

# **Maple Medical PRU**

## **Attendance and Absence policy**

### **The importance of regular school attendance**

#### **Learning**

Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life.

Children who frequently miss school often fall behind. There is a strong link between good school attendance and achieving good results.

Good attendance at school shows potential employers that a young person is reliable. Young people who are frequently absent from school are more likely to become involved in, or be a victim of criminal exploitation and anti-social behaviour.

#### **Safeguarding**

A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for a child encompasses: -

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti- bullying
- Online Safety
- Emotional support

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis would be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Maple Medical PRU has a responsibility for keeping accurate records of pupil attendance. We will contact parents/carers directly if we have any concerns about a child's attendance. There are a range of services to support families who encounter difficulties in ensuring their children attend school regularly such as Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service, CAMHS, The Early Help Hub, Doncaster Pride and Family Support Services. We also have a learning mentor and an inclusion manager in house who support with this.

## **Promoting Regular Attendance:**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents/carers, pupils, the Local Authority, the named mainstream school and all members of school staff and Management Committee.

## **Responsibilities of parents/carers**

A child can only miss school if either:

- they're too ill to attend
- They are required to isolate due to Covid rules
- their parents/carers have got advance permission from the school
- there are difficult family circumstances such as bereavement
- They have a medical appointment

If a child is absent parents/ carers must:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence
- Send a note in or verbally explain the reason for the absence.
- Provide evidence of a medical appointment

## **Holidays in term time**

Parents/ carers are strongly advised not to take their child out of school for holidays during term time and particularly during exam time as this can be disruptive to their child's education. Only in exceptional circumstances will holidays during term time be authorised.

Parents/carers have to get permission from the head teacher if they want to take a child out of school during term time.

Parents/carers can only do this if:

- they make an application to the head teacher in advance

- there are exceptional circumstances

It's up to the head teacher how many days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Parents/carers can be fined for taking a child on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

## **Responsibilities of Maple Medical PRU**

Schools, PRUs and local authorities have a duty to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education (or as much as they are able) to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Provide learning in some format if a child has to absent for a sustained period of time

## **The Admission and Attendance Registers**

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on both registers.

Pupils at Maple Medical PRU are often dual – registered with their mainstream school and the PRU and attendance registers are exchanged between the two provisions.

## **Children at Risk of Missing Education**

Maple Medical PRU must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Children at the hospital school who are missing from education are referred to the appropriate local authority

## **The Attendance Register**

Maple Medical PRU must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- Unable to attend due to Covid rules

Maple Medical PRU then follows up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.
- Contact the mainstream school for support in re-engaging the pupil with Maple Medical PRU and school

## **Support**

At Maple Medical PRU we are aware that many of our pupils, have, for a variety of medical reasons, experienced problems attending educational provision. As part of our work we support all our young people to achieve the highest possible attendance and we celebrate that achievement

## **Strategies used to support pupils and parents/carers to achieve excellent attendance:**

- Telephone or text parents/ carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them;
- Discussion re attendance expectations at admission meetings
- Meetings with pupils and/or parents/carers/mainstream schools/other agencies
- Report to parents/ carers on how their child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- Letters home
- Visual displays
- Rewards/Certificates for excellent attendance
- Recognition at the annual Presentation Day
- Work on improving punctuality
- Emergency transport
- Refer persistent absences to the mainstream school's attendance officer
- Post cards home to parents/ carers
- Remote learning if they are required to isolate
- Safe and well calls and/or visits

## Legal Framework

### **The Law relating to attendance**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that ‘the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise’

### **The Law relating to safeguarding**

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

The Local Authority may use Legislation to Enforce School Attendance.

**Policy date:** January 2022

**Policy review date:** January 2024

**Signed**

**Head teacher**.....

**Chair of Management Committee**.....