



Corinium Education Trust

Collaboration • Kindness • Courage • Innovation

Attendance Policy

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Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Corinium Education Trust (the Trust) is an ambitious and inclusive family of schools.
- 1.2. We aim to transform lives and strengthen communities:
 - We put children and young people first;
 - We inspire a lifelong love of learning and fellowship;
 - We challenge everyone to achieve more than we all first think is possible.
- 1.3. We act with courage and kindness.
- 1.4. The Trust is committed to improving the learning and life chances of all of our children and young people and, to support their personal development and academic progress, we provide rich and effective educational experiences that prepare them for the next stage in their lives.
- 1.5. The Trust believes that if all of our pupils are to benefit from the education our schools provide, punctual, daily attendance is crucial. Therefore, all our schools promote an inclusive culture and nurture a strong sense of belonging. Our schools are calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environments where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.
- 1.6. We recognise attendance is everyone's responsibility and is dependent on robust partnerships with the Local Authority and other agencies. Securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation. We focus on 'support first'. Effective practices for improvement involve close interaction with our schools' work on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and their effective use of resources, including the pupil premium. Our Trustees and Local Governing Bodies routinely monitor school attendance.
- 1.7. The role of the Local Authority and the Department of Education's expectations are clearly set out in Chapter 4 'Working together to improve school attendance' DfE February 2024, (from August 2024)

2. The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

- 2.1. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have (see 7. Legislation below).
- 2.2. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
- 2.3. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

3. Importance of regular attendance

- 3.1. All schools within the Trust have high expectations. We actively promote and encourage 100% attendance as the 'norm'.
- 3.2. Our objective is to ensure all pupils have access to the fulltime education to which they are entitled and our schools work closely in partnership with parents and carers to ensure this is possible.

- 3.3. We expect all our pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and every day their schools are open.
- 3.4. Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of all our pupils. The Trust defines regular attendance as 97% or above.
- 3.5. By providing calm, orderly, safe and supportive environments where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn, we have created the best conditions for achieving good attendance.
- 3.6. For a pupil to reach their full potential a high level of school attendance is essential. Research indicates that there is a direct link between under-achievement and attendance below 95%.
- 3.7. The table below shows how irregular attendance adversely affects pupils' progress and may lead to educational and social disadvantage.

0 days absence (190 school days)	6 days absence or more	15 days absence or more	19 days absence or more
100%	96.99%	92.99%	Below 90%
Excellent attendance	Satisfactory attendance	Requires improvement	Causes for concern
Best chance of success	Harder to make good progress	Less chance of success	Serious concerns and possible court action

- 3.8. In contrast, research shows that regular attenders:
- Make better progress, both socially and academically;
 - Find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with;
 - Find learning more satisfying;
 - Are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.
- 3.9. 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. Attendance strategy

- 4.1. We recognise that nationally average school attendance continues to be lower than it was before COVID19 and we have seen this trend being reflected across our schools. Therefore, we are committed to improving attendance to above the pre-pandemic levels in each of our schools.
- 4.2. We aim to work collaboratively across the Trust with staff, parents, the Local Authority and other agencies to improve attendance.
- 4.3. By treating the root causes of absence together we are able to remove barriers to attendance at home or at school.
- 4.4. Across the Trust, our schools aim to do the following:
- **Expect:** We aspire to high standards of attendance from all of our pupils and parents and aim to build a culture where all can and want to be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement.
 - **Monitor:** We rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at the individual and cohort levels) as soon as possible so we can all work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

- **Listen and understand:** When a pattern is spotted, we encourage staff, pupils and parents to listen to each other to understand barriers to attendance and agree on how we can all work together to resolve them.
- **Facilitate Support:** We remove barriers in schools and help our pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.
- **Formalise Support:** Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work together with parents and other agencies to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.
- **Enforce:** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will liaise with the Local Authority to enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

5. Effective home-school partnerships

- 5.1. The Trust recognises that parents have a vital role to play in their children's education.
- 5.2. By building trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in partnership with school staff, parents/carers, pupils and, where appropriate, the Local Authority or other agencies, we are able to remove any barriers to attendance.
- 5.3. We ensure our schools have strong home-school links and communication systems in place that can be used whenever there is a concern about attendance. This includes the use of our MIS and parent apps. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- 5.4. If there are specific issues affecting a pupil's attendance, our schools will investigate, identify and seek to resolve these as quickly and efficiently as possible in partnership with parents/carers. Our schools follow a clearly focused and graduated approach aimed at returning pupils to full attendance at all times. This approach is set out in our Attendance Flow Chart (Appendix C).
- 5.5. Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided. This requires our schools to work in partnership with the Local authority and other relevant partners. For example, subject to the pupil's needs and the available resource allocation, this may include the provision of modified timetables, mentoring, careers advice, 1-2-1 tuition or out of hours learning, or where appropriate an education, health and care plan or alternative provision.
- 5.6. Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment. Where engagement in support is proving challenging, our schools will hold more formal conversations with parents and carers and pupil where they are old enough to understand and take responsibility for their own attendance and learning.
- 5.7. Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with our schools will work with the Local Authority to implement formal procedures (see 18. Reducing persistent and severe absence and 19. Legal sanctions below).

6. Legislation

- 6.1. The Education Act 1996 requires parent/carers to ensure their children receive effective, fulltime education, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.
- 6.2. Our schools are legally responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

- 6.3. The government expects:
- Schools and local authorities to:
 - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
 - Ensure every pupil has access to full time education to which they are entitled;
 - Act early to address patterns of absence.
 - Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
 - All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.
- 6.4. This policy meets the requirements set out in the following guidance for schools:
- 'Working together to improve school attendance' DfE February 2024, (from August 2024) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65df4a76f1cab36b60fc4726/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_29.02.24.pdf
 - 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance' DfE February 2024, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65df04aff1cab30011fc4842/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf
 - Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance, updated February 2024, [Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118421/toolkit_for_schools_communicating_with_families_to_support_attendance.pdf)
 - Summary of responsibilities where mental health is affecting attendance, DfE February 2023, [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/645d4a76f1cab36b60fc4726/Summary_of_responsibilities_where_a_mental_health_issue_is_affecting_attendance.pdf)
- 6.5. The documents are drawn from the legislation below that sets 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](#)
 - [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
 - The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
 - Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- 6.6. This policy takes due regard to all the requirements of the Human Rights Act and all Equal Opportunities legislation, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 6.6. We aim to meet our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty by having due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
 - Promote mental health and wellbeing.

7. Roles and responsibilities

- 7.1. **Parents/carers** are expected to:
- Make sure their child(ren) attend school every day on time, in uniform and equipped to learn;
 - Call or email their child's school on the first day of absence to report any absence no later than 15 minutes after the school's official start time (see Appendix A), and on each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return;
 - Provide their child(ren)'s school(s) with more than one emergency contact number for their child(ren);

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child(ren) are made outside of the school day;
- Refrain from arranging holidays in term time;
- Review their child's attendance using the information provided by the school's MIS – My Child at School (MCAS);
- Engage positively with any support offered informally and formally to help their child(ren) overcome any barriers to attendance.

7.2. **Pupils** are expected to:

- Be punctual;
- Attend school every day the school is open to them on time;
- Attend every timetabled session on time on every day the school is open to them (secondary);
- Review their own attendance using the information provided by the school's MIS.

7.3. The Trust's **Board of Trustees and local governing bodies** are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the Trust's and schools' ethos and policies;
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including the designation of Attendance Champions on each school's leadership team;
- Review attendance data regularly, paying particular attention to the attendance of pupil cohorts who have historically had poor attendance or who face entrenched barriers to attendance at Board meetings, examine, discuss, benchmark with comparator schools and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most;
- Work with school leaders to develop and monitor comprehensive attendance action plans to improve attendance, especially for schools where attendance is below that of the national average;
- Sit on formal attendance panels to review cases of severe absence as required;
- Hold the Trust Lead (CEO) and Headteachers to account for the implementation of this policy across the Trust and its schools;
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.

7.4. The **Trust Lead (CEO)** is responsible for:

- Setting the culture of the organisation and driving the ambition for all pupils forward. This includes promoting regular and good attendance and punctuality;
- Developing a robust attendance strategy and sustainable policy with school leaders and those involved in governance, leading on implementation and monitoring impact;
- Convening attendance panels to review cases of severe absence as required;
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools;
- Ensuring Trust/school staff receive adequate training on attendance matters and there is a senior attendance champion in each school;
- Using the Trust's MIS to prepare and deliver accurate and timely reports on attendance to Trustees.

7.5. Our **Headteachers** are responsible for:

- Promoting regular and good attendance and punctuality;
- Implementing the Trust's attendance strategy and policy in their schools and monitoring its local impact;
- Identifying and supporting a senior attendance champion. In the case of our small schools this may be the Headteacher;
- Ensuring attendance registers are accurately completed and that there are effective day-to-day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Ensuring the Trust's/school's MIS to set up effectively to communicate daily attendance data to parents and pupils;

- Analysing attendance data (one of our core key performance indicators) and report it to the Trust Lead (CEO) and local governing body, highlighting evidence of improvement and any patterns or trends of concern with relevant actions;
- Requesting attendance panels to review cases of severe absence as required;
- Benchmarking attendance data (with other schools in the Trust and nationally using DfE data and FFT) to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils, especially those with persistent or severe absence;
- Requesting the issue of fixed penalty notices, where necessary.

7.6. Our **designated senior attendance champions*** are responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across their schools;
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement and implementing the Trust's Attendance Strategy;
- Building strong relationships and working jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership to remove them; Evaluating and monitoring expectations, processes, progress and impact of strategies;
- Having an oversight of data analysis;
- Using the MIS to share attendance data and communicate messages to pupils and parents;
- Monitoring lesson attendance within sessions (secondary) to identify patterns of absence within the school day and deal with any pupils who are on site but not attending lessons through pastoral and special educational needs or disability support or the school's behaviour policy;
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families, including the provision of additional support for those who are absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special education needs of disabilities;
- Sharing information and working collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe;
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.
- Making the necessary statutory data returns to the Local Authority and Secretary of State.

(*Secondary only. In primary schools these responsibilities are delegated to the Headteacher or, where appointed, the Attendance and Support Officer. These postholders are named in Appendix 1 (ii))

7.7. Our **school attendance officers*** are responsible for:

- Supporting the school's senior attendance champion in the actions above;
- Checking registers have been taken and their accuracy;
- Using the Trust's/school's MIS to collate daily attendance data, including logging absence calls, and looking for any patterns or trends and bringing these to the attention of senior or pastoral staff;
- Monitoring daily attendance and initiating early intervention by contacting parents regarding any unauthorised absence. This may be through an alert system such as an App related to our MIS or truancy call;
- Monitoring pupils' attendance over time, conducting and managing AIPs (Attendance Improvement Plans) or AIMs (Attendance Improvement Meetings);
- Reporting significant concerns about attendance to the school's senior attendance champion and the Headteacher;
- Working with parents and school staff eg pastoral lead/family liaison officer/SENCO to tackle persistent absence;
- Advising the Headteacher (or other member of staff authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

(*In our some of our schools these responsibilities may be delegated and shared between administrative and senior staff)

7.8. Our **teachers** are responsible for:

- Promoting a culture of belonging and regular, good attendance and punctuality to their classes;
- Engaging in training on attendance. As a minimum this will include the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances, the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers, the Trust's/school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance, and the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;
- Using the Trust's/school's MIS to take registers accurately twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session using the appropriate codes (see Appendix B);
- Monitoring pupils' daily attendance, conducting and managing AIPs (Attendance Improvement Plans) when necessary.

7.9. Our **school administration and office staff** are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording absences on the Trust's/school's MIS;
- Transferring calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with a more detailed support on attendance;
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls with parents.

8. School processes for recording attendance and absence

8.1. All schools in The Corinium Education Trust keep attendance registers and place all pupils onto these registers. This information is stored in our Trust-wide MIS (Managed Information System).

8.2. Each school takes an attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. Using the appropriate codes (Appendix B), these registers will mark whether pupils are:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity;
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

8.3. Any amendment to an attendance register will include:

- The original entry;
- The amended entry;
- The reason for the amendment;
- The date on which the amendment was made;
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

8.4. The Trust's attendance registers also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not;
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity;
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

8.5. In line with our Data Protection and Records Management Policies and the statutory guidance, schools in the Trust keep every entry on our attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

9. Attendance

- 9.1. Pupils must arrive in school on time each day the school is open to them.
- 9.2. The register for the morning session will be taken within 15 minutes of the official start of the school day (See Appendix A for our schools' start times etc).
- 9.3. Registers will be kept open for no longer than 15 minutes after the session begins or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. The register for the afternoon session will be taken after the pupils' lunch break and will be kept open for 15 minutes.
- 9.4. The Trust's schools promote and recognise good attendance. Our schools use a range of strategies to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - Sharing attendance data in real time via our MIS or Parent App;
 - Badges and certificates within our MIS or Parent App;
 - Celebration assemblies;
 - Individual and class prizes for good and/or improving attendance;
 - Breakfast clubs and support groups for low or reluctant attendees;
 - Bespoke mentoring provided in school or through commissioning external support.
- 9.5. Where an attendance award system is used within a school, an attendance reward will take exceptions of 'authorised absence' into account. These are where a pupil's absence marks relate to recognised impairment (as the Disability Discrimination Act requires us to treat those with a disability 'more favourably') or where a pupil is granted leave for religious observance.

10. Punctuality

- 10.1. The Trust and all our schools promote good attendance. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child(ren) attend school full time and arrive on time.
- 10.2. The Trust monitors punctuality. Parents will be contacted if their child(ren) do not arrive at their school on time.
- 10.3. A pupil who arrives late:
 - Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L);
 - After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U).
- 10.4. If a pupil persistently arrives late for school, after the register closes, a school will explore the reasons for persistent lateness with the pupil and parents and, where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments and take supportive action to change behaviour and improve punctuality.
- 10.5. If the pupil continues to arrive late after a school's register has closed, and where there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised lateness within the immediately preceding 10-week period, parents will receive a warning letter advising them that if there is further unauthorised lateness within the next 15 school days, the school will advise the Local Authority and a penalty notice will be requested for each parent.

11. Authorised absence

- 11.1. This policy reflects the fact that schools cannot legally authorise any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education (DfE) has issued clear guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences.
- 11.2. The Trust's schools only authorise absences from school for the following reasons:
- A child is ill or receiving medical attention;
 - Unavoidable medical/dental appointments.
- 11.3. We expect parents/carers to notify their child(ren)'s school(s) of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day of absence no later than 15 minutes after the school's official start time or as soon as practically possible by calling or emailing the school directly.
- 11.4. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless a pupil's school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- 11.5. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Schools will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- 11.6. If a school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.
- 11.7. All schools in the Trust will endeavour to work with the parents of pupils who are unwell for more than 15 consecutive or cumulative school days and Gloucestershire County Council as set out in the Trust's policy for Children with medical needs who cannot attend school.

12. Planned absence

- 12.1. The Trust and our schools strongly discourage parents from taking their children out of school during term time.
- 12.2. Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. The Trust's Headteachers will rightly prioritise attendance. A family holiday in term time will not be authorised. The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.
- 12.3. A school can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. However, all schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:
- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad;
 - Attending an interview;
 - Study leave;
 - A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable;
 - Exceptional circumstances (see 11.11 below).
- 12.4. Generally, absences will not be granted during term time and will only be authorised by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances. The Trust is consistent in its approach to any requests for planned absence. We expect our Headteachers to follow the statutory guidance and exercise their professional discretion. Headteachers will make an informed assessment as to whether a planned absence can be authorised.

- 12.5. The Trust and our schools encourage parents/carers 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.
- 12.6. Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.
- 12.7. Parents should notify their child(ren)'s school(s) of an unavoidable or emergency appointment at least 48 hours before it is scheduled to take place or at the earliest opportunity.
- 12.8. The Trust's attendance policy recognises that the law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time for family holidays (11.3). The Headteacher has the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in 'exceptional circumstances.'
- 12.9. The Trust defines 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events that are unavoidable; examples may include but are not limited to:
- Days of religious observance, notified in advance;
 - An off-site educational activity such as work experience or educational visit organised by the school;
 - Approved sporting or extra-curricular activities, such as training for a GB youth team, an outward bound course signposted by a school, or an audition for a theatre school;
 - External examinations which are not offered by or hosted within a school, such as instrumental music or dance grades;
 - Bereavement or marriage of an immediate family member;
 - Respite care of a looked after child;
 - Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces;
 - A housing crisis which prevents attendance;
 - Traveller pupils travelling with their parents for occupational purposes.
- 12.10. Owing to the nature of 'exceptional circumstances', the Trust cannot provide a definitive list. However, our Headteachers consider requests carefully and with regard to this policy and the statutory regulations.
- 12.11. Parents may request authorisation for a leave of absence from school. However, they must seek permission in advance to take their child(ren) out of school during term time in advance. Only parents/carers with parental responsibility and with whom the child(ren) normally live can make such a request. Any request should be addressed to their child(ren)'s Headteacher.
- 12.12. Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.
- 12.13. The Trust's Headteachers consider each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, including the pupil's previous and current attendance records, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
- 12.14. A Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be truly 'exceptional circumstances.' This will be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion, including consideration of the length of time the pupil is to be absent.
- 12.15. Absence for traveller pupils 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. (The term 'traveller' covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers).

- 12.16. If the circumstances relating to any request are considered 'exceptional' and the absence is authorised by the headteacher, the authorising of the absence will be conditional on the child(ren)'s attendance being satisfactory up to the date covered by the request. If the headteacher withdraws the authorisation due to the child(ren)'s attendance dropping to an unacceptable level and the absence goes ahead, the absence will be unauthorised.
- 12.17. If a leave of absence in term time has been requested and is not considered by the Headteacher to be an 'exceptional circumstance', such as a family holiday, it will not be authorised.
- 12.18. 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.

13. Unauthorised absence

- 13.1. In the case of an unauthorised leave of absence, or absences, that consist 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.
- 13.2. The local authority may issue a Notice to Improve or a Fixed Penalty Notice in line with the National Framework where absence was unauthorised and support has been provided, but has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (eg. an unauthorised holiday in term time).
- 13.3. Such penalties are issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A penalty notice is a fine of £80 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £180 if paid between 21 and 28 days. Thereafter, if the penalty remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.
- 13.4. The local authority will only take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort where all other routes have been exhausted or deemed inappropriate.

14. Procedures following unexplained absence

- 14.1. In the event of an unexplained absence The Corinium Education Trust's schools will:
- Alert the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence and call them to ascertain the reason. If the pupil's school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will advise the police;
 - Identify whether the absence is approved or not;
 - Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session;
 - Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the pupil's school will advise the Local Authority's Education Inclusion Team and/or Early Help to seek additional support such as Family Support;
 - Inform a pupil's youth offending team worker of any unexplained absences.

15. Truancy

- 15.1. The Corinium Education Trust recognises that pupils make the most progress when they attend lessons punctually.
- 15.2. It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child(ren) attend school and all lessons as required.
- 15.3. It is unacceptable for a pupil in school to miss a lesson without prior authorisation or permission from a senior member of staff.

- 15.4. Parents and carers will be informed by their child(ren)'s school if their child(ren) has been identified as truanting.
- 15.5. 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's standards.
- 15.6. Persistent cases of truanting may be referred to the local authority who may consider issuing a fixed penalty notice.

16. Attendance data, reporting and analysing

- 16.1. The Trust and our schools will:
 - Regularly inform parents of their child(ren)'s attendance levels through our MIS or Parent Apps, letters and reports etc;
 - Routinely monitor attendance and absence data weekly across the Trust and in each of our schools and at an individual pupil level;
 - Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.
- 16.2. Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.
- 16.3. The Trust and our schools will:
 - Compare school attendance data across the Trust and to the national average. This is shared with Trustees and our schools' local governing bodies;
 - Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families;
 - Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns;
 - Generate regular attendance dashboards and reports within our MIS to enable teachers and school leaders to facilitate well informed and evidence-based discussions with pupils and families;
 - Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies;
 - Comply with the new requirements for schools on data sharing introduced through the Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) 2024.

17. Reducing persistent and severe absence

- 17.1. In line with the guidance, a pupil who is absent for 10% of school time will be considered to be a persistent absentee. A pupil whose absence is above 50% will be considered a severely persistent absentee.
- 17.2. The Conrinium Education Trust has a graduated response to pupil absence. We work together with parents, the Local Authority and other agencies, to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reduce persistent and severe absence. In doing so, we consider some of the reasons for absence sensitively and we understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties.

17.3. We aim to intervene early to minimise the learning time lost through repeated absence. Consequently, attendance that falls below 90% will initiate Stage 1; 95% will trigger Stage 2 (persistent absence) in our procedures and attendance that falls below 75% will trigger Stage 3 (severe persistent absence). See flow chart in Appendix C.

17.4. The Trust and our schools will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- Agree Attendance Improvement Plans at Stages 1 and 2;
- Hold Attendance Improvement Meetings with the parents of pupils who a school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school at Stage 2 and 3;
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance;
- Hold a formal attendance panel to review the reasons for severe absence, actions of the school, parents and other agencies and make further recommendations at Stage 3 in the form of an agreed Attendance Contract;
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with the local authority (Gloucestershire County Council), for example through using an attendance contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates' Court

18. Legal sanctions

18.1. The Trust's schools can request Gloucestershire County Council, or another local authority in which a pupil lives, to issue fines to parents for the unauthorised absence of their children from school, where the children are of compulsory school age.

18.2. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct: [Attendance - Schoolsnet \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/attendance-schoolsnet)

18.3. A fixed penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, from September 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

18.4. Once 3 years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued, a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases it would not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behaviour.

18.5. There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice.

18.6. In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil;
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

19. Monitoring and review

- 19.1. This policy is published on The Corinium Education Trust's website and our individual schools' websites.
- 19.2. Attendance data is included in our routine monitoring as a core key performance indicator and is a standing item on the agenda for The Trust's fortnightly Leadership Group Meetings and is reported to trustee and local governing body meetings.
- 19.3. This policy will be reviewed annually. This will take account of the impact of the policy on improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. It will respond to any updated guidance from the DfE and/or Local Authority.
- 19.4. At every review the policy will be approved by the Trust's Board of Trustees and shared with our schools' local governing bodies.

20. Links to other policies

- 20.1. This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust and school policies:
 - Behaviour Statement and Policies;
 - Data Protection Policy;
 - Children with medical needs who cannot attend school Policy
 - Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Pupils);
 - Equality Information and Objectives Statement, Policy and Plan;
 - Exclusions Policy;
 - Home/School Agreements;
 - Records Management Policy;
 - Safeguarding Statement and Policies;
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policies;
 - Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Appendix A (i): The Corinium Education Trust's school start times

School	AM		PM	
	Official start of the school day - Registers open at	Registers close at	Afternoon registers open at	Afternoon registers close at
Cirencester Deer Park School	8.50am	9.05am	2.25pm	2.40pm
Chesterton Primary School	8.45am	9.00am	1.00pm	1.15pm
Kemble Primary School	8.45am	9.00am	1.00pm	1.15pm
Siddington C of E Primary School	8.45am	9.00am	1.00pm	1.15pm

Appendix A (ii): The Corinium Education Trust's Attendance Teams

	Chesterton Primary School	Cirencester Deer Park School	Kemble Primary School	Siddington C of E Primary School
Attendance Champion (SLT)	Libby Pringle, Headteacher	Simon Bellamy, Assistant Headteacher	Emma Morrogh-Ryan, Headteacher	Louise Lennox, Headteacher
Attendance support	Andrea Hannis, Pastoral Lead	Year Leaders		

Appendix B: Absence Codes – Recorded on registers

Revised and updated in line with 'Working together to Improve School Attendance', February 2024, effective from 1 September 2024.

Λ	Present at registration / = morning, \ = afternoon
A	
B	Educated off site arranged by the school (Not dual registered)
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered (i.e. present at another school or at a PRU)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
F	Agreed extended holiday
G	Holiday not granted by the school (or sessions in excess of agreement)
H	Agreed holiday
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
J	Interview
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
P	Approved sporting activity arranged/agreed by the school
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U	Late and arrived in school after registration closed
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience (not based working)
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school (eg: untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils)
Y	Partial and forced closure
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed (eg. Adverse weather)
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause (impacts on the pupil not the parent)
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register yet
#	Planned whole school closure (dates know in advance (weekends, school holidays, Bank Holidays, inset days)
AEA	Authorised Educational Activity - counted as present

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

Appendix C: Attendance Flow Chart

(references in brackets relate to the relevant sections of the CET's Attendance Policy)

	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
Absence	Absence concern		Persistent Absence		Severe Persistent Absence	
First day of absence	Pupil's attendance falls below 95%		Pupil's attendance falls below 90%		Pupil's attendance falls below 75%*	
Parent/carer contacts school on first day of absence and on each subsequent day (6.1).	Attendance Lead routinely monitors attendance data and identifies those whose attendance is a concern (6.6, 16).		Attendance Lead routinely monitors attendance data especially of those who are at risk of being persistently absent (6.6, 16).		Attendance Lead proactively monitors attendance data especially of those who are at risk of being severely persistently absent (6.6, 16).	
If no notification received, school makes contact with parent/carer on first day of pupil's absence (absence alert, APP) (6.7, 10.3). <i>Safeguarding duty</i>	School makes parent/carer aware when pupil's attendance falls below 95% (APP, threshold letter, report) (6.7).		School makes personal contact with parent/carer where there is sustained poor attendance and liaises with other agencies where appropriate (13.1).		School maintains contact with parent/carer, liaises with Early Help and/or other agencies (home visits) and advises GCC's Education Inclusion Team (16.2).	
Where appropriate, a pupil who has been absent for 2 or more consecutive days is spoken to by the relevant member of staff (6.8). <i>Wellbeing check</i>	Absence is authorised (10).	Absences are unauthorised and suggest a repeating pattern (12).	Sustained poor attendance: medical condition (diagnosed) (10)	Sustained poor attendance: unauthorised absence or repeating pattern	Sustained poor attendance: significant medical condition (diagnosed) (10)	Sustained poor attendance: persistent unauthorised absence or repeating patterns
Holidays in term time: The CET's attendance policy recognises that the law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time for family holidays. A Headteacher has the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in 'exceptional circumstances' (11.8, 11.9). A family holiday in term time will <u>not</u> be authorised (11.2).	School does wellbeing check with pupil and parent; offers support and confirms agreed actions in writing	School reviews current and previous attendance records, offers support and puts an AIP in place with pupil and parent (6.7, 16.4)	School reviews AIP and liaises with parent and medical professionals and puts specific reintegration plan in place (10.7)	School reviews AIP and impact of strategies. Moves to AIM with Attendance Lead (6.7, 16.4). Agreed plan, targets and time frame confirmed in writing	School liaises with parent, medical professionals, GCC and CAMHs to ensure appropriate education provision in place (GHES) (10.7)	School reviews formal AIM with pupil, parent and adviser from GCC's Inclusion Team. New plan agreed. Notice given of CET Attendance Panel (16.4)
Punctuality: The Government and CET expect all pupils to be punctual to their lessons (5.3). Parents are expected to make sure their children attend school every day and on time (6.1, 9.1). Pupils are expected to be punctual (6.2). If a pupil persistently arrives late the school will explore the reasons for persistent lateness with the pupil and parents and, where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments and take supportive action (9.4). However, a fixed penalty notice may be requested where persistent and unauthorised lateness continues (9.5).		AIP is reviewed with pupil and parent		Formal plan following AIM is reviewed with pupil and parent	Attendance and engagement in provision reviewed	Support provided. Evidence collated for CET Attendance Panel
	Attendance has improved and % increasing	Attendance has not improved and % decreasing to below 90%	Attendance has improved and % increasing	Attendance has not improved and % decreasing	Phased return to school supported, monitored and reviewed	CET Attendance Panel held to review pupil's attendance
	No further action	See Stage 2 or proceed to legal action (12, 17)	Reintegration plan revised and progress monitored	AIM revised with time-limited targets to meet	Reasonable adjustments made.	Attendance Contract agreed: Recommendations made/warning given
AIP = Attendance Improvement Plan. AIM = Attendance Improvement Meeting – this is the first step in the formal procedure. *The DFE and GCC recognise 'severe persistent absence' when a pupil's attendance falls below 50%. However, attendance leads within the CET aim to intervene early to minimise the learning time lost through repeated absence (16.2).			Escalated to Stage 3 if diagnosed as significant medical condition	Attendance has not improved and % decreasing to below 75%	Attendance improving	Attendance does not improve. Proceed to legal action (12, 17)
				See Stage 3 and/or proceed to legal action (12, 17)	No further action	
Refer to the local authority for legal action (eg. after 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence) (17).						

Document History

Creation Date	March 2023 (replaces individual school policies)
Trust Lead	Trust Lead (CEO) in consultation with Heads/Attendance Leads
Approved	Trustees
Review frequency	Annual

Review date	Significant amendments	Made by	Next review
Mar 2023	<p>New MAT-wide policy to replace school-based policies and achieve greater consistency across the Trust. Will be complemented by school procedures.</p> <p>Based on most up to date DfE guidance, GCC 'skeleton' draft template for school attendance policies and Swindon Borough Council's Attendance Strategy 2022-25.</p>	CXH/SB	Mar 2024
Mar 2024	<p>Checked against latest and updated guidance from DfE on Attendance, February 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed reference to 'parenting contract' to 'attendance contract' in 3.4 and 16.4. • Inserted reference to MIS and parent app in 4.3, 6.4 and 6.5. • Lists updated in 5.4 and 5.5. • Introduce attendance champions in 6.4 and 6.5. • Changed senior attendance leaders to senior attendance champions and added responsibility for evaluating progress and impact of strategies to 6.6. • Clarified leave of absence including exceptional circumstances (11.3-11.11). • Referenced the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices in 12. • Added informing pupil's youth offending team worker of any unexplained absence 13.1. • Referenced the new requirements for schools on data sharing in 15.3. • Updated sanctions including fixed penalty notices with effect from September 2024 (17). 	CXH	Mar 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised attendance codes added to Appendix B 		
September 2024	<p>Further review and accuracy checks following revisions to 'Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' February 2024 (effective from August 2024). Minor additions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5-1.7. Trust/school culture and exemplification of wider support for pupils; 3. The law and attendance; 4.5-4.7. Exemplification of support and relationship with local authority; 6.1-6.2. Reference to use of the MIS for communications re-attendance; 6.3-6.8. Additions to roles and responsibilities; 16.2. Additional targeted support to reduced persistent absenteeism; Named personnel responsible for attendance in each school listed in Appendix A,i. 		September 2025