

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Coney Hill Community Primary School



Governor Committee Responsible:	Coney Hill Combined Committee	Staff Lead(s):	Danielle Brayshaw
Status (Statutory / Advisory)	Statutory	Subject Lead:	Lynn Hodges
Last Review	March 2026	Review Cycle	Annual
Headteacher	Dani Brayshaw head@coneyhill.gloucs.sch.uk	Next Review Date	March 2027
Chair of Governors	Ceri Davies chair@coneyhill.gloucs.sch.uk		
			



Aims and objectives

At Coney Hill Primary School we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, Gloucestershire County Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

The school recognises that regular attendance is an important part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Poor attendance or unexplained absence may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns. The school will therefore monitor attendance closely and respond promptly to patterns of absence in line with safeguarding procedures.

Strategies for promoting attendance

At Coney Hill Community Primary School, we recognise that attending school regularly has a positive impact on learning, progress and, therefore, ensures the best life opportunities and chances for children.

Because of this we:

- Ensure good attendance and punctuality is promoted and supported and remains high profile across the school.
- Encourage good attendance for all pupils, by offering an environment in which pupils feel valued and part of the school community.
- Promote a home / school partnership built on communication and trust.
- Strive to create a happy and rewarding environment for all children.

We will work with parents and carers to support regular attendance by communicating early about issues, acknowledging positive improvements, and by providing an Attendance Officer who is available to discuss any concerns.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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 School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)
- [The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)

- 
- [The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before registers close at 9.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day and be on time

The governing body are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Senior Attendance Champion (*Dani Brayshaw* head@coneyhill.gloucs.sch.uk) is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishing and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff

- Having a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.

The school attendance officer (*Lynn Hodges* lhodges@coneyhill.gloucs.sch.uk) is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Writes an Attendance report each term to present to the Governing Body
- Writes and shares individual attendance plans at Attendance Improvement Meetings (AIMS) where attendance is a concern
- Implement the daily completion of SIMS registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions
- Perform first day calls to parents and carers to remind of procedure, when no reason has been received for an absent pupil
- Phone daily to confirm pupils absence
- Visit pupil homes if necessary and with the permission of the Headteacher, to ascertain why a child is absent from school
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Senior Attendance Champion and the headteacher
- Working with school staff e.g., pastoral lead/family liaison officer/SENDCo to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (*or other member of staff authorised by the headteacher*) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The class teacher/form tutor is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information to the school twice a day; at 8.50am and at the start of the afternoon session at 1.15pm
- Provide a safe, welcoming environment, encourage attendance and promote best performance
- Establish effective communication links with parents / carers to work collaboratively to meet the child's needs
- Work with pupils / families of concern, identifying barriers of good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To feedback to parents / carers about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly at Parents Evenings

School administration/office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system

- 
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
 - Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent

Any amendment to the 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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2024
- 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

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by *8.50am* on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken from *8.50am* and will be kept open until *9.20am but no longer than 30 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 at *1.15pm* and will be kept open until *1.45pm*

Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day by *9.20am* or as soon as practically possible by calling the school. If a parent is unable to contact the office directly then a message may be left on the answer machine.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the 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.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late (Code L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent (Code U)



Parents / carers of pupils frequently arriving late to school will be sent a warning letter after 6 late marks per term. Persistent arrivals after the register has closed (9.20am) may result in a Notice to Improve and a penalty notice request for unauthorised absence by the Local Authority.

Planned absence

- 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. However, we 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.
- The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be '**exceptional circumstances**'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as e.g. children whose parents / carers are in the armed forces or a family bereavement.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and where possible, at least *4 weeks* before the absence, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form. These are available from the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. These should be signed by both parents / carers, where appropriate. The Headteacher will respond directly to inform whether it has been authorised (due to exceptional circumstances) or unauthorized.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (Code C1)
- Attending a medical or dental appointment (Code M)
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution (Code J1)
- Studying for a public examination (Code S)
- Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school (Code X)
- Compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable (Code C2)
- Exceptional circumstances (*see definition above*) (Code C)
- Parent travelling for occupational purposes – The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to required them to travel from place to place (Code T)
- 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 (Code R)
- Illness (Code I)

The following absence **will not be authorised**:

- Absence in May when Statutory Key Stage Tests are completed for Year 6
- Absence in June for Year 1 and Year 2 children who are completing the Phonics screening test
- Looking after younger siblings

- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Family holidays or days out

Procedures following unexplained absence

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a home visit if deemed necessary.
- 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 school will seek advice from the Local Authority or social care.

CME

Anyone concerned that a child is missing education (CME) can make a referral to the Education Performance and Inclusion Team (EPI) at Gloucestershire County Council. CME refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity, e.g. school, alternative provision, elective home education, and has been out of education provision for at least 4 weeks'. CME also includes those children who are missing (family whereabouts unknown), and are usually children who are registered on a school roll/alternative provision.

This might be a child who is not at their last known address and either:

- has not taken up an allocated school place as expected;
- has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or
- left school suddenly and the destination is unknown.

It is the responsibility of the Education Performance and Inclusion Team, on behalf of the Local Authority, to:

- collate information on all reported cases of CME of statutory school age children in Gloucestershire maintained schools, academies, free schools, alternative provision academies and alternative provision schools (APS).
- liaise with partner agencies and other local authorities and schools across Britain to track pupils who may be missing education
- ensure each child missing education is offered full-time education within 2 weeks of the date the local authority was informed.

If the Headteacher suspects that a child might be missing from education, a CME referral will be made to the Local authority.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels through letters and annual reports
- Monitor attendance and absence data, fortnightly, across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern



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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

- 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
- Provide regular attendance reports to facilitate 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

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

The school recognises that some pupils may experience anxiety or emotional difficulties which make attending school challenging. This is sometimes referred to as Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

Where attendance difficulties appear to be linked to emotional wellbeing or anxiety, the school will work closely with parents or carers and relevant professionals to identify barriers and provide appropriate support. This may include pastoral support, graduated reintegration plans, adjustments within school, or referrals to appropriate services where necessary.

The school will aim to support pupils to maintain regular attendance wherever possible while ensuring that responses are sensitive to the individual needs of the child.

Staged approach to attendance support

In line with Department for Education guidance, the school uses a staged approach to improving attendance:

Universal support (for all pupils)

- Promoting a positive culture of attendance across the school
- Celebrating good attendance and punctuality
- Clear communication with parents about attendance expectations

Targeted support (for pupils whose attendance is beginning to decline)

- Early identification of attendance concerns through regular monitoring
- Communication with parents to understand barriers to attendance
- Pastoral support or early help where appropriate

Formal support (for persistent absence)

- Attendance meetings with parents/carers
- Individual attendance plans or parenting contracts
- Involvement of wider services where appropriate

Legal intervention (where support has not improved attendance)

- Consideration of penalty notices

- Referral to the Local Authority for further legal action where necessary

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Legal sanctions

The school must consider requesting Gloucestershire County Council issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age and the national threshold has been met. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. Information can be found on page 4 in the Code of Conduct

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/hn1afkus/gcc-pn-code-of-conduct.pdf>

National threshold for penalty notices

In line with the national framework for penalty notices introduced by the Department for Education in August 2024, a penalty notice may be considered when a pupil has accrued **10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**.

A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. The 10 school week period may span different terms or school years.

Penalty notice fines are issued in accordance with the national framework for penalty notices. Each parent may be issued with a penalty notice for each child. The first penalty notice issued within a three-year period will be **£80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days**.

If a second penalty notice is issued within a three-year period, this will be **£160 with no option for a reduced payment**. If the national threshold is met for a third time within three years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period (the second one being payable at £160 with no option to reduce fine by making payment earlier). If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

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

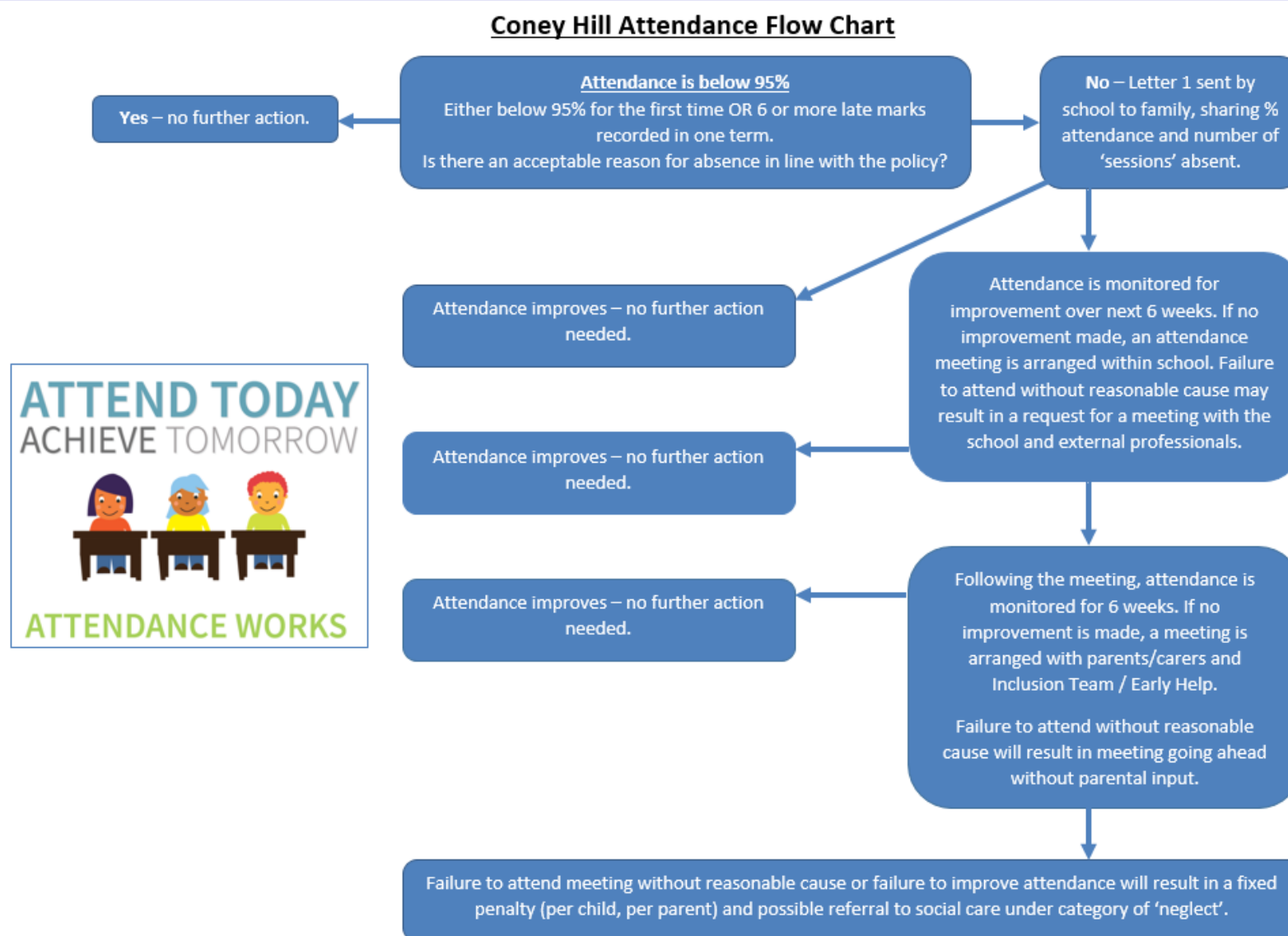
- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

Rewards for good attendance



Class attendance is monitored and classes with the highest attendance each week are displayed on a celebration board and the class is awarded with the Attendance trophy for the week. The class of the week is also recognised in the weekly newsletter.

1 Appendix 2 Coney Hill Attendance Flow Chart



What can you do to help?

Take an interest in your child's education.

- Ask them about their day and praise and encourage their achievements at school.
- If your child is missing school or is seemingly unhappy, you should discuss your concerns with your child.
- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of them missing school, but be on the alert for any particular reasons for non-attendance, such as bullying or problems with school work.

Contact the school as soon as possible when a concern is identified so that you can work with them to resolve any difficulties.

Be willing to engage with any support offered by the school or Gloucestershire County Council Support Services.

Make sure your child arrives at school on time for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

If your child is ill or absent for any other reason, contact the school on the first day of absence.

Follow the school's procedures for notifying absence, and always let the school know of any days that your child is unable to attend.

It all adds up!

Attending school everyday gives your child the best chance of success. 100%

Attending 4½ days a week = 4 weeks learning missed per year 90%

Attending 4 days a week = 8 weeks learning missed per year 80%

Attending 3½ days a week = 12 weeks learning missed per year 70%

80% attendance adds up to missing 2 full years of education over their school life!

Can they afford to keep missing out?

Every Minute Counts!

Being late for school reduces learning time.

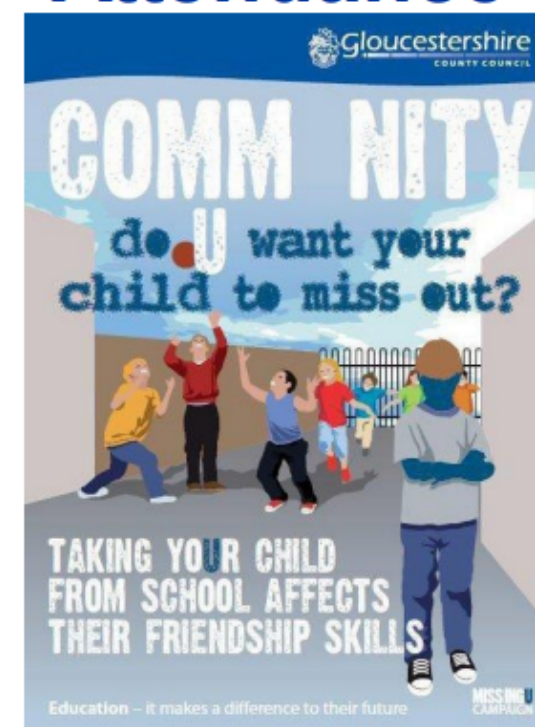
5 minutes late every day = 3 days of learning missed per year.

15 minutes late every day = 9 days of learning missed per year.

Arriving late can be very disruptive for your child, the teacher, and the other children in the class.



School Attendance



Information for Parents and Carers

Why is it important for children not to miss school?

Children only get one chance at school, and your child's chances of a successful future may be affected by not attending regularly. If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child catch up.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up. Employers want to recruit people who are reliable. Setting good attendance patterns from an early age will also help your child later on in life.

What might the impact of poor attendance be on your child?

Research shows children who are not regularly attending school are:

- More likely to become involved in, or be a victim of crime and anti-social behavior.
- More likely to fall behind due to the strong link between attendance and achieving good results.
- Less likely to achieve 5 good GCSEs (grades 9-5) compared with those with less than 8 days absence.
- More likely to have increased levels of anxiety due to inconsistencies and uncertainty in their routine.
- More likely to have reduced self esteem due to finding learning increasingly hard having missed out on key information.



What does the law say?

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education.

Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly?

If your child fails to attend regularly - even if they miss school without you knowing - the Local Authority (LA) may take legal action against you.

Schools will notify you if your child's attendance level is a concern and look to work with you to put in place steps to improve it. If attendance continues to require improvement then schools will look to initiate an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM).

The AIM is the start of the legal process. It is important you engage with the process and work with the support provided to meet the agreed targets. These targets will be reviewed and progress evaluated at a review meeting. If satisfactory progress is made then targets will either be considered met or adjusted until attendance is satisfactory. If progress is not made then you may be referred to the LA for legal intervention.

You run the risk of being issued with a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted in court. If this happens:

- Parents can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- Magistrates can also impose a Parenting Order, which means that the parent has to attend a counselling and guidance programme, usually a parenting class.

When is absence authorised?

There may be times when your child has to miss school because they are unwell. If your child becomes ill you should notify the school immediately and follow the school's absence procedures.

Children may have to attend a medical or dental appointment in school time. However, you should, whenever possible, try to make routine appointments such as dental check-ups during the school holidays or after school hours. Schools have the right to request medical evidence to validate absences for medical reasons.

If you think you might need to take your child out of school, discuss the reasons with the school as soon as possible. Absence must be requested as far in advance as possible. Absences will only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances.

Examples of absence that may be considered as exceptional circumstances include family bereavement or taking part in an agreed religious observance. The decision on whether to authorise absence is made at the headteacher's discretion.

For more information

For more information you can contact the Local Authority's Education Inclusion Service at:

Phone: 01452 427274

Email: Attendance@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning

