



Policy: Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Our Attendance Policy is designed to promote outstanding attendance for all pupils across the school. We understand that there is a proven critical link between attendance and academic and social outcomes for our pupils. It is the desired outcome of this policy that it supports the development of our pupils into academically successful young people of good character with a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning.
- 1.2 Our Attendance Policy takes account of the guidance set out in “Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities” published by the Department of Education in September 2014.
- 1.3 This policy acknowledges the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and how they apply to head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents.
- 1.4 This policy takes account of key relevant legislation including;
 - The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
 - The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
 - The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
 - The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
 - The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- 1.5 The policy complies with the Gloucestershire County Council Penalty Notice Protocol* which, under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, empowers designated LEA officers, Head Teachers (Deputies and Assistants authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school (as from February 2004).
- 1.6 This policy takes due regard to all the requirements of the Human Rights Act and all Equal Opportunities legislation.

2. Aim

- 2.1 At Cirencester Deer Park School we consider regular attendance to be 100% attendance. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. It is our aim that we support all our pupils so they can continue to attend school even though they may be facing challenging personal circumstances.

2.3 We are an inclusive, comprehensive school with high expectations for all our pupils. The Headteacher expresses this by setting out clearly that everyone within our learning community is challenged to be 'The best we can be every day' and to achieve more than we all first think is possible.

2.4 We expect that;

- every teacher accepts responsibility for promoting and encouraging outstanding attendance within the classroom and across the wider school;
- all staff acting as a tutor are consistent in their approach to attendance and work within the framework set out in this policy and liaise closely with the relevant Year Leader, Pastoral Team Leader and Attendance and Support Officer to ensure good attendance;
- every pupil is made aware by their teachers, tutors and Year Leaders of the importance of attendance through lessons, tutor time activities and assemblies where the school's high expectations are set out;
- every parent and carer accepts the shared responsibility for their child's regular and punctual attendance at school.

2.5 The Attendance Policy will ensure;

- that all pupils will be supported in their right to enjoy and access a top quality education by attending school regularly;
- that pupils are recognised for their good or outstanding attendance and judiciously supported when their attendance is not good.
- that all staff across the school will work together within a single clearly defined framework to challenge poor attendance and to support good or outstanding attendance.

3. Rationale

3.1 Our policy is that all of our pupils have the potential to achieve at or beyond their indicated potential and we endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

3.2 Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. This policy seeks to ensure that parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting good and outstanding school attendance and punctuality for all.

3.3 For a pupil to reach their full potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We understand that research indicates that;

- there is a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%;
- regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically;
- regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with;

- regular attenders find learning more satisfying;
- regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

3.4 The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. We believe that high attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

4. Policy in Practice

4.1 This policy reflects the fact that the school cannot legally authorise any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education (DfE) has issued guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences. These include;

- a child is ill or receiving medical attention;
- days of religious observance, notified in advance;
- absence due to family circumstances (e.g. bereavement, serious illness);
- other absences, such as approved sporting activities that can be authorised and there will be events affecting families, some unforeseen, which will necessitate absence from school; professional discretion will need to be used in these cases as to whether the absence can be authorised.

4.2 This policy recognises that the law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Headteacher has the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in “exceptional circumstances”. If a holiday in term time is not considered by the Headteacher to be an “exceptional circumstance” it will not be authorised.

4.3 Parents may request authorisation for a leave of absence from school. However, if the leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher, and a parent or carer nevertheless takes the pupil out of school for the leave of absence, the school will record the absence as unauthorised leave.

4.4 In the case of an unauthorised leave of absence, or absences, that consists of 10 sessions (5 Days equivalent) or more within a 10 week period, the school is obliged to report the absence to the local authority. The local authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice without further warning to the parent. Please note that such a penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A penalty notice is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. Thereafter, if the penalty remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the magistrate’s court.

4.5 The school will ensure that it fulfils its legal obligation to register pupils every morning between 8.50 and 9.05 am and every afternoon between 2.25 and 3.25 pm. This will be taken as an electronic register on SIMS.

- 4.6 As a school we believe that the work to promote outstanding attendance for all pupils starts with proactive high quality pastoral care. The pastoral team seeks to identify early issues that will affect pupil's attendance, both in school generally and in academic lessons specifically, and work in partnership with parents and pupils to support attendance.
- 4.7 As a school we reward outstanding attendance while challenging and supporting pupils whose attendance could be better. The diagram below outlines how we do this.

Indicative Actions for Attendance -Threshold at 100%

Attendance is analysed on a weekly basis for all pupils by the Attendance and Support Officer and Pastoral Team Leader. Attendance rates for all pupils, including attendance rates for key groups of learners, are monitored by the Strategic Leadership Team through the weekly KPIs.

Gold, Silver and Bronze certificates for good attendance between 97-100% three times a year

Tutor Group Competitions for attendance every term

Termly prizes for individuals with 100% attendance

Indicative Actions for Attendance -Threshold at 96%

Where appropriate, pupils who have been absent for 2 or more consecutive days are seen by a Year Leader, Attendance and Support Officer or Senior Member of Staff.

The Attendance and Support Officer identifies any unusual patterns of attendance and makes personal contact with families of pupils who the school has concerns about.

Where appropriate, any pupil eligible for the pupil premium receives a phone call from the Attendance and Support Officer, or Pupil Premium Champion,

Year Leaders, in consultation with the Attendance and Support Officer and Pastoral leaders, identify pupils "at risk" of having possible attendance deterioration in the future. Pupils are met with and placed on an interim Attendance Improve Plan (AIP) by a Member of the Pastoral or Tutor team.

Letter of concern and support sent to parents at the start of term 2 and the start of term 4

Option of referral to Local Authority for legal action for unauthorised periods of absence over 10 sessions in 10 weeks

Indicative Actions for Attendance -Threshold at 90% - Persistent Absentee

Persistent Absentee Protocol. Home visit by the Attendance and Support Officer to formulate an informal action plan. Referral to outside support agencies as appropriate.

Persistent Absentee Protocol: Pathway 1

Sustained poor attendance due to diagnosed medical condition.

Appropriate and bespoke pastoral and inclusion support.

Reasonable temporary adjustments to timetable and curriculum.

Persistent Absentee Protocol: Pathway 1

Sustained medical absence with no impact from pastoral or inclusion support.

Medical referral to Hospital Education.

Persistent Absentee Protocol: Pathway 2

Sustained poor Attendance below 90%
Formal Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) at school with Attendance and Support Officer, Year Leader and Pastoral Leader and outside agencies as appropriate.

Appropriate and bespoke pastoral and inclusion support.

Persistent Absentee Protocol: Pathway 2

Sustained poor attendance

Referral to the local authority for legal action.

4.8 It is the expectation of the school that all pupils attend registration and lessons on time every day. All pupils arriving to school in the morning should register with their tutor between 8.50 and 9.05. The punctual attendance of each pupil will be recorded using the following protocol;

- when a pupil is present when the register is opened at 8.50 they receive a present mark (/).
- when a pupil arrives after 8.50 they are late and should be marked with a late mark (L).

- tutors will close the registers in their tutor room at 9.05.
- any pupil who arrives after 9.05 but before 9.30 will sign in at reception and receive a late mark (L). These pupils will be followed up by the pastoral team.
- reception will formally close the registers at 9.30 and any pupil signing in after this will receive a late after registration closes mark (U).
- when a pupil has a notified medical appointment and arrives before 10.05 a present mark (/) should be entered;
- when a pupil has a notified medical appointment and arrives before 11.25 a late mark (L) should be entered;
- when a pupil has a notified medical appointment and arrives after 11.25 then a Medical (M) mark should be entered;
- morning registers will be marked by tutors for absent pupils in the usual way using the most appropriate coding set out in appendix 1. Where the tutor can find no reason for the absence an “N” mark should be entered.

4.9 Late arrival without a valid reason is not acceptable. The sanctions for this are that;

- when a pupil is late to school without a valid reason they will receive a breaktime detention with the Pastoral Team.
- when a pupil is late to school more than 3 times in a fortnight they will receive an afterschool detention.
- if lateness becomes persistent parent and/or carers will be invited in for a meeting with the Pastoral Team Leader.

4.10 The school expects absences to be kept to a minimum; routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible.

4.11 We recognise that pupils make the most progress when they attend lessons punctually. It is unacceptable for a pupil in school to miss a lesson without prior authorisation or permission from a senior member of staff. Any unauthorised absences from lessons will be considered truanting and will result in the pupil spending time in detention equivalent to the time missed in addition to a further appropriate sanction for breaching the school standards.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 We believe the responsibility for the attendance of all pupils is shared between the pupil, parent/carer and school.

5.2 **Parents will:**

- make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child attends school 100% of the time and arrives punctually to school;

- inform the school on the first day of their child's absence, and on every subsequent day of absence, of the reason for the absence and, where appropriate, supply a medical certificate or other evidential paper work as requested;
- Inform the school of any unavoidable medical or dental appointments during school time in advance of any consequent absence.

5.3 **Tutors/Teachers will:**

- welcome pupils to the school each morning, nurture good attendance and promote positive mindsets;
- mark registers accurately in tutor time and during period 6;
- practise good housekeeping - chase up absence letters for coding, pass on letters for filing in the weekly pastoral year team meeting, or earlier if needed, inform the Year Leader of any pupils giving cause for concern;
- report attendance data and update pupils on competitions during tutor time;
- maintain awareness of prior and current Persistent Absentees and liaise closely with the Attendance and Support Officer, Year Leaders and Pastoral Team Leader to pick up any attendance issues for pupils or groups of pupils;
- reinforce the positive messages about attendance through undertaking AIPs with agreed pupils in their tutor group;
- plan activities during tutor time relevant to the year group and agreed programme;
- teach engaging and effective lessons in which all pupils can learn and make good progress over time and which pupils want to attend!
- inform the pastoral team if a pupil is absent from their lesson but has been marked as present;
- reintegrate pupils into lessons after a prolonged period of absence and provide support as appropriate. (please see Pupils with Additional Needs Policy).

5.4 **Year Leaders will:**

- provide general pastoral support as required to pupils who are struggling to attend school regularly;
- liaise with Attendance Officer and Pastoral Team Leader over targeted pupils;
- undertake mentoring and parental meetings of pupils with poor attendance, and those at risk of poor attendance;
- use the AIP process as appropriate to ensure a proactive approach to pupils with lower or falling attendance.

5.5 The Attendance and Support Officer will:

- monitor and update registers as necessary when they have been completed by teachers and tutors, including inputting all missing marks;
- ensure codes are recorded accurately (see Appendix 1);
- liaise with tutors regarding pupils who are late to school;
- review blue absence slips for absent pupils and make contact with parents as necessary;
- prepare, analyse and share relevant data to share with SLT and the pastoral team as part of the school weekly KPIs;
- liaise with Pastoral Team Leader and Year Leaders to identify causes for concern and decide appropriate levels of intervention;
- follow indicative action protocol with pupils and families giving cause for concern (see policy into practice);
- prepare case studies as appropriate in conjunction with the Senior Leader in charge of Attendance and Pastoral Team Leader;
- follow up all requests for term time absence;
- praise students with consistently high punctuality and/or attendance;
- to review weekly and termly attendance data and ensure an appropriate level of response to attendance concerns.

5.6 The Pastoral Team Leader will:

- liaise with the Year Leaders and Attendance and Support Officer to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance and ensure action is taken to support these pupils;
- monitor and quality assure systems and processes, including the AIP and AIM protocols and the roles and responsibilities of members of the pastoral team in relation to attendance to ensure that there are no pupils that go unnoticed;
- prepare case studies as appropriate in conjunction with the Senior Leader in charge of attendance and Attendance and Support Officer;
- meet with pupils and families in addition to appropriate outside agencies, to ensure attendance concerns are addressed and the necessary support is put in place.
- use assemblies to regularly reinforce the importance of punctuality and good attendance. Use this opportunity to praise student with consistently high punctuality or attendance.

5.7 The Senior Leader responsible for Attendance will:

- lead on reviewing KPIs for attendance at the weekly SLT meeting;
- formulate the strategic response to attendance issues across the school;

- analyse data to identify trends, areas of improvement and areas needing improvement;
- investigate strategies to improve attendance of all pupils at the School.

5.8 Governors will:

- review attendance as part of the schools KPIs at least once a term;
- hold senior leaders to account for the level of attendance in school and have an overview of the policy and procedures in dealing with attendance.

5.9 The Headteacher will:

- ensure the school follows the DfE guidelines and ensure the legal obligations of the school are met in regard to all matters of attendance.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

6.1 Our Attendance Policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually.

7. Other related policies and documents

- The Exclusions Policy
- The Equality Policy
- The Safeguarding Policy
- The Home/School Agreement
- Behaviour for Success Policy
- Pupils with Additional needs policy

Appendix 1

Absence Codes – Recorded on registers

- A Present at registration
- B Educated Off Site (Not dual registered)
- C Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
- D Dual registered (ie present at another school or at a PRU)
- E Excluded but no alternative provision made
- F Agreed extended holiday
- G Family holiday (not agreed or sessions in excess of agreement)
- H Agreed holiday
- I Illness
- J interview
- L Late but arrived before the register closed
- M Medical or dental appointment
- N No reason for the absence provided yet
- O Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)
- P Approved sporting activity
- R Day set aside exclusively for religious observance
- S Study Leave
- T Traveller absence
- U Late and arrived after the register closed
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience (not based working)
- X Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils
- Y Partial and forced closure
- Z Pupil not on roll yet
- # School closed to pupils
- AEA Authorised Educational Activity - counted as present.

The Absence Codes have been updated by Capita and are now identical for all schools nationally

Document History

Creation Date	September 2016
School Lead	Assistant Head
Approved by	Local Governing Body
Review frequency	1 year
Last review/approval date	January 2020

Review date	Significant amendments	Made by	Next review
January 2020	Updated to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflect the latest guidance from the DFE: School attendance, Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, July 2019;• Clarify the role of the class teacher in promoting good attendance;• Include reference to the school's Behaviour for Success Policy and Pupils with Additional Needs Policy;• Remove attendance codes K and Q.	SB	January 2021