Student Attendance Policy

DRYBROOK SCHOOL

Policy name	Student Attendance Policy 2026–2027
Version date	September 2026
Owner	TH
Approval date	29th September 2026
Approver	Local Governing Board
Review frequency	Annually
Review date	September 2027

Reviewed September 2026

Aims and Objectives

At *Drybrook Primary School*, we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, Gloucestershire County Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

All schools in the Trust are committed to ensuring that all families understand the importance of 100% attendance. Attendance in school is vital for academic success. At all key stages, studies have shown that pupils who attend less than 97% of the time are far less likely to achieve gateway qualifications such as 5 grade 4 and above GCSE's and therefore face more adversity and less choice in their future careers.

The Forest of Dean Trust expectation is that all pupils should attend the school for every session available to them (even if they are feeling unwell), unless the Headteacher has authorised the absence. This policy reflects the fact that the school cannot legally authorise any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.
The Headteacher must notify the Local Authority if a pupil is expected to miss 15 or more days due to illness.
Requests for leave of absence must be submitted in writing at least 7 days in advance. Authorisation will only be granted in truly exceptional circumstances. Family holidays will not normally be authorised.

For these reasons, we monitor attendance patterns with vigilance and hold parents/carers to account where necessary.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

- This policy is informed by the DfE statutory guidance: Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026).

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before (8.45am) on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child/children.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance
- Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in legal action, including penalty notices or prosecution.
- Parents and carers are regularly informed about their child's attendance level, through half-termly or termly reports and meetings where appropriate.
  In addition to individual letters and meetings, parents and carers receive regular whole-school updates via newsletters and school communications to reinforce the culture of good attendance.

- Elective Home Education (EHE): Where parents/carers choose to educate their child at home, the school will work with the Local Authority to ensure that the decision is made in the best interests of the child and safeguarding responsibilities are maintained.

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time.
Attend every timetabled session throughout the school day on time.

The governing body/academy trust board are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
  Attendance monitoring reports are provided to the Local Governing Body six times per year.
  The school operates a first-day response system: if a pupil is absent without explanation, the

office will contact parents/carers by 9:30am. If no contact is made, the absence will be escalated to senior staff and may include home visits or invoking the missing pupil protocol.
Attendance Target: The school sets an expectation of at least 97% attendance for all pupils, recognising that high attendance is closely linked to positive outcomes.
The school shares attendance data with the Department for Education (DfE), the Local Authority, and the Forest of Dean Trust in line with statutory requirements.
All sharing of attendance data complies with UK GDPR and data protection legislation.

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

The Attendance Champion (Donna Hull) is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishing and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff
- Having a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Working with school staff e.g., pastoral lead/family liaison officer/SENCo to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Registers open at 8:45am and close at 9:00am in the morning, and open at 1:00pm and close at 1:35pm in the afternoon.

Attendance Champion and office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

Present

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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (PupiL Registration)(England) Regulations 2024
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by *8.45am* on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken by 8.45am and will be kept open until 9:00 am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 13.30pm and will be kept open until 13.35pm.

Attendance Practices at Drybrook Primary School

- Registers open at 8:45am and close at 9:00am in the morning, and open at 1:00pm and close at 1:35pm in the afternoon.
- Pupils arriving after 08:45 am will be marked as late. If lateness is a regular occurrence, the school will work with families on a case by case basis to try and improve punctuality. If further improvement is not made or the family are unable to accept the support of the school, a request to issue a penalty under the GCC

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late (Code L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent (Code U)
- In exceptional circumstances (such as severe weather or public transport disruptions) the closing of registration may be delayed at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- Parents/carers are expected to notify the school of pupil unplanned absence before 8.45 am or as soon as is practically possible. Parents/carers should telephone the school absence line on the first day of absence and then each day thereafter. The school number is 01594 542448. The school will continue to contact parents/carers for a period of extended absence, even if the reason for absence is known.
- The school will contact parents/carers on a daily basis if they fail to inform the school of an absence
- The school must be notified of the reason for a pupil's absence in order to safeguard the child and protect their education and well-being.
- We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern

about the authenticity of the illness.

- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
  Where there is doubt about the authenticity of illness, the school may request medical evidence such as a GP letter, prescription, or appointment card before authorising the absence.
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.
- If you do need to book a medical appointment during the day, we will require prior notification and in order to authorise the leave, we will also require a copy of the appointment, in writing, email or text.
- We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- Family holidays are not usually permitted during term time. Pupils have 13 weeks' school holiday per year and further time off on INSET days. Leave of absence can only be granted by the Headteacher if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.
- Exceptional circumstances may include things such as attending one off family events such as a wedding, funeral, graduation ceremony etc.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
- If you believe there are exceptional circumstances meaning a leave of absence should be authorised, a formal request must be made to the Headteacher, on the school's official form available from the school reception at least 7 days before the holiday takes place. The application must be made by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides, but the form can be brought to the school by the pupil. If a form is not submitted prior to the holiday taking place, then the holiday will always be unauthorised.
  The Headteacher will ensure all staff receive appropriate CPD on attendance expectations, recording procedures, and early intervention strategies.
  The Headteacher will ensure staff receive regular CPD and updates on attendance recording, early intervention strategies, and any changes in statutory guidance.
- Pupil absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised' when the school is not satisfied with the reasons for the absence. Continued unauthorised absence may result in a request to issue a penalty notice.
- For a day set aside exclusively for religious observance, pupils will be granted one day of authorised absence per religious festival, up to a maximum of three days per academic year. Time taken beyond this will not be authorised.
  Authorised absence for religious observance is limited to one day per festival, up to three days per academic year, in line with guidance.
  Requests for religious observance absence may require confirmation from the relevant religious body where appropriate.
- The school takes seriously its duty to safeguard the welfare of all its pupils. Unexplained absences and a lack of contact from parents/carers may cause us concern and lead us to involve other agencies such as Children's Services. We will contact Children's Services within 2 days for any pupil with a Child Protection Plan.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (Code C1)
- Attending a medical or dentaL appointment (Code M)
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educationaL institution (Code J1)
- Studying for a public examination (Code S)
- Non-compulsory school age pupiL not required to attend school (Code X)
- Compulsory school age pupiL subject to a part-time timetable (Code C2)
  Part-time timetables are used only as a short-term, exceptional measure, agreed in collaboration with parents, the SENCO, and the Local Authority, with regular reviews to ensure a return to full-time education.
- ExceptionaL circumstances (see definition above) (Code C)
- Parent travelling for occupationaL purposes – The pupiL is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupiL is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to required them to traveL from place to place (Code T)
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- Illness (Code I)

Attendance Procedures

Drybrook attendance process: September 2026

Drybrook Primary School follows a support-first approach: expect, monitor, listen and understand, facilitate support, formalise support where necessary, and enforce only where support has not worked, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate.

- Registers are taken at the same published time for all pupils. The register is kept open for the period set by the school; arrivals after it closes are recorded with code U where the statutory conditions are met.

- Parents must notify the office by 8.45 am on each day of absence. Where no explanation has been received, office staff make same-day contact using the available contacts. Unexplained or concerning absence is escalated to the Attendance Champion and DSL; safeguarding and children-missing-education procedures are followed where appropriate.

- Attendance is reviewed at pupil and cohort level, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker, young carers and pupils with mental or physical ill health. Leaders compare patterns with appropriate national and local benchmarks and evaluate whether support is improving attendance.

- The school listens to the pupil and family, identifies barriers and agrees proportionate support. Medical evidence is requested only where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of illness and must not become a routine blanket requirement.

- Remote education is not a substitute for attendance. It is used only as a last resort, for a limited period and as part of a plan to reintegrate the pupil into school.

- Leave of absence is granted only where the headteacher considers exceptional circumstances on the individual facts. The school does not operate blanket rules that automatically approve leave.

- Where absence becomes persistent or severe, the school works with the family, Gloucestershire Education Inclusion Service, the local authority attendance support team

and relevant partners. An Attendance Intervention Meeting and attendance contract may be used to formalise agreed actions and review dates.

- For unauthorised absence meeting the national threshold of 10 sessions within 10 school weeks, the school must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in the individual case. For N, O, U or mixed unauthorised absence, Gloucestershire normally requires a Notice to Improve before a penalty notice request; 10 sessions coded G for unauthorised holiday or leisure may proceed without an NTI.

- From 22 February 2026, Gloucestershire NTI and penalty notice requests are submitted through the MRI portal. After an NTI, the school monitors for the three-week improvement period and may request a penalty notice where there has been no sufficient improvement and the threshold is met.

- Evidence submitted includes the current 2026–2027 policy, a signed attendance certificate, the relevant central attendance log, dated correspondence, evidence of support offered and the headteacher's consideration of the family's circumstances and information from involved professionals.

- When refusing a requested leave of absence, the school sends the completed response and the required accompanying letter explaining that the absence is unauthorised, that a penalty notice may be requested and the consequences of non-payment. If leave is taken without a prior request, the current Gloucestershire template letter is used; parents are not asked to complete a retrospective request form.

- First penalty notice in a rolling three-year period: £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second notice within three years is £160 with no reduced rate. A third offence within three years normally leads to consideration of prosecution rather than a further penalty notice.

In order to ensure the safety and education well-being of all pupils, we have a rigorous monitoring system and follow up policy when absence occurs.

Internal Stages

- On the first day of absence each academic year, the school must be notified of the reason for the absence. If we are satisfied with the reason, we will authorise the absence. If we are not satisfied, we may request evidence. If we are unsure of the authenticity of the evidence the absence will not be authorised.
- If the school becomes concerned over a pupil's attendance we complete a range of actions which may include, contacting other people on the child's emergency contact list, contacting other professionals that may be working with the child/the family, carrying out a home visit, contacting Police for a welfare check, starting missing child protocol.
- If we become concerned about patterns of a child's attendance the child will be spoken to by their tutor when they return to school, parents/carers will be notified either via a phone call or letter and support will be offered to improve attendance.
- Following October half term and then for the rest of the academic year letters are sent to the parents/carers of children whose attendance starts to cause concern:
- When a pupil's attendance falls below 97% or we have previously written home, (regardless of whether absences have been authorised or not), parents/carers are sent a Stage 1 letter by the schools Attendance Officer.
- Parents/carers will be made aware of the next stages in the procedure should their child's attendance fail to improve.

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- Where the school has closed a case following a stage 2 letter, if a pupil's attendance falls again, then we will write to you. We will advise that your child's attendance is being monitored for 4 weeks and if no improvement is seen, then the AIM process will start.
- After the AIM process, attendance is monitored for up to a further 4 week period. If attendance is still not improving, or the agreed targets set are not achieved, the school and Gloucestershire County Council Education Team will begin proceedings to issue legal penalty notices to parents/carers.

Promoting attendance

- There are a number of ways that attendance is promoted across the school.
- At Christmas there is an attendance draw for those pupils who have reached above 97% attendance.
- Attendance also features as part of the house cup and pupils across the house can celebrate their achievements in this way.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels. Attendance is available for parents/carers to look at via the MCAS App linking to Bromcom and this information is also shared on progress reports that are sent to parents and discussed at parents evening.
- Monitor attendance and absence data across the school and at an individual pupil level. This is done with the headteacher and attendance champion weekly. Attendance champion then works with class teachers.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern. This is done by attendance officers and attendance champions and watch lists are provided for those at risk of becoming persistent absentees.
- Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.
- Provide regular attendance reports to *insert members of staff e.g. class teachers, tutors* and other school leaders *e.g. pastoral lead, SENCo)*, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Parental meetings are held to challenge and support our parents/carers in raising the attendance of any pupil the school has concerns about.
- Where a pupil is failing to attend school, a plan will be drawn up in consultation with the family and, possibly, external agencies, this may include Education and Inclusion service, or mental health support in school or externally, a reduced timetable, consideration of any SEN and use of the graduated pathway, etc. Any support package in place will be decided on a case by case basis with the long term goal being that the child returns to a full time education in lessons.
- Pupils who are off school for a long period due to severe illness (evidenced) may be issued with optional work to carry out at home to avoid falling behind. Although we do not offer flexi-schooling.
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Legal sanctions

The school must consider requesting Gloucestershire County Council issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age and the national threshold has been met. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeaL in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period (the second one being payable at £160 with no option to reduce fine by making payment earlier). If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.
The school follows the Gloucestershire County Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. A penalty notice may be issued where there are 10 or more unauthorised sessions within a 10-school-week period. In some cases, before a penalty notice is issued, the school and locaL authority may issue a formaL Notice to Improve. This sets out the improvements required and provides parents/carers with an opportunity to address concerns before further action is taken.
Parents/carers are reminded that this legal duty to ensure regular and punctual attendance applies regardless of whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

Home Education

All requests for elective home education need to be placed in writing to the Headteacher. Guidance in regards to home education from GCC can be found here:
https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/home-education/

Taking a Pupil off the Register

The Headteacher will authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations (see Quick Guide CD RA 1 and RA3)

Children Missing from Education (CME) The national definition of CME is:

"all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more)".

Children are at risk of becoming CME for many reasons, such as:

1. They cease to attend due to exclusion or withdrawal; removal from roll with no destination.
2. They fail to complete a transfer between providers.
3. They are offered alternative provision but fail to access this provision.
4. They have moved into the area and are not yet registered on a school roll (possibly including refugees/asylum seekers who have relocated from another authority from outside the area).

All schools in the trust have adopted Gloucestershire County Council's procedures for monitoring and reporting pupils who we believe are vulnerable and/or missing from education (CME).

Should the pupil be the subject of a Child Protection Plan, or should the school have child protection concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will immediately notify Children's Services.

We will not remove any pupil from our roll without consulting Gloucestershire Council School Admissions Services, and the Education Welfare Service where appropriate. It is our policy to ensure that a place has been secured and the pupil has enrolled at a new school before removing a pupil from roll when transfers take place.

Monitoring and Review

The trust will review the working of the policy annually and receive reports from the Headteacher and Local Governing Board. The Local Governing Body will also receive detailed attendance reports six times a year.

Current guidance and local procedures

- DfE, Working together to improve school attendance, July 2026: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance
- DfE, Children missing education statutory guidance, September 2025: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education
- Gloucestershire County Council, Information on all Legal Proceedings and current attendance templates: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/your-pupils/attendance/information-on-all-legal-proceedings/
- Gloucestershire County Council, attendance guidance and local Code of Conduct: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/your-pupils/attendance/

Appendix 1: Link to Parent and Carers guidance on new attendance guidelines

Appendix 2: Request for leave of absence form

Request for a leave of absence during term time

Parents should be aware that the law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Department for Education allows a Headteacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in "exceptional circumstances".

You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will still miss out on the teaching and learning that their peers will receive whilst your child is away. Children returning from a leave of absence during term time are also unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed and arrangements need to be made for individual children to catch up on missed work. Disruption to the continuity of teaching and learning is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

If requesting a leave of absence you will need to complete the form on the reverse of this notice, setting out the reasons. If the holiday is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance it will not be agreed. If you nevertheless take your child out of school for the leave of absence, this **will be recorded as unauthorised leave.**

In the case of an unauthorised leave of absence the headteacher may request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice without further warning to the parent. Please note that such a penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £80 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £160 if paid between 21 and 28 days. Thereafter, if the penalty remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.

All leave of absence requests should be completed on the attached form by the parent with whom the child ordinarily resides. This should be returned to the school at least seven days before the start of the absence. All requests must be made prior to the leave being taken. Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively.

I hope you will support our efforts to maintain good levels of attendance and attainment. Yours sincerely

Education Welfare Officer

Request for Leave during Term Time

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT(S)/CARER(S)

A Request for Leave during Term Time form must be completed and returned to the School Office if you intend to take your child(ren) out of school during term time. This should be completed 7 days prior to any absence.

Pupil	
Name	
Date of Birth	
Year	
Class/Form	
First date of absence	
Last date of absence	

Parents - Parent means: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child.

Name		Name	
Address		Address	
Telephone number		Telephone number	
Email		Email	
Accompanying child during the leave of absence	Yes / No	Accompanying child during the leave of absence	Yes / No
Signature		Signature	
Printed name		Printed name	
Date		Date	

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To establish if your reasons for the above absence are for exceptional circumstances, please give as much detail as possible (including your destination).

The decision will be based on the information you provide on this form (please continue with additional information on a separate sheet if required)

Our records will reflect that you will still proceed with this absence on an unauthorised basis, however, should you decide not to take your child out of school at this time, please let us know as soon as possible.

Information for parents/carers

- '*Improving attendance is everyone's business*', and it is important that we, as your child's school, work together in partnership with you, your family, your child, and the wider community.
- Any holiday-related absence taken that includes 10 sessions in 10 weeks, may result in a Penalty Notice.
- The first penalty notice in a rolling three-year period is £160 (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days for the first offence). If a parent receives a second penalty notice within a rolling three-year period (following 1st September 2024) the fine is £160 and there is no option to pay the fine at a reduced rate.
- Parents with parental responsibility, and adults residing with the child, including for example, stepparents who have day-to-day responsibility for the child, may be fined, and this applies to each child who is absent.
- If a Penalty Notice is not paid within the time limits set out in the letter to the parent, the Local Authority may proceed the case to court.
- Nationally, Headteachers are: not permitted to approve term-time holidays except in genuinely exceptional circumstances, and are to consider each application for a leave of absence individually before making our decision.
- The law clearly expects Headteachers to enforce these penalties strictly.
- Parents/carers **do not** have the right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time. Any requests are considered on an individual basis following guidelines issued by the DfE and LA.
- Holiday absences will not be authorised if they are not considered to meet exceptional circumstances.
- If a pupil goes on holiday without permission, the absence will be classed as unauthorised. Absence will also be unauthorised if a child does not return to school on the agreed date. Unauthorised absence could result in referral to the LA to begin legal proceedings.

Request for Leave during Term Time

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEADTEACHER

Pupil Name	
Date of Birth	
First date of absence	
Last date of absence	

	Leave of absence **authorised** for the dates specified above. Please ensure your child returns to school promptly following the absence, as failure to do so may result in their removal from the school roll.	Signature of headteacher:	Date:
	Leave of absence **unauthorised** for the dates specified above. Should your child be absent on the dates specified above, these dates will be marked as unauthorised. This absence may result in a penalty notice being issued by the LA on behalf of the school.	Signature of headteacher:	Date:
	Other:	Signature of headteacher:	Date:

Parents – Parent means: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child.

Name		Name	
Address		Address	

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Telephone number		Telephone number	
Email		Email	
Confirmation letter sent to parent	Yes / No	Confirmation letter sent to parent	Yes / No
Date sent		Date sent	

Information for parents/carers

- '*Improving attendance is everyone's business*', and it is important that we, as your child's school, work together in partnership with you, your family, your child, and the wider community.
- Any holiday-related absence taken that includes 10 sessions in 10 weeks, may result in a Penalty Notice.
- The first penalty notice in a rolling three-year period is £160 (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days for the first offence). If a parent receives a second penalty notice within a rolling three-year period (following 1st September 2024), the fine is £160 and there is no option to pay the fine at a reduced rate.
- Parents with parental responsibility, and adults residing with the child, including for example, stepparents who have day-to-day responsibility for the child, may be fined, and this applies to each child who is absent.
- If a Penalty Notice is not paid within the time limits set out in the letter to the parent, the Local Authority may proceed the case to court.
- Nationally, Headteachers are: not permitted to approve term-time holidays except in genuinely exceptional circumstances, and are to consider each application for a leave of absence individually before making our decision.
- The law clearly expects Headteachers to enforce these penalties strictly.
- Parents/carers **do not** have the right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time. Any requests are considered on an individual basis following guidelines issued by the DfE and LA.
- Holiday absences will not be authorised if they are not considered to meet exceptional circumstances.
- If a pupil goes on holiday without permission, the absence will be classed as unauthorised. Absence will also be unauthorised if a child does not return to school on the agreed date. Unauthorised absence could result in referral to the LA to begin legal proceedings.

Appendix 3: Stage 1 Letter to parents/carers

Mr & Mrs
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX

Dear Mr & Mrs XXXXXXX

I am writing to inform you of XXXXX's school attendance which currently stands at XX.XX%. Government guidelines state that an acceptable attendance record should stand at 97%.

In line with our school policy, as XXXXX's attendance has dropped below 95%, we are writing to advise that XXXXX has already missed over XX lessons so far this year and we know how stressful it can be trying to catch up with missed work. Regular attendance is not only essential but also a legal requirement.

If you need support or advice regarding your child's attendance at Drybrook Primary please do not hesitate to contact us to arrange a meeting.

Thank you for your cooperation in this important matter. Yours sincerely

XXXXXXXX
Education Welfare Officer

Enc.
Attendance Record
GCC Information Leaflet

Appendix 4: Stage 2 letter to parents/carers

Mr & Mrs
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX

Dear XXXXX

Following my letter dated XXXXXXXX I am writing to express our further concerns around XXXXXX attendance which now stands at XXXX%. This is below the 97% attendance expected by the Department for Education for young people and children to achieve their educational potential.

I hope you will support us in maintaining good attendance. XXXXX attendance will now be monitored for a further four week period. Should XX attendance improve, we will consider the case closed. If, however, their attendance does not improve, or declines further, we may move to the next stage of our policy which will involve inviting you to an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) in order to discuss reasons for absence and strategies to help improve XXXXX attendance.

In the meantime, if you wish to discuss anything related to attendance and punctuality, or if you feel that XXXXX would benefit from support from their pupil support mentor or head of house, then please contact me or a member of the pastoral team.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Yours sincerely

XXXXX
Education Welfare Officer

Enc.
Registration Certificate Penalty Notice Leaflet

Appendix 5: Example of an attendance contract

Attendance Contract – An agreement between the school and parents

Date

Child's name:		Child's DOB:	
School/NCY:			
Parents' name(s):		Parents' DOB(s):	
Address(es):			
Tel:			

Senior staff member with overall responsibility:
Member of staff responsible day-to-day:
Contact number for the school to inform if the child is too unwell to attend:
Linked Inclusion Officer:

It is important that we work together to improve your child's school attendance to give them the opportunity to attain and progress. We are going to work together to ensure the above-named child improves their attendance at school with immediate effect.

Your child's current attendance is:

This means they have missed sessions/days so far this year. So far, of these absences have been authorised by us.

So far, of these absences have been unauthorised by us. Your child has been late to school on occasions.

This equates to them missing minutes of their learning. The reasons you have given for these absences have been:

……

……

……

……

We have listened to your child and discussed with them the reasons for their absence. They have shared with us that:

……

……

……

……

The specific targets of our plan. What we aim to do by (date):
These could be outlined in a My Plan and attached to document

To achieve these targets, we will:
These could be included explicitly in a My Plan and attached to the document

Parents agree to:

School agrees to:

Child agrees to:

Reviews

This contract will be reviewed on:

If the contract is being adhered to, the school will ensure the child receives recognition of the improvement and will continue to monitor and support.

If the contract is not being adhered to, the school will notify the Local Authority, where next steps will be considered, including progression to attendance legal processes.

Agreeing to the contract:

Consent by parent(s):

I/we have agreed to this Attendance Contract and will:

(a) work with the school (and council) as detailed above, to improve my/our child's school attendance, and
(b) carry out what we have promised to do.

I/we also agree to information being shared with other professionals and agencies as required to help us.

I/we understand that if my child has any further unauthorised absences from school a Penalty Notice or prosecution may follow without further warning. This agreement may be given as part of the evidence.

Signed (Parent/s): ……

Signed by the Child (age appropriate) ……

Signed (on behalf of the school/governing body/local authority) ……

Appendix 6: Warning letter in respect of penalty notices for persistent lateness (U code).

(This will need to be set to any parent that the school subsequently names in any request for a penalty notice).

Produce on school headed paper

Date
Name Address

Dear (name of parent(s))

Re: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

Warning of penalty notice for persistent lateness after the register has closed

Under the Education Act 1996, parents have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within an agreed Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

(Name) has been marked absent from school for ( ) sessions in the previous ( ) weeks without prior authorisation or an acceptable reason being given to the headteacher. Please note there are normally two sessions in each school day. Arriving after the registers have closed for the morning or afternoon session will result in an unauthorised absence mark for the entire session.

This absence has therefore been recorded as unauthorised in the school register.

I need to inform you that the level of (Name's) unauthorised absence places you at risk of a penalty notice and/or court action by the Local Authority.

Gloucestershire's current process requires the school to request a Notice to Improve through the MRI portal for N, O, U or mixed unauthorised absence where the national threshold is met. The Notice to Improve normally provides a three-week improvement period. If there is insufficient improvement and the threshold remains met, the school may request a penalty notice from the Local Authority.

should (Name) reach the national threshold again, the school must consider the appropriate legal intervention in line with the national framework, the rolling three-year escalation rules and Gloucestershire County Council's current Code of Conduct

Yours sincerely
Headteacher

Appendix 7:

When no request for leave was made by the parents but the head teacher has coded the absence as unauthorised family holiday (G Code), send a copy of this letter to each parent.

N.B. if parents are separated, investigate who has the responsibility of the child[ren]'s absence from school.

Send each letter by post Produce on School headed paper

Parent(s)' address Date
Dear (parent(s)' name),

Re: Leave of absence without request Child(ren)'s Name(s): Date(s) of Birth:

I am aware that your child(ren) was/were absent from school from (date) to (date). I have tried to contact you with regard to these absences but have been unsuccessful and now understand that you were on a family holiday. I believe this to be the case because…

As of 1 September 2013, Headteachers are no longer able to grant any leave of absence in term time unless there are exceptional/unavoidable circumstances. It is also stated in our school policy that all requests for leave of absence should be made in writing, in advance of the proposed absence.
As we are unaware of any exceptional circumstances that might apply, the absence has **not been authorised**. However, if you feel that the absence was due to an exceptional circumstance or illness, please provide supporting evidence to this effect no later than (DDMMYYYY – ***allow one week)*** and I may be able to reconsider my decision.

I must warn you that failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school is an offence under Section 444 of The Education Act 1996. The Supreme Court Judgement from 2017 (Isle of Wight Council v Platt [2017] UKSC 28) has determined that 'regular' means 'in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school'.

If the reasons given for your child(ren)'s absence from school are not considered to be exceptional (and therefore the absence is unauthorised) then I may request, without further warning, that the Local Authority take legal proceedings against you for your failure to comply with the law. This may result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority on behalf of the school. Failure to pay the penalty due may result in prosecution before Magistrates Court.

Please refer to the school's attendance policy (available on our website and in hard copy upon request) and Gloucestershire County Council's website for further information.

If you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,
Headteacher

Appendix 8: [Guidance on things that can be done prior to starting legal proceedings]

Steps to take before initiating legal proceedings

Support for the child

Anxiety

- ❑ Has the child suggested that they have feelings of anxiety?
- ❑ Have steps been taken to alleviate these feelings?
- ❑ Is there evidence of child-on-child abuse or bullying?
- ❑ Are home life or parenting styles causing concern for the child?
- ❑ Has a part-time timetable been considered to support return to full-time learning?
- ❑ Have the parents applied to their GP, TIC+ or CAHMS for a referral?

SEN

- ❑ Has specialist advice been sought?
- ❑ Has the feedback been implemented?

Patterns

- ❑ Have patterns in attendance been identified and addressed?

Section 19

- ❑ Has a referral been considered?

Support for the parents

Communication

- ❑ Are communication lines with the parents open?
- ❑ Are both parents contacted with information from school?
- ❑ Is communication delivered in an alternative language or format?
- ❑ Are parents aware that legal proceedings are being considered and what that means for them?
- ❑ How often does the school send out leaflets about attendance? (Available on Schoolsnet)

Meetings

- ❑ Have meetings with the parents been arranged, either on- or off-site as necessary?
- ❑ Have AIM (Attendance Improvement Meetings) been arranged and held?
- ❑ Has the attendance of parents and outcome been recorded?

Improvement

- ❑ Has a Attendance Contract been considered?

Support for the family

Collaboration

- ❑ Are the parents in need of support for the whole family?
- ❑ Has transport assistance been investigated?
- ❑ Have schools where siblings attend been contacted and consolidated plans been arranged?
- ❑ Have parenting courses and family support been considered?
- ❑ Has Early Help been considered?

Has the graduated pathway been followed to identify barriers to regular attendance?

Support for the school

Intervention

- ❑ Have all absences been recorded as unauthorised?
- ❑ Has evidence been collated for absences from the initial period of unauthorised absences?
- ❑ Has all communication with parents been recorded with names, dates and details of information?
- ❑ Has the Inclusion Officer been made aware of the attendance issues?

Policies

- ❑ Has the Attendance Policy been available to all parents?
- ❑ Does it have a clear definition of what the school regards as 'regular attendance'? **For example: We regard regular attendance for all children to be in school, on time. This is for every session of every day that the school is open to them.**
- ❑ Has it clear information regarding the school's expectation of good attendance and consequences of poor attendance?
- ❑ Has it guidance on how to approach the school regarding attendance concerns?
- ❑ Has it been updated in the last 12 months, and follow the *WTTSA*?

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GCC

Appendix 9: AIM document and review document

Education Inclusion Service
Education Act 1996 and Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
Attendance Improvement Meeting

This process is the beginning of the legal intervention process. As such, the school must have informed the parent(s) of the pupil of the potential legal prosecution if they fail to meet these targets. The notification must have been sent in writing when inviting parents to attend this meeting.

Should the pupil be an appropriate age to agree to the attendance plan but does not attend the meeting, the meeting should not go ahead. For further information, please visit the GCC Schoolsnet Attendance Training page:

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/your-pupils/attendance/training-and-support/

School	
Name	
Locality	
Headteacher	
School's contact name	
School contact's email	

Pupil	
Name	
DOB	
Gender	

NCY	CiC	CPP	SEN	Traveller
	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

Current attendance	%	Unauthorised	%

Primary Parent	
Name	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email	
Relationship to pupil	
Child resides with parent	Yes / No

Parent	
Name	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email	

Relationship to pupil	
Child resides with parent	Yes / No

Attendance Improvement Meeting

Date	
Location	
Present	

Background information provided by school:

Reasons for absence given by parents(s)/carer(s):

Reasons for absence given by pupil:

Evidence of support school has taken to improve attendance:

Support Pre-arranged home visit to discuss how to improve attendance Following the Graduated Pathway e.g. My Plan/My Plan+ Referral to other agencies (please state) Communication between school staff and parent(s)/carer(s) to discuss attendance concerns: e.g. telephone call, e-mails, letters, meetings Reviewing the academic support provided for the pupil Considered, where appropriate, a reduced timetable for a specific period Provided access to a school counsellor Provided a peer mentor Investigated allegations of bullying Initiated a vocational subject-based timetable Any other relevant intervention offered (please detail):	Date
Other agencies involved with supporting attendance, the pupil and/or the family	

Plan to improve attendance

This should detail any new intervention that either school, parent or pupil feel would be beneficial

Pupil agrees to:	
Parent(s)/Carer(s) agree(s) to:	
School agrees to:	

Agreed Attendance Target

For the next four school weeks, the attendance target will be:

e.g., no unauthorised absences / weekly attendance sessions/days etc.

Review Date:
As a parent/carer of , I understand that failure to meet these targets may result in legal proceedings taken against me.

Parent/Carer's signature:

Name:

Date:

Parent/Carer's signature:

Name:

Date:

Pupil's signature:

Name:

Date:

For use if parent(s)/carer(s) do not attend but pupil of appropriate age DID attend

Date plan posted to parent(s)/carer(s):

(This should be within one day of plan being drawn up)

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Education Inclusion Service
Education Act 1996 and Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
Attendance Improvement Meeting Review

This process is the beginning of the legal intervention process. As such, the school must have informed the parent(s) of the pupil of the potential legal prosecution if they fail to meet these targets. The notification must have been sent in writing when inviting parents to attend this meeting.

Should the pupil be an appropriate age to agree to the attendance plan but does not attend the meeting, the meeting should not go ahead. For further information, please visit the GCC Schoolsnet Attendance Training page: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/your-pupils/attendance/training-and-support/

School	
Name	
Locality	
Headteacher	
School's contact name	

School contact's email	

Pupil				
Name				
DOB				
Gender				
NCY	**CiC**	**CPP**	**SEN**	**Traveller**

	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Current attendance	%	Unauthorised		%

Primary Parent	
Name	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email	
Relationship to pupil	
Child resides with parent	Yes / No

Name	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email	
Relationship to pupil	
Child resides with parent	Yes / No

Attendance Improvement Meeting Review	
Date	
Location	
Present	

Initial AIM Meeting date	
Absences since last AIM	

Have all the agreed actions from the AIM been met by all parties? Provide details:		
Outcomes to improve attendance agreed at previous meeting		**Progress**

Pupil agrees to:		
Parent(s)/carer(s)agree(s) to:		
School agrees to:		

Next steps to improve attendance:	
Pupil agrees to:	
Parent(s)/carer(s) agree(s) to:	
School agrees to:	

Action (please indicate below)

or

or

Review Date:

As a parent/carer of , I understand that failure to meet these targets may result in legal proceedings taken against me.
Parent/Carer's signature: Name:
Date:

Parent/Carer's signature: Name:

Date:
Pupil's signature:
Name:
Date: