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**Attendance report for Governors 2018 – 2019**

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| **Attendance subtitle** | 2017 - 2018 | **2018 - 2019** |
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| Overall Attendance Y7 - Y11 | 95.1 | 94.6 |
| Persistent Absenteeism  | 11.3% | 12.9% |
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| Boys | 95.1% | 94.5% |
| Girls  | 94.9% | 94.2% |
| LAC  | 92.2% | 92.2% |
| PP | 91.4% | 90.4% |
| SEND | 93.5% | 92.2% |
| EAL | 94.9% | 94.4% |
| Oasis | 91.8% | 88.0% |

**Analysis:**

* We did not reach our Attendance targets of 95% overall absence or 11.5% PA 2018 – 2019.
* In previous reports to the Governing Body at Standards and Performance, we have highlighted the following issues: rise in **anxious school refusing** and corresponding rise in parents deciding to Home School when support from the Local Authority is sought by the school.
* We have analysed that mid term entrants are more likely to be poor attenders, as it takes time to establish relationships with families and routines.
* Our LAC attendance would have been much higher save a new LAC in Y11 who was placed out of area to beginning with and found attendance difficult in the period of time.
* Our Oasis attendance fluctuates due to the severe mental health of the students who access it. Oasis attendance should always be seen as a positive as it is unlikely that students accessing this support would be in at all if we did not have it.
* Even with the dip in attendance last year we still meet both Essex and National averages.
* Last year we issued 22 penalty notices and took 3 families to court to prosecute for persistent non attenders. Of those the courts gave a suspended sentence for non attendance to 1 parent. There remain strict criteria for applying for penalty notices as laid down in our policy and as required by law, and we follow these criteria . We only had one complaint from a parent last year about issuing penalty notices. Parents understand that this will be done for holidays in term time and also for irregular attendance. This is a slow and mainly non-productive route to follow.
* Over the course of the year there were 37 very poor attenders. Of those 13 were anxious school refusers, of whom 4 were removed by parents for Home schooling; 12 have been long term poor attenders, with family circumstances being the main driver; 10 being medical poor attenders, with support from medical professionals for reducing contact in school; and only 1 whose family took her on holiday (twice) without permission, and for whom penalty notices were applied. Of these students 10 were mid term entrants.
* In general, with those who attend well but have the occasional blips, our strategies to improve attendance work well.

**Setting targets for 2019 – 2020:**

* We currently have 12 students who immediately impact our attendance this year.
* 4 of those students are generally good attenders, whose families have been evicted from their current dwelling and who are currently in hostel accommodation out of area with no prospect of parents getting them here. These students will either move school, or once families have re located will not be poor attenders, but their initial issue will remain on our statistics.
* 5 students are and have been long term anxious school refusers, who have been and continue to be supported by The Oasis, but who have blips in their attendance. All have been referred for or are accessing additional mental health support, and the Local Authority is supporting us with examining options moving forward. All of these children will periodically be well enough to attend and will periodically be not well enough. This is not a clear medical term and is very difficult to regulate. The Local Authority will not prosecute families whose children have mental health issues. Regular team around the family meetings are held to try and find ways forward with these children. These children are the most likely to be withdrawn by their parents for Home schooling, which raises safeguarding issues.
* 1 student is in secure mental health hospital due to extremely high risk of suicide. This issue will not change. Even when the student is not in hospital her attendance is extremely changeable. She is supported both by Social Care and also mental health services.
* 1 student has always been a poor attender, lives out of area and is currently in application for a nearer school after the public transport she was using ceased to run. This parent will be referred to the Local Authority if a new school is not found within the next week.
* 1 student has chronic medical issues and is supported by the school nursing team. The attendance of this child will always be poor and will not change. If the child has any prolonged periods at home, home tutoring will be applied for.
* 1 student is LAC and is on our roll but has not started yet in Y7 due to his EHCP indicating that a more specialist setting is required and no movement as yet as to where that will be.
* It is clear that the issues we faced last year are still current. We have strong procedures and when the local Authority attend TAF meetings with us and the families they routinely say that the school could not do any more than we are already doing.

Therefore, I request that our attendance is set again at 95% overall attendance, Y7 – 11, and 12% PA.

Jenny Comerford

September 2019