

Shurdington CofE Primary
Be the **BEST** we can be, through love.

Believe Enjoy Succeed Together

'Love God and love your neighbour as you love yourself.'

Matthew 22, verses 37 and 39.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Shurdington Church of England policies are written in the spirit of Christian values

Agreed by Governors: Sept 25

Review Date: December 27

Please read this policy alongside our Arrivals and Departures Policy and Child Protection Policies.

Aims and objectives

At Shurdington CE Primary we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, 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 pupils 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 good attendance, ensuring every pupil 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 [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 9:00 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- 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
- **Pupils** are expected to:
- Attend school every day on time

The Governing Body 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 governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

Senior Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer fall under the role of the Headteacher but he works closely with the Admin Officer and Pastoral Lead. This team are 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 pupils and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils 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.
- 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 Senior Attendance Champion and the headteacher

- Working with school staff e.g., pastoral lead/family liaison officer/SENCo to tackle persistent absence
- Discussing when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis and submitting the information to the school office as soon as possible after the register is completed.

School administration/office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- 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 pupils 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 pupil is:

- Present
- Absent
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

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 pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil 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. Pupils must arrive in school by 9:00 on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken by 9:00 and will be kept open until 9:20. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 13:15 and will be kept open until 13:30.

Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day as soon as practically possible by calling the school on 01242 862420.

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 pupil's 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 pupil 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)

Punctuality issues are monitored by the attendance team and discussed within attendance meetings. If the school identifies ongoing punctuality issues, we will work with parents to identify reasons behind this and offer support as necessary. If improvements are not made the school may request to issue a Penalty notice under the GCC/National Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil 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 pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off events which are unavoidable. Examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

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 two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form accessible from the school office. 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 (see definition above) (Code C)
- 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 require 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 pupil'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 pupil's emergency contacts by telephone a text will be sent to the main contact. A member of staff will try visit the family home by the second day and a written communication will be sent on the 3rd day of absence, requesting the reason for absence. The school may take other proportionate safeguarding measures, depending on the context of the family (e.g. call a social worker, call the police, make a home visit, gain advice from the Local Authority). The DSL and DDSs will be part of this decision-making process.
- 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 contact the necessary support services.

Strategies for promoting attendance

To support our attendance policy we:

- Promote good attendance at every opportunity –at Parents evenings, at Induction, in newsletters, in assemblies, on notice boards, awarding certificates for excellent attendance etc.
- Always use first day telephone contact;
- Reward and celebrate good and improved attendance;
- Set attendance targets for the school;
- Ensure parents are aware of our attendance policy;
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance level;
- Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis;
- Notify Governors at each full governing body meeting of attendance levels;
- Liaise fully with the Local Authority when necessary;
- Provide a safe, happy, stimulating environment for children where they feel valued and welcomed and that their presence in school is important.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

- The school will:
 - Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels through reports, parents meetings and letters.
 - Monitor attendance and absence data at least once a month across the school and at an individual pupil level
 - Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-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 to the national average and share this with the governing board.

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Provide regular attendance reports to appropriate members of staff to facilitate discussions with pupils 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 pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Send letters to parents at identified attendance thresholds.
- 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
- 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. Notices to Improve and Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct available [here](#).

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

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is update, and as a minimum annually. At every review the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

Appendix 1

Shurdington Church of England Primary School Absence in Term Time

(This form should be completed and returned no less than 2 weeks before the planned absence.)

Please understand that schools are only able to authorise holidays in term time under exceptional circumstances. Before completing this form, please read the school's Attendance Policy. A hard copy is available via school reception or the latest edition can be accessed via the school's website www.shurdingtonceprimary.co.uk. Please be aware that in the case of an unauthorised leave of absence the Headteacher, or a member of staff who has been authorised by the Headteacher, may request that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice without further warning to the parent. Please note that such a penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter.

Request to take a child out of school for a holiday during term time (Leave of Absence)

I would like to take my son/daughter out of school on the following dates, from to

The holiday must be taken in term time because

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed Date

Please print

Authorised/Unauthorised by (Headteacher) Date:

...

Holiday Request Form – Reply Slip

Dear Parent/Carer

Re:
(Child's Name)

Thank you for submitting your recent request for leave of absence. I have given the matter due consideration and made my decision based on our current Attendance Policy.

Leave of absence has been authorised between and

Leave of absence has been unauthorised between and, therefore any absence for your child between these dates will be marked as unauthorised.

Yours sincerely

Jon Millin

Headteacher

What can you do to help?

Take an interest in your child's education.

- Ask them about their day and praise and encourage their achievements at school.
- If your child is missing school or is seemingly unhappy, you should discuss your concerns with your child.
- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of them missing school, but be on the alert for any particular reasons for non-attendance, such as bullying or problems with school work.

Contact the school as soon as possible when a concern is identified so that you can work with them to resolve any difficulties.

Be willing to engage with any support offered by the school or Gloucestershire County Council Support Services.

Make sure your child arrives at school on time for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

If your child is ill or absent for any other reason, contact the school on the first day of absence.

Follow the school's procedures for notifying absence, and always let the school know of any days that your child is unable to attend.

Updated November 2020

It all adds up!

Attending school everyday gives your child the best chance of success. 100%

Attending 4½ days a week = 4 weeks learning missed per year 90%

Attending 4 days a week = 8 weeks learning missed per year 80%

Attending 3½ days a week = 12 weeks learning missed per year 70%

80% attendance adds up to missing 2 full years of education over their school life!

Can they afford to keep missing out?

Every Minute Counts!

Being late for school reduces learning time.

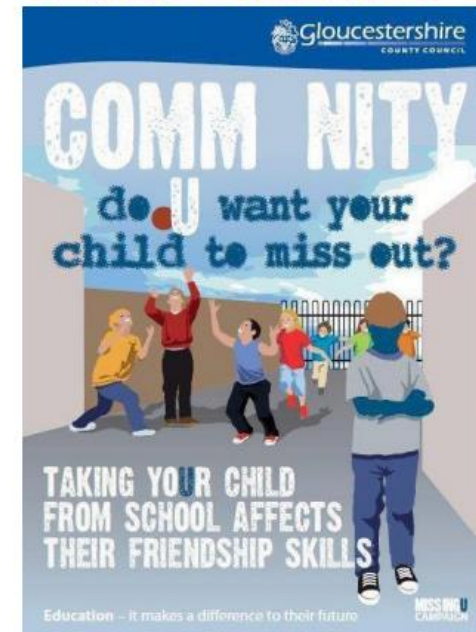
5 minutes late every day = 3 days of learning missed per year.

15 minutes late every day = 9 days of learning missed per year.

Arriving late can be very disruptive for your child, the teacher, and the other children in the class.



School Attendance



Information for Parents and Carers

Why is it important for children not to miss school?

Children only get one chance at school, and your child's chances of a successful future may be affected by not attending regularly. If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child catch up.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up. Employers want to recruit people who are reliable. Setting good attendance patterns from an early age will also help your child later on in life.

What might the impact of poor attendance be on your child?

Research shows children who are not regularly attending school are:

- More likely to become involved in, or be a victim of crime and anti-social behavior.
- More likely to fall behind due to the strong link between attendance and achieving good results.
- Less likely to achieve 5 good GCSEs (grades 9-5) compared with those with less than 8 days absence.
- More likely to have increased levels of anxiety due to inconsistencies and uncertainty in their routine.
- More likely to have reduced self esteem due to finding learning increasingly hard having missed out on key information.



What does the law say?

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education.

Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly?

If your child fails to attend regularly - even if they miss school without you knowing - the Local Authority (LA) may take legal action against you.

Schools will notify you if your child's attendance level is a concern and look to work with you to put in place steps to improve it. If attendance continues to require improvement then schools will look to initiate an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM).

The AIM is the start of the legal process. It is important you engage with the process and work with the support provided to meet the agreed targets. These targets will be reviewed and progress evaluated at a review meeting. If satisfactory progress is made then targets will either be considered met or adjusted until attendance is satisfactory. If progress is not made then you may be referred to the LA for legal intervention.

You run the risk of being issued with a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted in court. If this happens:

- Parents can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- Magistrates can also impose a Parenting Order, which means that the parent has to attend a counselling and guidance programme, usually a parenting class.

When is absence authorised?

There may be times when your child has to miss school because they are unwell. If your child becomes ill you should notify the school immediately and follow the school's absence procedures.

Children may have to attend a medical or dental appointment in school time. However, you should, whenever possible, try to make routine appointments such as dental check-ups during the school holidays or after school hours. Schools have the right to request medical evidence to validate absences for medical reasons.

If you think you might need to take your child out of school, discuss the reasons with the school as soon as possible. Absence must be requested as far in advance as possible. Absences will only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances.

Examples of absence that may be considered as exceptional circumstances include family bereavement or taking part in an agreed religious observance. The decision on whether to authorise absence is made at the headteacher's discretion.

For more information

For more information you can contact the Local Authority's Education Inclusion Service at:

Phone: 01452 427274

Email: Attendance@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning

