relevant professionals, to agree a joint approach for severely absent pupils.

*Proforma C: Attendance Support Plan*

# Formal Support:
## *following local authority guidance*

*Flow Chart: Attendance Triggers*

**Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with, all academies should collaborate with their local authority.**

- Put formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or an education supervision order in line with local authority/DfE guidance
- Issue a fixed penalty notice where further support is unlikely to be successful
- Intensify support through statutory social care involvement, where there are safeguarding concerns, especially if the absence becomes severe (below 50%)
- Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed.

*...Changing lives.*