

## Appendix 2: strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence

Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic, our schools will draw on or hope to build positive relationships and listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the student or family is experiencing.

Schools will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support.

Schools will:

- Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance
- Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents/carers to access any support they may need voluntarily. As a minimum, this should include meeting with pupils and parents/carers at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. These actions should be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.'

## Strategies deployed at Sherburn High School for students whose attendance may cause concern:

At Sherburn High school we take a proactive approach to ensuring all of our students attend, on time, with correct uniform and equipment ready for the start of each session.

1. For any student whose attendance and/or punctuality may begin to cause concern, we will:
  - Ensure prompt contact is made via an attendance/punctuality contact letter notifying concern in the first instance
  - Further communication with home will occur where poor punctuality and / or attendance persist
  - These communications may include warning letters and notifications of action the School would be required to take if improvements are not made, in line with the school's statutory duties

At all times, communications will encourage parents/carers to discuss any issues they may have with responding to attendance targets.

2. Where a student's absence continues to cause concern and especially should it either fall below **90%** or be in danger of reaching this level (**persistent absence**), we will:
  - Request a meeting between parents/carers and the Senior Leader to discuss the matter and look at strategies, and any support that the School can provide to help, according to knowledge of individual circumstances. A clear record of the meeting will be kept and agreed outcomes will be shared immediately after the meeting
  - Further to this we will consider implementing from within a bespoke range of strategies as available, based on detailed family knowledge and discussion of any barriers that may be preventing full attendance:
    - o Before a pupil's attendance drops below 90% contact will be made by the Head of Year and a meeting may be held to establish early any barriers to attendance that could be resolved
    - o Regular monitoring of students' attendance and sharing of this data. This will be communicated with parents and carers when necessary.

- o Ensure meetings are held to support students back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps;
  - o To ensure pupils with SEND, mental health issues, and LAC or young people working with a social worker have access to the relevant services so that there is a joint up approach for families.
  - o The implementation of an an internal attendance contract
  - o Home visits carried out by the School's Family Liaison Officer
  - o Multi-agency strategy meetings as appropriate; this may also take the form of an agreed referral to the appropriate Early Help service;
  - o Requesting the student/family attend a governor attendance panel or meeting with the Headteacher
  - o A formal *attendance contract* agreed by the student, parent/carer, school and/or local authority (this may happen before or after a Governor's panel or meeting with Headteacher)
  - o Progressing to a legally binding *Education Supervision Order* in the Family Court if there is non-engagement and deemed necessary;
  - o Where there are safeguarding concerns and an *Education Supervision Order* is not appropriate or has not been successful the case should be considered for s.17 or s.47 statutory social care involvement;
  - o Where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate, the case should be considered for *attendance prosecution* in the Magistrates Court (or a FPN for irregular attendance); subsequently a *parenting order* may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour;
3. Where a student's absence continues to cause concern and especially should it either fall below **50%** or be in danger of reaching this level (**severe absence**), we will:
- o As appropriate, deploying strategies from the above as listed for persistent absence.
  - o Where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate, the case should be considered for *attendance prosecution* in the Magistrates Court (or a FPN for irregular attendance)

***At all points, we will involve appropriate school staff who can work with families, conduct home visits (if required) and work in partnership including with any local authority's School Attendance Support and other partners to achieve a positive outcome for our students and their families***