



Irthington Village School Attendance Policy and Procedures

Date policy adopted by Governors	Summer Term 2022
Review date	Autumn 2023
Review schedule	Annually
Review responsibility	Curriculum and Pastoral sub-committee
Signed (Head)	Signed (Chair of Governors)

Irthington Village School

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Mission Statement

Through this policy, we aim to:

- Ensure the safeguarding, child protection and welfare of all pupils.
- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve an attendance for all children, that is at least in line with National Average, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Prior to the Coronavirus Pandemic the National Average was **96.1%**
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Access & Inclusion Team so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.
- Provide effective strategies for early intervention to ensure pupils are not deprived of their educational opportunities through non-attendance or lateness.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Fiona Sweetman
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Lynn Harrison
Nominated Governors for Safeguarding/ Attendance	Joanna Wharton
Attendance Officer	LA Team

The Governing Body of our School is responsible for ensuring the **annual review** of this Policy and procedures.

The Policy will be reviewed **annually in September** at the Full Governors meeting.

1. Legal Framework

Irthington Village School is committed to following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”[1]

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Education Act 1996
 - ✓ Education Act 2002
 - ✓ Equality Act 2010
 - ✓ Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
 - ✓ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018
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- [The Education Act 1996](#)
 - [The Education Act 2002](#)
 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf
 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741315/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2018_Part_One_14.09.18.pdf

This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE (2018) ‘School attendance’

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Build a firm and secure knowledge and understanding across all curriculum subjects.
- Ensure they consistently meet and build upon expectations for their age group.
- Develop good habits and important life skills.
- Maintain friendships.
- Gain better qualifications.
- Have access to a wider range of opportunities when they leave school.

2. Irthington Village School responsibilities

- We ensure that we adhere to the Children's Services School Absence Enforcement Policy (See [Appendix 2](#)) and DfE School Attendance Statutory guidance and departmental advice.
- The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of [Irthington Village School](#).
- The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- Attendance will be an agenda item at **the first Governors' meeting after the completion of the previous term**. The Head Teacher will report to the Governing Body at this meeting. The nominated Governor responsible for the monitoring of attendance is [Joanna Wharton](#)
- The Head Teacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- The school has effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Primary Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- The school makes parents aware of the school attendance policy either by making it available on request/school website or by use of parents attendance leaflet

3. Parental Responsibility

- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly and punctually. It is the parent's responsibility to notify our school if their child is unable to attend school or is going to be late.
- Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. This can be by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise (including the parent choosing to educate their child at home).
- Compulsory school age is defined as being the term commencing on or after a child's fifth birthday. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen. This applies to the parents of children of compulsory school age who are registered at a maintained school, a pupil referral unit, an Academy, or other state provided education.
- Section 576 of the Education Act 1996: Definition of a Parent – is as follows whether they are married or not; any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person; and any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law. Throughout this document, references to 'parent' mean each and every parent coming within the definition (whether acting jointly or separately) and should not be taken to mean that provisions only apply to 'parent' in the singular.

4. Expectations

4.1 Irthington Village School expects that all our pupils will:

- Attend school every day and strive for 100% school attendance. Every day counts!
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day as stated in the Home-School agreement
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their **child's** school attendance (age appropriate)

4.2 Irthington Village School expects that parents/carers will:

- Ensure their child attends school every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence.
- Ensure your child is not late for school.
- Contact school either by **telephone, in person, text, email or note** before **8.45am** on the first day of absence and regularly thereafter
- Provide the school with accurate and up to date contact details (minimum of 2 emergency contacts) and update the school if details change
- Endeavour to make health appointments, doctor, dentist, hospital appointments etc. at the end of the school day (thus allowing at least half a day's education). Do not allow your child to be absent for a whole day when their medical appointment is only a short, local one
- Inform a member of school staff of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school
- Avoid taking your child out of school for non-urgent matters

5. Registration

- Children are registered every morning and afternoon. Registers will be taken punctually each day at **8.50am and at 1pm**
- Register closes at **9.30 am and 1.45 pm**. Children will be marked absent or late by teachers using our attendance system. The office personnel record whether the attendance is authorised or unauthorised (**Please see Appendix 3 for register codes**).

6. Procedures

Our school will undertake the following procedures to support good attendance:

- ✓ To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- ✓ To maintain, analyse and evaluate appropriate attendance data.

- ✓ To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- ✓ To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- ✓ To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- ✓ To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- ✓ To strongly discourage unnecessary absence
- ✓ To work with parents to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality
- ✓ To refer to the Local Authority Access & Inclusion Officer, any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- ✓ To report attendance statistics to the DfE where requested.
- ✓ All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns (as per the escalation of intervention) to the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for monitoring attendance.

7. Monitoring and reporting of absence concerns

7.1 Irthington Village School will:

- Contact parents on the first day of absence if no reason has been received. Contact will be by telephone
- School will contact regularly (daily if necessary)
- **Our First Day Response is as follows:**
If, on the first day of absence, no reason has been obtained for the reason of absence by 10.30am, the Safeguarding Team will investigate.
If no response is gained we may contact Children's Services and/or Police to conduct a welfare check
- Irthington Village School will follow the escalation of intervention procedure (see Appendix 4) and where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging the parent/carer will be invited to school to work with the Head Teacher and attendance governor to help resolve the difficulties
- **School termly attendance monitoring identifies attendance below 96% and we will send out letters for information to parents.**
- **School termly attendance monitoring identifies persistent absentees (below 90%) and will send out letters for information to parents informing them that attendance will be monitored during the following half term and if there is no improvement they will be invited to an Attendance Panel with Head Teacher and Attendance governor to discuss support needed. An appropriate action plan will be jointly agreed and may involve external agencies**

- **A review will take place after a half term, and if there has been no improvement in attendance, school will consult with LA Access and Inclusion Officer to determine the next course of action. This may be an Early Help Assessment, a referral to other agency or referral to Access & Inclusion Officer for formal involvement and consideration of legal action.**
- School will keep a detailed chronology of all interventions/action taken re attendance.

8. Attendance Monitoring Procedures:

- ✓ First day phone call protocol
- ✓ Follow up phone calls
- ✓ Fortnightly attendance reports and individual attendance reports to be analysed for patterns and trends
- ✓ Our disadvantaged children's attendance to be monitored, and compared to their non-pupil premium counterparts
- ✓ Regular attendance section on the school newsletter
- ✓ RAG letters at the end of every term

9. Dealing with late arrivals/persistent lateness

Please see lateness escalation of intervention in Appendix 5

- If a child is late they must enter by the main entrance and let a member of staff in the office know. If a Parent/Carer is present, they will be asked to enter the child's details and reason for lateness on the school entry system.
- It is to be expected that very occasionally a child may be late for a genuine reason. The concern is in regard to any consistent late arrivals (where there is no avoidable reason). If there are children who fall into this category then the following procedure takes place:
 - Parent is reminded by office staff of the importance and reasons for lateness and support strategies discussed.
 - Staff responsible for attendance contacts parents informally for discussion about continued lateness
 - Formal written letter from Head teacher
 - If the issue persists then a formal meeting will be held between the Head Teacher and the Attendance Governor to establish the reasons and plan forward.
 - Regular monitoring of lateness will occur by the school and where necessary action will be taken following the escalation of intervention (Appendix 5) at the headteacher's discretion.

10. Medical or dental appointments

- Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.
- However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents can inform the school in advance using the following options: telephone, email, or in person.

11. Children Missing in Education and School Roll Procedures

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.

Updating the School Roll:

All schools must notify the local authority when they are about to remove a pupil name from the School Admission Register under any of the 15 grounds listed in the [Children Missing in Education Regulations 2016 annex A](#).

All Schools must also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the Admissions Register.

Schools must complete the "Pupils Gains and Losses Information Sheet" and send to the local authority at the end of each week if gains or losses occur in the school.

If the child leaves the school and the destination is unknown then schools must complete the CME1 form and forward to the CME officer as soon as possible following the guidance below.

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity.

11.1 What happens if a school think a child is missing education?

Schools have a duty of care to ensure they have conducted 'reasonable enquires' to locate a child missing education before this is reported to the Local Authority CME officers.

Where a pupil leaves without advance notice or their destination is unknown, the school will:

- Check possible whereabouts with staff
- Contact parents using last known number or e-mail
- Contact any emergency contacts held for the pupil

- Make a home visit to the last known address
- Check with neighbours and any known friends
- Contact any agencies known to be involved
- If the pupil is statemented or has SEN check with SEN services
- If the pupil or family is known to Social Services inform the named social worker
- Ask the pupil's friends and their parents if they are aware of the pupil's whereabouts
- Check any social media sites e.g. Facebook.

If the pupil is still not located, the school should complete a CME1 referral and e-mail it to Janice.ogilvie@cumbria.gov.uk; (07866649190). This will enable the LA to make further enquires, as appropriate, to try and locate the pupil. The pupil should remain on roll for **20 school days** and their absence should be recorded. Please note, the school must contact the CME officer to **agree the date** that the pupil should be removed from roll before they actually remove the pupil from their roll. On this date the CME officer will forward a CME2 form. On the date agreed with the school, the school should ensure the pupil's attendance data is up to date, and remove them from their roll with the correct leaving date.

11.2 Admission of children from overseas

These procedures will apply to all schools where Cumbria County Council is the admitting authority.

All schools must comply with the [Schools Admission Code](#) when dealing with an application for a child who is not a UK National. Schools must not refuse a school place simply because of doubts about the child's immigration status. **School may seek passport identification / visa checks when parents are applying for a place within the school.** Further information can be found <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children>

Most children from overseas are entitled to a state education. Children who are not entitled to a state education: -

Children from non-European Economic Area (EEA) countries who are here as short term visitors – these are children who live abroad but have been admitted to the UK for a short visit and not for study. For a child to be entitled to a place they would need to be granted a visa for more than 6 months.

Children from non-EEA countries who have permitted to study in the UK. These children are allowed to study in England on the basis that they attend an independent fee paying school. If children belong to either of these categories and are found to be admitted into school then schools must not deny a place. They should instead refer to the Home Office's school referral team – schoolreferrals@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

12. Roles and responsibilities

12:1 Governors

- To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

12:2 Head teacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns.
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.

12:3 Senior Leader responsible for attendance / Attendance Officer:

- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality when it is an issue.
- To contact and work with parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- To monitor attendance data and ensure the Head teacher receives this information every half term.
- To provide attendance "watch" lists to the school office for daily monitoring.
- To coordinate daily punctuality checks with late children.
- To process all legal documentation regarding attendance monitoring including penalty notices to the LA.

12:4 Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by office staff.
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate recording sheet.

12:5 Office Staff

- To record children arriving late or leaving early on a daily basis.
- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the Attendance Manager System.(SIMS)
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary – monitoring coding.
- To contact any parent who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence.
- To use the text system to request a reason for absence from parents.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.

- To make a judgment in conjunction with the Inclusion manager whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

12:6 Local Authority Access and Inclusion Officer

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.

13. Leave of Absence during term time

- Leave of absence during term time will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.
- The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Department for Education allows a Head Teacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in "exceptional circumstances".
- No Holidays taken during term time will be authorised.
- The law states that the provision for Head Teachers to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.
- We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event or problem which you did not expect.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for exceptional circumstances / **authorised absence may** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments or where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Bereavement, unexpected personal or family problems or illness might be considered as an **exceptional circumstance**.
- To attend a wedding of a person close to the family – up to 1 day.

The school will identify pupils and families where attendance is poor and meetings, letters, closer monitoring may be considered as detailed above.

Evidence would be required in each case to support any application for leave. The school will not condone holidays taken during term time, permission for absences in term time may only be granted for exceptional circumstances. When a request is not authorised, parents have the right of representation to the School governors.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

1. The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
 2. Year six transition days (for pupils in year six)
 3. Year six SAT's week (for pupils in year six)
 4. Year two – SAT's week (week to be decided by school)
- Parents and carers must complete a 'Leave of Absence' form outlining in writing the "exceptional circumstances". The headteacher may invite you to attend a meeting to discuss your request. This must be done at least 2 weeks prior to the leave (except for a bereavement).
 - **All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the Head Teacher, are accumulated and parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The amount is £60 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £120 (per parent per child) if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution, except in limited circumstances.**

14. Incentives and rewards

- Pupils at **Irthington Village School** will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level and we will positively encourage and celebrate good and improving school attendance:
 - ✓ **Every half term we reward all of the children who have had 100% attendance with a certificate.**

15. Links with other policies/Procedures:

This policy is linked to our:

- Child and Safeguarding Protection policy
- Behaviour policy
- Home School Agreement

Appendix 1

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

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

An “authorised absence” as:

- 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.

Only the Head Teacher can authorise absence. If a child is ill or unable to attend school for any reason, the parents should provide an explanation for the absence. For repeated or regular periods of illness, the school will request medical evidence prior to authorising absences.

An “unauthorised absence” as:

Any absences that is deemed not to be an acceptable reason for missing school. Unauthorised absences from school carry the risk of prosecution under Section 44 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

- Parents/carers 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.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

“Persistent absenteeism” as:

-Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason. Persistent absence equates to 38 sessions (19 days) absence across an academic year.

Appendix 2

(reference from main policy to DfE School Attendance Statutory guidance and departmental advice)

Appendix 3: attendance codes

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

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
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 5:

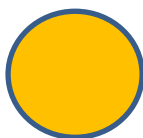
ESCALATION OF INTERVENTION

Lateness

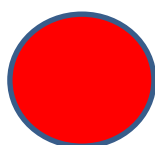


% Lateness

No lateness



1 – 2 late arrivals
in a week



3-4 late arrivals
in a week

Level of Intervention

- No lateness concerns
 - Lateness challenged on arrival by office staff
 - Speak to parent and ask why child is late
 - Offer advice or support to parents if necessary
 - Recorded in school's late system
 - Send warning lateness letter to outline concerns and consequences if this doesn't improve
 - Regularly monitoring of lateness letters. Any concerns issued with a written warning at the head teachers discretion
- At the end of monitoring :
- Improvement: Continue monitoring
 - No Improvement: Lateness Panel Meeting – HT and a governor to be present.
 - If this continues, this will escalate to unauthorised absence and move over to the attendance escalation.

Responsibility

School Lead on these actions

School Lead on these actions

School Lead

School Lead/LA Officer