

Clearwell C of E Primary School Attendance Policy

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For Review By:	FGB/F&R/T&L/ECC

Aims and objectives

At Clearwell C of E Primary School, we believe that improving attendance is everyone's responsibility 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. Remote learning may be provided during exceptional closures, but it does not replace the expectation of full attendance when 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.

We adopt a **support first** approach, working with families to identify and remove barriers to attendance before considering formal interventions.

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 latest statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

<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:

- 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](#)

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- [The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education \(Current Version\)](#)

Absence can be a warning sign for a range of safeguarding concerns; therefore, any absences must follow our Safeguarding policy and the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) legislation.

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 09:15 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/academy trust board 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 (senior leader) Mrs Jones, head@clearwell.gloucs.sch.uk, is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance



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- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and making 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 is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- 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/SENCo 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 office by the time registers are closed and no later than 9.15 am/1.30 pm

School administration/office staff are responsible for:

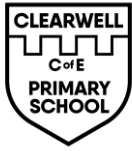
- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Keeping accurate and up-to-date records of calls and communication with parents

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



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- 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 08:45 on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 8.45 am and will be kept open until 9.15 am.

The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.00 pm and will be kept open until 1.30 pm.

Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day and every subsequent day of absence by 9.00 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school.

Notification of absence can be made via. School Gateway, leaving a voicemail on the absence line, or by emailing the school office on admin@clearwell.gloucs.sch.uk, or by Class Dojo to your child's teacher.

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.

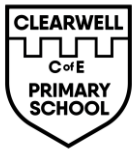
A pupil who arrives late:

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

Where a pupil is persistently late for school, a conversation is had with parents offering support to get their child in school promptly before formal letters with the notice to improve is issued.

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.



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Parents must notify the school office via. School Gateway, email or telephone and provide a copy/screenshot of the appointment letter/text.

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 following a traumatic event for the family, where medical needs are such that a holiday cannot be taken in term-time, or the military deployment of a parent over a holiday period. This list is not exhaustive. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

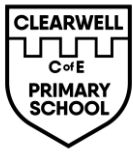
Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form which can be found on the school website [Request for Leave During Term Time](#). The headteacher may require evidence 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 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)

Procedures following unexplained absence

- Call the pupil's parent/carers on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach a of the pupil's emergency contacts,



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school staff may carry out a welfare visit to the child's home address. If there is no-one present at the home address, the school may contact the police or social services if they are involved with the family and/or if there is a concern that the child or family may be at risk of harm

- 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 carry out a welfare visit to the child's home address. If there is no-one present at the home address, the school may contact the police or social services if they are involved with the family if there is a concern that the child or family may be at risk of harm.

Strategies for promoting attendance

While the school does not give out 100% attendance awards at the end of each term/academic year, full attendance and punctuality is celebrated on a weekly basis in Celebration Worship and by the awarding of Dojo (house) points for all pupils who are in school on time for each full week. Dojo points are also awarded to the "Best Class" at lining up when the whistle goes to indicate the start of the school day.

The issue of attendance features regularly on school newsletters. Pupils whose attendance has improved are recognised with letters sent home to acknowledge this improvement as well as to express concern about attendance levels.

The timetabling of regular and special events in the term deliberately schedules such occasions on Fridays or on the last day of term in order to motivate pupils to attend.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels through letters, annual reports and verbal conversations.
- Monitor attendance and absence data regularly 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
- Share attendance concerns at weekly staff meetings

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



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- 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.

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
- Use graduated letters to inform parents of concerns regarding their child's absence and inviting them to discuss ways to improve this, as well as the potential consequences of not doing so.
- 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)

The national threshold for unauthorised absence is 10 sessions in 10 school weeks. Please note: each school day constitutes 2 sessions (morning registration and afternoon registration). Therefore, a 2-week holiday during school term time would meet the 10 session threshold.

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



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Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, annually. At every review the policy will be approved by the full governing body.