

# Priority: Further improve attendance rate with particular focus on reducing Persistent Absenteeism and on particular groups of pupils.

## Why is this a priority for us?

The school has been working hard to improve the overall levels of school attendance for a number of years. Our main focus has been to address levels of attendance which have been below the average attendance levels achieved nationally (approximately 96%), and to ensure that we reduce the number of children who fall into the Persistent Absentee category (less than 90%).

We have also been focusing on the attendance rates of particular groups of pupils (e.g. Pupil Premium and SEND).

## What impact is this having?

Our close monitoring of, and targeted action towards, improving individual attendance rates has helped us to achieve a steady improvement in attendance for the school overall, moving from 94.7% in 2014/15 to 95.5% in 2016/17 and has improved still further to 96% at the end of the Autumn Term 2017.

Similarly, this close individual focus has seen the percentage of persistent absentees drop from 12.8% in 2014/15 to 7.8% in 2016/17 which is below the national average. A similar pattern of improvement can be tracked for SEND, Boys & Free School Meal children.

We are severely affected by families taking unauthorised holidays in term time. The school works hard to dissuade term-time holidays which currently account for approximately a third of all pupil absence in school.

## What are we doing?

The school **closely monitors** whole school, individual and group attendance on a daily basis.

This information is used to inform our intervention strategy.

As a whole school, we publish a weekly **Attendance League** in our Friday News; this is also displayed in the hall. The class with the highest attendance wins a 'free playtime' and is entered into the assembly raffle for a family cinema ticket. All classes who beat the staff attendance also win a free playtime.

We **band attendance into Gold (98%+), Silver (97-98%) and Bronze (95-96%)** levels - all children who achieve these bands by the end of the year receive an Attendance Certificate, a Book Bank Cheque and entry into the Attendance Prize Draw.

Using the regular monitoring of individual attendance, we issue **letters to parents** where the overall attendance level or the percentage of broken weeks is a concern. This letter is designed to have minimal text and clear graphical images showing our concerns relative to the national picture and the financial cost of the education which has been missed. This letter will invite the parent in to **discuss our concerns** with Mrs Daylak or Mr Higgs.

We buy in the **Education Welfare Service** support package and use this to pursue individual case concerns where our in-house actions have not been successful in achieving positive changes.

The school has set up an **innovative partnership** (Learning Well) with 30 local schools and all local GP Surgeries to improve safeguarding and pupil attendance via improved lines of communication between schools and local GPs.