COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Managing Attendance at Headlands Primary School September 2020

Policy owner: Head Teacher

Date: 25/09/20

Date shared with staff:

1. Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible. At that time, schools and all childcare providers provided care for a limited number of children: those who were vulnerable, and children whose parents were critical to the COVID-19 response and could not be safely cared for at home.

The government announced on 11th May 2020 that schools should plan to re-open for children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1st June 2020. At the time attendance was not compulsory.

Following the continued reduction in infection rates across the country, the DfE announced in June 2020 that schools would be fully open to all children at the start of the new academic year in September 2020. However, there remains the probability that, at some point during the course of the next academic year, there could be further disruption resulting in individuals, classes or cohorts of children being educated at home. In addition, attendance from the 1st September 2020 is compulsory and additional categories for authorised absence have been set out by the government.

This addendum of the Attendance Policy contains details of our school arrangements for managing attendance in the following areas. The content focusses on arrangements to support attendance from the 1st September 2020 when all children return to school, as well as managing absence related to Coronavirus. There is a close relationship between attendance and safeguarding and this document is intended to operate in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and addendum as well as the school's Blended Learning Strategy.

1. Context
2. Key Contacts
3. Attendance Monitoring
4. Roles and Responsibilities
5. Attendance Rewards
6. Managing Attendance Concerns
7. Communication with families where a child is not attending school
8. DfE Guidance and Related Documents

2. Key Staff

Role	Name	Contact Number	E-mail
Headteacher / Attendance Lead	Darren Smith	01604 407098	Darren.smoth@headlands.org.uk
Attendance Officer	Diane Atkinson	01604 407098	Diane.atkinson@headlands.org.uk
Lead Family Support Worker	Sharon Ritchie	01604 407098	Sharon.ritchie@headlands.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Adam Eakins	01604 407098	Adam.eakins@headlands.org.uk

3. Attendance Monitoring

Headlands Primary School will continue to monitor attendance on a daily basis with additional scrutiny of those children who cannot attend school due to circumstances related to Coronavirus (Covid-19).

Authorised absence related to Coronavirus (Covid-19) is broken down in to the following reasons and will result in the code X being given to an absent pupil on SIMs, as outlined in the following DfE document:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year

for absence will result in the code X being given to an absent pupil on SIMs.

a. *Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)*

b. *Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)*

c. *Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine*

d. *Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only*

e. *Local lockdown*

Unauthorised absence will be recorded for the following circumstances related to Coronavirus (Covid-19).

f. *High parental or child anxiety about returning to school/refusal to attend school.*

g. *Absence alongside previously identified or recent safeguarding concerns.*

h. *Concern that a child may be missing from education.*

Any other absence will continue to the school's Attendance Policy.

Any amendments to the school's Attendance Policy when managing absence related to Coronavirus will be set out in this document and shared with all stakeholders.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher/Attendance Lead will

- Lead the strategic planning to support pupil attendance.
- Lead staff in the implementation of the Attendance Policy and addendum
- Monitor the effectiveness of absence management and support provided to pupils and families
- Submit the Setting Status to the DfE and local authority daily
- Meet with parents where a Parent Contract is required for attendance or lateness.
- Identify and report children missing from education, with the support of the Attendance Officer.
- Report to governors

Attendance Officer will

- Collate attendance information from SIMs and contact with parents and share this with the Attendance Lead on a daily basis
- Identify those children who require Blended Learning to be instigated by phase leaders.
- Log Covid-19 related absence on MyConcern
- Liaise with the Lead Family Support Worker where there are concerns.

- Ensure door step visits are carried out with the pastoral team of a member of SLT to ensure that Blended Learning resources are delivered or if a family cannot be contacted on the first day of absence.
- Be visible and available to parents at the beginning and end of the school day at the school gates so as to monitor lateness.
- Ensure that all absence and lateness is followed up and accurate record maintained.

Family Support Workers will

- Lead regular communication, as part of a weekly Safeguarding meeting, with the Attendance Lead and Attendance Officer to discuss all concerns raised over attendance.
- Keep an up to date list of families who are on a tiered system of concern/support as agreed by the core safeguarding team.
- Maintain contact with families on the tiered concern/support list.
- Follow up MyConcern reports logged for children absent from school due to Covid-19 self-isolation, quarantine or anxiety about school attendance.
- Ensure that EHAs are offered to families where attendance is a persistent concern or there are other factors related to Covid-19 for which an EHA would support the family.

Phase Leaders will

- Monitor attendance in their phase and ensure all staff are promoting attendance with classes.
- Meet with the Attendance Lead once a week to discuss the operational effectiveness of the strategy in their phase.
- Ensure Blended Learning is up and running on the first day of absence, for all necessary children in their phase.
- Monitor across their phase the quality and frequency of pupil's participation in Blended Learning with teachers.
- Discuss attendance concerns during fortnightly Phase Leader safeguarding meetings and ensure actions are completed.

Teachers will

- Actively promote and reward attendance with pupils on a regular basis in line with the school's attendance reward systems.
- Raise concerns with their Phase Leader if a child's attendance or punctuality becomes apparent.
- Ensure that Blended Learning curriculum structure and content has parity with that taught in class and that learning from home is acknowledged and supported on a daily basis.
- Log failure to complete Blended Learning on MyConcern.

All staff will

- Be vigilant to the concerns of children and parents about attending school and work to support families to understand the safety measure in place the school and the positive impact on a child's learning coming to school every day has.
- Robustly maintain the safety measure in place in the NPAT Risk Assessment July 2020.

Parents

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil

5. Attendance Rewards

A system of rewards for good attendance will be implemented, communicated to all members of the school community and promoted by all staff.

6. Managing Attendance Concerns

	Step 1 First Day of Absence	Step 2 Within 24 hours of absence being recorded	Step 3 Next 10 school days
Authorised Absence related to Coronavirus *(See section 3 a, b, c)*	Attendance Officer will make initial calls and collate children who fall into this category. This will be discussed at the daily attendance meeting with the Headteacher.	**Doorstep visits** made with the learning pack and any IT resources required for Blended Learning. (Member of SLT and Attendance Officer)	Blended Learning engagement monitored and FSW team to contact families following the tiered communication strategy. (Teachers, Phase Leaders and FSW)
Authorised Absence related to Coronavirus *d. Lockdown*	Children sent home with learning packs and equipped with the knowledge of how to access Blended Learning. (Teachers and Phase Leaders)	Tiered Communication (see below) implemented.	
Unauthorised Absence related to Coronavirus *e. High parental or child anxiety about returning to school/refusal to attend school.*	Discussion with the headteacher or appropriate member of SLT to identify the barriers to attendance and ways for the school to support the family. A walk around the school for the family may be required to talk through safety measures.	**Parent Contract set up.** Options: • Building up from a PT basis to full time alongside Blended Learning. • Communicating with the class teacher either by phone or online. • Door step visit for a face to face discussion.	If the parent contact is not adhered to there may be cause to consider an amended arrangement and period of monitoring. However, where parents do not engage with school despite all reasonable efforts to do so, and if arrangements cannot be made to ensure a child is attending school, the school will make a referral after 10 days of absence.
Unauthorised Absence related to Coronavirus *f. Absence alongside previously identified or recent safeguarding concerns.*	Contact the parents. Leave a text message alerting parents to a pending doorstep visit. Doorstep visit if no contact has been made. School compliment slip left so that parents are aware of the visit. If there is no contact on the first door step visit Any third parties will be contacted i.e. SW or Targeted Support A return visit by school staff will be carried out with a text sent beforehand if there are still concerns. Police may need to called if there is still no contact for a Safe and Well Check.	**Where a family is not currently on an EHA, this will be offered.** Communication with third parties continues where this applies i.e. SW or Targeted Support Where contact is made a meeting will be set up with the Headteacher and Lead FSW to discuss barriers and support.	If attendance continues to be a concern over the next two weeks the school will put in place a Parent Contract to support the family. This will be dependant on families and circumstance.

	MASH referral may also be necessary.		
Unauthorised Absence related to Coronavirus g. *Concern that a child may be missing from education.*	Contact the parents. Leave a text message alerting parents to a pending doorstep visit. Doorstep visit if no contact has been made. School compliment slip left so that parents are aware of the visit. If there is no contact on the first door step visit a return visit will occur with a text sent beforehand. Police may need to called if there is still no contact for a Safe and Well Check. MASH referral may also be necessary.	**Refer in as a missing child before 10 days if there are significant concerns for the child's welfare.**	
Late on more than two occasions	Attendance Officer/FSW or Headteacher to discuss ways to support the family and identify issues leading to lateness.	**Parent Contract set up.** Options • Reward chart for the child • Breakfast Club space offered	EHA offered if punctuality does not improve.

7. Communication with families where a child is not attending school

A child's absence from school will be followed up with regular communication between school and home so as to support the child and their family from both a safeguarding and educational perspective. Maintaining strong relationships with families is aimed at ensuring children confidently return to school with continued good attendance and as minimal a gap in their education as possible.

The school uses a tiered traffic light system to organise support for families (see below). Vulnerable children are continually assessed by the safeguarding team on a weekly basis as to their level of support by the Pastoral Team. This includes all absence related to Coronavirus (Covid-19) authorised or unauthorised.

All 'door step' visits are carried out by two members of staff and follow the procedures in place in the school's Home Visits Risk Assessment.

If a child is attending school, the tiered communication is not implemented as communication via in person on the playground or via phone is available to staff and families.

Children	Staff responsible for contact…	Frequency	Focus	Follow Up	System for logging and monitoring
Red Level (children with a social worker, including	FSW/Inclusion Lead	Twice Weekly	Welfare Check	If no contact within a week they are flagged at the end of the week safeguarding	Every child on the traffic light system has an open concern on My Concern labelled

				meeting for a door step visit the following week. Social workers are informed of any concerns.	Covid-19. Under this file each child has a record of all contact including attempts to contact. Safeguarding Meetings review the level of concern for each child.
those recently closed to social care)					
Amber Level (children on Early Help, Targeted Support or EHA and children assessed as Amber Level due to attendance or ongoing safeguarding concerns)	**FSW/Inclusion Lead**	Weekly	Welfare Check	If no contact within a week they are flagged at the end of the week safeguarding meeting for a door step visit the following week. Targeted support contacted where concerns are raised to maintain communication about families.	As above
Green Level (children who are regular concerns in school due to number of repeated concerns raised however parents have declined an EHA, or children where EHA closed this academic year)	**EYFS Lead** for those children in Reception and Nursery All other green level children the **FSW** contacts	Weekly	Welfare Check	If no contact within a week they are flagged at the end of the week safeguarding meeting for a door step visit the following week.	As Above
Children with an EHCP	**Inclusion Lead**	Twice Weekly	Discuss learning, supporting targets and welfare.	As Red Level	As Above

Class teachers will communicate with children via the online learning platform as part of their Blended Learning. In the event of a class bubble being required to self-isolate the following additional communication will be implemented:

				Staged approach... The office will send a text to parents that cannot be contacted. The office will call so that the number is recognisable for parents. If no contact by the end of a week the teacher will log on My Concern. These are then discussed at the weekly safeguarding meeting for consideration for a door step visit the following week.	Contact records are kept on a section of Teams for staff to log contact and attempts. My Concern is used to log non-contact. Monitored by SLT. Reviewed and children's level of vulnerability assessed through weekly safeguarding meetings.
All Children (including those mentioned above)	**Class Teacher**	**Weekly**	**Blended Learning support**		

8. DfE Guidance and Related Documents

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year