



# **The Coppice Primary School Attendance Policy and Guidance Document.**

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## **The Coppice Primary School Pupil Attendance Policy**

This policy has been developed in consultation with Trustees, Teachers and Education Welfare Services at The Coppice Primary School and in consultation with The Grove Partnership schools. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance (including parents and carers) are aware and informed of attendance matters in school. It outlines the school's commitment to attendance matters and details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

### **School Mission Statements:**

**The Coppice Primary School** aims to promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued and to provide an environment that is conducive to creating 'happy, successful and confident' learners. We recognise the importance of an engaging and relevant curriculum in ensuring that our children are ready for the next phase of their education and consequently, we seek to ensure that our children fulfil their potential and are 'Well prepared for life'.

### **1. Overall Aim of the Policy:**

This policy will aim to raise both progress and attainment of the children at The Coppice through maintaining and improving their overall attendance. This will be done in the following ways:

- Raising awareness of the importance of consistently high levels of attendance.
- Making attendance a priority for all those associated with the school including parents, pupils, teachers and Trustees.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and that reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- Encouraging parents to ensure that their children attend regularly and arrive at school on time and are discouraged from taking term-time holidays.
- Positively encouraging and valuing regular, punctual attendance.
- Rewarding and recognising children whose attendance and punctuality is good and those who have improved their attendance and time keeping.

### **2. Rationale**

All children of compulsory school age have the right to a high-quality full-time education which is relevant to their age, aptitude, ability and any special needs that s/he may have.

The Coppice recognises that regular school attendance and punctuality is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them, achieve their full potential and improve their life chances.

Regular attendance greatly enhances the continuity of learning, furthers educational progress and leads to increased levels of achievement and attainment of both individuals and groups of pupils and thereby the standards achieved by our school. It also improves a child's ability to develop and keep friendship groups within school and enhances their social skills. Without doubt, regular and punctual attendance patterns are crucial for our children when they enter the world of work and they are therefore key life skills which will benefit all of our children's economic life chances.

Due to the above, attendance is always a key whole-school improvement issue and we take seriously our responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all of our children.

We believe that all stakeholders have a role to play in ensuring that school attendance is good.

### **3. Legislation:**

Parents/carers of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (Section 444) to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be referred to the

Local Authority for prosecution via our Deputy Headteacher or our Education Welfare Officer (EWO) if the issues around non-school attendance cannot be resolved by the use of a range of attendance strategies (**see section 11**).

In addition, the school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of all children for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

### **4. School Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing in Education (see appendix 1).**

Local authorities have a legal duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. This particularly applies to children who have moved to another authority or country but are not yet in education.

Schools are required to make the Local Authority aware of every registered pupil on roll who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school (whose absence we have not been able to establish), where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days (Education Pupil Registration England Regulations 2006 regulation 12).

The Local Authority provides further information and guidance on children missing from education, emphasising the link between poor school attendances and safeguarding concerns at:

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20223/support\\_for\\_children\\_and\\_families](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20223/support_for_children_and_families)

The Attendance Leader in school (Deputy Head) and the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) should work closely to manage risks and ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement

where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

## **5. Who is responsible for attendance issues in school.**

At The Coppice Primary School, Lindsey Ashwell (Deputy Head) is the senior member of staff responsible for attendance; Karen Woodyatt is the EWO and Billy Hutt (Headteacher) is the Senior DSL. All of these staff work closely together where the attendance of a pupil is a concern.

As stated earlier, all members of school staff (both teaching and non-teaching) have responsibility for attendance issues in school. Consequently, all members of school staff from those who receive absence calls in the school office, through to teachers, who speak regularly to parents, and senior staff, who deal with attendance issues, can impact positively on children's attendance in school.

Attendance matters are reviewed by the Head and members of the senior management team on a regular basis and attendance issues are reported at least termly to the Board of Trustees.

## **6. Statements of Expectations**

### **6(i) What is expected of The Coppice Primary School:**

- Meet the legal requirements set out by Government.
- Give a high priority to encouraging excellent punctuality and attendance.
- Monitor all children's punctuality and attendance and develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- Consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1996 Education Act.
- Develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance.
- Encourage open communication channels between home and school.
- Develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees.
- Liaise regularly with the school's Education Welfare Officer and develop procedures leading to a formal referral to the EWO.
- Keep accurate records using the computerised system of attendance (SIMS).
- Monitor absentees on day 1 via a telephone call to parents if school has not been notified;
- Contact parents if the need arises via phone, follow up calls and in writing. Should the need arise, meetings with parents will be held and, where absence is persistent, involvement of EIS (Educational Investigation Service) will be considered.
- Reward excellent or good attendance.
- Inform the Board of Trustees about attendance.
- Keep parents updated about attendance via the school newsletter.

### **6(ii) What is expected of the Parents/Carers at The Coppice:**

The school aims to work collaboratively with parents/carers so that children receive consistent messages about their attendance behaviour.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school every day and stay in school for every session that they have been registered. Parents/carers should make

sure that their children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Under the 1996 Education Act, parents/carers may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This legislation exists with the aim of ensuring that parents carry out their duty to secure a good education for their children.

If a child is in foster care or a residential home, it is important that the carers recognise their parenting role where school attendance is concerned. In order to do this, they will be supported by close co-operation between the school, Education Welfare Services and Social Services, especially where such a child's attendance is irregular.

### **Parents/Carers should support regular school attendance by:**

- Offering a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of.

- Offering reasons for any lateness.

- Working closely in partnership with the school Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance.

- Parents should actively engage in discussing concerns regarding their child's attendance.

- Taking family holidays during school holiday periods and being aware that requests for holidays during term time will not be authorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances (**see further detailed explanation in section 10 below**).

- Be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic times such as SATS or the start of new terms.

- Supporting their child and recognising their successes and achievements. They should attend Parents' Evenings and other events, talk to their child about school and take a positive interest in their child's work, including homework.

- Keeping in touch with class teachers, especially regarding any issues that may affect a child's attendance and learning.

- Encouraging their child to come to school and reinforcing why this is in the child's best interests.

### **6(iii) What is expected of the children:**

Children have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available. Consequently children should:

- Respect themselves and others.

- Do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually.

- Inform a trusted adult if they feel they are being bullied.

- Encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.

### **6(iv) What is expected of The Board of Trustees at The Coppice:**

The Attendance Lead takes the lead role in managing attendance and liaises with School Administrators, parents and the EWO to promote good attendance and follow up a potential or arising attendance issue. A report is presented to Trustees each term and they in turn are then required to support the school and challenge them where necessary with attendance issues.

## **6(v) What is expected of The Local Authority:**

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide education and promote the regular attendance of all statutory school age children. Through the Education Welfare Service (EWS), the Local Authority provides support to schools and parents to fulfil their legal duty. The EIS (Educational Investigation Service) is the enforcement agency of the LEA and as well as providing guidance and support through its officers may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The court may fine the parent and put in place a School Attendance Order (SAO), an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or a Parenting Order.

## **7.School Procedures for Recording and Monitoring Attendance**

The law states that a register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to record whether a child is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site or absent. If a child is absent the register must record the reason for the absence and whether it was authorised or unauthorised.

### **7(i) Registers:**

Attendance registers and registers are kept electronically every morning and afternoon using the SIMS attendance module.

Every morning, the class teacher will take a register recording who is present and absent from school from 8.45am - 9.00 am and every afternoon from 12.30 – 12.35pm for EYFS; 1.00-1.05pm for KS1; 1.10pm - 1.15pm for Year 5 and 6; and 1.20 – 1.25pm for Years 3 and 4.

Teachers must ensure the registers are completed and returned to the office as soon as possible. The registers will close at 10am. Any child arriving later than the register times stated above (without a prior reason being given) will be marked by the teacher as absent (N code).

The Coppice Primary School complies with and uses the DFE compulsory national attendance codes (**see Appendix 2**). An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions. The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations.

### **7(ii) Absences and Codes (see appendix 2):**

Every half day of absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the Headteacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised (**see iii below**).

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the Headteacher [**see The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI No. 2006/1751) – Reg 7(1)**].

### **7(iii) Unexplained absences:**

All unexplained absences are chased up on a daily basis by text message requesting a reason for the absence. If a child's absence is not covered by any of the reasons in **Section 8 below**, and

if no satisfactory explanation has been presented from home for a child's absence, then the absence is entered as 'unauthorised' (O code). The Coppice Primary School has procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within one week.

The Headteacher/Deputy Head/EWO will personally phone the parents of Pupil Premium children and Persistently Absent (PA) children to request a reason for absence. Medical evidence will be asked for if appropriate and as a matter of course with PA children.

#### **7(iv) Lates/punctuality**

Children must attend on time to be given a mark for the session. Children arriving after 8.45am (but before the register closes) should report to the school office where they will be marked as late on the register and the reason for lateness noted in the Late Book.

Where a pupil arrives after the register closes (10am at The Coppice), they (as per DfE compulsory attendance codes) will be marked with a 'U' (late after registers have closed and meaning an unauthorised absence) **unless** they have a legitimate reason e.g. they were attending a medical appointment ('M' code) which was pre-arranged and we were notified about it.

If the parent states that the child is late due to a medical/doctor's appointment that we didn't know about, evidence will be required of this e.g. an official text from the doctors, official letter or appointment card. In this case, the child will be given an 'L' code which means 'Late after the registers closed but meaning an authorised absence.

If the child is absent for another acceptable reason, they will be given a 'C' code (meaning other authorised circumstances) which will be marked on the child's attendance record accordingly.

#### **8.Absence from school:**

There are only two categories of absence from school:

#### **'Authorised' – approved and 'Unauthorised' – not approved**

Only the Headteacher (or their delegate) can approve an absence from school. That is the law **(see section 9 below)**.

Absence will be recorded using the codes recommended by the Department for Education Guidance on School Attendance.

#### **8(i) Authorised (approved) absence – types of authorised absence that may be approved:**

-Leave of absence for bereavement, funerals or close family weddings.

#### **-Medical absence appointments:**

The Coppice recognises that specialist hospital and specialist clinic appointments including orthodontic and on-going dental treatment may require a child having time out of school. However, our expectation is that a minimum amount of learning is lost and children should not be absent for the whole day. We will seek an explanation from parents where a whole day is missed for this reason. Proof of unavoidable medical appointments in school time must be provided for the school e.g. hospital appointment letter.

Parents are advised to make routine, non – urgent check-up appointments for dentists, doctors or opticians outside of school hours (after 3.15pm) where possible or during school holidays.

#### **-Illness:**

We know and understand that children are likely to experience bouts of illness from time to time which mean that the child is ill or is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause. In addition, some students will be managing chronic or more serious medical conditions that impact on attendance. We will of course support children in these circumstances to ensure that they do not miss out on their education and are not penalised for unavoidable absence related to their condition. However, we will seek to always support parents with encouraging them in ensuring that their children still attend school if the illness is not sufficient enough to prevent this e.g. a cold (**see appendix 4**).

We have agreed that if a child has taken a PCR test and is awaiting results, due to either having Covid symptoms, or because they live with someone who has tested positive to Covid, they will be granted two authorised absence days (time taken for the PCR test results to be returned). If they test positive for Covid and need to isolate, 10 days from the day the test was taken will be granted as authorised (along with proof of a positive result). If the PCR is negative, no further days will be authorised (following Government guidance).

#### **-Service children:**

It is a well-known fact that the children of members of the armed forces may not be able to have holidays with their parents within the usual school holidays due to a parent being on deployment. Schools should therefore treat any requests for term-time leave for this reason as an exceptional circumstance. However, the onus is on the parent to provide evidence of the legitimate nature of this absence i.e. through a letter from the Commanding Officer. It is also the responsibility of the parent to balance the amount of these requests with the child's educational needs.

**It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence.** In the majority of cases, a parent's note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern. In exceptional circumstances, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

The Coppice Primary School can challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance and there is a pattern of frequent absence for reasons of minor illness.

The Coppice Primary school has clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

#### **8(ii)The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:**

-Attendance is less than 90%.

-There are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness (also known as broken weeks) – (**see Appendix 3: explanation for parents**).

-The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated.

-Where there is a particular medical problem and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support.

-Where a positive PCR test is given as reason for absence

### **8(iii) Other reasons for absences:**

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time. Notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons.

-Religious observance. The child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith e.g. Eid.

-If a pupil is excluded from school for a behaviour related incident, this is an authorised absence.

-The child lives over a certain distance from the school and the LEA has either failed to make suitable arrangements to register the child at a nearer school or make suitable transport arrangements.

-The child is absent "with leave" which, due to exceptional circumstances, has been granted by the school.

### **8(iv) Unauthorised (not approved) absence – types of absence that will not be approved:**

-The school will follow DfE guidance and not authorise absences due to birthday, shopping, childminding or looking after other family members

-Holiday in term-time unless there is an exceptional circumstance agreed to by the Headteacher – in line with the changes to the law implemented in 2013.

-As mentioned earlier above, late arrival at school after 10am has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless a sufficient reason has been provided.

-Absence relating to a family member being tested positive for Covid when the child has tested negative or has not been tested.

### **9(i) Reasons for absence must be given by parents/carers.**

The Coppice Primary School will always require an explanation from parents for all absence or periods of absence. These may be offered by text; verbally (either in person or over the phone) or in writing.

If the child involved has an attendance of below 90%, or there has been no verbal explanation, then a written explanation must also be received by the school upon their return. The school may then decide whether to authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence (as per above).

This decision will be made in accordance with the 1996 Education Act, which identifies the reasons (**in section 8 above**) as acceptable reasons for an authorised absence.

The school will contact parents who have not offered a reason by letter and, on the advice of our Educational Welfare Officer, will mark the absence as unauthorised if no reason is provided.

### **9(ii) The Coppice Primary School daily absence procedure (See Appendix 6 flowchart):**

Unexplained or prolonged absences are followed up by the school EWO Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) or Education Investigation Service (EIS) who regularly check registers and monitor attendance.

### **10. Leave of Absence requests (including holidays)/planned absences procedure:**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 state that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance.

The Coppice Primary School is therefore unable, legally, to authorise any leave of absence requests unless there is an exceptional circumstance. This is due to the volume of work expected from children to cover the National Curriculum requirements and consequently, term-time absence is deemed disruptive to a child's education. It is the decision of the Head Teacher as to what might be considered an exceptional circumstance.

Parents/carers are requested to fill in a leave of absence form from the school office and return it at least 6 weeks in advance of the proposed absence whereupon, if the leave is judged to be an exceptional circumstance and is consequently authorised, they will be notified of such in writing within two weeks. However, parents are advised that they should not expect their request to be granted as a right and must assume it is NOT authorised unless they hear otherwise.

If school is aware of any language difficulties that may preclude a request form being completed appropriate support will be offered to the parent/carer.

If a parent/carer considers that they require their child's proposed leave of absence to be for exceptional circumstances, there is a requirement that parent/carers provide evidence of the exceptional circumstance and may be required to meet with the Head teacher/Attendance Leader to explain this.

An example that can be given from the 2012 London Olympics where all police leave was cancelled. As a result, it was agreed that requests for leave for the children of Police officers affected by the cancellation of their leave would be treated as exceptional.

Where the Headteacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to warrant the request of the leave of absence but has additional concerns such as the timing of the absence or the child's attendance record is of concern, further guidance will be sought from the LA.

If however, the Headteacher deems that the reasons are not exceptional, the leave of absence will not be authorised and a written reply will be sent informing the parents/carers of this decision for each child.

This written confirmation will also state that should this absence still be taken, it will be recorded as 'unauthorised' on the register and will warn of the legal implications of taking this absence.

It is important for all parents/carers to understand that The Coppice Primary School is duty-bound to refer all unauthorised holiday leave of 10 or more consecutive days directly and immediately to the Education Enforcement Team at the Local Authority for safeguarding reasons. Worcestershire County Council will then also make the decision whether or not to impose a fixed penalty notice (fine) for this absence as it is the law that parents can be fined for taking their children on holiday during term time without the consent of the school. Currently, the fine stands at £60 per parent per child.

The Coppice Primary School also reserves the right to refer to County any 5 day holiday requests where the child's attendance is below the 90% PA threshold and there is a pattern of concern around a child's attendance.

**No absence will be granted during the Key Stage One or Key Stage Two testing periods.**

### **11. Poor attendance Strategy:**

All children are expected to achieve at least 96% attendance for an academic year. This equates to no more than 8/9 days absence a year.

#### **11(i) Persistent Absences:**

The definition of persistently absent (PA) pupil as set by the DFE is a pupil with 10% or more absence (90% or less attendance). The information below, derived from the census guidance, gives an indication of the minimum number of sessions a pupil would miss by each half term to be classed as PA. One session equates to either a morning or afternoon.

**Half-term 1 (Autumn term) 1 - 7 or more sessions**

**Half-terms 1&2 (Autumn term) 14 or more sessions**

**Half-terms 1-3 (Autumn term and first Spring half-term) 20 or more sessions**

**Half-term 1-4 (Autumn term and Spring term combined) 25 or more sessions**

**Half-term 1-5 (Autumn and Spring terms plus first Summer half-term) 31 or more sessions**

**Half-term 1-6 (full academic year) 38 or more sessions**

Pupils with persistent absenteeism will be identified and action will be taken to address the underlying reasons for the absence level. EWO or Local Authority involvement may be necessary. All intervention must be documented.

Those students whose attendance falls below 92% will be closely monitored and further action considered. Between 95% and 92%, it is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to discuss the matter with the parent/carer in consultation with the Head/Deputy Head and administrative staff.

Recognition of a pattern of absence is vital. Schools will analyse individual pupil data to identify quickly patterns of absence which cause concern and parents will be informed by the school where their child's attendance causes concern.

Liaison between SLT, class teachers and the Education Welfare Officer with support from the County attendance officer will ensure a holistic approach to the cause for concern. Early involvement of the parent/carer is paramount in securing good attendance. The Coppice Primary School will rigorously challenge the attitudes of parents who give a low priority to the attendance of their child.

The Coppice Primary School has a clear and escalating approach to intervention where there are concerns regarding a pupil's attendance at The Coppice:

- Phone call home.
- Letters to parent/carer including those requesting medical evidence
- Home visits by the EWO/Head/Deputy Head
- Calling meetings with parent/carers and children in order to discuss any issues
- School mentoring
  - Parenting contracts
  - Pastoral support plan (PSP)
  - Individual educational support plan

### **11(ii) Formal Attendance Meetings:**

Parents of children whose attendance gives cause for concern may be invited to attend a formal attendance meeting to discuss the child's school attendance, identify and barriers to regular school attendance and agree a target and action plan to improve school attendance.

These meetings will be chaired by a senior member of school staff and in exceptional cases, a member of the Board of Trustees. A parent representatives will also be present. Others attending may also include anyone in school who is involved with the child e.g. a Thrive Practitioner.

### **11(iii) Legal action to be considered should children's attendance still not improve:**

If there is no improvement in a student's attendance following the school's interventions and attendance remains a concern, the school will refer the matter to the Worcestershire County Council Senior Education Welfare Officer for Prosecutions for advice and possible legal action. A pre-prosecution meeting will be held involving the Local Authority, and The Coppice Primary School to determine whether any of the following course of legal action is necessary:

- Prosecution of a parent/carer for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends school to the statutory requirement through the Education Act 1996, section 444(1 or 1A)

- Application to Magistrates Court for an Education Supervision Order – to ensure that the child of compulsory school age and registered at a school attends regularly

- Application to Magistrates Court for a Parenting Order – to enforce regular attendance following a successful prosecution by the Local Authority

- Penalty Notice issued for an instant monetary fine for irregular attendance. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of up to £2,500.

The Coppice Primary School will put into place a system for enabling returning children to catch up on learning and reintegrate within the school.

### **12. Lates and what will happen if a child is persistently late:**

Persistent lateness i.e. any child repeatedly arriving after 9am, will be deemed as an area of concern by the school and parents will be contacted in writing or in person to discuss the problem (see appendix 5 example of letter to parents).

Lessons and learning begin immediately at the very start of the school day (at 8.45 am) with Early Bird activities. It is important that children do not miss this key learning.

### **When children arrive late:**

-They may feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled.

-They miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability.

-It disrupts the entire class and the teacher – everyone's education is compromised.

-5 minutes late every day adds up to 3 days lost learning each year

-10 minutes adds up to 6 days lost learning each year

-15 minutes adds up to 10 days lost learning each year

-20 minutes adds up to 13 days lost learning each year

-30 minutes adds up to 19 days lost learning each year

Continuing late arrival and absences may be marked as 'unauthorised absence'. Letters from parents / carers explaining the 'lates' will be requested. The EWO/Attendance Lead may also discuss punctuality problems with parents at the request of the school.

***Further lateness may result in being served with a Penalty Notice or a summons to court. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular and prompt attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.***

### **13.Support for parents with attendance:**

School attendance is supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved is paramount.

The Attendance Lead, Designated Safeguarding Lead and EWO should work closely to manage risks and ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

The School Educational Welfare Officer can be contacted via the school office to provide support and guidance to any parent/carer experiencing difficulties with attendance or any other family issues. They will also be proactive in contacting parents/carers by letter/telephone to help prevent persistent absence from arising in the first place.

### **14. Monitoring**

The attendance and absences of all children are monitored on a weekly basis by the Attendance Leader and EWO.

This involves:

-Monitoring any issues connected with requests for leave of absence or explanations for illness, and intervening as appropriate.

-Reviewing list of pupils below 92% attendance (in September 2015, the Persistent Absence level was raised from 85% to 90%) and intervening as appropriate i.e. when attendance/punctuality becomes a concern.

### **15. Travellers** (Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families):

Research has shown that many children from these families can become disengaged from education, particularly during the secondary school phase. Pupils are particularly vulnerable at transition from primary to secondary where a GRT pupil leaves school without identifying a new destination school. Schools should inform the CME team as soon as they become aware that a secondary school application will not be made for a GRT pupil. Although many are settled, some GRT families move regularly and their children can be at increased risk of missing education.

Schools should work with families to minimise disruption to GRT pupils' education, for example if the family need to travel in order to work, they should be supported to dual register with other schools.

There is provision within the legislation to permit Travellers to remove their child/children from full time education whilst they are travelling, however this can only be done after the completion of 200 sessions (100 days) in an academic year. The parent/carer must complete a form stating the economic purpose of their intention to travel and must attend school to discuss the pending period of absence with the Attendance Leader prior to removing the child. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise this absence or not. Should permission be granted, 'T' will be entered into the pupil register system.

### **16. Service children:**

Families of members of the Armed Forces Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in the UK and overseas and often at short notice. Schools and local authorities should contact the MOD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980 618244 for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for those children when the family moves. (**See also section 8** regarding term-time absence requests from service people due to deployment)

### **17. Deletion of children from the admission register:**

Schools must notify the Local Authority when they remove a child from roll in line with the '**Removing Pupils from Roll: Guidance for Schools**'. All schools must inform their local authority of any child who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

-Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, eg: elective home education (EHE). Schools must not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the child or because the child has a poor attendance record.

-Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.

-Have been certified by the School Nurse as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

-Have been permanently excluded.

### **18. Rewarding good attendance:**

The Coppice Primary School will reward good attendance and improved attendance regularly through reward schemes and incentives. These include:

-Weekly Class Attendance Reward for the class with the highest attendance percentage. Two certificates will be issued (one in KS1 and one in KS2) with the highest attendance.

-Weekly Punctuality Award presented to KS1 and KS2 class with the least number of lates.

-Termly and half-termly certificates are issued for all children with 100% attendance.

-Any child who achieves a full term of 100% of attendance will receive a bronze star. If a child achieves a 100% attendance for two terms, they will receive a silver star; and if they achieve a 100% attendance for all three terms i.e 100% for the whole academic year, they will receive a 100% badge and a free book from the Book Fair.

-Children with attendance of 98% or over for the whole academic year (from the first day for children in September through to the cut-off point towards the end of the Summer term) will receive a year group reward. This will be a two hour reward and could involve things like a Forest School session; fun games afternoon outside on the field with an ice-cream; or a cinema afternoon with hot dogs.

### **19. Mention of attendance in Annual School Report and at Parents' Evening:**

A summary of attendance is presented to parents with their child's report at the end of every academic year in July. Attendance will also be mentioned and discussed at the twice-yearly Parents' Evenings where an up-to-date attendance printout is shared with parents.

### **20. Data analysis – when this is done and how it is used:**

Attendance data is submitted to the DFE, most schools use the management information systems via the school census. This data is published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics. Analysis of data helps to identify the main causes of absence within the school and plan appropriate action to ensure all children attend school regularly.

Attendance data is analysed by year group, classes, groups of children e.g. Pupil Premium, SEND, GRT, EAL etc. in order to help identify particular groups of children where absences are an area of concern and to track attendance patterns of individual children.

## **21. Inclusion statement:**

The principles and expectations of this Attendance Policy apply to all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. However, early and accurate identification of a child's special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention is crucial in ensuring that any issues relating to the child's attendance at school are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Consequently, we will always endeavour to use effective and meaningful ways of supporting the attendance of all pupils with Special Educational Needs (within the bounds of the resources available). This will ensure that all pupils receive the education to which they are entitled.

## **22. Legislation and Guidance informing this Policy:**

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold. **For academies**, this policy complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

## **23. GDPR:**

### **Data Protection Statement:**

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our GDPR Data Protection Policy and all data will be handled in accordance with it.

<b>Name of policy</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Reason for policy</b>	<b>Who does it relate to?</b>	<b>Where is it stored?</b>
Attendance	Key information concerning Attendance policy and procedures.	To inform all stakeholders about attendance in The Grove Partnership	Children, Teachers, Parents, Trustees and Ofsted.	By the Curriculum Coordinator and through The Governing Body via The Curriculum Sub Committee.

### **As such, our assessment is that this policy :**

<b>Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements</b>	<b>Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements</b>	<b>Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements</b>
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This policy is a working document and is therefore open to change and restructuring as and when the need arises.

### **Appendix 1: Children Missing From Education Pathway:**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff in education provision should follow the provision's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential, pupils need to attend regularly. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing in their area.

All education providers should:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Ensure parents perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- Ensure all pupils are punctual to school and lessons.
- Ensure they liaise with the named social worker where Children's Social Work are engaged with the child or family

The law requires schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. Schools should use the national absence and attendance codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collection statistics through the School Census System.

The codes are detailed in School Attendance (DfE, October 2014) [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/361008/Advice\\_on\\_school\\_attendance\\_sept\\_2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/361008/Advice_on_school_attendance_sept_2014.pdf)). Please note the requirements around the use of the L and U code (page 8), and requirements for recording attendance of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller pupils (page 11).

Schools should promote good school attendance and put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that staff are alert to signs to look out for, and the individual triggers to be aware of, when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM, CSE, forced marriage

Involving other agencies and signposting:

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent, without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

Pupils at risk of harm/neglect - Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected schools should follow child protection procedures. If there is reason to suspect that a crime has been committed or the child's safety is at risk, the police should also be involved.

#### **Appendix 2: Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings:**

##### **CODE DESCRIPTION MEANING:**

/ Present (AM) Present

\ Present (PM) Present

**B** Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) Approved Education Activity

**C** Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) Authorised absence

**D** Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment) Approved Education Activity

**E** Excluded (no alternative provision made) Authorised absence

**G** Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement) Unauthorised absence

**H** Family holiday (agreed) Authorised absence

**I** Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) Authorised absence

**J** Interview Approved Education Activity **L** Late (before registers closed) Present

**M** Medical/Dental appointments Authorised absence

**N** No reason yet provided for absence Unauthorised absence

**O** Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description) Unauthorised absence

**P** Approved sporting activity Approved Education Activity

**R** Religious observance Authorised absence

**S** Study leave Authorised absence

**T** Traveller absence Authorised absence

**U** Late (after registers closed) Unauthorised absence

**V** Educational visit or trip Approved Education Activity

**W** Work experience Approved Education Activity

**X** Non-compulsory school age absence - Not counted in possible attendances

**Y** Enforced closure - Not counted in possible attendances

**Z** Pupil not yet on roll - Not counted in possible attendances

# School closed to pupils - Not counted in possible attendances

### **Appendix 3: Broken weeks – attendance information for parents:**

#### **Broken Weeks! Please avoid them!**

One of the things that impacts most negatively on children's progress is if children have odd days off here and there over the year that disrupts a week's learning. Those who monitor attendance in school call these 'broken weeks'.

Good learning in school is reliant on building learning links, lesson by lesson and day by day. If one of these links is missed then the whole programme of learning can be disrupted, leaving children confused and falling behind. In short, every lesson counts!

In addition, absence can affect friendships, with the break in social continuity, and children losing that sense of 'belonging'. Such influences cannot be underestimated as children's happiness, and so success, in school is often affected by friendships. This is particularly the case in Infants and the Early Years where friendship groups are just establishing.

All of the above can lead to a downward spiral with children feeling 'disconnected' and finding work difficult because of missed learning. Accordingly, we often end up with such children not wanting to attend.

The government (DFE) document '*The link between absence and attainment*' (available online) points out that even a small drop in attendance can negatively affect a child's success in school. We see this in school, with our low attending children being amongst the worst attaining children.

Given all of the above we would urge parents to be stringent when making the decision to keep children off school.

The NHS give some very good guidance on this, making the point that even if a child feels under the weather then they need to be in school. Some of this advice is copied overleaf.

Basically, the rule needs to be, use parental judgement to decide if your child is actually ill to the extent that they cannot participate in lessons, otherwise dose a child with Calpol and send them in! If your child's condition deteriorates during the school day then we will always contact you. Please be assured, we always have your child's best interest at heart and would not keep them in school if they were not well enough to be here.

I appreciate the temptation as a loving parent is to keep children off school at the slightest sign of anything but in the long run it does not help their performance in school.



#### **Appendix 4: NHS Advice : Is my child too ill for school?**

If your child is ill, it's likely to be due to one of a few minor health conditions. Whether you send your child to school will depend on how severe you think the illness is. Use this guidance to help you make that judgement.

**Remember:** if you're concerned about your child's health, consult a health professional.

- **Cough and cold.** A child with a minor cough or cold may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by a raised temperature, shivers or drowsiness, the child should stay off school, visit the GP and return to school 24 hours after they start to feel better. If your child has a more severe and long-lasting cough, consult your GP. They can give guidance on whether your child should stay off school.
- **Raised temperature.** If your child has a raised temperature, they shouldn't attend school. They can return 24 hours after they start to feel better.
- **Rash.** Skin rashes can be the first sign of many infectious illnesses, such as chickenpox and measles. Children with these conditions shouldn't attend school. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or practice nurse before sending them to school.
- **Headache.** A child with a minor headache doesn't usually need to be kept off school. If the headache is more severe or is accompanied by other symptoms, such as raised temperature or drowsiness, then keep the child off school and consult your GP.
- **Vomiting and diarrhoea.** Children with diarrhoea and/or vomiting should definitely be kept off school until at least 48 hours after their symptoms have gone. Most cases of diarrhoea and vomiting in children get better without treatment, but if symptoms persist, consult your GP.
- **Sore throat.** A sore throat alone doesn't have to keep a child from school. But if it's accompanied by a raised temperature, your child should stay at home.
- **Chickenpox.** If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all their spots have crusted over.

## **Tell the school**

It's important to inform the school if your child is going to be absent. On the first day of your child's illness, telephone the school to tell them that your child will be staying at home. The school may ask about the nature of the illness and how long you expect the absence to last.

If it becomes clear that your child will be away for longer than expected, phone the school as soon as possible to explain this.

**For more information visit:** <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Yourchildatschool/Pages/Illness.aspx>

## **Appendix 5: Exemplar Persistent Lateness letter to parents:**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

### **Re: Persistent Lateness**

Your child \_\_\_\_\_ has been late for school on \_\_\_\_\_ days out of 82 so far this academic year. This represents a significant number of days.

Lessons and learning at The Coppice begin immediately, at the very start of the school day (at 8.45 am) with our Early Bird activities. **It is important that children do not miss this key learning.**

In addition, when children arrive late:

- They may feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled.**
  
- They miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability.**
  
- It disrupts the entire class and the teacher – everyone's education is compromised.**

Further lateness may result in you being served with a Penalty Notice or a summons to court. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular and prompt attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

### **Bear in mind:**

- 5 minutes late every day adds up to 3 days lost each year
  
- 10 minutes adds up to 6 days lost each year

- 15 minutes adds up to 10 days lost each year
- 20 minutes adds up to 13 days lost each year
- 30 minutes adds up to 19 days lost each year

If this persistent lateness continues, you will be contacted by either the school's EWO (Mrs. Woodyatt), Deputy Head (Mrs. Ashwell) or Headteacher (Mr. Hutt) to discuss this matter.

We trust that we will have your support in ensuring that your child arrives at school on time. At the end of the day, we all want the best for your child, both socially and academically. Yours sincerely,

(Mrs. Ashwell - Deputy Head)

**Appendix 6: The Coppice's absence of children (due to illness) procedure:**

