

## Addendum to Attendance Policy – September 2020

This addendum to our school attendance policy has been written in line with the most recent government guidance on school attendance from 1 September 2020, when all pupils are expected to return to school following the previous reduced opening caused by the coronavirus pandemic. It replaces the previous addendum that altered schools' approaches to managing attendance, in line with the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Current government guidance says:

*Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:*

- *parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;*
- *schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence*
- *the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct*

All CDAT schools have clear Attendance Policies and procedures detailing how they deal with non-attendance at school, in line with Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 which states that **the parent of a child of compulsory school age is guilty of an offence if the child fails to attend regularly at the school at which he/she is registered.**

We recognise that some parents may be anxious about sending their child back to school at this time, and want to work with parents who are anxious, so that they feel confident about their child being back in school. **To this end, CDAT schools will hold off on moving on to the formal warning/sanctions part of their Attendance Policy during the first three full weeks of term (i.e. up to and including Friday 25 September 2020).** This is not to say that poor attendance will be condoned, but that we recognise the need to work in especially careful partnership with parents at this time and that a degree of leeway and flexibility in how attendance is managed is desirable.

During this time, as always, all CDAT schools will continue to be vigilant around matters of attendance because we know that erratic attendance, or patterns of absence, can often be indicators of other issues. We will continue to be mindful of children's attendance, and will act appropriately if issues around attendance cause particular concern, or are part of the reason for us to be concerned about a pupil's overall wellbeing.