

Governor Visit Record

Date	08.02.2023	Governors	Maureen Spence/Gill Finch
Objectives for visit			
To discuss and monitor the school's actions in improving and developing strategies to address issues relating to pupil attendance.			
Links with 5 Year School Development Plan			
Safeguarding			
Personal Development			
Parental involvement			
Background preparation			
KMc shared the recently updated attendance policy in preparation for the meeting which both governors had read. It outlines the legal framework and the school's procedures for dealing with unsatisfactory or persistent absence.			
Governor Observations and Comments			
<p>KMc explained how Education Welfare Officers now support schools. The school's assigned EWO is Claire Laskey and she meets with KMc and Lisa Collis (attendance officer) every 3-4 weeks to monitor attendance patterns.</p> <p>We discussed the procedures in schools relating to absence: Lisa closes registers and calls the child's home on the first day of absence if no reason for absence or telephone contact has been received in the morning. If there are welfare concerns, this is followed up by a home visit. Usually class teacher/Phase Lead/KMc.</p> <p>The school has learned from experience that it is very valuable and useful to have additional emergency numbers for each child.</p> <p>Following a recent attendance audit, school established that it may be helpful to send a letter to follow up unauthorised absence and also to consider sending a letter out to parents whose child is at risk of being persistently absent (PA).</p> <p>The threshold for PA is 94%. Lisa generates a list from SIMS of children to whom this applies; this is currently 44 children, many of whom may have reached this threshold due to medical conditions and appointments. Holidays, which count as unauthorised absences also contribute to the number of children counted as PA. Letters 1 and Letter 2 can be sent to parents reminding them of the importance of regular attendance. CHS has not, to date, pursued legal enforcement due to persistent absence.</p> <p>The role of the EWO can be to support children to obtain 'help to attend more regularly'; for example, when a pupil was refusing to come to school, Clare did attend their annual review to offer support.</p> <p>Sarah Wintringham, the Lead EWO coordinates an attendance network meeting. One of the recent outcomes of the network was that school based staff were given 3 slogans to rank in order to develop materials for a county-wide attendance campaign. The slogans were: Attendance matters; let's make a change together Together as a community, working hand in hand to improve attendance Attend today, achieve tomorrow; attendance matters</p> <p>Lisa compiles school's Children Missing Education Return on a monthly basis and sends to NCC.</p>			

Karyn requested comparative data at the Network meeting to show the local and national picture for attendance in special schools, and this does show Cleaswell Hill's attendance to be above those averages.

An action plan has been formulated following the audit. This is available to Governors.

Actions include;

- Updated attendance policy
- To update admissions pack for parents
- The previous 'postcards home' initiative which praised and commended full or improved attendance has been stopped and replaced with a notification sent home using School Ping. It is less time consuming, and still celebrates good attendance. MS recalled the incentives that were used during her time at Collingwood: termly £5 and annual £10 vouchers for shopping.

We asked whether the post-Covid context has any families feeling anxious about infections and whether this affected attendance. KMc said that although all children have returned to school, some remain anxious. Impact of Covid 19 on families was written up following a parental survey to support provision and understanding.

KMc introduced us to the [summary table of responsibility for school attendance](#) which applies from September 2022. These explain the expectations of parents, schools and the local authority.

When a child is struggling to attend school there are strategies in place:

- Remote Learning
- Work to support EHCP targets
- Activities and resources, along with equipment for self-regulation
- A timetable for the activities gives structure
- TAF meetings to discuss re-integration

KMc is planning to work in collaboration with parents regarding the practice and information shared with parents to support attendance. This work is due to start early Summer Term and will be shared with Governors.

Issues to be raised with the Full Governing Body (if any)

No issues to report

Plans for Follow-up Visit

This visit will be repeated annually

Date reviewed at FGB: 21 March 2023