

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Coney Hill Community Primary School



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1 Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations concerning school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Working with all members of our school community to provide the best possible learning experiences for our pupils, starting with good attendance

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

At Coney Hill Community Primary School, "regular attendance" means attending school every day (100%), on time.

The school follows the Gloucestershire County Council's guidance on securing regular and punctual attendance. This guidance is updated regularly and is based on DfE guidance. Please refer to appendix 3 for GCC useful information and contact numbers.

2 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.

3 Legislation and guidance

3.1 Legal Duty of Parents to Secure Regular School Attendance

The parent/carer of any child of compulsory school age has a legal duty to secure the regular attendance of that child at the school where they are registered. Failure to secure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is a criminal offence which can lead to prosecution of the parent(s)/carer(s) in a magistrates' court.

In Education Law, (Section 576 of Education Act 1996) [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/576) , 'parent' means:

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

The local authority and school will need to decide who comes within the definition of parent in respect of a particular pupil when using the legal measures, but generally parents include all those with day-to-day responsibility for a child.

3.2 Statutory 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 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Education Act 1996	Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk)
Children Act 1989	Children Act 1989 (legislation.gov.uk)
Crime & Disorder Act 1998	Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (legislation.gov.uk)
Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003	Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (legislation.gov.uk)
Education & Inspections Act 2006	Education and Inspections Act 2006 (legislation.gov.uk)
Sentencing Act 2020	Sentencing Act 2020 (legislation.gov.uk)
Education (Pupil Registration) 2006	The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (legislation.gov.uk)
Parenting Contracts/Orders 2007	The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007 (legislation.gov.uk)
Education (Penalty Notices) 2007	The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (legislation.gov.uk)

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

4 School procedures

4.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of each school day and at afternoon registration. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils must arrive in school from 8.40am and be ready to learn by 8.50am on each school day.

Morning registration is at 8.50am and remains open for 20 minutes.

Afternoon registration is at 1:15pm.

Parents/carers should understand that every absence will affect their child's percentage attendance, even those that are approved.

The only exceptions are as listed in Appendix 1: Register Codes under the "Attendance Approved" column.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on every day of an unplanned absence (for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health) by 9.00am, or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). This can be done by calling 01452 522734.

Absence due to illness will be authorised with the appropriate code 'I', unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

We acknowledge that, from time to time, a child may suffer from a mid to long-term medical condition. On such occasions, a doctor's letter confirming the diagnosis would be required.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, medicine packaging, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents/carers straight away, to collect them.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorized, which is code 'O'.

4.3 Medical or dental appointments

Routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged 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.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence, with the appropriate code 'M'. Advance notice should be given and evidence may need to be provided (for example appointment letter/card/text/prescription/medicine packaging). The parent/carer will also be required to inform the school in advance of the length of time the pupil is likely to be away from school and who will be collecting/returning the pupil.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 5

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed (before 9.20am) will be marked as late using code 'L'.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed (after 9.20am) will be marked as absent. Using 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 penalty notice request for unauthorised absence to the local Authority.

4.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences in order to:

- ascertain the reason
- ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- identify whether the absence is approved or not
- identify the correct attendance code to use

Parents/carers who have not informed the school by 9.00am of their child's absence will be contacted during the morning session by the school to ascertain the reason for absence.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Attendance is reported annually to all parents/carers in the pupil's end of year report.

All pupils' attendance is analysed termly; any pupil who falls below 95% will be monitored more closely than this.

Pupils for whom attendance drops below 95% in a term, will be monitored by the Attendance Officer. The Attendance Officer will write to the parents/carers to inform them of the exact percentage figure and offer support aimed at increasing the pupils attendance percentage.

4.7 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.

5 Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

5.2 Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments - as explained in sections 4.2 and 4.3
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. The school will authorise one day of absence due to religious observance, using the appropriate code, 'R'.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. children whose parents / carers are in the armed forces or a family bereavement.

5.3 The following absence will not be authorised.

- Absence for Y2 and Y6 children during May when Statutory Key Stage Tests are completed;
- Absence during Phonics Screening Check week in June for all Y1 pupils and some Y2 pupils who did not meet the threshold in Year 1.
- Looking after brothers or sisters
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Family holidays or days out

5.4 Term-time holidays

Parents/carers who wish to apply for a term-time absence must complete a Request for Leave form, available from the school office. This should be signed by both parents/carers where appropriate. Term-time absences are considered, by the Headteacher, on an individual case-by-case basis, taking into account the specific facts and context. The Headteacher will respond directly to inform whether it's been authorised (due to exceptional circumstances) or unauthorised.

5.5 Legal sanctions

The Education Regulations 2006 have been amended, and, as from 1st September 2013 **no child may take holidays during term time**, unless the Headteacher deems there to be **exceptional circumstances**.

A penalty notice **may** be issued by the Local Authority if unauthorised holiday reaches a minimum of 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) during term time, within the immediate preceding ten week period.

Any parent / carer taking a child on holiday that has not been deemed an exceptional circumstance may be expected to be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice. This could result in a fine to both parents/carers of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid between the 21st day and the 28th day. If the fine is not paid the Local Authority would then proceed to court for the criminal offence of non-school attendance under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444).

A warning letter will be issued to the parents/carers that have day to day care and responsibility to inform them that:

Under the Education Act 1996 [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56), parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

The decision on whether or not to request to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices.

Penalty notices can be issued for:

- Unauthorised holidays
- Persistent lateness (U code)
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justified reason.

6 Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly, termly and annual basis:

6.1 Weekly

The Attendance Officer produces a report of pupils with 95% or less.

The Family Intervention Team use the attendance data to inform their support of the child and their family, liaising with the Attendance Officer where necessary.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for the Coney Hill Attendance Flow Chart.

Where necessary, the attendance officer may visit a pupil at home, with permission from the headteacher, to ascertain why a child is absent from school.

The class who has the highest weekly attendance is celebrated in assembly.

6.2 Termly

Pupils for whom attendance drops below 95% in a term, will be monitored by the Attendance Officer who will write to the parents/carers to inform them of the exact percentage figure and offer support aimed at ensuring that it doesn't fall further.

Pupils with attendance of 90% or less are classified as Persistent Absentees (PA), as they meet the absence threshold of 10%. The PA list is shared with the Headteacher who, in partnership with the Attendance Officer, consider the pupils, analyse the causes and arrange Attendance Improvement Meetings where appropriate.

Persistent absence means:

At the end of term 1 — at least 7 sessions absence (3.5 days).

At the end of term 2 — at least 14 sessions absence (7 days).

At the end of term 3 — at least 20 sessions absence (10 days).

At the end of term 4 — at least 25 sessions absence (12.5 days).
At the end of term 5 — at least 31 sessions absence (15.5 days).
At the end of term 6 — at least 38 sessions absence (19 days).

6.3 Annually

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors three times a year (ie autumn, spring and summer).

Pupils' attendance data is collected, stored and analysed in SIMs and used internally to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7 Roles and responsibilities

7.1 Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly (seasonal) basis and agrees school attendance targets annually via the School Improvement Plan. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy and ensures attendance data is reported as required to either the Local Authority or DfE as requested, in a timely manner.

7.2 Headteacher

Responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy, and reporting data to governors. Deals with parental requests for leave in line with Gloucestershire Local Authority policies and procedures. Considers the use of Penalty Notices in line with Gloucestershire Local Authority policies and procedures.

7.3 Attendance Officer

- Monitors weekly attendance data for registration groups.
- Informs the FWO/HT promptly, of concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.
- Communicates concerns to HT/the Family intervention Team and DSL's and produces data for analysis.
- Liaises with outside agencies such as the Education Inclusion Service (EIS), as necessary.
- Supports HT with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- Writes and shares individual Attendance Improvement Plans at Attendance Improvement Meetings (AIMs) where attendance is below 95%.
- Writes an Attendance Report each term (seasonal) to present to the Governing Body and liaises with the Attendance Governor on a regular basis.
- Sends an email, where appropriate, to parents/carers to celebrate where their child and family have worked hard to significantly improve attendance such that they come off the Persistent Absentee list.
- 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 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.

7.4 Class teachers / Teaching Partners / Family Intervention Team

- Complete the daily class attendance register with the pupils' 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 the best performance.
- Establish effective communication links with parents/carers to work collaboratively to meet the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example child protection.
- Work with pupils/families of concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To promptly inform the FWO/Attendance Officer of pupils who persist with poor attendance.
- To feed back to parents/carers about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

7.5 Office staff

Receive calls from parents about absence and record it for the Attendance officer.

7.6 Parents/carers

- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons e.g. PE kit, reading book bag and reading book.
- Telephone to inform the school on each day of absence of their child.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may affect learning.

7.7 Local Authority

- Supports attendance improvement, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions.
- Works with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.
- Ensures that parents are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Upholds and enforces the law in respect of attendance, child employment, involvement in entertainment and child protection.
- Supports the school in issuing penalty notices should this be appropriate.

8 Rewards for good attendance

Attendance is rewarded through the AAA (Aiming for Awesome Attendance) reward scheme. Children collect stamps throughout the year- depending on their attendance - that can be exchanged for small items in the AAA shop at the end of each term.

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.

9 Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher will review this policy biannually. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Governing Body.

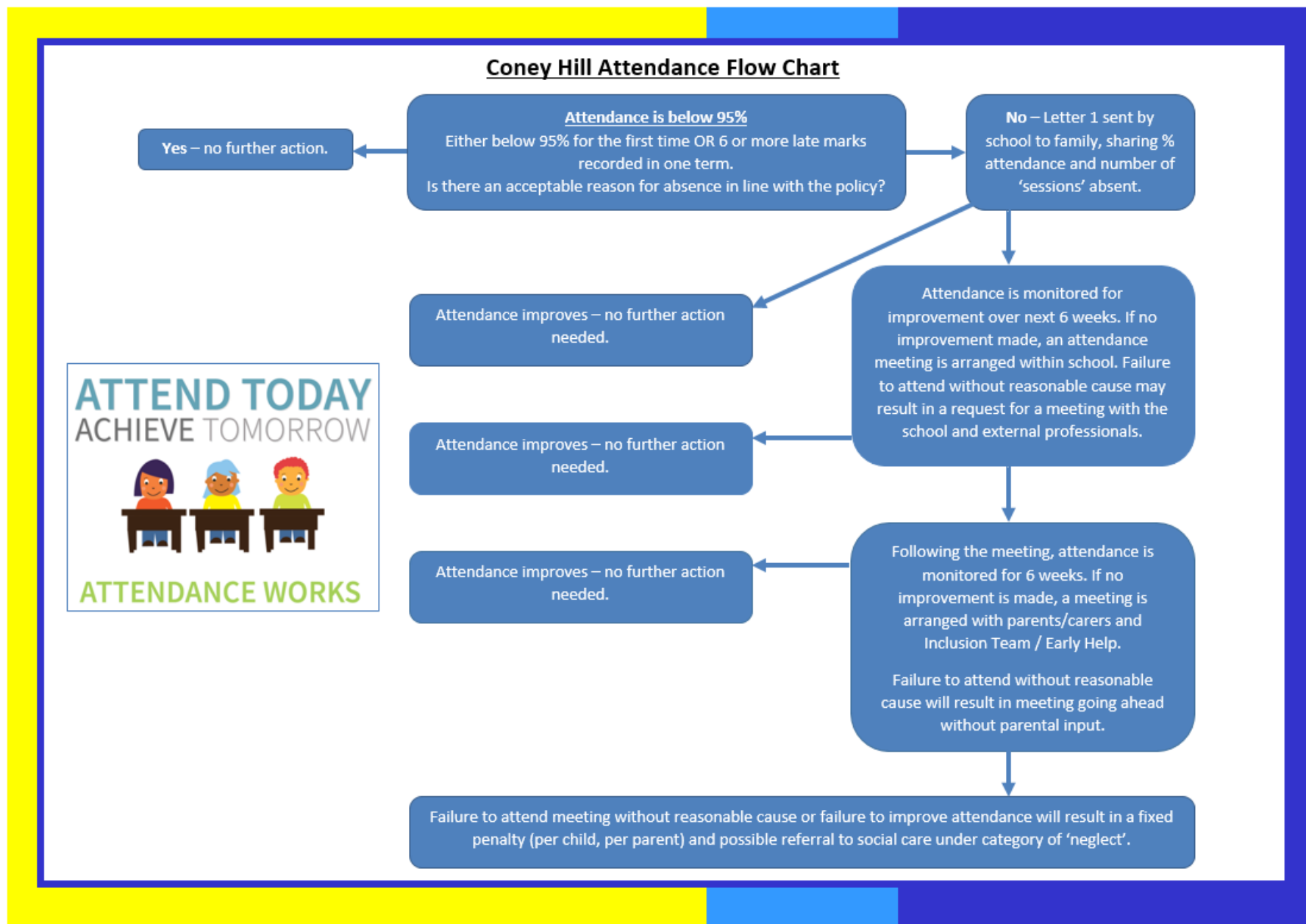
10 Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Child protection and safeguarding Policy.

11 Appendix 1 – Register codes

Code	Notes	
/	PRESENT AM	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	PRESENT PM	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
B	EDUCATED OFFSIDE	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
C	OTHER AUTHORISED ABSENCE	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
D	DUAL REGISTRATION	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
E	EXCLUDED	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
G	FAMILY HOLIDAY (NOT AGREED)	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school (includes holiday in excess of agreed period)
H	FAMILY HOLIDAY (AGREED)	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	ILLNESS	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
J	INTERVIEW	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment (includes visits to offer schools for transfer)
L	LATE ARRIVAL	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
M	MEDICAL/DENTAL APPOINTMENT	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
N	NO REASON YET PROVIDED	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (amended when reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
P	APPROVED SPORTING ACTIVITY	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
R	RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	STUDY LEAVE	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	TRAVELLER ABSENCE	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
U	ARRIVAL AFTER REGISTRATION	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed at 9.30am.
V	EDUCATIONAL VISIT OR TRIP	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved by the school
W	WORK EXPERIENCE	Pupil is on a work experience placement
X	NON COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE ABSENCE	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	UNABLE TO ATTEND DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupils in custody
Z	PUPIL NOT ON ADMISSION REGISTER	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school

12 Appendix 2 Coney Hill Attendance Flow Chart



13 Appendix 3 GCC useful information and contact numbers

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?

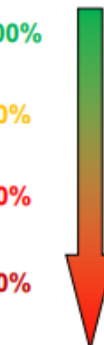
Every Minute Counts!

Being late for school reduces learning time.

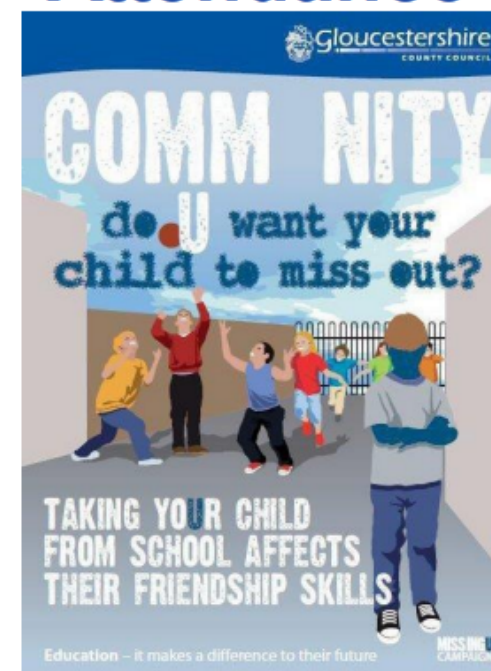
5 minutes late every day = **3 days** of learning missed per year.

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