



Christ Church Hanham CE Primary School

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Attendance Policy

Author/Person Responsible	Headteacher and Attendance Lead
Date of Ratification	13.10.25
Review Group	Curriculum, Standards and Safeguarding Committee
Ratification Group	Curriculum, Standards and Safeguarding Committee
Review Frequency	Every 2 years
Review Date	By 31 st October 2027 (or earlier subject to local or national guidance)
Previous Review Amendments/Notes	-
Related Policies	SEND Safeguarding and Child Protection Medical Needs
Chair of CSS Committee Signature	S. Richards

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

Policies, Procedures or Practices:	Attendance Policy	DATE:	
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Groups that may be affected:

Are there concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for a positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly; issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)	None	None
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication)	X- considered within policy	None
Gender reassignment	None	None
Marriage and civil partnership	None	None
Pregnancy and maternity	None	None
Race	None	None
Religion and belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)	X- considered within policy	None
Gender identity	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

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Attendance at CCH

1. Rationale

Regular attendance and excellent punctuality at school enables each pupil to fulfil their potential at all levels and represents a maximisation of educational potential within the community. Research demonstrates strong links between attendance and achievement, indicating that even occasional broken weeks can have a negative effect.

In line with our vision of Nurture-Grow-Flourish, we aim to build strong and effective relationships with all of our children and families creating a nurturing and safe place for children to learn. Regular attendance is the key to children being able to grow and flourish in their education.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. In encouraging good attendance it is also hoped that this will lead to the development of habits of good attendance and punctuality for the future. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from attending school.

2. Guiding Principles

We are committed to ensuring that all students benefit from the opportunities available at Christ Church Hanham C of E Primary School. Our expectation is that children arrive on time and attend regularly; we will actively promote this ethos throughout the school community and encourage our children to achieve this. Where this expectation is not met, we will identify and address the barriers that prevent this. At Christ Church Hanham CE Primary School, we value education and therefore expect all children to attend school, every day.

3. Responsibilities

Good attendance at Christ Church Hanham CE Primary School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community – pupils, parents, staff and Governors. Our policy is based upon the DfE's statutory guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance.'

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

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for:

- Taking an active role in attendance improvement, support their school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensuring leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.
- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

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- Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.
- Monitor and review attendance of the looked-after and previously looked-after cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.

The Headteacher, Attendance Strategic Lead and Attendance Champion supported by the office staff are responsible for:

- Having a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately completing admission and attendance registers.
- Having robust daily processes to follow up absence.
- Regularly monitoring data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.
- Having a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Proactively using data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.
- Working with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.
- Continuing support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.
- Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.

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- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.
- Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.
- Agreeing a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.
- Proactively using data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.
- Working with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Inform the Local Authority (LA) of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.
- The Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered students of school age attend school regularly and punctually and that they receive an education suitable for their aptitude and ability. Where this is not the case, school will provide ongoing support as needed or may, in some cases, request Penalty Notices or legal proceeding in conjunction with the Local Authority.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
- The school has a legal responsibility for maintaining school registers and taking the register twice a day (at the beginning of the morning and afternoon) using the Arbor system. This will be carried out by the teacher in charge of the class. The Arbor system will show clearly whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will leave the Arbor mark blank, which will inform the school office of the absence. The office staff will contact a parent or guardian by text, email and telephone. If we are not able to speak to the child's parent/carer, school will implement our safeguarding procedures in order to help us to ascertain the safety and whereabouts of the child. This may be an unannounced home visit which could lead to a possible safeguarding referral.
- Where patterns of poor attendance have been identified, the attendance team comprising of Mrs Amy Pope, our Pupil and Family Support Lead and Attendance Champion, and Joshua

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Rowe, Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Lead will work to support families to improve children's attendance

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details, ensuring the school has more than one emergency contact number and updating the school if their details change.
- Ensuring children attend school every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Informing school if your child is unwell on a daily basis as soon as possible. If a child is unwell and is not able to attend school, a phone call should be made to the school office on 01454 867145. A message should be left before the school day stating a descriptive reason the child cannot attend school avoiding the wording of 'unwell, sick or poorly'.
- If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible – by phone call or in writing. A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is provided by the parent. If a child is late, a parent must sign the child in via the office.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- If a request of leave of absence is needed, ensure this is done so in advance and a form is filled out via the office.
- Proactively engaging in the school's support offered to prevent absence.
- **Avoiding making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours and no holidays should be taken during term times. Request of leave of absence should only be done in exceptional circumstances and done so in advance.**
- When requested, provide proof, such as an appointment card, when absences require further justification.
- Be aware that a letter or phone call does not in itself authorise the absence. Only the school's acceptance of the explanation will authorise the absence.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that their child arrives punctually to school every day. If punctuality problems are of a persistent nature, parents or carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the school to improve the situation.
- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary Early Help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

4. Attendance

- We expect our students to attend school on time every day that the school is open unless there is an unavoidable reason for not doing so, for example illness.
- We will promote and celebrate positive attendance as a school community, focusing on the link between attendance, achievement and enjoyment of learning (e.g. through class attendance figures in newsletters or through recognising classes with strong attendance in assembly).

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- We will share attendance information with parents/carers via school newsletters, termly attendance awareness letters and other communication.
- The school will communicate attendance matters to parents/carers via text; telephone; email; letter and through the school website. **Where attendance is a concern, discussion about attendance will also take place at parent/carers consultation evenings.**
- We will talk to pupils about their attendance as they move through KS2 and discuss reasons for any late arrivals with both pupils and parents.

5. Absence from school

There are two categories of absence from school:

Authorised – approved

Unauthorised – not approved

Unauthorised absence examples (please note this list is not exhaustive):

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained or the school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day
- The pupil is visiting relatives
- The pupil is away from school due to a parent or sibling illness
- Local football or rugby social tours

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

Severely absence (SA):

- Missing 50 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

Absence will be recorded using the code recommended by the Department for Education Guidance on School Attendance. Please refer to the DFE Working Together to Improve Attendance Guidance for further information on attendance codes.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

Where a pupil is ill and too unwell to attend school, this absence will be authorised. We expect children to return to school as soon as they are well enough (in the case of sickness and diarrhoea, children must remain absent for school for a period of 48 hours). If a child has one bout of sickness or diarrhoea, please discuss with the school office about the child's return before the 48 hours is up.

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Absences will be marked as unauthorised unless there is an 'exceptional circumstance'. Only the Headteacher (or their delegate) can approve an absence from school as being an exceptional circumstance. That is the law.

Any requests for absence in term time which parents/ carers believed fit the criteria of being an exceptional circumstance must be submitted in writing using the school form in advance to the Headteacher who will treat every request on an individual basis and respond accordingly. An absence may be approved as an exceptional circumstance if the following apply:

- If the pupil is prevented from attending by unavoidable cause.
- The absence occurs so that the pupil could take place in a religious observance set apart by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs.
- There is a significant family event such as bereavement or funeral.

In all cases, parents/ carers must inform the school in writing via the school form of the reasons for the absence. As the law only permits absence in exceptional circumstance, it is at the Headteacher's discretion whether or not to authorise any requests for absence.

Holiday Absence in Term Time

- The Department of Education's guidance strongly encourages schools to take a much firmer stance on absence authorised in term times. OFSTED also judge a school in part on its level of absence, authorised and unauthorised alike.
- Christ Church Hanham C of E Primary always shares terms dates in advance of the term, we publish them on our website and remind you of them in the school newsletters. Advance dates of school terms are always published on the South Gloucestershire website but these will not show any additional training days (INSET days), and this information is shared again in the above ways. <https://find-information-for-adults-children-families.southglos.gov.uk/> It is important that parents and carers book holidays during the stated holiday periods.
- Current legislation **does not** allow any absence due to holiday, during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. **Holidays cannot be considered under the exceptional circumstances criteria.** As such, all holiday absence will be coded as unauthorised and may lead to the issuing of a Penalty Notice.
- **All term time holiday** must be communicated with the school via the leave of absence form to the Headteacher at least **four weeks in advance** so that we can maintain a clear record of unauthorised holiday absence. When a holiday is requested, confirmation of the booking may be required.
- **Failure to report any period of leave to the school will result in the school unauthorising the time taken and consideration will be given to requesting the LA issue a penalty notice (if fining criteria has been met)**
- Christ Church Hanham C of E Primary will consider requesting penalty notice fines be issued, for any holidays taken in term time (if fining criteria is met).

Lateness

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Alongside promoting the importance of regular attendance, at Christ Church Hanham C of E Primary, we place a huge importance on all pupils attending school on time. Lateness can impact negatively on a child's education; learning in the classroom is sequenced and builds upon previous learning. Therefore, if a child misses the first part of the day, even by a few minutes, this can result in lost learning time and them missing out on key parts of the learning.

- At Christ Church, our classrooms are open from 8.45 to 8.50am. All pupils must be in class by 8.50am.
- Any children who arrive after 8.50am must be accompanied to the school office and signed in by their parent/ carer.
- For children who arrive after 8.50am but before 9.00am, this will be recorded in the register with an 'L' code.

For children who arrive after 9.00am, this will be recorded in the register with a 'U' code. A 'U' code denotes an unauthorised absence. **Unauthorised absence can lead to parents /carers being issued with a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority.**

Medical appointments

- We monitor the amount of lessons missed due to medical appointments carefully.
- We acknowledge that hospital and specialist clinic appointments, including orthodontic and on-going dental treatment may require a student having time out of school. Our expectation is that the minimum amount of learning is lost. We will seek an explanation from parents where a whole day is missed for this reason. **Proof of urgent medical appointments in school time must be provided for the school.**
- Routine, non-urgent appointments must be made after school time and during the 13-week school holiday during the year.

Early collection

Every part of the school day is important. Children should not be collected early from school (prior to the normal end of school times) as this will impact on their learning and may result in them missing important celebration and activities such as assembly which are integral to our school community.

If a child needs to be collected early from school, parents/ carers must contact the office in advance, stating the reasons why an early collection is needed. As above, in cases of any medical appointments, proof of appointment must be shared with the office.

All absence, both authorised and unauthorised, as well as lateness and early collection will be analysed by school leaders and the Education Welfare Officer and may be subject to challenge. This helps to ensure that any concern regarding frequency, pattern or validity is acted upon swiftly to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met.

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Parents/Carers are expected to contact the school on [01454 867145](tel:01454867145) the first day of absence and any subsequent day thereafter informing the school of the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.

Persistent absence (PA) and Severely Absent (SA)

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. The attendance team comprising of Mrs Amy Pope and Mr Josh Rowe will make contact with parents and carers to offer:

- Catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils and families to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, such as social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe absence following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

To contact the attendance team please contact the school office on 01454 867145 or office@christchurchhanham.org.uk.

Legal intervention

Christ Church Hanham C of E Primary will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect, school will consider:

- School will consider holding a formal attendance contract meeting with parents, school and our Education Welfare Officer to discuss ongoing concerns regarding attendance.
- Work with the LA representative to complete a legal attendance intervention meeting, where consideration will be given to next steps to support improving attendance.
- School will consider using Notice to Improve process and issuing penalty fines where appropriate.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

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Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Safeguarding

All unexplained absence from school will be followed up each day by contacting parents/carers. If no response is obtained, contact will be made with people listed as emergency contact numbers to ascertain a student's whereabouts and safety. Parents/Carers are required to provide the school with two emergency contact numbers. Where no response is received, a home visit may be carried out or a referral may be made to the Access and Response Team or the Police.

Removal from Roll

There are strict grounds as to when a school may remove a student from the admissions register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 and the school must notify the Local Authority: [South Gloucestershire Children Missing in Education Procedures](#)

Penalty Notices

- Governors have adopted a zero tolerance to absence in term time for holidays in line with the current attendance guidance. Should parents/ carers ignore the policy, cases will be referred to the Local Authority for the issuing of a Penalty Notice.
- Any pupil who has 10 sessions of one or a combination of the following absence codes in any 10 week period may be subject to a Penalty Notice: G code (holiday absence), O code (unauthorised absence) or U code (late after register closed but before the end of the session) (please note each school day consists of 2 sessions- morning and afternoon). [South Gloucestershire Fixed Penalty Notice Information](#)
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

6. How our policy works in practice

Punctuality

- The registration period is deemed to be: 8.50am and 1:10pm.
- After these times, the registers will be closed and any arrival after 9.00am and 1:10pm will be regarded as late and marked accordingly (L) on Arbor.

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- Where children are consistently late (three or more times in two weeks) or absences are unexplained/unauthorised, the following procedure will be followed:
 - Phone call made by our Pupil and Family Support Leader to offer support to family.
 - Parent/carer will be sent a letter to inform them of the situation.
 - If this continues, a letter will be sent to the parent/carer to visit the school and discuss the problem with a member of the Leadership Team and the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).
- If a pupil arrives after the register has closed at **9.00am**, this will be recorded as U (unauthorised late arrival.) More than ten unauthorised sessions over a 10 week period can result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

Illness

- We recognise that, from time to time, pupils are likely to experience bouts of illness. Some pupils will be managing chronic or more serious medical conditions that impact on their attendance. We will support students in these circumstances to ensure they do not miss out on education by arranging suitable work to be sent home as appropriate.
- When a pupil is identified as having frequent absence for reasons of minor illness, or a more serious longer-term illness, a meeting will be arranged to discuss this with the school's Pupil and Family Support Leader to ascertain if any support is required to improve the child's attendance.
- When a child has a chronic illness, an Individual Health Care Plan may be considered.

Broken Weeks and Low Attendance

- A 'broken week' is defined as a week where a child has missed one or more session of schooling.
- Multiple broken weeks have been shown to have a significant impact on learning and the school monitors attendance data for this weekly and termly. Children who have three or more broken weeks in a 6 week period will be monitored closely and their parents informed. Where this level of broken weeks persist over two terms, parents will be invited to an Attendance Plan Meeting with the Family and Parent Support Worker. If broken weeks continue, parents will be invited to a Attendance Contract Meeting with a member of the Attendance Team and the Educational Welfare Officer.

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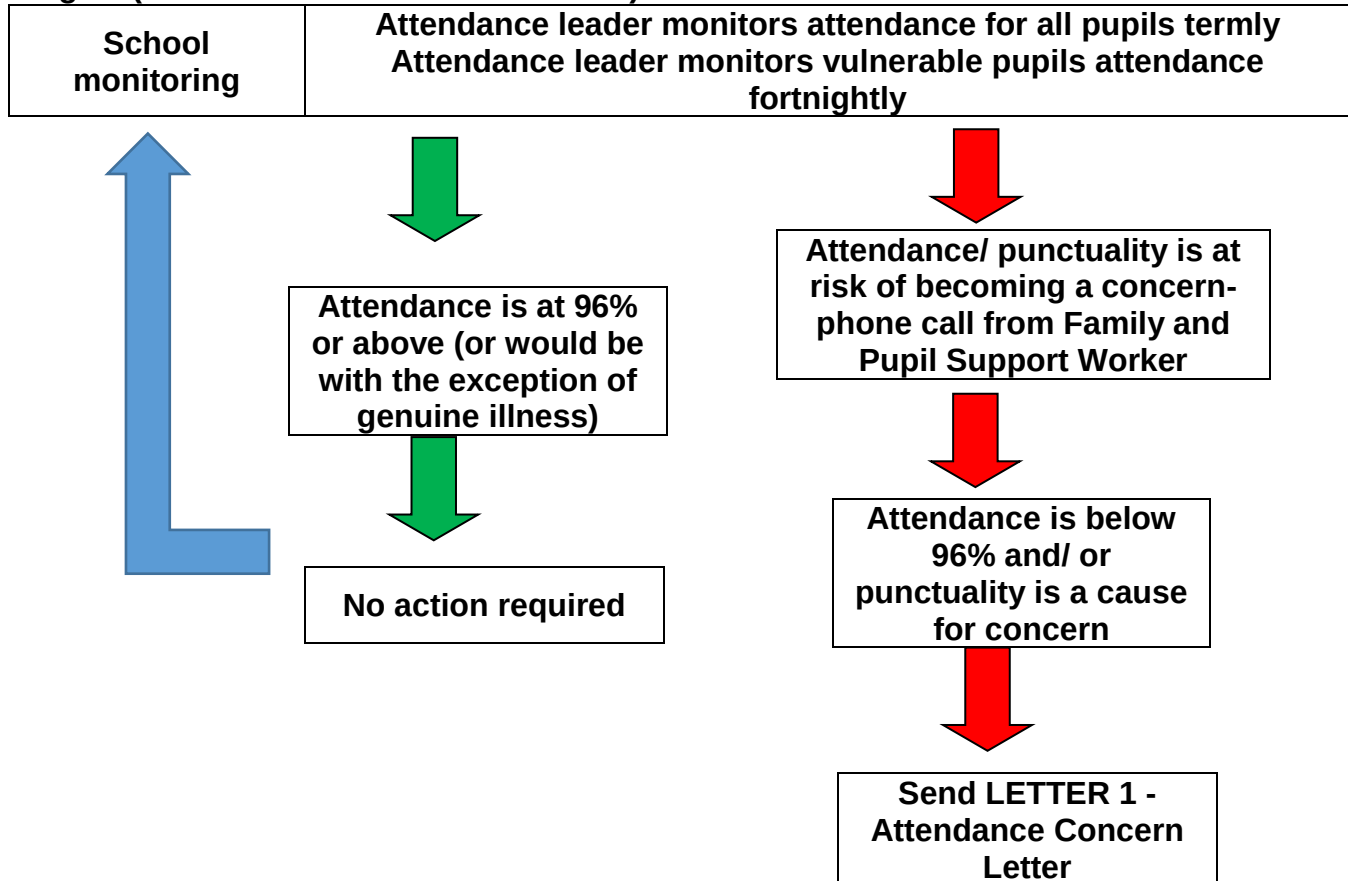
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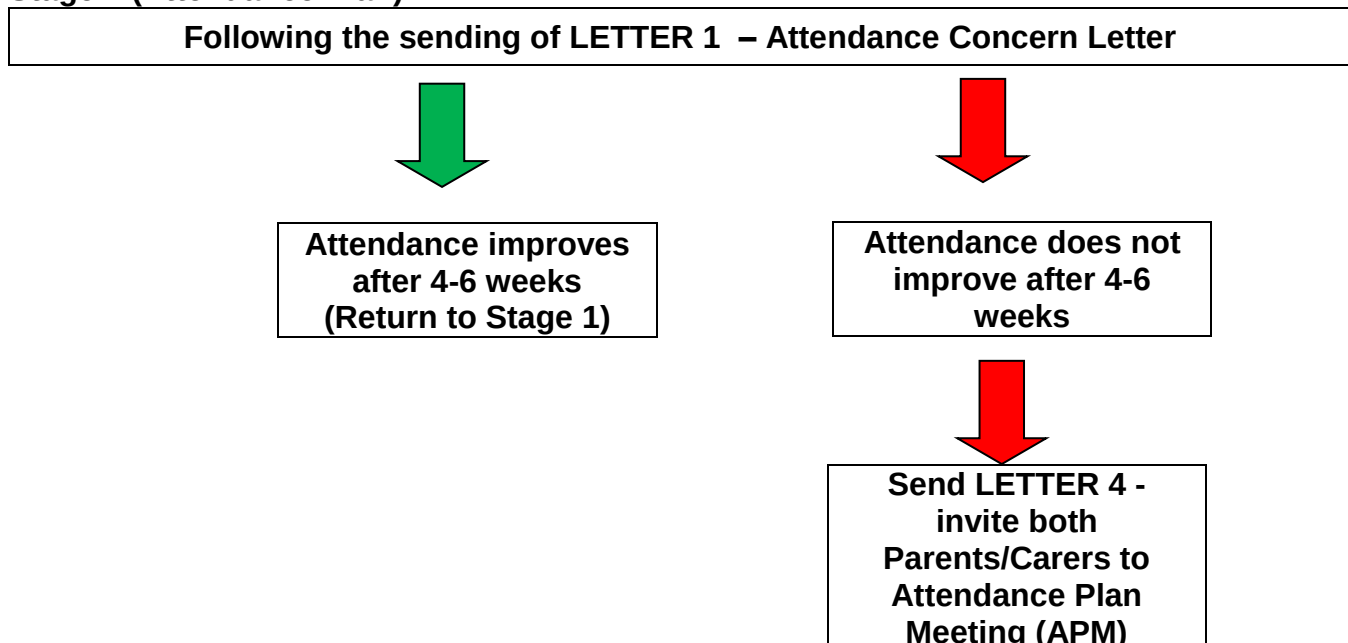
Appendix A

Attendance Flow Chart September 2025

Stage 1 (Monitor/ Attendance Awareness)



Stage 2 (Attendance Plan)



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Attendance Plan (AP)	Attendees: Attendance Champion/ Family and Pupil Support Worker and Parent/ Carer (and child if appropriate). Medical Letter/Medical Action Plan completed and Medical Consent form signed by Parent/Carers if appropriate. 4 School weeks from date of Attendance Plan review of attendance and/or punctuality to take place. If parents/ carers do not attend, Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) will make contact to rearrange meeting.
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Stage 3 (Attendance Plan Review)

Following the Attendance Plan Meeting (APM)



Attendance has improved after 4-6 weeks set further review date
Send LETTER 6



Attendance does not improve after 4-6 weeks



Send LETTER 8 - invite both Parents/Carers to Attendance Plan Review Meeting (APRM)

Attendance Plan Review Meeting (APM)	Attendees: Attendance Champion/ Family and Pupil Support Worker and parent/ carer (and child if appropriate). At this meeting an appropriate attendance target will be set and review for the next 4 school weeks.
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Stage 4 (Attendance Contract)

Following the School Attendance Plan Review Meeting (APRM)



Attendance has improved after 4 weeks
Send LETTER 10
(Return to Stage 1)



Attendance does not improve after 4-6 weeks following APRM
Send LETTER 10



Send LETTER 12 - invite both Parents/Carers to Attendance Contract Meeting (ACM)

Attendance Contract Meeting (ACM)	Attendees: Attendance Champion/ Family and Pupil Support Worker, Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and parent/ carer (and child if appropriate). At this meeting an appropriate attendance target will be set and reviewed for next 4 school weeks.
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Stage 5 (Attendance Contract Review)

Following the Attendance Contract Meeting (ACM)



Attendance has improved after 4-6 weeks
Send LETTER 14
(Return to Stage 1/2 and remind of Attendance Action Plan)



Attendance does not improve after 4-6 weeks



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Send LETTER 16-
invite parents/ carers
to Attendance
Contract Review
Meeting (ACRM)

Attendance Contract Review	Attendees: Attendance Champion, Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and parent/ carer (and child if appropriate). 6 school weeks given to improve attendance and/or punctuality.
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Following Attendance Contract Review Meeting (ACRM)



Attendance has improved
after 4-6 weeks. Send
LETTER 18
(Return to Stage 1/2 and
remind of Attendance
Action Plan)



Attendance does not
improve after 4-6
weeks



Consideration of next steps
including a Legal Attendance
Intervention Meeting

Stage 6 (Request Legal Attendance Intervention Meeting)

Following the Attendance Contract Review Meeting

EWO, School representative, parents will be informed of the outcome of the meeting.

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Formal guidance informing this policy

Relevant legislation

[The Education Act 1996](#)

The Children Act 1989

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Sentencing Act 2020

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Relevant government guidance

[Working together to improve school attendance](#)

[Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour](#)

[Children missing education](#)

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

[Working together to safeguard children](#)

[Elective home education](#)

[Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities](#)

[Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#)

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#)

[Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying](#)

Local guidance

[South Gloucestershire school attendance guidance](#)

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