

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. AIM

- 1.1. It is the personal responsibility of every individual referring to this policy to ensure that they are viewing the latest version; this will always be published on Cygnet's online policy library, **myPolicy/CAMHS'** and on each schools website.
- 1.2. In line with our school vision 'learning to be all you can be' it is vital that students attend school as often as their wellness permits so they can reach their personal and academic potential and will do what we can to prevent poor mental health being a barrier to achieving these goals. We strive to create a culture based on our core values of Care, Respect, Empower, Trust and Integrity.
- 1.3. Since we are a school which sets high standards for our students it is important that we are meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance using a consistent approach through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:
- Promoting good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
 - Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
 - Acting early to address patterns of absence
 - All students to be punctual to their lessons.
 - Emphasising the importance to all of good attendance at school as an essential component of improving the well-being of our students.
 - Making explicit to all relevant parties (all hospital staff, parents/carers and students) Cygnet Health Care's expectations on attendance levels.
 - Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance.
 - Stress the need for hospital and school staff to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance.

1.	AIM	1
2.	SCOPE	2
3.	INTRODUCTION	2
4.	LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE	2
5.	POLICY	3
6.	WHAT IS AN ACCEPTABLE ATTENDANCE RATE?	4
7.	AUTHORISED ABSENCE	4
	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE	4
8.	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	4
	Ward staff.....	5
	The school team (including Education Officers).....	5
	All staff	5
	Headteachers	6
	Lead Headteacher for Behaviour and Attitudes	6
	Hospital Internal Governance Team to:	6
	National Education boards to:	6
	Head of Education:	6
	National Attendance and Billing Officer:.....	6

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

9.	PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE	6
10.	RECORDING ATTENDANCE	7
11.	ATTENDANCE MONITORING	7
	Monitoring attendance	7
	Analysing attendance	7
	Using data to improve attendance	7
	Reducing persistent and severe absence	7
12.	MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS	8
13.	LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES	8
14.	APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE CODES	9
15.	APPENDIX 2: REDUCING SEVERE ABSENCE PROCESS FLOW	10

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to all Cygnet Schools.
- 2.2. It is the agreed Policy and any deviation by staff from following this policy and supporting procedures and documents may be subject to disciplinary procedures.
- 2.3. Links to supporting Policy, documents and references are in [Section 13](#).

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1. Children and young people admitted to hospital for treatment of mental disorder should be admitted to an environment that is suitable for their needs, and be provided with '*a routine which allows them to continue their social, personal and educational development and ... equal access to educational opportunities as their peers*'. (S131a Mental Health Act / Mental Health Act Code of Practice - paras 19.90/1)
- 3.2. We recognise that some of our student have significant needs and therefore it can be very challenging to secure consistently high attendance rates. At Cygnet Schools we take a 'no excuses' approach to all students engaging with education. This requires all of us (including YP) to understand and address any barriers to learning. If a student has been disengaged from learning for some time, we will work closely with the medical team to formulate an individual plan. This will typically use a balance of educational and therapeutic strategies to build up their courage, resilience, skills and confidence to begin learning again without delay. The HOE will be made aware of such plans during weekly meetings with the HT.

4. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- 4.1. This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
 - Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
 - Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
 - Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- 4.2. This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the **school census**, which explains the persistent absence threshold. DfE Guidance States (May 2022):

'pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school'.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073591/School_attendance_guidance_May-2022.pdf

5. POLICY

- 5.1. Local authorities have a legal requirement to arrange education for any young person of compulsory school age whose illness prevents them from attending school.
- 5.2. Cygnet provides an education service to young people in Tier 4 CAMHS services at Sheffield, Bury and Coventry. The school service is for 12 to 17 year olds.
- 5.3. Cygnet schools are independent schools. Ofsted are responsible for inspecting the quality of education provided. The Care Quality Commission also plays an important regulatory role in assuring quality.
- 5.4. For students admitted to an inpatient child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS), education is usually provided alongside a programme of therapeutic activities. This is the Cygnet approach and timetables and attendance tracking reflect this.
- 5.5. By law, students must stay in school until the last Friday in June if they turn 16 before the end of the summer holidays. They must then stay in full time education, start an apprenticeship or work or volunteer until they are 18.
<https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school>
- 5.6. The local authority must make sure students continue to get a full time education - unless part time is better for their health needs. Cygnet Schools avoid the use of part time tables by using a bespoke curriculum offer and working in partnership with the wider hospital teams. <https://www.gov.uk/illness-child-education>
- 5.7. Cygnet believes that:
- Education is a key component of the therapeutic process.
 - Regular attendance at school is vital. Put simply, absence means missed learning; without it, the learning process becomes fragmented and unsatisfactory.
 - Young people in Tier 4 CAMHS provision often have a long history of being unwell and may have missed significant parts of their education. They may be looked after and/or also have an Education and Health Care Plan.
 - It is our duty to do our very best for these vulnerable students.
- 5.8. At Cygnet, we take the issue of attendance very seriously and do all we can to obtain very high attendance from all of our students.
- 5.9. Cygnet expects students:
- At Key Stage 3 and 4 to engage in education & other therapeutic activities (either in class or on a 1:1 basis) on a full-time basis whenever possible.

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Post 16 to engage in education or training on a full-time basis whenever possible.

5.10. It is a legal requirement that students of compulsory school age receive full-time education and this means regular attendance at school (or 1:1 provision).

6. WHAT IS AN ACCEPTABLE ATTENDANCE RATE?

6.1. Attendance is a national priority. National data clearly shows a correlation between high attendance rates and high examination performance.

6.2. At Cygnet schools we expect:

- All staff to promote good attendance.
- That students will attend education unless they are deemed too unwell by a Doctor.
- Students to attend education every day during term time.
- Where ever possible young people who are granted home leave engage in school activity back 'home' if this falls in term time.

7. AUTHORISED ABSENCE

7.1. The Department for Education (DFE) has issued guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences and one of the key reasons is when a student is ill or receiving medical attention. At times students will be too unwell to access learning on ward or attend school in the hospital.

7.2. We expect absences to be kept to a minimum; authorised home leave should be arranged out of school hours whenever possible unless the student is attending their own school as part of a managed transition.

7.3. Occasionally students may need to visit a new school or foster placement for example. These visits should always be coordinated with the headteacher to minimise the impact on the young person's education.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- These are absences at Cygnet schools where a doctor provides no acceptable explanation.
- All absences that are not agreed by a Doctor should be treated as unauthorised for reporting purposes.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. Cygnet Schools have two sessions divided by a break in the middle.

8.2. On each occasion they must record whether every student is:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

- 8.3. Every session marked as absent from school has to be classified by the school as either 'Authorised' or 'Unauthorised'. This is why accurate information about the cause of any absence is always required.
- 8.4. Prior to school starting, school staff attend Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) meetings to ascertain any authorised absence from the school.
- 8.5. At the start of each school session an attendance register is taken. The school will follow up any unexpected absences immediately with the ward teams.
- 8.6. Education staff will monitor incidents of lateness and liaise with wider hospital teams to keep these to a minimum.
- 8.7. Securing a high level of attendance requires the school and wards to work closely together.
- 8.8. To this end, we expect from the following:

Ward staff

- Do all they can to ensure that students arrive on time for morning or afternoon school sessions including promoting good sleep hygiene and modelling positive morning routines.
- Notify the school as swiftly as possible if a student is medically unwell.
- Support students to engage in learning in class or on a 1:1 basis.
- Support students to undertake self-study and complete homework.

The school team (including Education Officers)

- Contact wards on day one of medical absence if no message has been received from the ward.
- Contact ward staff over any unexplained absences.
- Follow up promptly any concerns ward staff pass on to the school that may be affecting a student's attitude to, or feeling of wellbeing in, school.
- Involve the education officer to help students re-integrate into school after a period of illness or other individual circumstances.
- Regularly and consistently, remind students of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Attend morning meetings to discuss school attendance and DRA information.
- Reward excellent or improving attendance and action any concerns promptly.

All staff

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for the students and provide a safe learning environment;
- Ensure each student has an appropriate and responsive curriculum i.e. aspirational models are prioritised but where appropriate, other models are implemented flexibly.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any students' concerns;
- Be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance;
- See student' attendance as the responsibility of all school staff;
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures;
- Be pro-active in providing support for students who have additional learning needs;

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Use trauma informed restorative practice when working with students in the school or on ward.

Headteachers

- Ensure this policy is implemented.
- Monitor, analyse and report on trends of attendance.
- Ensure all students have access to high quality education.
- Ensure that the promotion and rewarding of good attendance is a key priority.

Lead Headteacher for Behaviour and Attitudes

- Drive high standards of attendance across the group of schools to support academic and personal development.
- Stay up-to-date with any new guidance, legislation, and best practice in regards attendance in schools.
- Make recommendations in regards policy/policy updates, to the head of education.

Hospital Internal Governance Team to:

- Challenge and support all staff to ensure that student's access education and learning whenever they are well enough to do so.

National Education boards to:

- Set strategy on promoting attendance
- Approve policy changes..

Head of Education:

- To assure the proprietor that this policy is compliant with legislation and guidance and being implemented at all school sites.
- Update policy.

National Attendance and Billing Officer:

- To produce national reports on attendance on a weekly basis.

9. PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

- 9.1. Students will be rewarded for good/improving attendance rates, on a weekly basis.
- 9.2. As a minimum HT's will be expected to have schemes in place to reward:
 - Student attendance
 - Staff contribution
- 9.3. These can be individual, group or both and a member of school staff will be present at ward community meetings to issue these. Possible reward schemes include:
 - Weekly Attendance Cup
 - Weekly 100% attendance certificates
 - Half Termly attendance certificates and gift voucher
 - Positive attendance reward trips
- 9.4. Parents are informed of their child's attendance at ward rounds and CPA meetings. The Education Officer will inform parents directly if there is an issue with

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

their child's attendance and positive attendance strategies are then shared and discussed.

- 9.5. Students with additional SEND, Medical needs or Mental Health Needs may need additional support to attend education sessions in school. For these students education can take place on the ward and they can be provided with specialist or safer equipment. Positive attendance strategies are discussed and agreed daily during dynamic risk assessment (DRA) meetings with the Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT).

10. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

- 10.1. Each headteacher must ensure that the admission and attendance system complies with this guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073591/School_attendance_guidance_May-2022.pdf

11. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

- 11.1. Cygnet Schools monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify students that require support with their attendance, Attendance concerns are raised at Student Progress Meetings where support plans are put in place and reviewed. If attendance issues remain a concern, the ward MDT can be consulted for further support and guidance.

Monitoring attendance

- 11.2. The school will monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school. Due to the small size of the school as well as the particular needs and transient nature of our cohorts we pay particular attention to attendance at an individual level.

Analysing attendance

- 11.3. The school will analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families.

Using data to improve attendance

- 11.4. The school will provide regular attendance reports to the HoE and Hospital stakeholders to facilitate discussions with students and families if necessary. Also use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

- 11.5. Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.
- 11.6. The school will use attendance data to identify students with patterns of severe absence. Also hold regular meetings to assess the success of targeted positive attendance strategies and feedback this information at ward rounds and CPA meetings.

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

12. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

- 12.1. This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated and as a minimum annually

13. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

- 13.1. This policy links to the following policies:
- Safeguarding in Schools Policy (4-17)
 - Behaviour policy (8-06)
 - Assessment and Marking Policy (8-03)

**CYGNET SCHOOLS
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

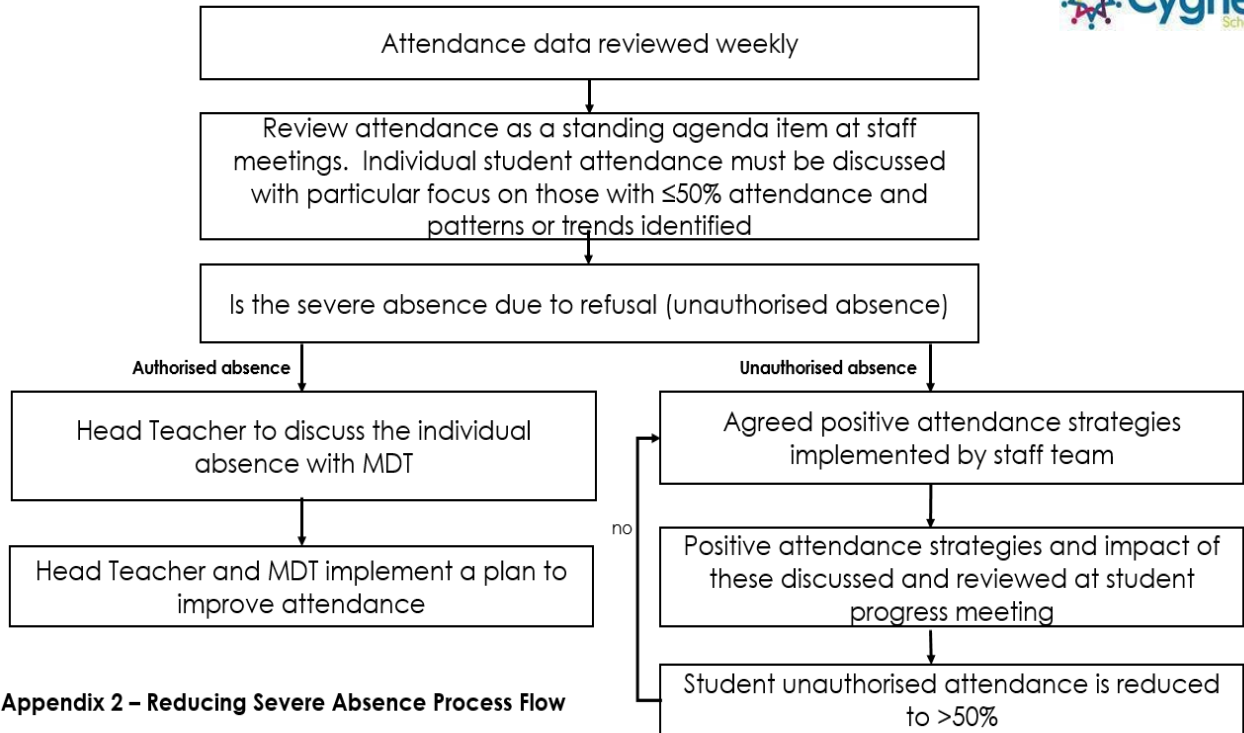
14. APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE CODES

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance and the QNICS attendance system.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
C	Authorised Absence	Leave of absence authorised by the school
I	Illness	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
M	Medical	Medical or dental appointments
A	Therapy appointments	Medical assessments/appointments/reviews associated with their mental health
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

CYGNET SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

15. APPENDIX 2: REDUCING SEVERE ABSENCE PROCESS FLOW



Appendix 2 – Reducing Severe Absence Process Flow