

FAO: All Headteachers/Principals/Centre Managers/  
Attendance Leads

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SKILLS**

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Your Ref:

Please ask for: Lorraine Lord

Our Ref: LL/CMS

Date: 11 January 2017

Dear Headteacher/Principal/Centre Manager/Attendance Lead

**Attendance Update Analysis Guidance**

Further to requests from schools/academies and in response to the 2016 safeguarding visits, we have produced further local guidance on managing attendance and punctuality information. We hope you will find the information useful, in analysing your attendance data to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly, and that persistent absence is eradicated or significantly reduced.

The DfE updated have their advice document: "School attendance: Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent Schools and local authorities" (DfE, November 2016)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/564599/school\\_attendance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564599/school_attendance.pdf)

The revised document has strengthened guidance to schools on the following:-

- study leave (Year 11) and the date when Year 11's are removed from roll after the summer exams
- coding holidays, in particular using the G code for unauthorised holiday
- part time timetables (FAQ)
- academic review days (not permitted during school hours – FAQ)

During our safeguarding visits in 2016, there was a focus on attendance. Learning to help you improve practice includes:-

- Ensure disadvantaged pupil attendance is in line with national, and other pupils in school; and consider how the pupil premium is used to improve attendance rates for pupils who do not attend school regularly. Expectations must be high for disadvantaged pupils, this includes the expectation that they attend school regularly
- Ensure pupils between 90% and 95% attendance rates are tracked, monitored and early help is provided to stop them becoming persistently absent (keep evidence of impact)
- Ensure you know who your persistently absent pupils are, and have support in place for these pupils to ensure they attend school regularly
- Demonstrate the impact of work to reduce/eradicate persistent absence, by generating reports for pupils to show attendance rates since the early help has been put in place, (e.g. pupil who had 76% attendance, since 25 October 2016, attendance rate has been 98%)
- Monitor authorised and unauthorised attendance rates regularly, against the national figures. Ensure correct codes are applied.
- Ensuring the B code is correctly applied – a pupil working unsupervised at home cannot be recorded as B code. Ensure pupils receiving their education off site, but on your school roll are regularly monitored and their attendance recorded on a daily basis (morning and afternoon sessions), including checking they are not leaving site after registration
- Many providers welcomed the random spot checks to check pupils are where they should be. It is important that you consider adding this strategy to your school self-evaluation work and undertake regular random checks to ensure your systems are working, and pupils are where they should be, and safe
- Ensure the D code to dual roll pupils is used when pupils have extended stays in hospital (16 days is the trigger), and they are dual rolled at the hospital school. You will need to liaise with the child's parents/carers and the school nursing service as soon as you become aware a child is in hospital, so that they can liaise with the hospital school
- Ensure that you seek evidence as advised in the departmental guidance where children are attending medical or dental appointments (M). Where you have concerns, you should liaise with the child's parents and the school nursing service. Ensure pupils with medical conditions and disabilities have the appropriate support in school ( such as an individual health plan/care plan reviewed by a medical professional such as the school nurse annually, or an EHCP/statement)
- Ensure attendance staff are able to access this data on their systems, if not seek advice from the system provider on how to do this
- Ensure effective liaison with feeder schools so that effective strategies to improve attendance are shared and followed through (e.g. Y6/Y7 – primary/junior schools share where there have been attendance concerns and how they have addressed them/what has worked; secondary schools act on and use the information effectively

- Ensure attendance concerns are acted on swiftly, and drift/delay in dealing with concerns does not happen. Particular caution on this with Year 7 pupils.

We will update the model attendance policy guidance in due course, which can be found at [www.solgrid.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.solgrid.org.uk/safeguarding) (SMBC Model Attendance Policy (May 2016)).

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L M Lord". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**Lorraine Lord**  
Senior Education Improvement Adviser  
Safeguarding and Vulnerable Children  
**Education & Skills**