



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

**Approved by Governing Body:**

**Date:** June 2021

**Reviewed by SLT on:** April 2021

**Next review due by:** Bi Annual – June 2023

**Dissemination of the Policy: All staff and Governors, School Website**

## History of policy changes

Date	Version	Change	Origin of change e.g. change in legislation, request by TU	Changed by

## **Purpose and aim of the policy and procedures**

1. To improve the overall percentage of students' attendance, including all identified sub-groups with identified low attendance, including Pupil Premium (PP) and SEND
2. To reduce the level of persistent absence (PA)
3. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers and governors.
4. To maintain a frame work which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
5. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students
6. To maintain a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
7. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
8. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions based upon attendance
9. To work in an effective partnership with the Local Authority and with other services and agencies

This policy has been developed in line with the [DFE guidance on School Attendance](#) – November 2016 and [Gloucestershire County Council Guidance for Schools: Securing Regular and Punctual Attendance](#)

## **Statutory Duties**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive full time education by regular attendance at a school or by other arrangements. Parents have the responsibility for making sure their children attend school and that they are on time. Pittville School is responsible for recording student attendance twice a day, once at the start of the morning sessions and once during the afternoon session.

## **Authorised and unauthorised absence**

It is the school's decision whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. A telephone call on the first day of absence followed by a letter on return from parents/carers does not in itself authorise an absence; only School's acceptance of the explanation authorises the absence. The following examples should make this clearer:

### **Authorised Absences**

- Sickness/medical condition. If the number of absences becomes a concern, medical evidence will be required. This will be at the school's discretion
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointment (half day maximum)
- Days of religious observance (agreed with Headteacher beforehand)
- Exceptional family circumstances (at the Headteacher's discretion)
- Going to other schools for visits, interviews or examination

### **Unauthorised Absences**

- Parents requesting their child take a leave of absence during term time should complete the Leave of Absence form on the school's website and submit this to the school no less than two weeks in advance. The law is clear that a leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Holidays in term time cannot be legally sanctioned and any parent who takes their child out of school for a term time holiday is breaking the law by doing so. If students are taken out of school without permission their absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents may be liable for a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution. Pittville School will always request the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for term time holidays.

The following are examples of unauthorised absences. This is not an exhaustive list:

- Minor ailments such as a stomach ache or headache – if as a parent you would not miss work for the same minor ailment then we would ask that you still send your child to school
- Concerns over bullying or friendship issues – these issues can only be resolved when the student is in school
- Because a child or parent is unhappy about a sanction issued by the school – again, these issues can only be resolved when the student is in school
- Looking after siblings or other family members – every student has a right to an education and they should miss time in school to act as a carer for other family members
- Shopping (even for school uniform)
- Celebrating a birthday
- Sleeping in
- One child is ill, so all are kept off
- Because it is the end of the week or the term
- Students arriving after the close of registration without a valid reason risk that session being recorded as unauthorised

### **Legal Proceedings**

Legal proceedings will be considered after the school have tried to engage with, and offered support to, a family of a student who has attendance issues. If the poor/non-attendance of a student is not resolved, the school will request the LA take legal action against the parents or responsible adult of the child. If found guilty by a Magistrate a parent/responsible adult could be fined, be subject to a Parenting Order, or face a custodial sentence.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)**

A school can request the Local Authority issue a FPN for a student who has a minimum of five days, or ten sessions, unauthorised absence. A FPN will always be requested for holidays taken during term time. Both parents/carers will be liable to pay a FPN in these circumstances.

### **Responsibilities Regarding Attendance Students**

- Pittville School expects all students to be punctual and maintain high levels of attendance (the minimum target for student attendance is 95%)
- Students should arrive at school on time and be at their tutor room by 8.30 am.
- Morning registration is from 8.35am until 8.45am
- The first lesson starts at 8.45am
- Late students will be sent to Attendance Office to sign in
- Students who arrive late to school (without good reason) will have a 30 minute detention after school that same day (parents will be informed by text message). Any student who is not in their tutor room at the 8.35am bell is considered to be late (even if they are on the school site at that time). We ask that parents contact the Attendance Office to report any genuine reason for a student's lateness
- A record of late comers and reasons for lateness will be kept by the Attendance and Welfare Officer and discussed at the bi-weekly House attendance meetings
- Lates will be recorded in SIMs by the Attendance and Welfare Officer
- Attendance will be rewarded on a termly basis through the issuing of rewards and certificates. Attendance is also a factor in students attending other reward trips.

There will also be voucher reward schemes three times a year – with a prize per tutor group given.

### **Parents**

- It is a legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. Pittville School expects parents/carers to ensure their child attends every day, on time, at 8.30am
- Parents/carers are expected to know what absences are acceptable. Any absence will only be authorised at the discretion of the Head Teacher as set out in this policy
- Parents should be aware of the legal consequences of non-attendance
- Parents/carers should be aware that poor punctuality may result in an unauthorised absence being recorded which could lead to intervention by the Local Authority
- Parents/carers are asked to inform Pittville School of any barriers to their child attending school and to work with staff at the school to overcome these barriers
- Pittville School requires that all parents/carers inform the school's Attendance and Welfare Officer by telephone (01242 548717) on their child's first day of absence. Medical evidence may be requested by the school if non-attendance is due to illness

### **Tutors**

- It is the responsibility of all tutors at Pittville School to formally and accurately take the register at the start of each registration session
- Starting in September each year it will be the responsibility of the tutor to phone the parents of any student whose attendance falls below 95%. This phone call should be to discuss any concerns around student welfare which are a barrier to good attendance. This phone call must be made within one week of the student falling below 95% attendance and must be recorded on SIMS/Behaviour/Attendance
- Pittville School expects all tutors to support the regular attendance of their tutees by addressing any barriers that may prevent their regular attendance
- Tutors will be expected to review the weekly attendance data they receive about their tutor group and to discuss attendance with their group at least once per week
- Tutors are expected to act on this attendance data, to monitor the attendance of their tutees and discuss any concerns to their Head of House
- Tutors are expected to encourage good punctuality
- Student's absence letters must be passed, promptly, to the Attendance and Welfare Officer
- Tutors should support students who are returning to school following an authorised absence
- Each tutor should maintain an up to date and accurate wall display of their group's attendance figures in their tutor room (this should not include names or photographs of individual students)

### **Heads of House/ Pastoral Managers**

- Heads of House will receive weekly updates on the attendance of all students in their House. It is the responsibility of the Head of House to ensure that they are aware of pupils in the Houses with poor attendance and that actions are being taken to address these issues.
- Heads of House and Restorative Practice Leads should rigorously monitor attendance. The Head of House will meet regularly (every two weeks) with the school's Attendance and Welfare Officer
- Attendance will appear as an item on all House Team meeting agendas

- It is the responsibility of the Heads of House to promote and celebrate good attendance through the use of the school's reward system
- Restorative practice Leads may be required to support the AWO in the administration of the school's attendance procedures as deemed necessary and should be familiar with these procedures (including holding ACMs as directed)
- The link between attendance and attainment will be actively promoted through tutors, assemblies and parents' evenings
- Pittville School expects all Heads of House and Pastoral Managers to promote the regular attendance of students by addressing any barriers that may prevent good attendance through early intervention with students and their parents/carers

### **Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO)**

- It is the responsibility of the school's Attendance and Welfare Officer to maintain the day to day running of attendance procedures. When no explanation for an absence has been received, the AWO is responsible for making contact with parents/carers to confirm the nature of the absence and to challenge any unnecessary absence
- The AWO will ensure that all parents/carers of absent students will receive a phone call to discuss and, where appropriate, challenge the reason for the absence
- The AWO should analyse attendance data to identify any patterns of concern and liaise with the relevant staff e.g. Assistant Head, Attendance Lead, Heads of House, Pastoral Managers, tutors and subject teachers and work with them to improve attendance.
- The AWO will support the school in raising the profile of attendance through the use and regular updating of attendance notice boards
- The AWO will hold meetings with students to discuss absence and lates as necessary and as directed by the Attendance Lead
- The AWO will manage the system for monitoring lates and issue late detentions as appropriate
- The AWO will make home visits based on attendance data and the priorities identified by HOH and the Attendance Lead
- The AWO will hold meetings with students to discuss absences and lates as necessary and as directed by the Attendance Lead
- The AWO will provide intensive support and guidance to a number of students as directed by the Attendance Lead and the Heads of House
- The AWO will be responsible to emailing out weekly attendance data to HOH, PMs and tutors
- The AWO will be responsible for arranging Attendance Contract Meetings and Attendance Improvement Meetings in line with this policy

### **Attendance Lead**

- It is the responsibility of the Attendance Lead to oversee the school's attendance policy and practices (as shown in the Attendance Procedures below)
- In collaboration with the Attendance Team, the Attendance Lead will monitor, evaluate and review the policy and its impact annually
- All attendance related action to be recorded in the School's Self Evaluation document
- The Attendance Lead will produce an annual report to Governors on matters of attendance as requested by the Headteacher
- The Attendance Lead will meet with regularly Head of House, Tutors, Pastoral Managers, AWO to discuss attendance issues, and monitor the progress made towards the meeting of agreed attendance targets

## **Subject Teachers**

- It is the responsibility of all subject teachers at Pittville School to accurately take their class register at the start of the lesson (within the first 10 minutes)
- The classroom teacher should report any unexplained absences to the Attendance and Welfare Officer via the messaging system on SIMS, or by email, or by a note sent to reception within the first 10 minutes of a lesson
- Pittville School expects all subject teachers to encourage punctuality through the appropriate meeting/greeting of groups and discussions with individual students who arrive late
- All lateness to lessons must be recorded on SIMS and challenged appropriately
- Subject teachers should support students who are returning to school following an authorised absence by ensuring that adequate resources are provided for their positive re-integration
- Subject teachers are expected to monitor their class attendance and identify patterns and report any concerns to the appropriate Head of House
- The link between attendance and attainment will be actively promoted in lessons

## **Heads of Faculty/Subject Leaders**

- Attendance should appear as an item on faculty meeting agendas as and when this is necessary and the link between attendance and attainment should be promoted with the Faculty/Subject
- It is the responsibility of the Head of Faculty/Subject Leader to have an overview of student attendance within their department and act upon any concerns raised by subject teachers
- Attendance information will be distributed to all teaching staff and not specifically to Heads of Faculty/Subject Leaders

## **Governors**

- Through the development of the School Development Plan governors should ensure that attendance is rigorously promoted to support student attainment
- Governors should receive regular attendance reports
- Governors should monitor and evaluate attendance and ensure the policy is carried out

## **Attendance Procedures**

### **Registers**

1. Morning and afternoon tutor registers to be taken formally and in silence
2. Lesson registers are to be taken as soon as practicable (but should be within the first 10 minutes of a lesson)
3. SIMS registers should be saved as soon as they have been taken (they must not be left open for students who are late arriving).
4. No copying over from previous session
5. Names should be called out or students visually identified
6. Unexplained absences should be reported promptly to the Attendance and Welfare Officer

### **Follow up procedures for absentees**

- Comments from all phone calls/conversation to be logged on SIMS
- AWO to send an information email to all staff with updates on absent students
- Attendance Lead to produce weekly attendance data and share at weekly tutor meetings.

**First Day of absence**

- When no communication received from parent/carer, Truancy Call to be sent and, where appropriate, followed up with a phone call to discuss the reasons for absence
- All comments to be logged on SIMS

**Second day of absence**

- AWO to phone home when student expected in (dependent on conversation from previous day)
- If no contact from parent/carer at all either on day 1 or day 2, formal letter to go home. AWO should consider whether a home visit is necessary
- All comments to be logged on SIMS

**Third day of absence**

- AWO to phone again to further discuss absence
- AWO to visit unless the reason for absence is considered genuine
- All comments to be logged on SIMS

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate to ensure compliance but no less than every 2 years. This policy review will be undertaken by the Attendance Lead

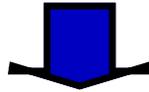
Linked Policies:

- [DFE guidance on School Attendance](#) – November 2016
- [Gloucestershire County Council Guidance for Schools: Securing Regular and Punctual Attendance](#)
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy

## Pittville School—Attendance Policy Flow Diagram

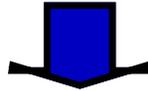
**Break time meeting with SBO/HOH each day to discuss absences. Every week attendance monitor updated and shared in Friday morning Attendance briefing with pastoral staff.**

Heads of House / Form tutors monitor attendance data on a weekly basis – Wed morning briefing information is given out.



If there is no improvement across the term, SBO/AL to ensure contact is made with home. These decisions are made weekly with HOH and SBO.

\* Daily contact will be made with AWO/ AL if a pupil is absent and parents have not informed us of where their child is.



Significant improvement and no further action taken

No change (92% to 95%) AWO/ AL and HOH will continue to monitor

No significant improvement (below 90%) the attendance team will telephone parents to arrange an Attendance Panel where a 6 week target is set to improve attendance. Panels will from Sept 2021 be done via phone call.



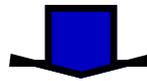
If attendance continues to be below 90%, if appropriate, SBO will send a legal warning letter. Where not appropriate, HOH/SBO/AL will work with the family and pupil on a personalised plan to re-engage the pupils in school.



If attendance continues to drop, all other avenues have been explored, SBO will begin the AIM process. (TAF/ FF/ CYPS/ TAS/ Early Help/ My Plan/ Counselling)



Parents attend Aim meeting—Aim paperwork completed at meeting and targets set with review in 4 weeks  
Parents fail to attend—we have the meeting in their absence or via phone call. If attendance continues to fall, the full AIM process is followed.



- Term 5—no governor’s panels this term
- AIMS continue as needed
- EWO chasing prosecutions with GCC legal departments
- 2nd round of postcards sent to (85% to 92%) and 100% club



- Term 6—final round of governors' panels held—focus on 88% to 92% attenders with aim of improving attendance in September
- Final attendance raffle held on last day before activities week
- Attendance Plan to be reviewed as part of SDP