

*The Crossways Schools*



*Learning Together, Stronger Together*

# Pupil Attendance and Punctuality Policy

| Version Number | Date Amended | Comments  | Date Approved | Author | Approved by |
|----------------|--------------|---|---------------|--------|-------------|
| 1              | 11/07/23     | Re write of the existing policy following full review | 18/07/23      | JG     | FGB         |

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Links with other policies | Behaviour Policy<br>Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy<br>Additional Needs and Inclusion Policy |
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## **Rationale**

Regular school attendance is essential to ensure the best outcomes for our pupils. By `regular` our policy is that all pupils attend each and every day that they are expected to attend. There may be exceptional circumstances when absences may be agreed in line with national attendance code guidance. During the school year we wish to encourage the highest possible individual attendance rate as we view this procedure as a necessary and important objective. Regular attendance and good punctuality is proven to improve attainment and establish good routines for life. Excellent attendance is an important part of our schools' visions which state...

***Our goal is to inspire a love of learning, nurture positive emotional and social wellbeing, empower all to be their personal best and thrive within our community***

## **Attendance registration**

We have a legal duty to register all pupils in the attendance register in the morning and afternoon. We will code according to national guidelines. Where there is a pattern of absence and no clear supporting evidence of acceptable reasons for absence we will mark these as unauthorised. (See ` health, healthcare and attendance `)

## **Punctuality**

Our policy is that we will allow a pupil who is late arriving by up to 20 minutes from the start of registration to be marked as "Late" in the attendance register. We believe that a pupil arriving late will not receive the best outcomes. Arriving late can be unsettling for the pupil and may cause classroom disruption. A continued pattern of lateness would fall under broken weeks.

Pupils arriving after 20 minutes from the start of attendance registration will be marked as (U) in the register. This has a meaning of an absence which is unauthorised. A pattern of unauthorised absence U codes may lead to formal action for non-school attendance and possible Penalty Notice fine.

## **Health, Healthcare and Attendance**

Where illness is a clear reason for a pattern of absence with supporting information (for example repeat reference to medical aspects by young person, parent carer, prescription information, medical appointment cards, information from other health professionals), we will put in place an Individual Health Care Plan in line with the South Gloucestershire Council Medical Needs Policy in order to ensure health needs are addressed.

Where there are occasional absences such as for sickness and diarrhoea, or Covid-19, there is no requirement for medical supporting information. For repeat absences we will follow government guidance and agree to absences where there is appropriate medical supporting information. For sickness and diarrhoea, 48 hours clear of symptoms is needed before returning to school.

## **Absences which are not agreed by the school (Unauthorised)**

The 1996 Education Act requires parents and carers to ensure children attend school regularly and punctually. The government made an amendment to the 2006 regulations on time term absence. Schools are now prohibited from authorising any leave in term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Should you wish to apply for exceptional leave you must contact the school office and complete the form requesting leave.

Where patterns of absence or broken weeks have been identified and where there are unauthorised absences, we will seek to engage with parents-carers and the young person. Where efforts to address attendance have not led to a reduction in unauthorised absence, consideration will be given to a formal legal process.

### **Penalty Notices**

In cases where parents or carers take their child on holiday during term time, we will follow the South Gloucestershire Code of Conduct and request that a Penalty Notice is issued by the local authority where applicable. Where all or almost all unauthorised absence marks are U coded (late after registration), we will first seek to engage with parents or carers and pupils. If U code absences persist, we will request a Penalty Notice in line with the Code.

### **Engaging with parents and carers**

We believe regular attendance is so important in ensuring best outcomes for our pupils that we will review our attendance performance each term. We will regularly look at the pupils where there is a pattern of absence. Where a child has a pattern of Broken Weeks (where there is at least one absence or very late arrival) or low attendance, we will contact parents and may arrange to meet and review progress.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

### **First Day of Absence Call**

We will regularly request updates of parent-carer contact information. Adults who have day to day care of a pupil are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance. We will contact parents/carers on the first day of unexplained absence if we have not been contacted before or at the start of the school day. Where absences are of concern and all attempts to engage have failed, we will refer to the Access and Response Team for further investigation.

### **Removal from Roll**

There are strict grounds as to when schools may remove pupils from their admissions register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Regulation 12(6) states that when a school has decided to delete a pupil's name from their admission roll they must notify their Local Authority as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

If the pupil has left the school without explanation, and there are concerns about the pupil's welfare; if there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or radicalisation, we will contact the local Access and Response Team (ART) immediately.

If the school is told that a pupil is leaving to attend another school, staff at the school of departure will establish the pupil's new address, the name and address of the new school and the date the pupil will start there. Once the school has confirmation that the child has started at the new school, they will update SIMs. Whenever a pupil leaves a school, a Common Transfer File (CTF) must be completed.

If the school is concerned about any aspect of a transfer or if a pupil has "disappeared", the matter will be drawn without delay to the attention of the Access and Response Team immediately. Please see further information in Children Missing Education Policy <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-education/behaviour-andattendance/children-missing-education/>

### **Part-time time-tables**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs and this decision is made by the Head Teacher in consultation with external agencies. A part time timetable is time limited and must not be treated as a long term solution and can only be made with parental agreement. This will be reviewed every

two weeks within the time limited period. The school will mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

## **Review**

The Attendance and Punctuality Policy will be reviewed every two years.

## **Appendices**

Threshold for Parent Contact

## Appendix A

**Threshold for Parent contact:** (See 'engaging with parents and carers') action will be taken to engage with parents.

1. Where there are five broken or incomplete weeks in each old style term (Autumn, Spring, Summer). A broken week is one where there is at least one late or absence mark in the register.
2. Where attendance is below 95% over a term
3. Where there have been repeat late or U code marks with or without other attendance concerns

For example

| Threshold for parent engagement * | Term 1-2       | Term 1-4        | Term 1-6        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Broken Weeks                      | 5 Broken Weeks | 10 Broken Weeks | 15 Broken Weeks |
| Percentage                        | 95%            | 95%             | 95%             |

\*Staged. Letter. Invite to support meeting. Consideration of Individual Health Care Plan

Possible example

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| Stage 1 | Year to date broken weeks greater than 5% over 2 terms or attendance <95%   | Letter 1<br>Notification of low attendance  |
| Stage 2 | Two terms or more >5% broken weeks or <95% attendance   | Letter 2<br>Offering support of FSW   |
| Stage 3 | Continued broken weeks > 5%   | Meeting with Family Support Worker to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impact of missed learning</li> <li>• investigate reasons for absence and solutions</li> <li>• set attendance targets</li> </ul>   |
| Stage 4 | Previous year attendance <95%<br>Repeated termly attendance 5 broken weeks over 2 terms   | School Attendance Meeting with SLT and/or EWO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss impact of missed learning</li> <li>• investigate reasons for absence and solutions               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set attendance targets</li> </ul> </li> <li>• fining or Individual Health care plan creation discussed               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set review period</li> <li>• EWO informed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Stage 5 | Previous year attendance < 95% 5 or more broken weeks (over two terms)<br>Repeated termly attendance continues to be of concern and | Following School Attendance Meeting review, meeting held with Head Teacher and/or EWO:  |
|         | School Attendance Meetings have not bought about improvement  | <input type="checkbox"/> Advise parent/carer that a panel meeting will take place.<br><br><input type="checkbox"/> School Attendance Panel meeting takes place (letter sent to arrange)   |

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|--|--|---|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ If no improvement after 4 weeks, school completes a request for an Attendance Panel review chaired by LA representative.</li><li>□ Update for EWO who may become involved</li></ul> |
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