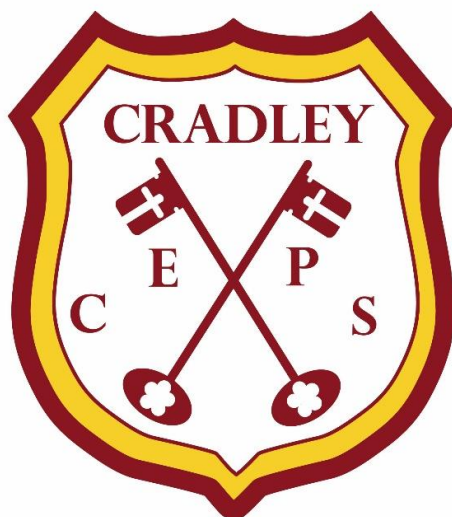


Cradley C of E Primary School



Attendance policy

| Responsibility for monitoring this policy: Zoe Brailsford <i>(Reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or operating procedures)</i> | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| | | Date |
| Written by | Z Brailsford | October 2024 |
| Approved by | Governors | October 2024 |
| Next review | | October 2025 |

Name of the Senior Attendance Champion: Zoe Brailsford

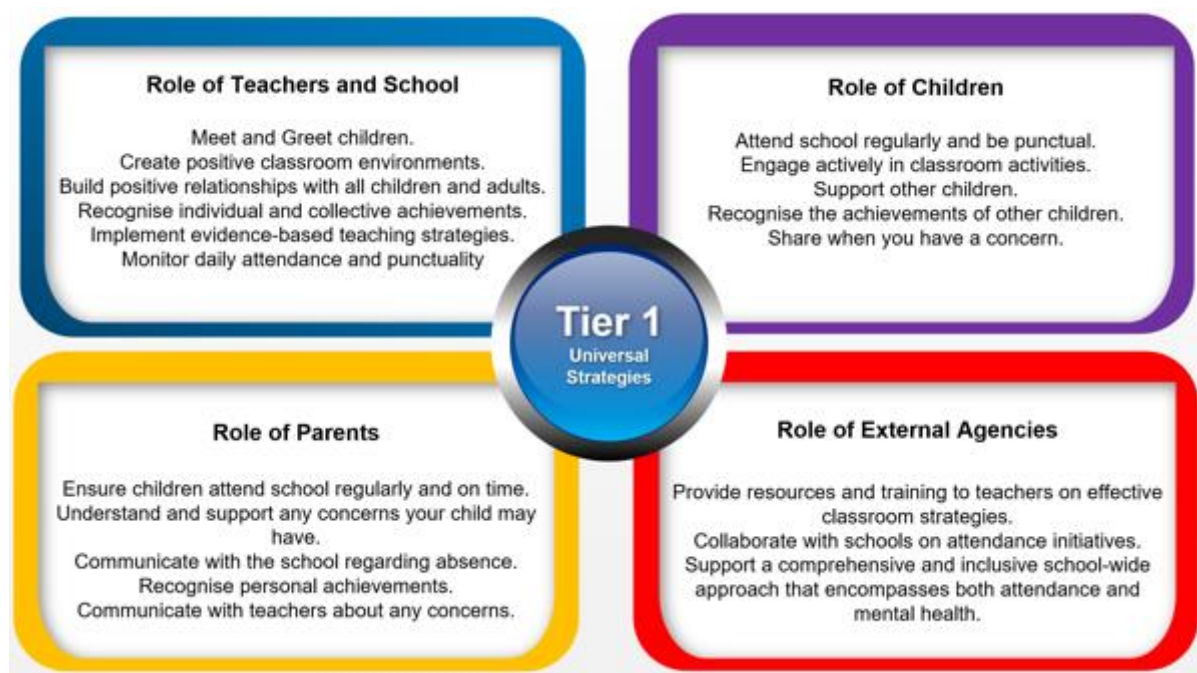
Introduction

Cradley C of E Primary School is proudly recognised as an Inclusive Attendance school. Our unwavering commitment to attendance centres around child-centric actions, evidence-informed practices, and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote exceptional attendance by holding our vision at its core 'Believe, belong, be happy, every child, every chance, every day.'

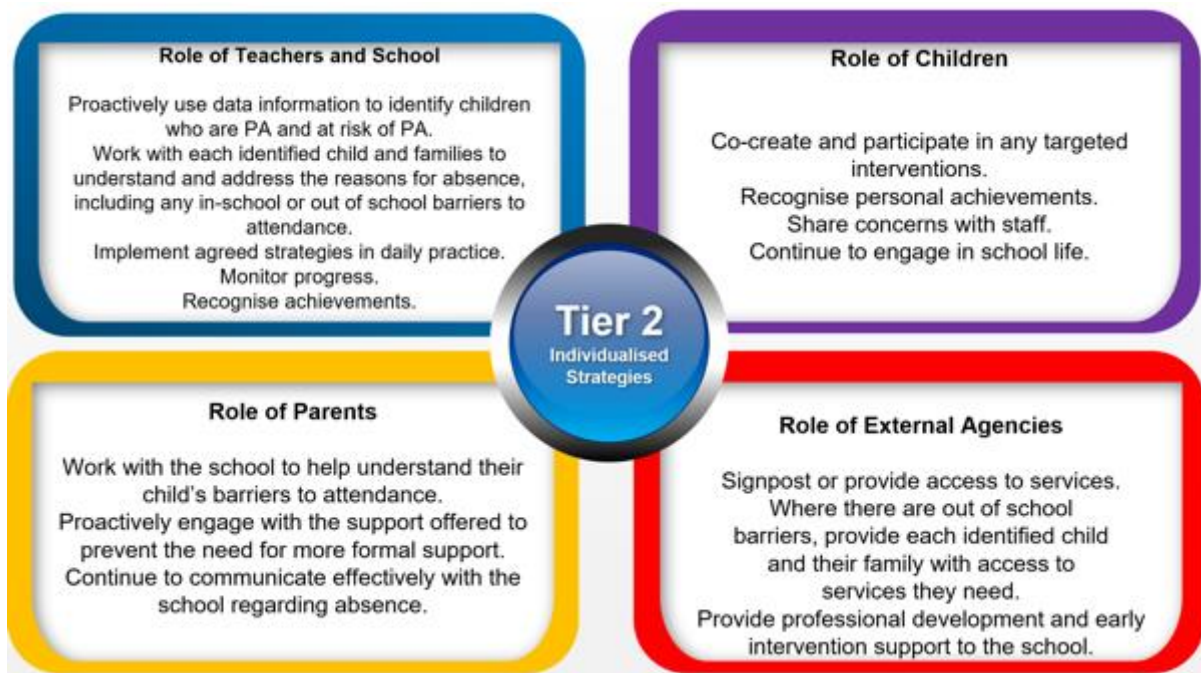
A Multi-Tiered System of Support

To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance Cradley C of E implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children, parents, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of this system. The system aligns with the Department for Education's (DFE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" statutory paper 2024.

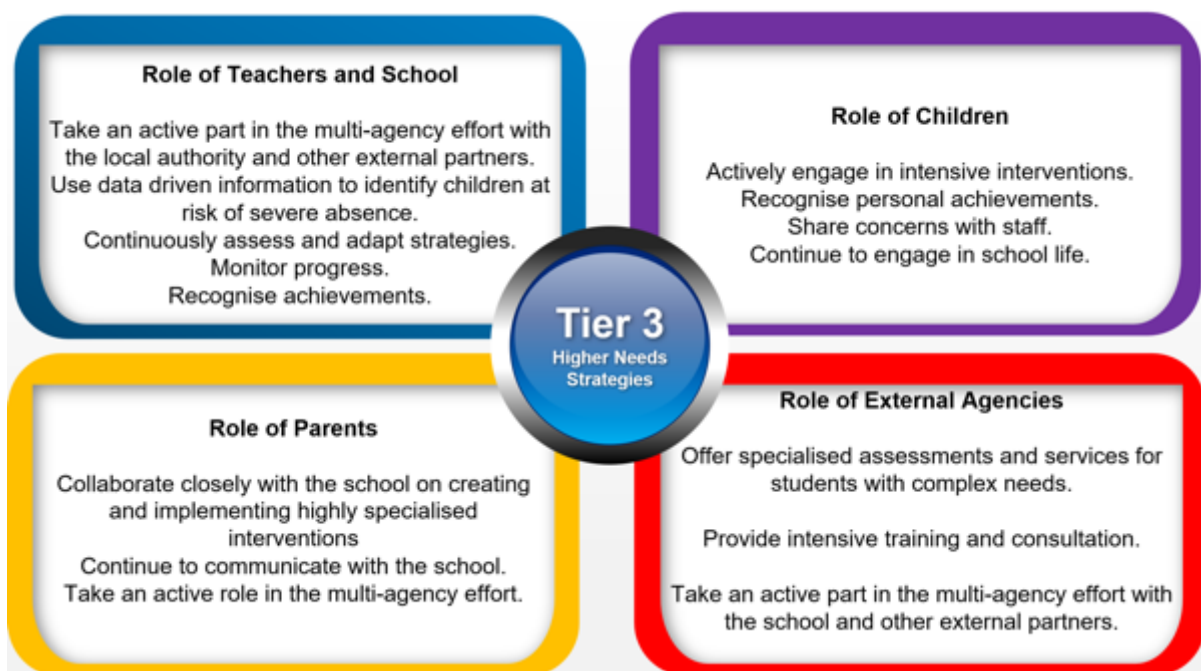
Tier 1 - Universal Approach: Establishing a baseline universal attendance approach that benefits all children.



Tier 2 – Internal individualised Strategies and Early Help Support: Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.



Tier 3 - Higher Needs Strategies Support: Furnishing specialised support for children, young people, and families with complex attendance requirements, including access to external agency support when necessary.



Recognition-Based Approach

Our attendance philosophy is rooted in a recognition-based approach that recognises both personal and collective achievements. This approach serves to stop isolation, prevent victimisation, cultivate positive environments, nurture relationships, foster inclusivity, and ultimately cultivate intrinsic motivation among our children, families, and staff.

Personal achievements include

- Messages home half termly to celebrate 100% attendance
- Bronze (Autumn), Silver (Autumn and Spring), Gold (Whole year) attendance certificates
- End of year recognition for 99% attendance
- Recognition/praise for improved attendance

- Messages home to acknowledge improved attendance to parents

Collective achievements include

- half termly attendance cup awarded to highest attending year group
- Colouring in letters on class poster for every day every child is present. When poster is filled whole class awarded MUFTI day

The Importance of School Attendance

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

- *Academic Achievement:* Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- *Knowledge Acquisition:* School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.
- *Social Development:* School provides a vital social environment for children and adolescents to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- *Building Routine:* School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- *Teacher Interaction:* Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- *Preventing Knowledge Gaps:* Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.
- *School Engagement:* Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- *Legal and Parental Responsibility:* Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.
- *Community Well-being:* High levels of school attendance contribute to the overall well-being of communities.

Factors Influencing Attendance

There are many factors which can impact on a child attending school, if you have any concerns you should contact the school as soon as possible:

Health Issues: Children may experience physical or mental health issues that lead to absences. Chronic illnesses, infections, and mental health conditions can impact a student's ability to attend school regularly.

Family Circumstances: Family-related factors such as bereavement, family illness, or caring responsibilities can result in absences from school. In some cases, students may need to take time off to support their families.

Bullying and Safety Concerns: Experiences of bullying, harassment, or safety concerns at school can deter students from attending. They may fear for their safety or well-being, leading to increased absenteeism.

Transportation Issues: Difficulty in accessing transportation to school, especially in rural areas, can affect attendance. Lack of reliable transportation options can lead to sporadic attendance.

Socioeconomic Factors: Families facing financial difficulties may struggle to provide necessary resources for their children to attend school regularly. Issues such as lack of appropriate clothing, food, or a stable home environment can contribute to absenteeism.

Special Educational Needs (SEN): Students with special educational needs may require additional support and accommodations to attend school regularly.

Engagement and Motivation: Lack of engagement with school activities and a perceived lack of relevance in the curriculum can lead to disinterest in attending. Children who are not motivated may avoid attending school.

Academic Challenges: Students facing academic difficulties or feeling overwhelmed by coursework may avoid school. They may fear falling behind or failing in their studies.

Cultural and Language Barriers: Children from diverse backgrounds may face challenges related to language barriers or cultural differences. These challenges can affect their attendance and engagement with school.

Peer Pressure and Social Factors: Influence from peers can impact attendance. Children may avoid attending school to align with the behaviour of their peers or to engage in social activities outside of school.

Parental Involvement: Parental support and involvement in a child's education can positively influence attendance. Lack of parental engagement may lead to increased absenteeism.

Supporting Attendance

To address any identified attendance issues effectively, Cradley C of E will implement a range of strategies such as early intervention, support for vulnerable families, intervention programmes, and creating a positive and inclusive school environment. Understanding the specific factors affecting attendance for individual children and families is crucial for developing any targeted interventions and support systems to improve attendance outcomes.

Contact Details of School Staff

| Name of Staff Member | Roles and Responsibilities | Contact Details |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Zoe Brailsford | Attendance Champion/DSL | zbrailsford@cradley-p.dudley.sch.uk |
| Claire Warford | Head Teacher | cwarford@cradley-p.dudley.sch.uk |

Strategy for Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

In order to reduce persistent absence at Cradley Ce we regularly engage with parents, children and families to ensure that we can collaboratively reduce and remove barriers to attendance. In order to support with this school offers the following information and support.

Information letters to inform families if your child reaches 'on track' for persistent absence markers each half term.

Phone calls home to review child's progress whilst absent and to ascertain if child can return with additional measures in place.

Parents encouraged to take NHS and pharmacy advice for low level illness to encourage quick return.

Attendance discussed at Parents' Evenings and throughout the year.

Families invited in to discuss barriers to attendance to see how school may support them to remove these barriers.

Early Help Assessment- initial referral.

Managing attendance home/school agreement.

Details of the National Framework for Penalty Notices

If you take an unauthorised leave of absence from school, your child may be referred to the Education Support Service in line with Government policy.

Fixed penalty notices (Fines) may be issued for unauthorised leave of absences which accumulate to a total of 10 sessions (5 days) missed within a 10-week rolling period.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. This rate is in line with inflation and is the first increase since 2012.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

If your child is persistently absent then you may be offered an attendance contract. An attendance contract is a formal agreement between parents and the school or local authority to address irregular attendance, providing support as an alternative to prosecution. It is not legally binding but serves as a formal route to secure engagement with support when voluntary early help plans have not worked. An attendance contract aims to offer support rather than punishment.

If voluntary support or attendance contracts are unsuccessful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can provide formal legal intervention without prosecution. Before proceeding with an ESO, the school and local authority should exhaust voluntary support options and ensure the order would benefit the pupil and parent. Persistent non-compliance with an ESO can lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court by the local authority. Upon conviction, parents may face fines of up to £1,000.

Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents for various offences related to attendance: Failure to comply with a school attendance order may result in fines of up to £1,000. Failure to secure regular attendance at school or alternative provision may lead to fines of up to £2,500 and/or imprisonment. Persistent non-compliance with an Education Supervision Order may result in fines of up to £1,000.

Removal from roll

This refers to the process of a child's name being officially taken off the school's register, typically due to extended non-attendance or other circumstances.

Reasons for removal from roll include:

If a child is absent from school for 20 school sessions or more, where no contact with parents can be made, we would work with the Education Investigation Service to ascertain the reason for absence if we are unable to contact you. A result of this investigation may be to remove your child from the school roll (Pupil Registration Regulations 2016).

If a child has not returned to school after a leave of absence this could also result in them being removed from roll.

Elective Home Education

Elective Home Education (EHE) is an option that some parents choose after removal from roll, where they take responsibility for providing education to their child at home.

If a parent chooses to remove their child from roll for the purpose of Elective Home Education (EHE) then School must inform the EIS.

First Day Calling and Safeguarding

A child's absence from school should be reported by calling the school office and leaving a message no later than 8.30am.

Within the message, please leave a description of the symptoms the child is experiencing and any follow up action you may be taking. If your message does not contain enough detail for us to effectively record the child's reason for an authorised absence, we will call you for clarity or may visit you at home.

School will call parents in the morning if students are absent from school and parent/carer has not contacted or provided a valid reason

If the call is not answered after 3 attempts or we do not get a reply to the call or are concerned about a reply; then a member of staff may make a Home Welfare Check immediately. These visits may result in the child being brought into school by Senior Staff, to support the parent.

If following these steps, we are unable to speak to anyone and/or visually see/locate the child then we may contact the Police and/or Social Care to highlight a welfare concern.

At any point, if the school is concerned, we may make unannounced Home Visits – this may be due to low levels of attendance or continuous absence.

School Times of the Day:

The school day begins at 8.45am and ends at 3.15pm

Registration opens at 8.45 and closes at 9.00am

Children are expected to arrive on time and attend all scheduled lessons and activities.

Coding of Attendance

Attendance will be recorded using the DFE's statutory attendance codes, please refer to the appendix for coding.

Requesting Absence Leave

Parents or carers must request leave of absence for their child in writing using a form provided by the school office at least 10 school days in advance.

Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Reporting a Child's Absence

A child's absence from school should be reported by calling the school office and leaving a message no later than 8.30am.

Within the message, please leave a description of the symptoms the child is experiencing and any follow up action you may be taking. If your message does not contain enough detail for us to effectively record the child's reason for an authorised absence, we will call you for clarity or may visit you at home.

Parents should continue to call the school every day for which their child is absent unless you have been advised not to by Mrs Z Brailsford or Mrs C Warford.

Holiday Request

Holidays during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Holiday requests must be made in writing, using a form provided by the school office and a decision will be communicated to the parents or carers via letter.

Definitions

In the context of school attendance and education in the UK, the terms "Persistent Absence," "Risk of Persistent Absence," and "Severe Absence" are used to describe different levels of irregular attendance by students. These terms are important for tracking and addressing attendance issues.

Persistent Absence (PA):

Definition: Persistent Absence is a term used to describe a level of student absence from school that is considered to be a significant cause for concern.

Threshold: In England, a student is considered to be persistently absent when they have an attendance rate of 90% or below. This means they have missed 10% or more of their school sessions.

Risk of Persistent Absence:

Definition: The term "Risk of Persistent Absence" refers to a situation in which a student's attendance is at a level that suggests they are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Threshold: While there is no specific threshold for "Risk of Persistent Absence," it is typically used to describe students whose attendance is consistently low and becoming a concern, as the school

communicates to parents in days, we identify 10 days or more as Risk of PA and we will follow internal school procedures. We do break this down into terms and may make contact with you if we feel your child is on track to becoming persistently absent.

Severe Absence (or Severe Persistent Absence):

Definition: The term "Severe Absence" or "Severe Persistent Absence" is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance.

Threshold: Particular focus and support will be provided to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of external agency partners.

Absence Definitions

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

Authorised Absence

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised Absence

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Policies and Practice

This attendance policy operates within the framework of statutory attendance regulations outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments. Cradley C of E adhere to the following key attendance acts in the UK:

Education Act 1996: The Education Act 1996 is the primary piece of legislation that sets out the legal framework for school attendance in England and Wales. It outlines the responsibilities of parents, carers, and schools in ensuring regular school attendance. Sections 444-447 of the Act deal with offenses related to non-attendance and penalties for parents and carers.

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006: These regulations specify the procedures for registering pupils and maintaining attendance records in schools in England. They also define the circumstances in which a pupil can be marked as absent or present.

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013: These regulations amended the 2006 regulations and introduced stricter rules on authorizing term-time holidays. Under these regulations, headteachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

School Attendance Code of Practice: The School Attendance Code of Practice provides guidance to schools, local authorities, and parents on the law and procedures relating to school attendance and absence. It sets out the principles for promoting good attendance and dealing with poor attendance.

Local Authority School Attendance Guidance: Each local authority in the UK may provide its own guidance and policies on school attendance. Schools should be aware of and follow the specific guidance issued by their local authority.

Department for Education (DFE) Guidance: The DFE periodically issues guidance documents and updates related to school attendance. Schools should stay informed about the latest DFE guidance 2024 and follow any recommendations or requirements outlined in these documents.

Child Employment Legislation: Legislation such as the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and the Children (Performances) Regulations 1968 govern the employment and attendance of children involved in performances, modelling, and other activities outside of regular school hours.

Children Missing Education (CME) Statutory Guidance: This guidance outlines the responsibilities of local authorities in identifying and tracking children who may be missing education, including those who are not on a school roll or are not receiving suitable education.

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (England and Wales) outlines the duty of local authorities in ensuring that suitable education is provided for children of compulsory school age.

Additional Policies aligned to the Attendance Policy

- Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- SEND statement
- Pupil Premium Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers:

In the United Kingdom, teachers play a vital role in monitoring and promoting school attendance. Ensuring regular and punctual attendance is essential for the academic success and well-being of children.

Monitoring Attendance: Teachers are responsible for monitoring the daily attendance of their children. They should maintain accurate attendance records, noting both present and absent students.

Promoting Punctuality: Teachers should encourage students to arrive at school on time each day. Punctuality is essential for a smooth start to the school day and minimises disruptions in the classroom.

Taking Immediate Action: When a child is absent without prior notification or a valid reason, teachers should take immediate action. This may involve contacting the school's attendance officer or designated staff member to report the absence.

Early Intervention: Teachers should identify patterns of poor attendance or lateness and intervene early to address any underlying issues. This may include communicating with the student, their parents or guardians, and relevant support services.

Maintaining Communication: Teachers should maintain open lines of communication with parents or guardians regarding attendance. They should inform parents of any concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality.

Providing Support: Teachers can provide academic and emotional support to children who may be experiencing attendance challenges. Identifying the root causes and addressing them proactively can help improve attendance.

Setting Expectations: Teachers can set clear expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms. This includes communicating the importance of regular attendance for learning and academic progress.

Creating a Welcoming Classroom Environment: Teachers should strive to create a positive and welcoming classroom environment where students feel motivated and engaged. A supportive atmosphere can encourage attendance.

Identifying Barriers: Teachers should be alert to potential barriers to attendance, such as bullying, health issues, or family problems. Identifying these barriers and reporting them to school staff can lead to effective interventions.

Implementing School Policies: Teachers should adhere to and implement the school's attendance policies and procedures.

Attendance Records: Accurate attendance records are crucial. Teachers should submit attendance data promptly to the school's administrative team. This information is used for reporting to local authorities and the Department for Education (DFE).

Collaboration: Collaborating with other school staff, such as attendance officers, counsellors, and administrators, is essential for addressing attendance concerns effectively. Teamwork ensures a coordinated approach to supporting students.

Supporting Positive Behaviour: Teachers can implement strategies to reinforce positive behaviour related to attendance, such as recognising attendance and punctuality.

Safeguarding: Teachers should be aware of safeguarding protocols and report any concerns related to a child's safety or well-being promptly to the appropriate school staff.

Professional Development: Continuous professional development will enhance teachers' skills in addressing attendance issues and implementing strategies to promote regular attendance.

Role Modelling: Teachers can serve as role models by demonstrating punctuality and a commitment to their own professional responsibilities.

Teaching Assistants:

Teaching assistants (TAs) in schools also play important roles in supporting and promoting attendance. Their contributions can have a significant impact on attendance and overall well-being.

Monitoring Attendance: TAs/LMs often work closely with children and have a good understanding of individual attendance patterns. They should be vigilant in monitoring attendance and promptly report any concerns to teachers or school administrators.

Positive Relationships: TAs/LMs can build positive and trusting relationships with children. By creating a supportive and welcoming environment, they can encourage children to attend school regularly.

Attendance Support: TAs/LMs can provide individualised support to children who may be struggling with attendance. This support may include identifying barriers to attendance and working with children to address them.

Reinforcing Expectations: TAs/LMs can reinforce the importance of regular attendance and punctuality to children. They can remind children of the school's attendance policies and expectations.

Communication: TAs/LMs can maintain open lines of communication with children's parents or guardians. They can inform parents of any attendance concerns and collaborate with them to find solutions.

Attendance Interventions: TAs/LMs can collaborate with teachers, counsellors, and school administrators to implement attendance interventions when needed. This may involve developing action plans for children with attendance issues.

Supporting Students with Special Needs: TAs/LMs often work with children with special educational needs. They should ensure that these children receive the necessary support to overcome attendance barriers and participate in school activities.

Identifying Patterns: TAs/LMs can help identify attendance patterns, such as recurring absences or lateness, and report them to the appropriate school staff. Identifying patterns early can lead to targeted interventions.

Promoting Engagement: TAs/LMs can engage children in meaningful learning activities and provide extra support when students are struggling academically. A positive classroom experience can motivate students to attend school regularly.

Safeguarding: TAs/LMs should be aware of safeguarding protocols and report any safeguarding concerns or signs of distress related to a child's attendance promptly to designated school staff.

Role Modelling: TAs/LMs can serve as positive role models by demonstrating punctuality, professionalism, and a commitment to their work. Children may be inspired by their dedication.

Professional Development: Continuous professional development can enhance TAs/LMs skills in addressing attendance issues and supporting children effectively.

Collaboration: Collaborating with teachers and other school staff is essential. TAs/LMs can work together with the school's attendance officer, counsellors, and administrators to implement effective attendance strategies.

Recognition of Attendance: TAs/LMs can participate in recognising children's attendance.