



## **Attendance Policy**

**Nurtured, Cherished and Inspired for Fullness of Life**



**Reviewed by E Black and Governors:** January 2025

**Next Review:** January 2027

### **School Vision**

We are a small close-knit community with life in all its fullness at the very heart of everything we do. We provide all our pupils with a range of high-quality enriching experiences. Every unique individual is nurtured, cherished and inspired to be, and to do their very best.

Coberley develops children who are resilient, honest, and courageous. We prepare our children to leave our school as confident, compassionate and respectful global citizens ready for our diverse world.

Our Christian Vision and its linked values are at the heart of our school 'Nurtured, Cherished and Inspired for Fullness of Life' and are rooted in the teachings of Jesus, 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.' John 10:10 Church of England

### **Aims and objectives**

At Coberley C of E 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.

### **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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [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 **by 9am** 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 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** 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:**

- Monitors weekly attendance data for registration groups.
- Informs the Inclusion Team/HT promptly, of concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.
- Communicates concerns to HT/the Inclusion Team and DSL's and produces data for analysis.
- 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

**The school inclusion team (EB,ND & FT):**

- Monitor and analyse attendance data termly (weekly for pupils identified as a concern)
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Provides an Attendance Report each term (seasonal) which can be used to inform the Governing Body and liaises with the Headteacher and Inclusion Governor
- Working with school staff e.g., Headteacher, Pastoral Team, SENCo and class teachers to tackle persistent absence
- Communicates with 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.
- Advises 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 office as soon as possible after the register is completed.
- 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 Inclusion Team/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.

**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 from 8.45am and be ready to learn by 8.55am on each school day.

Morning registration is at 8.55am and remains open for 20 minutes.

Afternoon registration is at 1:15pm and remains open for 10 minutes.

## **Absence**

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school (01242 870366).

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/carers 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) (this is after 8.55am but before 9.15am)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent (Code U) (this is after 9.15am)

Lateness is monitored regularly, and school will inform you if they have concerns about your child's punctuality.

## **Planned absence**

Applications for absence in term time must be made in advance by completing the term time absence request form available from the school office.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carers 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.

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 term time absence request form accessible from the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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 (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)

## **Procedures following unexplained absence**

School will identify whether the absence is approved or not.

School will 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 contact external agencies (Children's Social Care, Police etc)

School will 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 contact external agencies (Children's Social Care, Police etc)

School staff may visit pupil homes if necessary, and with the permission of the headteacher, to ascertain why a child is absent from school.

School will 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

## **Strategies for promoting attendance**

At Coberley C of E 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 Inclusion & Pastoral Team who is available to discuss any concerns.

## **Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing**

All pupils' attendance, lateness and absence information is analysed termly.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 95%, parents/carers will be informed by letter of the need to improve attendance.

Attendance, lateness and absence of pupils for whom attendance drops below 95% in a term, will be monitored more regularly and closely by the Attendance Officer.

The Inclusion Team will write to the parents/carers to inform them of the exact percentage figure and offer support aimed at increasing the pupils attendance percentage.

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

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.

This can be used to:

- 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 class teachers 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
- Publication of data does not include identification of any individual

## **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.

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
- Work with any external agencies supporting the pupil and family
- 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 [Attendance - Schoolsnet \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/attendance-schoolsnet)

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

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

## **Links to other policies and monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually and as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be shared for approval with the Governing Body.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Inclusion Policy (Inc. SEND)
- School Behaviour Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Home School Agreement
- SEND Information Report