



Cotswold
Primary School

Attendance Policy

September 2024

Document History Log:

Author of document:	R. Cook	Job role:	Headteacher
Date document created:	September 2022	Approval by Governing Body:	November 2024

Annual Review History:

Task	Date Reviewed	Reviewed by	Signatories
First document review	Sept 24	R. Cook	
2 nd Review			
3 rd Review			
4 th Review			

Revisions Log:

Revision	Date of revision	Reason for revision	Resulting version number	Signatories

Attendance Key Contacts

Please find the details of those with overall responsibility for attendance, attendance support and attendance improvement within our school below.

Name	Role	Contact Details
Mrs R. Cook	Head Teacher / Designated senior leader	0191 5864660 P2532.admin@durhamlearning.net

	with responsibility for attendance	

If a pupil is going to be absent from school the person who should be informed is: Mrs R Foster-Nuttall (Office Manager) or Miss E Stradling (Admin Assistant) on 0191 5864660.

If a pupil, parent or family is having difficulty with attending school and requires advice, help or support then they can contact:

Name	Role	Contact Details
Mrs R Nuttall	Office Manager	0191 5864660
Mrs R Cook	Headteacher	P2532.admin@durhamlearning.net
Mrs V Page	Deputy HT	
Deb Dixon	Place2Be	

Help & Support

Where help or support is needed with attendance the sooner school know about this, the quicker people can work together to support with this. Where needed this can involve other services to make sure that pupils and their families get the right support, at the right time from the right people.

Children Missing from Education

If pupil's whereabouts are not known following enquiries schools can legally remove pupils from the admission register (the school roll) after 20 school days of unauthorised absence. It is **vital that parents keep school informed of any change of details** and regularly update them if details change. Pupils place in schools are at risk if whereabouts are not known. Children Missing from Education must be reported to the Local Authority and the matter may be treat as a safeguarding issue.

Cotsford Primary is committed to the Rights of the Child. Although direct reference to this is not continually made throughout the written the policy, children's rights are at the centre of all of the school's work and underpin our ethos and values.

This policy also complies with:

- Article 12 'Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously' and
- Article 28 of the UNCRC 'Every child has the right to an education'.

Introduction to our school attendance vision and ethos

Cotsford Primary School seeks to ensure that all of its pupils receive an education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential. The school will strive to provide a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want

to be and are keen and ready to learn within a culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

Regular school attendance plays a vital role in children's wellbeing and their education, ensuring that their current learning needs are being met but also building their future ability to learn.

As attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils', improving attendance is everyone's business, a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, the governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, the school and partners will work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Specific roles and responsibilities have been published in the [Working Together to improve school attendance statutory](#) guidance.

We recognise the link between regular attendance and the well-being, development and achievement of our students / pupils. We expect everyone to attend every session they are able to, to benefit from the learning and pastoral opportunities and support we offer.

Communication is vital to ensure we are able to work with our parents and pupils and support attendance.

We ask that parents check the contact details, address and emergency contact information held by the school are up-to-date, are communicated to school as soon as possible as it is extremely important school can contact parents in an emergency, keep parents informed of events and progress or discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity.

The school day

The school day is from 8.50am to 3.15pm.

The school pedestrian gate opens at 8.45am for pupils to walk onto the yard. Pupils in the Reception Class line up at the at the bottom of the yard, pupils in Years 4, 5 & 6 at the top of the yard, met by their class teachers. Pupils in Years 1, 2 & 3 are able to access their classrooms directly from the yard.

Registration is 8.50am. The register will close at 9.15am. Pupils must be in school to be marked present, otherwise another appropriate code will be used (Attendance codes appended).

Pupils arriving late for registration, but before the register has closed will be recorded as late (L code).

In line with government guidance the registers will close at 9.15am.

Pupils who are not present before the register closes but attend during the session will be recorded as a U code unless the reason means another code is more appropriate. The U code is an unauthorised absence.

Arriving late to school can be disruptive and unsettling to the child and the rest of their class. Parents should contact the Headteacher or Office staff if there are any issues which are affecting a pupil's ability to attend school on time.

If your child is late for school:

All children arriving late at school will be asked the reason for their lateness and this will be recorded on the register within SIMs.

If a child is late (after registers close) for school on a number of occasions

A member of staff may speak with you in person, by telephone or by letter.

If the school continues to have concerns about a child's punctuality

We will discuss the barriers and offer a range of possible solutions such as attending breakfast club, exploring family and community network support, meet and greet, early help request or possible referral to the local authority for action if unauthorised.

Term dates and planned Professional Development days

Parents can find term dates, professional development days etc on the school website and on the annual diary sheet provided in the Autumn term.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Head teachers are expected to restrict leave of absence in term-time to the specific circumstances in [regulation 11 of the School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#). There is discretion to consider exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts, circumstances and background behind the request. Permission must be requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with completing the form. Leave of Absence request forms are available on request from the Office, alternatively they can be download from the school website.

Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion. If an application is not made for leave then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised regardless of circumstances.

The DfE have stated that generally they do not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

On the first day of absence

If a pupil is to be absent for any reason, parents or carers are asked to contact the School by telephone or via Dojo message to 'Admin' providing a reason for the absence. If a pupil is absent from school and there is no contact from parents/carers then school will contact home by telephone to find out why the pupil not in school. If telephone contact has been unsuccessful, we will attempt to make contact by Dojo message or email.

Appointments should be made outside of school time where possible. If this is not possible, your child should miss the minimum amount of school time necessary. If they are well enough to come back to school following the appointment they should do.

Periods of extended absence

If a child is absent due to an illness which has an exclusion period from school, for example, sickness or diarrhoea (48 hours), or chicken pox, once the school are aware of this, it is not expected that parents/carers continue to make contact with the school. If the pupil remains unwell and unable to attend school after the expected period of exclusion, the school should be contacted and informed. If no contact is made, school will telephone home for an update/welfare check.

If it is anticipated that a pupil will be absent for an extended period not covered by illness, for example, recovering from medical treatment, periodic welfare calls will be made by school.

No reason for absence provided

If no reason for absence has been provided by the primary caregiver, other emergency contacts held by school will be contacted. If school have welfare/safeguarding concerns, staff visit will complete a home visit.

If the school do not receive a reason for any absence it will be recorded as unauthorised. Regular absence and unauthorised absences could result in more formal action.

Where 10 or more unauthorised absences are recorded in any 10 school week period the school must consider whether a penalty notice may be appropriate and if so will refer the matter to the local authority.

Absence authorisation

The High Court has confirmed that the school's Head Teacher authorises absences. In

some circumstances, the school may request that parent's provide medical evidence to support absences.

We want to support all our pupils to ensure they can access their education and will take a support first approach. This will sometimes require communications and conversations to better understand the circumstances which may lead to absence.

Promoting good attendance and punctuality

The school has established an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts to improve attendance and timekeeping and will challenge where low priority to attendance and punctuality is given. We do this through:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools;
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families;
- Give parents/carers details on attendance through our Dojo communications and on the school website;
- Promote the benefits of high attendance to pupils, sharing weekly class attendance and punctuality figures in 'Well Done' assembly, acknowledging improvements and rewarding the class with the highest attendance;
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absences
- Celebrate excellent attendance with half termly certificates and rewards.

Attendance data

We will use data we have such as whole school, year group, class and individual pupil level to analyse for patterns of absence which may require some support to improve.

We will also consider different pupil cohorts such as all pupils, those who have free school meals, those with special educational needs or disabilities, pupil premium, children who have a social worker or are looked after etc to identify where additional support may be required.

At Cotsford Primary, we analyse individual's attendance information on a fortnightly basis. Those causing concern may be monitoring more regularly.

We will use the information to inform what we do to support and aid discussions between staff, pupils and families.

We will monitor the data to understand the impact of what we do.

We will communicate information to parents/carers on a weekly basis to show class data and information for individuals working with external partners will be shared during TAF, Care Team and Core Group meetings.

Absence concerns

Parents may identify concerns about school attendance early if there is a change in child's attitude to school or in their willingness to attend. If this is the case, concerns should be shared with school so people can work together to ensure that school attendance does not decline. The earlier concerns are identified and shared, the quicker they may be resolved.

Persistent absence

Pupils who miss 10% or more of their sessions at school are persistently absent. School will review the reasons given for absence and may speak with or write to parents/carers if there is concern that a pupil is regularly absent from school.

Severe absence

Pupils who miss 50% or more of their sessions at school are severely absent. School will work with pupils, parents and partner services and agencies to provide additional support through a more formal, planned approach in conjunction with the Local Authority.

National framework for penalty notices and other legal intervention

To improve consistency of practice across the country there is a national framework for penalty notices.

At the point where there are 10 unauthorised absence sessions recorded in any 10 school-week period, schools must consider if:

- further support is appropriate.
- support is appropriate but is not being engaged with.
- support is appropriate but is not improving attendance.
- support is not needed, such as in cases of term-time leave of absence.

If support is appropriate, this should continue.

If support is appropriate but is not improving attendance or is not being engaged with, then a referral for consideration of legal intervention should be made to the local authority. This can include, but is not limited to a Notice to Improve, an application for an Education Supervision Order, Penalty Notice or Offence investigation Interview (PACE caution).

If support is not appropriate, such as where a holiday in term-time has taken place, a referral for a penalty notice will be made. ([DCC - Penalty Notice Code of Conduct](#))

Penalty notices offer the opportunity to deal with an irregular attendance offence without the need to go to court. Penalty notices are issued at a rate of £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

There is an escalation policy which means that if a second notice is issued within a three-year period, the second notice will only be payable at the rate of £160. Further offences will not be eligible for the offer of a penalty notice and parents may be prosecuted in court. ([DCC - Penalty Notice Leaflet](#))

If penalty notices are not paid then a prosecution for the original irregular attendance offence will take place.

If convicted at court under section 444 of the Education Act for failing to secure the regular attendance of a registered pupil at school, a parent may be fined up to £1000 for each offence.

If there is evidence that a parent knowingly failed to secure the attendance and there is no reasonable justification for this, they can be fined up to £2500 and/or face up to 3 months in prison, be subject to probation supervision or have a curfew imposed as maximum sentences.

Pupils with specific needs

This policy is supported by our policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- Pupils with medical conditions

The school and all partners will work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.



MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.



FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.



FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.



ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.