



# Attendance Policy

<b>Ratified by Governing Body on:</b>	November 2024
<b>Due for Review:</b>	November 2025 (or earlier if statutory changes are required)

Acronyms Used	
EBSA	Emotional Based School Avoidance
EWO	Educational Welfare Officer
ECHP	Education and Health Care Plan
EHAP	Early Help Assessment Plan
ART	Access and Response Team
SEND	Special Education Needs and Disabilities
Supporting Documents and Guidance	
<a href="#">Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a> <a href="#">Fixed penalty notices   South Gloucestershire (southglos.gov.uk)</a>	

**Vision:**

At Pucklechurch CE VC Primary School we are constantly striving for excellence in all that we do by setting high expectations and working together as a school community to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment where children are motivated to learn, are valued as individuals and enriched by an experience that enables them to thrive in tomorrow's world.

**Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024)**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an exceptional absence in advance from the school.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

## School Attendance Policy

**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 guidance.

### Every moment matters:



Did you know that:

- A child who is absent for one day of school per week, misses the equivalent of 2 years at school (equates to 80% attendance)
- 90% of children with absence rates of 85% or lower fail to achieve five or more good grades at GCSE (level 5 or above) and around one third achieve no GCSEs at all

### Good attendance is a learned behaviour

(WTISA gov.uk pt25)

Attendance office	<b>Admin team:</b> 0117 9372579 (8.30 – 3.30) <a href="mailto:absence@pucklechurchprimary.org.uk">absence@pucklechurchprimary.org.uk</a>
-------------------	--

The law requires all schools including independent schools to have an admission register and, except for schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. These registers must be kept electronically. All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on the admission register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register. The

proprietor of a school who fails to comply with these regulations is guilty of an offence and can be fined

### **Attendance registration**

Schools must also take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion, they must record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

### **Punctuality**

Our policy is that a pupil who arrives more than 5 minutes from the start of registration will be marked as "Late" in the attendance register.

Arriving late can be unsettling for the pupil and may cause classroom disruption. Where a pupil is persistently late (3 or more times in 2 weeks) parents will be contacted and offered the opportunity to discuss any issues and plan a way forward.

Pupils arriving 15 minutes after the start of attendance registration will be marked as (U) in the register. This means that the absence is unauthorised. A pattern of unauthorised absence may lead to formal action for non-school attendance and a possible Penalty Notice fine.

**At Pucklechurch, registration is at 8.40 (school gates open @ 8.30)**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Registration code</b>	
8.30		Gates open
8.40-8.45	Present	Registration opens
8.45 – 9:30	Late (L)	Registration closes
9.30 onwards	Unauthorised (U)	
3.15		End of day/collection

### **Health and Attendance**

If a child is ill, this absence will be coded as authorised (I). Normally medical evidence is not needed or required.

**Please call the school on 0117 9372579 and leave a message on the absence line detailing your child's name, class and reason for absence (e.g. vomiting, temperature).**

Where illness is a clear reason for a pattern of absence or is frequent, supporting information (for example prescription information, medical appointment cards, information from other health professionals) may be sought in order to create a medical and/or support plan.

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance. This can include pupils who have long-term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as it is for any other pupil, additional support may need to be provided (pastoral support, EHCP, My Support Plan, EBSA Plan, EHAP).

Possible support	Attendance meeting Attendance plan Pastoral support EBSA (emotional school-based avoidance) plan EWO (education welfare officer) Family link referral School nurse referral EHAP (Early Help Assessment Plan)
------------------	--

### Granting leave of absence

All schools can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority must do so. These circumstances are:

- **Taking part in a regulated performance:** in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace
- **Attending an interview:** for entry into another educational institute
- **A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable:** where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.
- **Exceptional circumstances:** All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

**The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.**

***Our school will not authorise holiday in term time.*** Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours

Parents must send in an absence request as early as possible (no less than 2 weeks prior to absence) so as it can be considered and response returned. Request must be made using the school absence request form.

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

### **Penalty Notices**

Local authority guidance: [Fixed penalty notices | South Gloucestershire \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://www.southglos.gov.uk)

A penalty notice may be issued to a parent in the following circumstances, where the threshold for a penalty notice has been met:

- Where the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday and the absence has not been authorised by the Headteacher (G)
- Where the pupil has a pattern of unauthorised absence, not covered by any other code (O)
- Where the pupil has arrived in school late after the taking of the register, where no other code applies (U)
- Where a combination of the above codes are recorded

What you can do to avoid a penalty notice:

- Ensure your child attends school every day and on time
- Do not take family holidays in term time
- Build positive routines

**Please note new national thresholds:**

**This means that missing 5 school days for a holiday would incur a fine**

If your child has **10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence** within 10 school weeks, after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. There are two sessions in each school day (morning and afternoon). The sessions of absence can be consecutive (for example 10 sessions of unauthorised holiday in one week) or not (for example 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, spread across the 10 school weeks). This is a change from South Gloucestershire Council's current threshold.

There is an increase in the amount that a Penalty Notice is charged at and a decrease in the number of Penalty Notices that can be issued within a rolling three year period

On the first occasion that a parent is issued with a Penalty Notice in respect of their child, on or after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, the Penalty Notice will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This amount will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

If a second Penalty Notice is issued, within 3 years of the date of issue of the previous Penalty Notice, to the same parent in respect of the same child, the Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160. There will be no reduction if the Penalty Notice is paid within 21 days. This will apply even if the previous Penalty Notice has been issued by another local authority.

If the threshold for issuing a Penalty Notice is met for a third time (or subsequent times), within three years of the first Penalty Notice being issued, a third Penalty Notice cannot be issued. Instead, alternative action will be considered, which may include prosecuting a parent for the offence of failing to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. This will apply even if one, or both, of the previous Penalty Notices were issued by another local authority.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

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

**Please call the school (0117 9372579) and leave a message on the absence line detailing your child's name, class and reason for absence (e.g. vomiting, temperature). This should be made by 9am.**

If a child is absent and we do not receive a call/email, the school office will message and/or call parents and carers.

Where we do not receive a message and can not get a response from parents, a call may be made to ART (Access and Response Team) and/or the police to ask for a welfare check.

See Children Missing in Education [Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/children-missing-education-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf)

### **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 we will contact the local Access and Response Team immediately.

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 Access and Response Team 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 Arbor. 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.

Please see further information in Children Missing Education Policy

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-education/behaviour-and-attendance/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; this decision is made by the Head Teacher in consultation with external agencies. A part time timetable is time limited, 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).

### **Monitoring and tackling persistent absence**

Parents will receive their child's attendance certificate three times per year (at the end of T2,4 and 6). Attendance will also be discussed at Parents' Evenings (October and February).

Attendance is monitored daily and checks made for absent pupils.

In addition to this, attendance is monitored by the Headteacher every term. During this monitoring, pupils whose attendance falls below 96% and/or where there is a pattern of broken weeks, persistent lateness or persistent absence are investigated. Where there are further questions or concerns, an initial meeting will be requested with parents. This may lead to: additional support, a medical plan, notice to improve or an attendance plan. Where support, medical plans or attendance plans are made, these will be reviewed regularly (at least once per term).

If the initial plan/s are not successful, further support will be sought. This may involve the EWO, school nurse team or compass. An EHAP will be considered.

Where there are concerns regarding EBSA, EBSA guidance will be followed and an EBSA plan utilised. This will be reviewed at least once per term.

[EBSA toolkit \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://southglos.gov.uk)

If attendance does improve despite support and intervention, legal action may be sought with the guidance of the Local Authority.

[School attendance | South Gloucestershire \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://southglos.gov.uk)

### **Celebrating Success**

Good school attendance is an expectation of all of our families. Punctual, regular attendance leads to the best outcomes for children. This may be celebrated in classes, assemblies and newsletters.

### **Further Support**

In the first instance, please contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have or request support with attendance. We want to build a strong partnership with parents and support all of our families.

### **Additional advice and support can be found:**

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[Find information for adults, children and families | South Gloucestershire \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://southglos.gov.uk)

[EBSA toolkit \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://southglos.gov.uk)

<https://www.sendandyou.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/EBSA-Frequently-asked-questions-Final-version-16.05.2024.pdf>

[Compass | South Gloucestershire \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://southglos.gov.uk)

### **Review**

We will review the attendance policy annually.