

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

At Cirencester Kingshill School we believe that if we are to shape greater futures, securing good attendance is essential. We recognise the proven link between attendance and positive academic and social outcomes for students. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not attend school.

### **Aims and Principles**

At Cirencester Kingshill School, we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of positive attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, students, 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 students to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.

Our objectives are to promote excellent attendance, ensuring every student 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.

### **Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the document [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. 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](#)
- [The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

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 **8.40 am** on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return. Parents can report an absence using the following options<sup>1</sup>
  - i) all the absence line on 01285 651511 option 1
  - ii) email the Attendance Office on [attendance@cirencesterkinghill.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@cirencesterkinghill.gloucs.sch.uk) This will ensure all the relevant parties are informed.
  - iii) Use Edulink App
  - iv) Use the 'Report an absence' tab on the homepage of the website.
- 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

**Students** are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Attend every timetabled session on time

**The Trustees** 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 Trustees
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

**The Senior Attendance Champion (Debbie Christopher, Deputy Head)** is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishing and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make 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 students and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students 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 (Liz Kelly)** 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 Heads of Year, Senior Attendance Champion and the headteacher
- Working with school staff e.g. Heads of Year, Up Strategy leads, SENCO and Attendance Champion to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

**The Tutor** is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information to the school office by **9 am**

**School administration/office staff** are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and forwarding to the Attendance Officer.
- 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 students 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 student is:

- Present or  
Absent

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 student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student 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.

Students must arrive in school by **8.40 am** on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken by 9 am and will be kept open until 9.30 am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12.20 pm and will be kept open until 12.50 pm.

### **Absence**

The Student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day by 8.40 am or as soon as practically possible using the following options:

- i) all the absence line on 01285 651511 option 1
- ii) email the Attendance Office on [attendance@cirencesterkingshill.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@cirencesterkingshill.gloucs.sch.uk) This will ensure all the relevant parties are informed.
- iii) Use Edulink App

iv) Use the 'Report an absence' tab on the homepage of the website.

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 students 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 student 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)

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 action will be taken for lateness to School:**

Immediate break-time detention on the day that they are late.

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.

#### **For lateness to lessons the following action is taken:**

- Heads of Year will receive data every week.
- For three lates, the tutor will call home
- For six lates, a lunchtime detention will be set
- For nine lates, a senior detention will be set

#### **Planned absence**

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This should be done using one of the four options below:
  - i) all the absence line on 01285 651511 option 1
  - ii) email the Attendance Office on [attendance@cirencesterkinghill.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@cirencesterkinghill.gloucs.sch.uk) This will ensure all the relevant parties are informed.
  - iii) Use Edulink App
  - iv) Use the 'Report an absence' tab on the homepage of the website.
- However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student 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 student is authorised to be absent for.

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 4 weeks before the absence, in writing to the Headteacher. 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 employment or 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
- 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 student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police. 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 take advice from the MASH team.

### **Strategies for promoting attendance**

Data is shared with all staff on a daily basis.

Engaging parents to recognize the importance of attendance is key. Parents can access their child's attendance on the Edulink app. Attendance features on all reports home. Attendance is a regular feature in the Head's newsletter.

Students are encouraged to monitor their own attendance in their journals. The Edulink app is very effective for this purpose too. The launch of this in September has incentivised some students - if they feel something is wrong on their attendance they are keen to get it corrected.

Every week, data is aired by the Heads of year during assemblies. Students compare their own tutor group data with that of other tutor groups within their year as well as the rest of the school. This has fostered a sense of competition amongst students. Assemblies are used regularly for attendance messages, fostering an attitude that attendance is key if we are to 'shape greater futures'.

The UP Strategy has enabled effective gathering and feedback on data for every student. It is being used for target setting and mentoring. The UP Strategy Leads are able to work in a holistic manner with

students. Cohort meetings occur on a weekly basis to drill down into the data and share the findings. Students cannot be platinum if their attendance falls below the expected standard.

The 100% club celebrates student success in the UP Strategy, including attendance. Within this, 100% attendees are celebrated and rewarded at the end of the school year.

At transition, primary schools share with us the attendance of each student during year 6 so we can quickly work with the students in the Autumn term of year 7 if an early pattern begins to emerge.

### **Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing**

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels via letters and academic reports. Parents can also use the Edulink App to identify their child's current attendance.
- Monitor attendance and absence data on a daily basis across the school and at an individual student level. The data will form part of the School's Up Strategy.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Student-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 at the national average and share this with the governing board.

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families. This will occur at the regular Cohort meetings, the Attendance Strategy meeting, weekly attendance meetings between the Heads of Year, Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Provide regular attendance reports to Tutors to facilitate discussions with students 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 student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence. The UP Strategy affords us the opportunity to effectively identify students and work with them in a holistic manner.
- 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. This might include support from Early Help, support from the Outcomes co-ordinator in the Inclusion Team
- 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)

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

### **Links to other policies and monitoring arrangements**

*This policy can be read in conjunction with the following policies: **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.***

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum of every 2 years by the deputy head. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Impact Committee and reported to the full governing board.

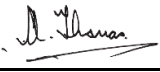
**CIRENCESTER KINGSHILL SCHOOL**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Reviewed by: D Christopher (Deputy Head | DSL)

Date: September 2024

Adopted by Governors: 05 November 2024

Sign: 

Date: 11 November 2024

Next Review Date: June 2025