The right support, at the right time

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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This policy sets out the procedures and responsibilities for Attendance at the Leading Futures Alternative Provision.

Purpose and Scope

Leading Futures is committed to providing an exceptional educational experience within a safe and nurturing environment to all learners. We believe, if learners are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance are crucial to them fulfilling their potential. However, good attendance goes beyond the academic success of a learner and is also a measure of safeguarding. Our learners have often poor historic attendance within their home school setting. We recognise the nature of our learners and as a result, believe our attendance systems are our first line in safeguarding our young people and therefore a priority.

With that principle in mind, we work in close partnership with our home schools and families to support a culture of attendance and safety; however, parents are responsible by law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with Leading Futures staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance.

If there are problems which affect a learner's attendance, we will investigate, identify, and strive, in strong partnership with parents and learners, to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach, involving families fully, and outside agencies where appropriate, to ensure learners are attending the provision daily. We appreciate every family's circumstances are different, and we will always aim to work in partnership with to find a solution for issues that arise.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to good attendance through our culture and ethos including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure learners have the support in place to attend the provision
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every learner has access to the fulfilling education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence and contacting families to discuss this

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Where to Find Information

Alongside this policy, attendance information can be found on our website, under the 'pastoral support' menu. Information includes:

- Parent/Carer reporting an absence
- Request a leave of absence information
- Named Attendance Officer and Family Liaison Officer

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures.

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996

- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Roles and Responsibilities

The Directors

The Directors are responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at Leading Futures
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual learners
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Advising parents/ carers for the need to the request a leave of absence from the home school
- Working collaboratively with the home school staff and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- Collaborating with the parents of learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for learners with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where learners with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority (LA) when a learner with an education, health, and care plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the learners needs
- Communicating the provision's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to learners and parents/ carers through all available channels

The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the provision
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Meeting with the other professionals regarding attendance data
- Consulting with learners, parents/ carers, and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents / carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with learners and their parents/ carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to learners and families

The contact details for the designated senior leader responsible for attendance are to be found on our website.

The Attendance Officer

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that daily registers are completed accurately and on time by staff
- Administration of first day contact procedures and ensuring that absent learners are discussed at the daily staff briefing
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see Section 7) and identifying areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to Leading Futures staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated responsible individuals in the home schools for attendance
- Escalating to, and working with, home schools and local authority professionals to tackle persistent and severe absence, which may include the home schools use of statutory procedures and fixed penalty notices
- Issuing Attendance Letters to parents where it is felt that attendance may need support

The contact details for the attendance officer can be found on the website.

Subject Tutors/ Form Tutors

Subject Tutors/ Form Tutors are responsible for recording attendance accurately on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the attendance officer in a timely manner, to enable safeguarding procedures to be implemented in the case of unexplained absence. Our procedures are set out in Appendix 2.

Leading Futures Staff

The attendance officer who is responsible for the administration within the provision, will:

- Take calls from parents/ carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the provision system
- Transfer calls from parents/ carers to other relevant staff to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- The Family Liaison Officer, or another member of staff, may call at the family home to offer support and to stay connected with the learner and family during periods of absence in line with this policy. All home visits will be arranged in consultation with the home school

Leading Futures Uniformed Approach

Leading Futures is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all staff, learners, and parents/ carers
- Making sure senior leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the provision records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority, as requested
    - Making sure staff collaborate effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific learners, where appropriate
- Making sure the attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for learners who need it most by prioritising staff and resources

- Making sure the provision has high aspirations for all learners, but adapts processes and support to learners' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping staff to focus improvement efforts on individual learners who need it most
- Working collaboratively with home school staff to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the provision and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the provisions processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting learners needs
- Ensuring all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The provisions legal requirements for keeping registers and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners, and keeping them informed regarding specific learners, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the provision
- Holding the staff to account for the implementation of this policy

Parents/ Carers

Where this policy refers to a parent/ carer, it refers to the adult the home school and/ or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends the provision every day
- Call Leading Futures to report their child's absence before 8.30am (AM session) and 12.15pm (PM session) on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the provision with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
  Keep to any attendance contracts or action plans that they make with the home school, EWO, Leading Futures and/ or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the relevant staff as identified in the attendance pages of each school's website

Learners

Learners are expected to:

- Attend the provision every day on time, prepared for learning, and attend each lesson on time throughout the day
- Work in partnership with Leading Futures staff and parents/ carers to overcome any barriers to attendance where appropriate

Education Welfare Officers (EWOs)

Leading Futures will work collaboratively with the home school and/or Local Authority EWO's to support the attendance of our learners. Parents/ carers are actively encouraged to work with the EWO's to secure the attendance support they require.

The EWO has a key role in ensuring the safety of learners through driving attendance improvements. The welfare aspect of the role is significant, and the relationships born from high level pastoral support of learners and their families is of the upmost importance.

The EWO role examines many areas that cross into other aspects of our provisions attendance systems. However, ultimately the role is to challenge attendance and provide support to all stakeholders that leads to the desired improvement.

The role of EWOs considers all the above statements and includes the following:

- A solid understanding of the learner/ family for all our most vulnerable learners, particularly those in severe and persistent absence
- Full engagement with learners highlighted as being most vulnerable for attendance, and their families
- Oversee home school actions and become involved in processes after attendance letters have been issued
- Actively engage and work alongside external agencies to support all stakeholders
- To be present at Attendance Support Meetings (ASM) to support families and home school staff to put in place the most appropriate plan that will lead to attendance improvements and support the learner

Recording Attendance

Attendance Register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all learners onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of each session. This will give our learners either an AM or PM mark as it translates on their home school register.

It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every learner is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE's attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a learner is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a learner is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The provision has its own timings of the day as agreed by Directors:

AM Session:

- 9.00 am – Start of session
- 12.00 noon – End of session

- 12.45 pm - Start of session
- 3.45 pm – End of session

The start and end times can also be found on our website.

The registers for each session will be kept open for 30 mins from the start time of the session.

- 9.30am – AM register closes
- 1.15pm – PM register closes

Unplanned Absence

The learner's parent/ carer must notify the provision of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am (AM session) and 12.15pm (PM session) or as soon as practically possible by calling the provisions line. The parent must continue to call in each day to update the provision on any continuing absence.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the provision has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. This will be communicated to the home school about the unplanned absence on the first day of absence and any further days.

We may contact parents/ carers by telephone or through a visit to gain more details about their child's absence and how we can support if appropriate. The Family Liaison Officer or an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) may visit the family home to offer support and to stay connected with the parents/ carers and their child.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the home school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. They will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily and will not ask parents/ carers to pay for evidence. We would expect that the home school would communicate with Leading Futures and update about regarding prolonged absence.

If Leading Futures is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and liaise with the home school to devise a support plan for the learner and their family. We will endeavour to inform parents/ carers of this decision and are happy to discuss the reasons for this.

Planned Absence

Attending an unavoidable medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the learner's parent/ carer notifies the provision or home school in advance of the appointment. An appointment card or letter may be requested. If a parent/ carer knows their child will be attending an appointment, they should give details to a member of the attendance staff so arrangements can be made to mark the register accordingly. Any communication that Leading Futures receives of this nature will be communicated with the home school.

However, we encourage parents/ carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the learner should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The learner's parent/ carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 5 outlines the term-time absences the provision or the home school can authorise.

Lateness and Punctuality

A learner who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Leading Futures has a clear 'Start of Session' welcome procedure. As a provision we analyse data for both late to the provision and late to sessions to identify subgroups and drive appropriate interventions.

The use of Leading Futures Engagement for Learning Policy will be applied to discourage lateness in preparation to Post-16 destinations.

As a provision we will strive to review individual circumstances through meetings with learners and parents/ carers to identify issues and introduce interventions/ action plans.

Following up Unexplained Absence

If a learner fails to attend their Leading Future session the following steps will be taken:

1. Leading Futures will notify the Home School or Local Authority of the learner's absence and will record the details of this call
2. The Home School or Local Authority will then make enquiries about the learner's absence in line with their Attendance Policy and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
3. An update will be provided to Leading Futures within 30 minutes of the notification call and the details of this call will be recorded
4. Leading Futures will then complete a follow up call to see if the parent/ carer wishes to discuss the reason for absence and to offer additional support

If Leading Futures is unable to successfully contact the home school to trigger the above procedures, then the provision will contact one, or both, of the emergency contacts held for the learner. They may also call at the home to check on your welfare of the learner, in line with Appendix 2.

If all the above procedures are unsuccessful, in collaboration with the home school, we may make referrals to other agencies, including the Education Welfare Officer (EWO):

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than five working days after the session
- Call the parent/ carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary

If absence continues, the home and EWO, will provide additional advice, support, and guidance to both schools, the provision, and families.

If we are unable to ascertain from a parent/ carer why their child is absent, in collaboration with the home school, we will take all necessary steps to do so. This may include contacting the Police, Social Care, talking to friends and neighbours and other measures. **Safeguarding children is our priority, and we will do everything possible to ensure they are safe.** If we have not heard from them, parents/ carers should expect us to follow the procedures outlined. The home school may also:

- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the learner's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the learner and/or their parents/ carers to improve attendance
- Identify whether the learner needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the home school may request Notice to Improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention, as appropriate

Reporting Attendance to Parents/ Carers

Leading Futures will regularly inform parents/ carers of their child's attendance and absence levels, through the use of regular progress reports. Parents/ carers are always advised to contact the provision or home school to gain further information if they have any concerns.

Leading Futures staff will be happy to provide a copy of a child's attendance record should it be required. If a child's attendance is at a level where we feel we need to draw this to the attention of their parents/ carers attention, this will be done in one of the following ways:

- A letter named a SAL (School Attendance Letter) may be sent to parents/ carers, notifying them of their child's attendance and inviting them to contact us if they need support. A copy of their attendance certificate will be enclosed
- A member of staff or the EWO may telephone parents/ carers to discuss their child's attendance and to offer support if there are issues affecting attendance or barriers making it difficult for a child to attend
- If the attendance continues to cause concern, parents/ carers may receive a follow-up letter, a home visit or an invitation to come to an 'Attendance Support Meeting' where they can discuss any issues with relevant staff (may include the provision and/ or home school Attendance Officer, EWO or pastoral support staff) and work together on a plan to ensure that their child is able to maximise the opportunities available to them at the provision by attending daily. Parents/ carers may also be offered referral to other agencies, or asked if they would like to be supported through the Early Help process. Early Help is about identifying problems within families early, and providing proactive support, helping to ensure that families receive the right support at the right time
- If a child's attendance remains unsatisfactory, further referrals may be made, depending on the situation. A referral may be made to Wolverhampton Councils Attendance Support Team, to Social Care or to agencies who are best placed to support a child in overcoming any barriers to attendance. We will discuss this with each family dependent on their own unique circumstances

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for Term-Time Absence

The Headteacher/ Principal of the home school, will only grant a leave of absence to a learner during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances', considering the specific facts, circumstances, and the relevant context behind the request.

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher/ Principal's discretion, including the length of time the learner is authorised to be absent. There is no specific definition of 'exceptional circumstances;' however, if the leave is for something that could otherwise be organised during school holidays, it is very unlikely to be granted. A family holiday, or the cost of taking a family holiday being too expensive during school holiday periods, is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance.

Any leave of absence during term time can be disruptive both to the child's learning and to the provision regardless of the reason for the leave. Leading Futures is aware, that a Headteacher/Principal of a home school will only consider authorising leave in term time where both:

- The application is made on the home schools 'Request for leave in term time' form, to the Headteacher/Principal in advance (at least 2 weeks prior to departure) of the leave by a parent the child normally lives with. The legislation does not allow for retrospective permission to be granted. The form can be requested from the home school or is available on the provision's website under 'Leave of Absence Request.' We recommend that trips are not booked until leave has been granted
- There are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Headteacher/Principal for the leave, and in such circumstances the home school determines the length of any agreed leave in term time. If a child does not return to the home school/ provision on or by the agreed date, they will be at risk of losing their place. The Headteacher/Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/ dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learners parents/carers belong. If necessary, the home school/ provision will seek advice from the parents'/ carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller learners travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the home school, but it is not known whether the learner is attending educational provision

Unavoidable family circumstances for which time off is agreed by the home school, i.e. bereavement, funerals, family crisis and other unforeseen situations as deemed appropriate in discussions between families and staff.

Sanctions

The home schools have authority to make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty Notices

Leading Futures is aware of the systems used by the local authorities within which our home schools are located. In Wolverhampton, the local authority (LA) can fine parents/ carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from their school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the home schools and the LA will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that learner
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents/ carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the home school has notified the parents that the learner must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent/ carer who is liable for the learner's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent(s)/ carer(s) who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent/ carer must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent/ carer in respect of the same learner, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/ carer in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to Improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents/ carers do not engage with offers of support, the home school may offer a Notice to Improve to give parents/ carers a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to Improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the home schools are located.

They will include:

- Details of the learner's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far

- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance does not improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

The Attendance Support Team at Wolverhampton Council can be reached via emailing Sarah Flanagan, the Attendance Manager. Sarah.Flanagan@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The profile of attendance and its importance must be evident in the provision at all times. The culture of attendance must be of the highest profile to ensure our children understand the intrinsic link between good attendance, safety and future life choices.

As a result, the provision has the following expectations:

Expectations of in-provision actions to improve attendance culture	
Non-negotiable	**Desirable**
• All learners know their current attendance and have a strategy to improve it • Monitors attendance regularly • Culture of poor punctuality being challenged through a range of strategies • Posters in key areas to promote good attendance • Half-termly parental contact as a part of our newsletter to promote attendance • Letters of congratulations, certificates for good attendance which may be taken home Recognition in assembly • The award of star points • The giving of prizes, class rewards such as mascots or a cup for the highest class or tutor group attendance • Recording attendance on reports sent home, with positive comments for effort • Facilitating Attendance Support Meetings for a discussion specifically about attendance. This meeting may include the home school, community school nurse etc.	• Sending letters to parents whose child has 100% attendance • Recognising and rewarding most improved attendance where there is a history of poor attendance • Sending children to senior members of staff for commendation for efforts made towards improvement as well as for full attendance

Supporting Learners Who Are Absent or Returning to Education

Learners Absent Due to Complex Barriers to Attendance

Leading Futures prides itself on inclusivity and as a result, the approach to learners and families who face complex barriers to attendance. Ultimately, the provision will emphasise the importance of their educational setting being a safe place, where learners really want to be, with the right ethos, engaging curriculum and lessons that inspire each individual.

Key principles for supporting attendance:

- Gain a full and clear understanding of the learner/ family circumstances
- Offer early help, in collaboration with the home school, through the provision or through the local authority pathways
- Consider and drive engagement of external agency support
- Monitor progress through effective action planning and provide opportunities to review impact and reassess

Learners Absent Due to Mental or Physical Ill Health or SEND

Leading Futures recognises the barriers and the link between mental or physical illness and/ or SEND.

The key principles our provision will apply are:

- Discuss the underlying reasons for absence with learner and parents/ carers
- Ascertain the support required for both home and the provision to improve attendance
- Devise an action plan (with medical professionals if required) for all parties to drive accountability to improve attendance or ensure that the learner has access to an appropriate education

Where a learner has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the provision becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the learners' needs, the provision will inform the home school and local authority.

For learners with 15 days recorded absence due to illness, our provision will notify the home school who will have a statutory duty to record this absence with the local authority. At this stage, Leading Futures, and the home school staff and/ or EWO teams will need to discuss the absence in more detail and may ask for medical evidence so that we can best support your child.

Learners Returning to the Provision After a Lengthy or Unavoidable Period of Absence

Leading Futures recognises that reintegrating learners back into education following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence is challenging. Our staff will work to the following principles:

- Gain a full understanding of the historical issues that have led to absence
- Assess and understand the current barriers to re-engaging in education
- Conduct a high-quality induction based on the knowledge gained from initial meetings, including baseline testing
- Clear and concise action plan to re-engage learners into education with supportive interventions in place as appropriate
- Monitor and review the action plan at Director level

Attendance Monitoring

Leading Futures holds attendance as one of the key factors in successful outcomes for our learners, but equally as important is the safeguarding aspect. We care deeply for our learners, and we need to ensure they are safe and well at all times.

As a result, we pride ourselves in going the extra mile to support our learners and families with our first day and follow-up approach. We will make key decisions daily on which learner we will send our staff to visit to ensure that we offer both the child and the family the support they require from our provision.

Leading Futures will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data daily, weekly, half-termly, termly, and yearly across the provision and at an individual learner level as appropriate
- Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Specific learner information will be shared with the DfE on request. The DfE may request access to the management information system so the attendance data can be accessed regularly and securely. Each term, the DfE will publish at national and local authority level, through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases, attendance data.

The provision will benchmark its attendance data against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the Stakeholders.

Analysing Attendance

Leading Futures will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify learners, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify learners whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using Data to Improve Attendance

Leading Futures will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual learners, groups, or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the learners it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families
- Provide regular attendance reports to Subject Tutor/ Form Tutors to facilitate discussions with learners and families, and including special educational needs co-ordinator (SENDCo), designated safeguarding leads (DSL)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies

- Share information and work collaboratively with the home school, local authorities, and other partners where a learner's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific learners, where appropriate

Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a learner misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a learner misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the provisions strategy for improving attendance.

Leading Futures will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/ carers of learners who the provision (and/ or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at the provision
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
    - Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
    - Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these learners. In doing so, the provision will sensitively consider the reasons for absence
    - Work collaboratively with home schools to implement sanctions, where necessary

Elective Home Education (EHE)

The Leading Futures is committed to supporting our learners and families through all aspects of their lives. EHE is considered to be the very last resort in the educational journey. If a parent/ carer proposes EHE for their child, the provision will notify the home school immediately. The home school may request a Multi-Agency Meeting (MAM) with families and engage with the local authority to help to ensure that the correct decision is made in the best interests of the child or young person. Leading Futures staff are available to attend these meetings if required.

Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. This will be undertaken by the appropriate senior leader or Director, minimum every 2 years.

The reviewed policy will be agreed by the Directors and shared will all staff within the provision. The policy will also be published on the Leading Futures website: Policies | Leading Futures

Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies which can be found on our website: Policies | Leading Futures

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Learners with Medical Conditions and Administering Medicines Policy
- Engagement for Learning Policy
- SEND Policy
- Home Visits and Lone Working Policy
- Exclusions and Suspensions Arrangements Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Learner is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Learner is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Learner arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than their home school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Learner is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Learner is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Learner is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Learner is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Learner is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Learner is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – Leave of Absence		

C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Learner is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Learner is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Learner has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Learner has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Learner of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Learner is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Learner has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – Other Authorised Reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Learner is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Learner is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Learner is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)

E	Suspended or excluded	Learner has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – Unable to Attend School because of Unavoidable Cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Learner is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Learner is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Leaner is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Learner is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every Learner absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Learner is unable to attend as they are:
		• In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Learner's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law

Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes Staggered starts are now covered by this code
Absent – Unauthorised Absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Learner is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school is not satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Learner has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative Codes		
Z	Prospective Learner not on admission register	Learner has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 – Attendance Tracking, First Day Contact and Attendance/ Safeguarding Monitoring

We have a robust understanding of their learners and families. Using this knowledge is critical in making sure learners attend and are, by default, safe. We use the information to create an agreed criteria that forms a tiered system to prioritise first day response by provision.

The provision follows the RAG protocol for first day response:

The GREEN and AMBER process is as follows:

If a learner fails to attend their Leading Future session, the following steps will be taken:

1. Leading Futures will notify the Home School or Local Authority of the learner's absence and will record the details of this call
2. The Home School or Local Authority will then make enquiries about the learner's absence in line with their Attendance Policy and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
3. An update will be provided to Leading Futures within 30 minutes of the notification call and the details of this call will be recorded
4. Leading Futures will then complete a follow up call to see if the parent/ carer wishes to discuss the reason for absence and to offer additional support

If Leading Futures is unable to successfully contact the home school to trigger the above procedures, then the provision will contact one, or both, of the two emergency contacts held for the learner. They MAY also call at the home to check on the welfare of the learner.

Leading Futures will also send a text messages to all absent learners' families when the registers are closed:

- 9.30am – AM register closes
- 1.15pm – PM register closes

The expectation for all phone calls and texts to be made and logged on our MIS and Safeguarding system for analysis

The RED process is as follows:

- The above procedures will be followed
- There WILL be a visit to the home to check on the welfare of the learner. This will be agreed in collaboration with the home school

Appendix 3 - Leading Futures Learner RAG Ratings

The following criteria is to be used to define the RAG ratings of our learners. Professional judgement may be used to adjust a learner's RAG rating but must be supported by external professionals and a risk assessment must be in place.

The following steps with be taken in agreement with the home school or local authority.

Learner focus group	Definition/ Criteria	Additional Attendance Action All families will be contacted by the provision on the first day of absence
RED **Complex/ Acute** **Risk Assessment**	EHCP LAC/CIC CSE CCE Social Workers CP Plan S47 Investigation Mental Health linked to suicide risk (Family/Learner)	In addition to first day contact The provision will make every effort to make face-to face contact with learner and family every first day of absence. Face-to-face contact with learner being a video call or home visit The provision will contact and update home school and linked external agencies The provision staff will visit learners on a more regular basis if they have additional concerns
AMBER **Vulnerable**	Severe and Persistent absentees Working with external agency Family concern EWO/ AST involvement Police investigation	In addition to first day contact Provision will make every effort to make face-to-face contact with the learner and family every third day of absence. Face-to-face contact with learner/ family being a video call or home visit Provision will contact and update linked external agencies The provision staff will visit learners on a more regular basis if they have additional concerns
GREEN **Universal**	Remit of working with Leading Futures or home school staff	In addition to first day contact The provision will make every effort to make face-to face contact with the learner and family every fifth day of absence. Face-to-face contact with learner/ family being a video call or home visit The provision staff will visit learners on a more regular basis if they have additional concerns

Leading Futures will:

- Use the LA threshold guidance
- Ensure all associated professionals are aware of the attendance support
- All learners identified as RAG RED will have a full risk assessment (Appendix 4)

Leading Futures First Day Calling Procedure

Classification of Child

Red Learners	Amber Learners	Green Learners
EHCP, LAC/CIC, CSE, CCE, Social Workers, CP Plan, S47 Investigation Mental Health linked to suicide risk, (Family/Learner)	Severe and Persistent absentees, Working with external agency, Family concern, EWO/ AST involvement, Police investigation	Remit of working with Leading Futures or home school staff
9.30am – AM register closes 1.15pm – PM register closes Phone calls made to home school or LA LF sends out text message to parent/ carer Record all calls and texts made	9.30am – AM register closes 1.15pm – PM register closes Phone calls made to home school or LA LF sends out text message to parent/ carer Record all calls and texts made	9.30am – AM register closes 1.15pm – PM register closes Phone calls made to home school or LA LF sends out text message to parent/ carer Record all calls and texts made
The home School or Local Authority will then make enquiries about the learner's absence in line with their Attendance Policy and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	The home School or Local Authority will then make enquiries about the learner's absence in line with their Attendance Policy and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	The home School or Local Authority will then make enquiries about the learner's absence in line with their Attendance Policy and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
LF to receive an update within 30 mins from home school or LA	LF to receive an update within 30 mins from home school or LA	LF to receive an update within 30 mins from home school or LA
LF complete a follow up call to see if the parent/ carer wishes to discuss the reason for absence and to offer additional support	LF complete a follow up call to see if the parent/ carer wishes to discuss the reason for absence and to offer additional support	LF complete a follow up call to see if the parent/ carer wishes to discuss the reason for absence and to offer additional support
No response then LF will contact one, or both, of the two emergency contacts held for the learner.	No response then LF will contact one, or both, of the two emergency contacts held for the learner.	No response then LF will contact one, or both, of the two emergency contacts held for the learner.
They WILL also call at the home to check on the welfare of the learner.	They MAY also call at the home to check on the welfare of the learner.	They MAY also call at the home to check on the welfare of the learner
In addition to first day contact Leading Futures AO and FLO will support Neglect Toolkit to be completed if the first visit Offer Early Help	In addition to first day contact Leading Futures AO and FLO will support Neglect Toolkit to be completed if the first visit Offer Early Help	In addition to first day contact Leading Futures AO and FLO will support Neglect Toolkit to be completed if the first visit Offer Early Help
The provision will make every effort to make face-to face contact with the learner and family every 1st day of absence. Face-to-face or video call	The provision will make every effort to make face-to face contact with the learner and family every 3rd day of absence. Face-to-face or video call	The provision will make every effort to make face-to face contact with the learner and family every 5th day of absence. Face-to-face or video call
Who can support the process? Home school Local Authority Leading Futures AO Leading Futures FLO Home school EWO Linked Agencies DSL's	**Who can support the process?** Home school Local Authority Leading Futures AO Leading Futures FLO Home school EWO Linked Agencies	**Who can support the process?** Home school Local Authority Leading Futures AO Leading Futures FLO
Strategies of Support Phone Call Home visits - Face-to-face Attendance Action Plan Meeting – following 3 wk review EWO LA referrals Praise and awards sent home	**Strategies of Support** Phone Call Home visits - Face-to-face Video call SAL 2 – no improvement 3 wks/ drop 90%. School/ Provision Attendance Support Meeting to set targets Praise and awards sent home	**Strategies of Support** Phone Call Home visits - Face-to-face Video call SAL 1 under 90% Invite to attendance meeting to discuss barriers Praise and awards in school

Where the procedure fails to meet Leading futures contact intention the DSLs at the home school & provision should liaise and agree a plan.
It should involve the EWO team and making referrals to Local Authority Services.

Process recorded on MIS and Safeguarding systems

Appendix 4 – Risk Assessment – High Needs Learner

Risk Assessment – High Needs Learner

Historic – Physical – Engagement – Attendance – SEMH – Safeguarding

Name of learner:		**Date written:**	
Risk assessment compiled by:		**Review date:**	

Task Analysis Summary

-

Summary of Historical and Current Concerns

-

Current Agencies/Professionals Involved

Agency/ Professional	Name	Contact Details
Home School		
Local Authority Professional		
Social Worker		
CATE Team		
Strengthening Families		
GP		
School Nurse		

Alternative Provision / Staff Based Actions:

	Identified risk to learner and others	HOW LIKELY? *5=Certain 4=Probable 3=Possible 2=Not Impossible 1=Never*	HOW OFTEN? *5=Daily 4=Weekly 3=Monthly 2=Rarely 1=Never*	RAG *20-25 = RED 10-19 =Amber 2-9 = Green*	Preventative actions taken by provision	Staff lead	If actions fail.....escalation pathway
1	•				•		•
2	•				•		•
3	•				•		•
4	•				•		•

Next Steps

-

Summary Checks

Has this document been reviewed by Directors?			Has this document been shared with external agencies?		
Has this document been approved by DSL?			Are all staff aware of the learner's risks?		Y
Signed (Writer):	**Date:**		**Signed DSL:**	**Date:**	

Learner focus group	Definition	Action
RED Complex/Acute**	LAC, County lines, CSE, CE, Social Workers, CP Plan	Daily face to face, e.g. video or home visit Contact linked agencies
AMBER Vulnerable**	Persistent absentees, working with external agency, family concern, EWO/AST involvement	Daily verbal contact with learner and family Face to face every 3 days
GREEN Universal	No key concerns above the remit of an EWO	Daily verbal contact Face to face a minimum of once a week AP systems and strategies to be used and impact monitored