



St Cuthbert's C of E Primary School

The Chase, Great Glen, Leicester LE8 9EQ
Tel: 0116 2592764
Fax: 0116 2593248

Attendance policy

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Our Vision

Doing all the good we can, through faith, love and excellence.

Micah 6:8 "This is what the Lord requires of you: to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God."

We want St Cuthbert's to be a school where:

Our Ethos

- everyone flourishes through the guidance of our Christian values.
- teaching and learning is creative, engaging and motivational.
- relationships are positive and serve to support others through **compassion** and **kindness**.

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." John 10, V10

Our Expectations

- we show **courage** to be the best that we can be.
- the children make excellent progress, fostering a love of learning.
- every child has an **equal** chance to fulfil their full potential.

"All human kind is made in the image of God." Genesis 1, V26-27

Individuality

- we grow and flourish as individuals; through **endurance** we can achieve.
- the value and worth of each individual is celebrated and everyone feels included.
- the children develop a spirit of **curiosity** and a willingness to rise to a challenge through a broad, enriched curriculum.

"All people are called to transform the world" Genesis 1 V26-31, Micah 6 V8

Working Together

- the children are able to **trust** show **respect** and **friendship** to others.
- the community enables our pupils and school to grow in a happy, safe, healthy and spiritual environment.
- we foster links and contribute to the educational community through effective communication.

"Every person is an individual and also part of a community." 1 Cor 12 V12-27

*This is a vision that is inclusive to all as we are reminded in the words of Luke 18:16:
"But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."*

For we are all equal in the eyes of God.

Compassion

"Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."
Colossians 3:12



Kindness

"Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you."
Ephesians 4:32



Equal

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself."
Mark 12:31



Potential

"Behold they are one people and they have all one language and this is only the beginning of what they will do."
Genesis 11:6



Courage

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened and do not be dismayed for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."
Joshua 1:9



Trust

"My God is my strength in whom I trust."
Psalm 12



Friendship

"Encourage one another and build each other up."
1 Thessalonians 5:11



Respect

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."
Joshua 1:9



Endurance

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens"
Joshua 9





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Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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:

This policy is based on statutory guidance and relevant education legislation.

- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

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 governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents

- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure 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 school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The named safeguarding governor will:

- Meet with the headteacher every half term
- Monitor attendance data for the whole school and emerging patterns for groups of children or individuals

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors



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- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, or authorising the school business manager to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr. Bools.

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

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- 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
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the deputy headteacher, Mr. Bools, and can be contacted via 0116 2592764/office@stcuthberts.leics.sch.uk.

Class Staff

Class staff are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office:

- Morning registration must be completed by 9.10am
- Afternoon registration must be completed by 1.20pm.
- Contribute to and support the continued development of the warm, welcoming, exciting and safe environment for all children.
- Welcome each child into the class by name and with a smile. Promote and reward good attendance at all opportunities.

- Welcome children who have been absent with warmth – “it's great to see you – we have missed you and I am really pleased you are better/back” and never say “Where have you been? You have missed so much work....”
- Be aware of absences of each child or patterns in absence in their group and make sure the child is supported in catching up missed work.
- Support children with attendance targets by completing daily sticker charts.
- Communicate with colleagues where necessary if there are any issues resulting from the absence that other staff should know (concern about work missed, response of other children, possible responses of colleagues) but also where there are possible safeguarding concerns reporting to the school's DSL.
- Notify the KS lead and Headteacher if there is any suggestion of term time holiday.

Office Staff

Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the headteacher, SENCO, Key Stage lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Notify the DSL if there are any contextual safeguarding issues which might explain erratic or poor attendance
- Contribute to and support the continued development of the warm, welcoming, exciting and safe environment for all children
- Greet the children by name and always with a smile and a greeting
- Make a special effort to provide a warm welcome to children returning with anxiety issues
- If necessary, walk the child to the lesson/assembly etc. if this is a cause of anxiety
- Reassure families that the school will monitor the child's welfare carefully during the course of the day and communicate with the family if there are any issue

Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the 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 every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (or complete the online absence form) and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when their child is expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child



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- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. Where not possible, inform the school of the child's absence in advance by emailing or phoning the school office.
- If their child's absence rates are increasing and are causing concern, an attendance contract may be used to support parents to make improvements. Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting headteacher, deputy headteacher, SENCO, Key Stage lead who can be contacted via 0116 2592764/office@stcuthberts.leics.sch.uk.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time.

Recording Attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil 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 school day starts at 8:50am and ends at 3.30pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.10am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.10am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1:15pm and will be kept open until 1.25pm.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling or emailing the school office staff, who can be contacted via 0116 2592764/office@stcuthberts.leics.sch.uk.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 2 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents can notify the school of a medical or dental appointment by phoning or emailing the school office: 0116 2592764/office@stcuthberts.leics.sch.uk.

Notify the school of:

the reason for the absence

The length of their absence

When the child is expected to return to school

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



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The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

After the register has closed (9.10am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

Incidents of lateness are reported to the headteacher daily. Patterns of lateness are track half-termly and report to the governing body.

Parents of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of punctuality and how this might be achieved:

Parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss the cause of lateness with the deputy headteacher and support will be offered.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10-week period, a penalty notice may be issued if necessary in accordance with Leicestershire's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance

Parents must collect their child promptly at the end of the school day:

Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly after 3.30pm, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns, as necessary, with other agencies.

If one is available, the school will place a child into the after school club and provide the parent/carer with the bill.

If a child is not collected by 5.30pm, and a parent cannot be contacted, the school will contact Children's Services as this is a safeguarding concern.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may complete a home visit, contact Children's Services or the police.
- 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 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent

- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer or social worker.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil 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: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels:

Half-termly attendance updates:

Persistent absence, 10% or more, serious concern

Cause for concern, 4% - 9%, requires immediate improvement

Good attendance, 0% - 3%

Parent Consultations held in October and March

End-of-year report

5 Authorized and unauthorized absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances
- A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as unexpected, unavoidable, and outside of your control, such as hospitalisation, a serious illness or a bereavement of a close relative. A leave of absence must still be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with.



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Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday or celebration (including a wedding).

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) 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 school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

Procedure for monitoring attendance and alerting parents

The school monitors attendance and the impact poor attendance is having upon pupils throughout the academic year. The attendance calendar (appendix 1) provides details of how this monitoring is structured and the numerous ways in which the school will alert parents to any issues regarding their child's attendance.

The school aims to work with families where attendance requires improvement. This may include regular meetings with school staff and the involvement of outside agencies (for example the school nurse or paediatrician, Child, and Adolescent Mental Health Service [CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)], Social Care, SEN (Special Educational Needs) support services, etc.). The school aims to deal with all cases by having effective communication with the family and, where ongoing matters exist, by finding a satisfactory solution for all concerned as soon as possible.

Where communication breaks down, or where a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, the school has a duty to inform the Local Authority of attendance issues. Monitoring of Severe or Persistent Absence A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% or below for any reason whether the absences are authorised or not. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 school days; equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year).

Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. A pupil becomes 'severely absent' (SA) when their attendance drops to 50% or below for any reason, whether the absences are authorised or not. As persistent absence is often a symptom of wider issues in a child's life, schools, local authorities, and their partners play a crucial role in overcoming barriers to attendance and ensuring all children can access the full-time education to which they are entitled. Pupils are monitored monthly to identify any that may be at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Once a child's absence becomes 12 days or more in an academic year, they may be issued (if necessary) a letter to warn them that their child is at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Pupils with medical conditions or Special Educational Needs Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than others. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as any other pupil. We will work closely with parents of these children to put additional support in place to ensure the best attendance possible. If necessary, we will work closely with outside agencies, such as medical professionals, to remove barriers.



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Appendix 1: Calendar for monitoring attendance and reporting to parents.

September

- Baseline attendance data collection
- Initial attendance letters for previous year persistent absentees
- Parent information evening on attendance expectations

October

- Half-term attendance review
- Attendance letters sent to parents
- Parent evening (include attendance discussion)

November

- Monitor persistent absence and issue warning letters if needed
- Attendance support meetings for at-risk pupils

December

- End-of-term attendance report to governors
- Attendance rewards and recognition assembly

January

- New term attendance expectations reminder to parents
- Review of autumn term attendance data

February

- Half-term attendance review
- Attendance letters sent to parents

March

- Parent evening (include attendance discussion)
- Attendance improvement plans reviewed

April

- Spring term attendance report to governors
- Monitor for persistent absence and issue letters if needed

May

- Review of attendance improvement before end of year
- Attendance support meetings for targeted pupils

June

- Half-term attendance review
- Attendance letters sent to parents

July

- End-of-year attendance report to governors
- Attendance certificates and rewards
- Letters for pupils at risk of persistent absence next year



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Appendix 2: Example letter for when attendance drops below 95%

[Parent Name]

[Address]

[Postcode]

[Date]

Dear [Pupil's Name]'s Parent/Guardian,

At St. Cuthbert's Church of England Primary School, we firmly believe that regular attendance and punctuality are essential for children to make the most of their educational opportunities. We are committed to ensuring that all our pupils develop good attendance habits that will support their learning and future success.

As part of our approach, we closely monitor attendance levels, particularly when they fall below 95%. I am writing to express my concern that [Pupil's Name]'s attendance is currently at [XX]%. This means that [Pupil's Name] has missed [Number of Sessions] sessions since the start of the academic year. For your reference, I have attached a copy of [Pupil's Name]'s attendance certificate.

We understand that absences can sometimes be unavoidable due to illness or other circumstances. If there are any health concerns or other issues affecting [Pupil's Name]'s attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to support you and work together to help improve attendance wherever possible.

Over the coming months, we will continue to monitor [Pupil's Name]'s attendance and hope to see an improvement. Our School Attendance Policy, which is available on our website, outlines our expectations and the procedures we follow if attendance continues to be a concern.

If you would like to discuss this matter further or require any support, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Bools

Deputy Headteacher

Appendix3: Example letter for when attendance drops below 90%

[Parent Name]

[Address]

[Postcode]

[Date]

Dear [Parent/Guardian's Name],

Further to my letter dated [Date], I remain concerned about [Pupil's Name]'s attendance, which is still significantly below the expected level for regular and consistent school attendance. As of today, [Pupil's Name]'s attendance stands at [XX]%.

I would like to invite you to a meeting at school on [Date] at [Time] to discuss this matter further. During this meeting, we will explore any barriers to attendance that [Pupil's Name] may be facing and how we can work together to support their full-time return to education.

This policy is based on statutory guidance and relevant education legislation. See Appendix for full references.

If you are unable to attend the meeting at the scheduled time, please contact me via the office to arrange an alternative time.

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to working together to improve [Pupil's Name]'s attendance.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Position]



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Appendix 4: Example letter for when attendance does not improve following attendance plan.

[Parent Name]

[Address]

[Postcode]

[Date]

Dear XXX

Further to my letters of XXX, and XXX where I have highlighted to you that XXX attendance is continuing to cause significant concern.

You have previously advised us that XXX absence is due to: (Summarise actions from SIMS)

This policy is based on statutory guidance and relevant education legislation.

Delete/add as required

- First day calls/office support during absences
- Support from LSA and class teacher to support attendance.
- ELSA support in school - Offer of breakfast club to support attendance
- Meeting offered between parents and SLT leading attendance
- Assigned support from Senior Leaders with XXXX supporting as a named contact.
- Home escort by SLT for XXXX on non-attendance days
- Rewards and incentives for good attendance and a positive day
- A referral to Early Help to support with strategies to implement in the home
- Consultation with Leicestershire Inclusion Service to explore further measures available
- Request for referral to CAMHS in case of anxiety as cause of absence.

Unfortunately, despite this support XXXX is still missing significant periods of school and we have not seen the required improvement in attendance.

We are happy to offer a further meeting with myself to agree an attendance improvement plan to support XXXX to improve their attendance. We can be flexible to suit your needs and ask that you provide us with 3 possible dates that you are available over the coming weeks. Please provide this information to the school office by XXXX.

If we do not see a significant improvement in attendance over the next two weeks, which is sustained for a period of 6 months we will have no choice but to refer this matter to Leicestershire Local Authority Attendance team. This is the final opportunity that we will provide for this matter to be resolved.

This policy is based on statutory guidance and relevant education legislation. See Appendix for full references.

We will be monitoring XXXX absence closely going forwards and will look to review it again on XXXX .

Many thanks,

Mr. Bools

Deputy Headteacher



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Glossary of Terms

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead

ELSA: Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

SEND: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

EHC: Education, Health and Care

CAMHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

SLT: Senior Leadership Team

PA: Persistent Absentee

SA: Severely Absent