

The MFG Attendance Policy 2023-24



Issue Date	Autumn 2023
Next Review Due	Autumn 2024

Aims of the Policy

This policy is intended to outline the expectations, procedures and key staff in relation to attendance as well as the strategy and support in place to ensure students maximise their attendance at school.

We envisage that this policy will act as a 'user manual' for students, families and staff when it comes to attendance at school and will keep it under annual review. We will use our stakeholder voice mechanisms (e.g. student surveys, parent forum etc.) in order to ensure that feedback around this policy is taken on board when the policy is reviewed.

This policy will be published on the Mirfield Free Grammar website and will be recirculated to parents at the start of each academic year and when it is updated at any other point.

Introduction

At the MFG, our priorities are that our students are safe, healthy and successful, all of which are helped by attending school regularly. We believe that working in partnership with families is the best way to maximise attendance at school in order to achieve these priorities.

We know that regular attendance at school is vitally important in helping students to reach their academic potential, to grow socially and emotionally and to develop a range of life skills which will support them as they enter the world of work or higher education at the end of their compulsory education.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular school attendance and educational progress and attainment. Children who frequently miss school often fall behind and they are likely to have fewer GCSEs at lower grades, which can impact on their ability to access further education and/or employment.

When it comes to school attendance, it is easy to think that 90% attendance is at a positive level but the reality is that this is equivalent to one day off school per fortnight or 95 hours of learning missed across a year. Children who have less than 90% attendance are regarded as 'persistent absentees' from school by government standards. It is our expectation that our students should only miss school when it is absolutely necessary and should aim for a minimum of 97% attendance over the course of each year.

Strong school attendance for every child is in everyone's best interests and it is the responsibility of us all. We are determined to work together with students and their families to make this happen.

Key Staff

This section of the policy details key staff and their responsibilities in relation to different aspects of the attendance policy.

Staff Member	Job Title	Role
Mrs A Robinson arobinson@themfg.co.uk	Vice Principal	Strategic leadership of whole school attendance strategy including policy development, staff training and data analysis.
attendance@themfg.co.uk	Attendance Officer	Operational leadership of attendance including direct work with families, home visits and liaison with Education Welfare around any legal proceedings/fixed penalty notices
Mr Knowles cknowles@themfg.co.uk	Year Leader- 7	To support the students in Year 7 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Mrs Fox afox@themfg.co.uk	Year Leader -8	To support the students in Year 8 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Mr McConnell nmccconnell@themfg.co.uk	Year Leader -9	To support the students in Year 9 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Mrs Firth cfirth@themfg.co.uk	Year Lead -10	To support the students in Year 10 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Mrs Taylor ktaylor@themfg.co.uk	Year Leader -11	To support the students in Year 11 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Form Tutors	Form Tutors	To support the students in their form in maintaining excellent attendance through praise, encouragement, intervention and mentoring.
Admin Team	Admin	To support with the daily attendance and absence procedures including updating registers and contacting parents via text message, email and phone call.

Daily Attendance Routines

This section of the policy outlines how the school day operates in practice.

The timings of the school day are outlined below:

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Movement 8.30	Movement Bell – students to be onsite and heading to tutorial. Students are late from 8.35am						
Tutorial 8.35-9.00	Tutorial						
Period 1 9.00-10.00	Period 1						
Period 2 10.00-11.20	Break 10.00 – 10.20	Break 10.00 – 10.20	Period 2 10.00 – 11.00	Period 2 10.00 – 11.00	Break 10.00 – 10.20	Period 2 10.00 – 11.00	Break 10.00 – 10.20
	Period 2 10.25 – 11.20	Period 2 10.25 – 11.20	Break 11.00 – 11.20	Break 11.00 – 11.20	Period 2 10.25 – 11.20	Break 11.00 – 11.20	Period 2 10.25 – 11.20
Movement 11.20	Movement Bell						
Period 3 11.25-12.25	Period 3 11.25 - 12.15	Period 3					
Period 4 12.25 – 2.00	Lunch 12.15 – 1.00	Lunch 12.25 – 1.00	Period 4 12.25 – 1.25	Period 4 12.25 – 1.25	Lunch 12.25 – 1.00	Period 4 12.25 – 1.25	Lunch 12.25 – 1.00
	Period 4 1.00 - 2.00	Period 4 1.00 – 2.00	Period 4 1.05 - 2.05		Lunch 1.25 – 2.00		Period 4 1.00 - 2.00
Movement 2.00	Movement Bell						
Period 5 2.05-3.05	Period 5						

The MFG is open to students from 8:00am and they will be welcomed by staff on the door to support them in being prepared for the day. Please note that due to safeguarding reasons, students will not be permitted to leave the school site after they arrive.

Before the day begins, students will be supervised in the Take Five restaurant. Other areas of school will be out of bounds during this time as they are not supervised. Breakfast is available for students to buy from 8:00am to 8:25am.

We expect all students to be on school site by 8:30am at the latest so that they have time to organise themselves and get to Tutorial punctually. This will enable their school day to begin in a calm and positive manner rather than having to rush.

The school day begins with Tutorial where the official morning register is taken at 8:35 am so it is vital that all students are punctual to this lesson.

Form Tutors are a key member of staff for every student and parents, as they may be the only member of staff who sees the student every day. Tutorial is a key part of the day as the following occur during this time:

- Key information and messages are communicated to students around items such as room changes, school reports, trips etc.
- Students are supported with addressing any uniform or equipment issues to ensure that they are prepared for the school day.
- Planners are checked and monitored for communication between home and school.
- The achievements of students linked to the school values are celebrated. The Form Tutor will also provide advice and guidance to students who have not demonstrated these values so that they can improve.
- Topics linked to the Personal, Social, Health and RS are taught, helping students to learn about issues such as how to manage their mental health, drugs/alcohol and relationships.
- Each year group has an assembly one day per week during this time presented by senior leaders, other staff members.

The official morning register closes at 9:05am. Students arriving after 8:35am and 9:30am will be given a late register code (the 'L' mark). This does count as a present mark towards their attendance as they have arrived before the official closing time of the morning register.

Where a student arrives after 9:30am, they will be given an unauthorised late register code (the 'U' mark). This counts as an absence mark towards their attendance as they have arrived after the official closing time of the morning register.

Students arriving late to school can expect to receive a consequence in line with the behaviour policy. If students need support with their punctuality, we would encourage them or their parents to get in contact with an appropriate member of staff in school (see Key Staff section).

The official afternoon register is taken during a student's Period 4 lesson. Registers are also taken in every lesson for safeguarding reasons but it is the official morning register mark and official afternoon register mark which make up a student's attendance percentage.

Daily Absence Procedures

This section of the policy outlines the procedures that parents should follow to report their child absent from school and the systems in place within school to follow this up.

For safeguarding reasons, it is vital that school and families work in partnership so that we know why each child is absent from school on any given occasion.

With this in mind, when their child is unable to attend school for whatever reason, parents should inform us at the earliest opportunity, and certainly by 8:00am, by either:

- Phone call to The MFG absence line 01924 483687 is manned by the Attendance Officer or a member of the admin team and has the facility to leave a message if the phone is busy.
- Email to attendance@themfg.co.uk

It is important that parents are specific in the reasons that their child is absent from school (e.g. 'vomiting' or 'fever' rather than 'unwell' or 'a bit under the weather') as this enables us to track patterns of absence more effectively with individuals and particular groups of students, therefore enabling more effective support (see section on Tracking and Monitoring of Attendance Data).

This information will be processed by the admin team and the Attendance Officer so that registers are accurately recorded for the day for any child who is absent from school (see section on Attendance Register Codes for more details).

After the official morning registers have been taken in Tutor Time, we will add any late arrivals to these so we have an accurate picture of which students are present in school.

This will enable us to quickly identify any students who are not in school and whose parents have not informed us of the reason why. From here, the following actions will be taken in order to ascertain a reason why and ensure the safety of the child:

- Text message sent to priority parent/carer contacts on school system requesting a response. We endeavour to send this within an hour of the school day starting aside from in exceptional circumstances which may impact this (e.g. significant travel disruption).
- If no response is received, we will make phone calls to priority contacts on the school system throughout the morning.
- Where necessary, we may also conduct home visits and engage with external agencies such as the Police and Children's Social Care if we are concerned that a child is at risk.
- Where a student is absent from school for ten consecutive days and no reason has been provided, this will result in a referral to Kirklees attendance and pupil support for further support as they could be deemed as a Child Missing in Education according to local authority procedures.

In any cases where a student has been marked present earlier in the day but then does not turn up to a lesson, the teacher will report their absence to the pastoral team who will attempt to locate the student.

If the student cannot be found, a safeguarding call will be made as a priority to the parents/carers to inform them of the absence (truancy). We do not hold mobile phone numbers for students, so parents are best placed to contact them.

If parents/carers cannot be contacted, staff will attempt to contact other emergency contacts held on the school system to inform them and request their support. If this is unsuccessful, a risk assessment will be undertaken, and the Police may be informed.

Parents of Students who access a bespoke, partial or amended timetable, which may include starting later in the school day and attending lessons after P5, must also follow the daily absence procedures. School will respond by -

- A text message will be sent to priority parent/carer contacts on school system requesting a response. We endeavour to send this within an hour of the agreed starting time
- If no response is received, phone calls will be made to priority contacts on the school system within 30 minutes.

Students are not allowed to leave the school site during the day. On the rare occasions when this may be necessary (e.g. they have become severely unwell at school or have an emergency appointment), the following will apply:

- Students are only allowed to leave the site with parental/carers knowledge and written permission.

- Where a student is unwell or there are potential safeguarding concerns, students will not be allowed to leave unless accompanied by an adult.
- Students are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from school. If a student does this, they will be regarded as truanting from school.
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time. Only urgent appointments should be attended during the school day and students should return to school after them.
- Students must be signed out by the attendance officer on leaving school and signed back in on their return.
- Where a student is being collected from the academy, parents should report to reception before the student is permitted to leave the site.

These measures are taken in order to promote the safety and welfare of our students. It is vital that we have at least two contacts on the school system for every student so that we are able to do this effectively. Please email office@themfg.co.uk if you would like to add any additional contacts for your child.

We appreciate the support of parents in informing us in a timely manner of any absences of their children so that we can ensure that all of our students are safe.

Leave of Absence Requests

This section of the policy details the procedure in relation to leave of absence requests which will only be authorised in the most exceptional of circumstances.

The Mirfield Free Grammar term times and school holiday dates are published a year in advance and are published on the academy website.

Training days are published as soon as we have agreed these but may be subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to parents at the earliest opportunity.

From 1 September 2013, a change to government legislation means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for students to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. In line with the government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, holidays during term time will NOT be authorised.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Some examples may include compassionate leave, a religious observance or sporting/musical competitions.

Parents/carers should make any such request at least three weeks in advance and in writing by email at office@themfg.co.uk or letter addressed to the Attendance Officer.

All requests are considered individually, taking into account the circumstances of the request. Other factors will be taken into account including:

- The time of year the student will be absent (e.g. a Year 11 student missing a GCSE examination would be extremely detrimental to them)
- The attendance record of the student
- The number of previous requests for leave of absence

Parents will be notified of a decision either by telephone or email. Where a parental request has been refused, and parents continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 where a child has ten or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a term.

A penalty notice is issued to each parent of each child. This is for £60 if it is paid within the first 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the local authority commencing legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular school attendance. If found guilty, you may be fined up to £1,000 and you will receive a criminal record.

If your child has been suspended or excluded, they may not be in a public place during the period of suspension/exclusion without just cause (such as attending a medical appointment). If that pupil is seen in a public place, a penalty notice is issued to each parent of each child. This is for £60 if it is paid within the first 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the local authority commencing legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular school attendance. If found guilty, you may be fined up to £1,000 and you will receive a criminal record.

If you wish to refer to religious observance days, 3 days are permitted within a 12-month period where a religion other than Christianity is practiced and those days are specifically set by the religious body and the day falls on a usual school day. (Please note, pilgrimage or performing Umrah are not 'religious observance' days and are not considered reasonable cause for a child to miss school).

Attendance Register Codes

This section of the policy outlines some of the common attendance codes that are used on the register. This is not an exhaustive list and further information can be found in the 'DFE School Attendance Guidance' which is linked in the 'Links with Guidance and Other Policies' section.

The attendance register is a compulsory legal document which must be accurately maintained by schools using these attendance codes.

Present Codes

These are used when a student is present in school or is at an approved off-site educational activity and they count positively towards their attendance. They include:

- / = Morning present mark
- \ = Afternoon present mark
- L = Arrived late but before register closed
- B = Present at an approved off-site educational activity (e.g. at alternative provision)
- J = Attending an interview (e.g. a Y11 student at a Post-16 college)
- P = Approved sporting activity (e.g. a student who plays for Leeds United Academy)
- V = Educational visit (e.g. where students are out on a Geography field trip)
- W = Work experience (e.g. where a Y10/11 student is accessing an approved work experience placement)

Authorised Absence Codes

These are used when a student is absent from school but we have authorised the absence. These marks count negatively against a student's attendance but do not count against parents when considerations are made around any legal proceedings. They include:

- I = Absent due to illness
- M = Absent due to medical appointment (please try to make these outside of school hours wherever possible)
- C = Other authorised absence (e.g. to attend a funeral)
- E = Absent due to being issued with a suspension from school

- R = Absent due to religious observance

Unauthorised Absence Codes

These are used when a student is absent from school but we have not authorised the absence. These marks count negatively against a student's attendance and may inform any legal proceedings against parents (see section on Legal Proceedings for more details). They include:

- N = Absent without a reason being provided. As detailed above, we will make all efforts to contact parents to find out why their child is absent. If we are unable to do so, 'N' marks will be changed to 'O' marks (see below) after five working days.
- O = Absent from school without authorisation. Some examples that would fall into this category include:
 - No reason being provided for an absence
 - The child is refusing to come to school
 - Truancy
 - Oversleeping/missing the bus
 - School uniform not clean
 - Birthday treats
 - Looking after younger siblings
- G = Absent due to holiday in term time
- U = Arrival after the closing time of the official morning register.

Monitoring and Tracking of Attendance Data

This section of the policy details how we track, monitor, share and analyse attendance data for individual students and cohorts of students.

In order for all stakeholders (students, parents, staff, governors and external agencies) to work in partnership to ensure excellent attendance for students at The MFG, it is important that we track the attendance of students and share this information.

This will be done by the following means:

- Individual student attendance data will be shared on a weekly basis with Form Tutors who will then share it with their form group.
- Every two weeks during tutorial, students are issued with an attendance sticker in their planner so parents can monitor this at home.
- Parents will also be informed about attendance in relation to their child individually and the school more widely through newsletters, social media, academic progress reports, text message, email and letter.
- Attendance data by Form Group will be shared with students in assembly on a weekly basis. This will feed into competitions (see Rewards and Incentives section).
- Attendance data of different cohorts will be shared with the Senior Leadership Team on a weekly basis. Examples of cohorts include year groups, boys and girls, students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and students eligible for free school meals. This will then enable leaders to plan specific intervention to support any cohorts whose attendance is below expected.
- Attendance data of different cohorts will also be shared with the whole staff on a weekly basis in briefings so that Form Tutors are aware of which students in their form groups may need extra support.
- Attendance data will be shared with Governors so they can fulfil their responsibilities in supporting and challenging senior leaders in relation to the attendance strategy and the impact it is having.
- Attendance data will be shared with the Kirklees Local Authority School Attendance Support Team on a termly basis. They will then provide support, advice and guidance to school on how to make further improvements.

This list may not be exhaustive but it is intended to ensure that attendance remains at the forefront of everyone's minds so that we can work together in partnership to secure excellent attendance for all students.

Whole School Tier Model Attendance Strategy

This section of the policy outlines the overall strategy in relation to supporting students to maintain excellent school attendance.

Our strategy is based on a tier model in line with best practice as recommended by the Department for Education, with the level of support dependent upon the level of attendance of the student.

Students whose attendance is below 90% are regarded as 'Persistently Absent Pupils' by the government and students whose attendance is below 50% are regarded as 'Severely Absent Pupils'.

The below framework shows the different tiers of the attendance model and the range of support/intervention that may be implemented for students within these tiers.

The Mirfield Free Grammar Academy Attendance Tier Model

Attendance Tier	Impact on Student	Intervention and Support	Staff Responsible
<u>Tier 1</u> 97%-100%	Students in Tier 1 only miss 0-3 days of school per year and access all learning opportunities available to them. They have a strong chance of fulfilling their potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise and encouragement to maintain • Access to rewards • 100% attendance awards and recognition • Positive communication home 	All staff in school
<u>Tier 2</u> 93%-97%	Students in Tier 2 miss up to 13 days of school per year which is up to 65 hours of learning. This puts them at risk of underachievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive encouragement to improve • Access to rewards when sustained improvement is made • Attendance mentoring • Communication home so parents are aware and can support with encouragement to improve 	Form Tutors
<u>Tier 3</u> 90%-93%	Students in Tier 3 miss up to 19 days of school per year which is almost 100 hours of learning. They are at significant risk of underachievement and becoming Persistent Absentees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive encouragement to improve • Access to rewards when sustained improvement is made • Attendance mentoring • Communication home so parents are aware of concerns and need to improve • Meeting with student and parents to identify barriers to attendance and develop bespoke action plan for improvement together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year Leader
<u>Tier 4</u> 80%-90%	Students in Tier 4 miss up to 38 days of school per year. This is more than an entire half-term or 190 hours of learning. They are deemed to be Persistently Absent students and are at high risk of underachievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive encouragement to improve • Access to rewards when sustained improvement is made • Attendance mentoring • Communication home so parents are aware of significant concerns and urgent need to improve • Meeting with student and parents to identify barriers to attendance and develop bespoke action plan for improvement together • Referral to Local Authority School Attendance Support Team • Referral to Early Help or Children’s Social Care • Referral to other appropriate external agencies (e.g. CAMHS) • Referral to Education Welfare to begin legal proceedings where absence is unauthorised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year Leader • Attendance Officer
<u>Tier 5</u> 50%-80%	Students in Tier 5 miss between 38 and 95 days of school per year. This is between one and three entire half-terms or 190-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive encouragement to improve • Access to rewards when sustained improvement is made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer • Leadership Team

	<p>475 hours of learning. They are at risk of becoming Severely Absent students and are at severe risk of underachievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance mentoring • Communication home so parents are aware of significant concerns and urgent need to improve • Meeting with student and parents to identify barriers to attendance and develop bespoke action plan for improvement together • Attendance panel meeting with Governors to discuss how improvement can be secured • Referral to Local Authority School Attendance Support Team • Referral to Early Help or Children’s Social Care • Referral to other appropriate external agencies (e.g. CAMHS) • Referral to Education Welfare to begin legal proceedings where absence is unauthorised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated safeguarding Lead.
<p><u>Tier 6</u> Below 50%</p>	<p>Students in Tier 6 miss over 95 days of school per year. This is over 475 hours of learning. They are deemed to be Severely Absent students and are at extreme risk of underachievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive encouragement to improve • Access to rewards when sustained improvement is made • Attendance mentoring • Communication home so parents are aware of significant concerns and urgent need to improve • Meeting with student and parents to identify barriers to attendance and develop bespoke action plan for improvement together • Attendance panel meeting with Governors to discuss how improvement can be secured • Referral to Local Authority School Attendance Support Team • Referral to Early Help or Children’s Social Care • Referral to other appropriate external agencies (e.g. CAMHS) • Referral to Education Welfare to begin legal proceedings where absence is unauthorised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer • Designated Safeguarding Lead

Rewards and Incentives

This section of the policy outlines the ways that excellent attendance is promoted and incentivised at The Mirfield Free Grammar

In order to support students to maintain excellent attendance and encourage them to improve their attendance, it is important that there is a high profile and positive culture around school with rewards and incentives available to them. This will be achieved by:

- Positive attendance messages being shared in assemblies on a weekly basis with individuals, form groups and cohorts who have improved being celebrated
- Positive attendance messages being shared throughout the day in Tutorial and lessons
- Positive attendance messages being displayed throughout the school and in classrooms
- Positive attendance messages being shared on social media, newsletters and other external communications
- Attendance competitions between individuals, tutor groups and other cohorts with rewards/privileges for the winners
- Recognition for students who maintain excellent attendance or make sustained improvement to their attendance through achievement points, positive communication home, certificates and other rewards
- Access to end of term celebration events contingent on maintaining excellent attendance or demonstrating significant sustained improvement
- Access to privileges for students who maintain 100% attendance
- Promotion of excellent attendance at parent information and transition evenings

Punctuality

This section of the policy outlines the expectations of students in relation to their punctuality to school and throughout the school day.

Good punctuality on a morning and to each lesson is crucial. Lateness to a lesson causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other students in the class as it leaves teachers having to repeat instructions and breaks the flow of a lesson. It is, therefore, a collective responsibility of all students to ensure they are punctual throughout the day.

We expect all students to be on school site by 8:30am at the latest so that they have time to organise themselves and get to Tutorial by 8:35am when the school day begins and the morning register is taken. This will enable their school day to begin in a calm and positive manner rather than having to rush.

We then expect all students to arrive punctually to all their lessons. Whilst we appreciate that it takes time to move around the school building (consideration is given to this), it is not acceptable for students to arrive late for lessons after social times or significantly after the rest of their classmates. All students must be in their classroom before the five minute movement bell. Any student arriving after this time will be marked late to the lesson. As detailed above, this has a negative impact on learning and is not fair on the other students in the class.

Students who are persistently late will be sanctioned through the detention system.

Students with Medical Conditions, SEND and Social Workers

This section of the policy outlines the considerations that will be made for students with medical needs, Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and other vulnerabilities.

At The MFG we hold the same level of aspiration and high expectations for all of our students. We recognise, however, that some students may have additional needs or vulnerabilities that impact upon their attendance at school.

For example, some students may have diagnosed medical conditions which require them to attend regular hospital appointments during school hours, or complex situations at home with which Children's Social Care are supporting.

In these circumstances, we will work together with families and other professionals involved to ensure that any necessary reasonable adjustments to this policy are made.

How Parents can Support their Child's Attendance at School

This section of the policy provides advice and guidance to parents as to how they can support their children in ensuring excellent attendance at school.

Excellent attendance at school is the aspect of their child's education that parents have the most impact upon. This is why Parental Responsibility Measures are clear that it is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly. The following are some ways in which parents can do this:

- Be aware of their legal responsibilities in ensuring their child attends school regularly
- Ensure that their child arrives to school punctually every day
- Reinforce to their children the importance of education and how attending regularly leads to higher achievement
- Contact school in a timely manner (before 8:00am) in the event that their child is going to be absent that day
- Ensure that any medical appointments are booked outside of school hours wherever possible
- Ensure that any leave of absence request is only made in the most exceptional of circumstances
- Support their child's attendance (and therefore achievement) by not taking holidays during term time
- Notify school immediately if there are any changes to details of named contacts for their child
- Work in partnership with school staff when there are concerns about their child's attendance
- Support the school with any consequences that are implemented as a result of their child truanting or being late to school or lessons

Formalising Support

This section of the policy outlines the more intense and formal support that will be implemented when more informal measures have been exhausted without success.

In their 2022 report, 'Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence', Ofsted advise schools to take an approach where they, 'listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate'.

This means that where a student's attendance is an ongoing concern, we will work with families and make referrals to external agencies in order to secure support in removing barriers to attendance and establishing strong attendance routines. These include:

- Parenting Contract – a voluntary agreement between parents and governors

- Penalty Notices – a fine issued by the local authority where a student has repeated unauthorised absence
- Education Supervision Order – where a court mandates the local authority to supervise a child’s education for a period of time
- Parenting Order – where a court places a mandatory order on parents to attend guidance sessions and improve their child’s attendance at school
- Prosecution – where a court prosecutes a parent who has failed to ensure their child attends school regularly under the Education Act 1996

These formal mechanisms are a last resort once more informal support has been exhausted, however, we feel it is important to be transparent in stating that we will not shy away from using them where necessary in order to help every student access their education.

Children missing in education

The school recognises that children missing education are at risk of underachieving and may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. We follow the LA guidelines in monitoring such children. If a child is apparently “missing”, we endeavour to find that child as soon as possible, working with partner agencies, including the Police and Social Care if necessary. Our Attendance Officer, Year Leaders and Tutors, work with families to support good attendance. Where there are serious concerns, we work closely with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that children are safely in school. Where a child goes missing, we make every attempt to contact the family by phone, letter and home visits. Children missing for more than 10 days MUST be referred to the LA (or earlier where there are existing safeguarding concerns), who will attempt to trace the family. Children who do not attend for more than 20 days without notification are removed from the school roll.

Links with Guidance and Other Policies

The Mirfield Free Grammar Attendance Policy has due regard to the related statutory legislation on areas including:

- [Parental Responsibility Measures](#)
- [Children Missing Education](#)
- [Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School](#)
- [Suspensions and Exclusions](#)
- [Alternative Provision](#)
- [Safeguarding](#)
- [DFE Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance](#)
- [DFE Summary Table of Responsibilities to Improve School Attendance](#)
- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [The European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following The Mirfield Free Grammar policies:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour