

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Our Attendance Policy is designed to promote outstanding attendance for all pupils across the school. We recognise the proven link between attendance and positive academic and social outcomes for pupils. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not attend school.

We take a whole school approach to securing good attendance. We recognise the importance of good attendance and, alongside good behaviour, make it a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the impact our efforts in other areas e.g. curriculum, behaviour standards, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium, can have on improving attendance.

We recognise that barriers to attendance are complex, therefore we will continue to prioritise the cultivating of a safe and supportive environment at school, alongside trusting relationships with pupils and parents/carers.

The policy is intended to ensure that staff, parents/carers and pupils are aware of the importance of attendance and to make this a priority for all.

### **Legal Framework**

This policy takes into account:

DFE Working together to improve school attendance September 2022

DFE Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance February 2023

DFE School attendance guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities August 2020

Education Acts 1996 (section 7) and 2002

Equality Act 2010

Gloucestershire County Council Penalty Notice Protocol which under section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, empowers LA, Headteachers and the police in case of unauthorised absence from school.

DFE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

### **Aims**

Our expectation is that pupils should aim for 100% attendance. As a school, it is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all our pupils.

The school will take all opportunities to convey to pupils and parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Pupils will be recognised for their good or outstanding attendance. Pupils will be supported when their attendance is a concern.

Parents/Carers will understand that they are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance.

### **Policy in Practice**

#### **Registration (including punctuality)**

- Registers will be taken punctually at 8.50am and at 1.25pm (start of lesson 5)
- Should a pupil arrive during registration between 8.50am and 9.10am, but after the register is called, the tutor will fill in an L mark.
- Should pupils arrive in school after registration, they should sign in at Pupil Reception, providing an explanation for the lateness.
- Late arrivals between 9.10am and 9.30am will receive an L mark; those arriving after the close of registration without an acceptable reason, such as a medical appointment, will receive an unauthorised mark.

### Parents/Carers

- Parents/Carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance.
- Parents/Carers should inform the school of any absence on the first day of absence, and then every day thereafter. It is imperative that we can account for your child's whereabouts on a daily basis.
- By calling the Absence Line on 01285 651 511 (Option 1), or by emailing the Attendance Office on [attendance@cirencesterkingshill.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@cirencesterkingshill.gloucs.sch.uk) this will ensure all relevant parties are informed.
- Parents/Carers who become aware that their child is reluctant to attend school for any reason should contact the tutor/Head of Year as soon as possible to discuss the situation.

### Authorised/Unauthorised absence

The school will decide whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence from school may be authorised for reasons such as:

- The pupil is too ill to attend
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

*If children are Young Carers, the situation should be discussed with pastoral staff at the school.*

Whenever possible, medical/dental appointments should be made outside of school hours.

Absence from school will not be authorised for reasons such as:

- Shopping
- Looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents/carers
- Minding the house
- Birthdays

### Holidays in term time

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 previously allowed headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday in term time in 'special circumstances' of up to ten school days per year. Amendments to the 2006 regulations from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that **headteachers may only grant leave of absence during term time for extenuating circumstances.**

### Procedures for following up absence

- Pupils who are on an Attendance 'stage of concern' (see below) will receive a phone call home or a text message from the Attendance Officer on the first day of absence.
- Parents/Carers will be contacted if a pupil has been absent for three consecutive days and no message has been received by the school.

- Should a pupil return to school after an absence without a written explanation from a parent/carer, and one is not forthcoming in subsequent days, the Head of Year will write to parents/carers. After this point, unexplained absences will be marked as unauthorised by the Head of Key Stage.
- Where a pupil's attendance falls below 90% for a single term, the Head of Year will phone home to discuss this concern. The pupil will also be placed on the first day phone call list for the next term.
- A child who has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation is regarded as a Child Missing Education (CME). If the school's attempts to contact the parent/carer within these 10 days are unsuccessful, the relevant Head of Key Stage will complete a CME referral form for the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team at Shire Hall.

### **Supporting pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance**

School will set and maintain high expectations for the attendance, engagement and punctuality of all pupils, including those who are anxious about attending school. It is important to recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as much as being away from school might exacerbate it. Prolonged periods of absence may heighten anxiety about attending in the future.

Where a pupil displays any social, emotional or mental health issue that affects their attendance, an initial plan will be drawn up with parents and pupil documenting any 'reasonable adjustments' that need to be implemented.

Please see appendix 1 attached to this document.

### **Procedures for pupils who have specific health needs**

School will follow the guidance within the Policy for Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school.

### **Actions for Attendance**

The Attendance Officer will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first sign.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, authorised and unauthorised absence for:

- The school cohort as a whole
- Individual year groups and tutor groups
- Individual pupils
- Other groups of pupils e.g. pupils with SEND, PP, FSM, LAC

The Attendance Officer will conduct analysis of the above data on a short term, long term and annual basis to identify patterns and trends.

The Attendance Officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and implement attendance procedures.

### **Threshold 100%**

Pupils who achieve 100% attendance will be rewarded at different points in the school year and their success will be shared within year group settings.

### **Threshold 95%**

- When a pupil has been absent the tutor should have a discussion with the pupil about their absence and complete the Absence Conversation card. The card should then be placed in the register in the appropriate plastic page labelled Absence Conversation. Attendance Officer will collect these.

- The Attendance Officer identifies any unusual patterns of attendance and makes personal contact with the families of pupils whom the school has concerns about.
- Through HOY meetings, pupils who are 'at risk' of having possible attendance deterioration in the future will be identified. Support will be offered and attendance monitored.
- Letters of concern and support will be sent to parents at the start of term 2 and the start of term 4.

### **Threshold 90% - Persistent Absence**

#### Stage 1

When attendance falls below 90% for the year (over two or more terms), the Attendance Officer contacts parents/carers and invites them into school for a meeting. At this meeting a Cirencester Kingshill Individual Attendance Plan is established to formalise actions for improvement. It should also be made clear that, if concerns persist, the school may decide not to authorise absence in the future (unless accompanying medical evidence such as an appointment card or prescription is provided) **even if the absence is supported by a note from parents/carers.**

At the end of the next term, the pupil's attendance percentage for the year is again examined. If there has been an improvement, a letter of praise will be sent. However, if attendance remains below 90%, the pupil should be placed on Stage 2.

#### Stage 2

Parents/Carers are contacted by the standard Stage 2 letter of concern from the Head of Key Stage. The letter will invite parents/carers into school for a further meeting and inform them that absence notes will no longer be accepted by the school unless accompanied by medical evidence. At the meeting the Cirencester Kingshill Individual Attendance Plan will be updated, and the school will also make a referral to its Attendance Support Worker within the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team.

At the end of a four week period, the pupil's attendance percentage for the year is again examined. If there has been an improvement, a letter of praise will be sent. However, if attendance remains below 90%, the pupil may be placed on Stage 3.

#### Stage 3

Where a pupil's attendance for the last 12 months is below 90% and in addition there are at least 20 continuous unauthorised sessions of absence OR at least 28 unauthorised sessions in the academic year, parents/carers will be invited to an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) chaired by the Head of Key Stage. A review of the AIM will then be held after 4 school weeks. If the pupil has not achieved at least 90% attendance in that time (absent for more than 6 unauthorised sessions), the pupil will be placed on Stage 4.

#### Stage 4

The school makes a request to the Local Authority to initiate legal proceedings.

### **Stages for tackling punctuality concerns:**

At the start of each week during each term, Heads of Year will be provided with separate lists for lateness before the close of registration (L) and lateness after the close of registration (U).

### **The following actions will be taken for lateness:**

1 late mark (L) in a week:

- Pupil will receive a break time detention the same day.

2 late marks (L) in a week:

- Pupil will receive a break and lunch time detention on the same day.

3 late marks (L) in a week:

- Pupil will receive a break and lunch time detention and will be spoken to by a member of SLT. (Senior Leadership Team)

All incidents of lateness that require the use of the **U** code will receive a lower/upper school detention.

**Caveat:** The Attendance Officer and Heads of Year will be circumspect with regard to issuing punishments. There may be extenuating circumstances and these will always be considered.

### **Registration Procedures**

- A pupil who arrives late during registration time due to a late bus should be marked as PRESENT.
- A pupil who arrives late i.e. after the 8.50 bell, but during the registration period should be marked 'late' by the tutor. The tutor should issue a yellow break time detention slip.
- A pupil who arrives between 9.05 and 9.15 and signs in at reception will be marked 'late' automatically. Pupil Reception will issue a yellow break time detention slip. The tutor will, in the first instance, monitor patterns of lateness and raise issues with the parent and pupil.
- If a pupil arrives at 9.15 am, the tutor will need to receive a letter from parent explaining the lateness.
- Late detentions take place on the same day.

***If appropriate: you may want to read the following policies in conjunction with this policy. Accessibility Plan, Anti-bullying Policy, School Discipline and Behaviour Policy, Child Protection Policy, Looked After Children Policy, Equality Policy, E-safety Policy, Exclusion Policy, Offensive Weapons Policy and the Substance Misuse Policy.***

CIRENCESTER KINGSHILL SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed by: D Christopher (Deputy Headteacher)

Date: June 2024

Adopted by Governors: 25 June 2024

Signature: 

Date: 26 June 2024

Next Review Date: June 2025