The Federation of Boskenwyn & Germoe Schools

and Nysgerrig Kindergarten

ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. Some children find attending school harder than others and therefore it is essential when trying to improve attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove barriers by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance should not be seen in isolation so effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with school on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources including pupil premium.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

The law on school attendance

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education other than school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Children with a good attendance record have a higher chance of making good progress and achieving good grades. For the most vulnerable children, regular attendance is an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

An absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools, trust and local authorities should always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and

provide support. Where it is not successful, or it is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

Headteacher/Attendance lead:

- Implementation of this policy at school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Identify trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance and punctuality of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented strategies
- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Devising strategies to address areas of poor attendance and punctuality identified through data and monitoring intervention of these strategies
- Benchmarking data
- Make referrals and work with Education Welfare/Attendance Officer to tackle persistent absence and lateness, provide background information, monitor and follow-up
- Meet termly with Attendance officer to discuss attendance and persistent absence
- Consider leave of absence in exceptional circumstances
- Liaise with social care/CIC team where necessary
- Make referrals to the LA for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices as appropriate, Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

Teaching staff/Office:

- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
  - To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the Government on attendance twice a year.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure and monitor regularly.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance
- To tackle lateness as and when it occurs (with parent when child has gone to class or after school)
- Ensure punctuality/absence issues are addressed at parents evening if relevant

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To have children in class ready for learning by the start of the day at 8.45am or 09.00am depending on key stage. If your older child starts earlier than a younger sibling then please bring them at the earlier start time.
- To inform school on **first** day of any absence.
- To request leave as far in advance as possible (and within at least 3 weeks' notice) on the school's **'Leave Of Absence form"** giving the **exceptional circumstance** for the request.
- To work with the school and EWO/LA Attendance officer to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day. If this cannot be helped then to inform school in good time and provide evidence if required.

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

ABSENCES DURING TERM TIME - LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted an exceptional circumstance as justification for the absence at least 3 weeks prior to the intended absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.

Valid reason for authorised absence as set out in regulation 11 of the school attendance (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2024 include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable agreed by school
- Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant leave of absence at their discretion. This needs to be requested at least 3 weeks in advance (if possible) by a parent who the pupil usually lives with and the reason must meet the criteria of exceptional circumstance.

Applications for a **leave of absence** for exceptional circumstances will be considered individually by the headteacher /attendance lead and will take into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher/attendance lead considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances' and cannot be taken outside of term time. The DFE states: "*Headteachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a headteacher grants a leave request, it will be for the headteacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday as a norm."*

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made at least 3 weeks in advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence during term time'. These may be obtained from the school office. These requests will then be ratified by the headteacher/attendance lead.

Parents may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the request in greater depth for the team to gain a better understanding of the reasons the absence cannot be take outside of term time. If the absence has been authorised then the parents will be informed of the result via email within 10 school days of the request. However, if the absence request is for 10 sessions (5 days) or more and the school/parents cannot find an agreeable way to reduce this, the headteacher/attendance lead will meet with our local authority attendance officer for advice and support. Parents will be informed of the result of their request via email within 15 school days of the request.

What is considered an exceptional circumstance?

The fundamental principles for defining "exceptional" are **rare, significant, or unavoidable circumstances** (which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time). Circumstances will vary from family to family.

Possible exceptions to Unauthorised absence

The headteacher/attendance lead will consider the impact on learning, the frequency of absence, and whether educational provision is in place during the absence.

Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or TV work and modelling – Parents/carers of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the headteacher/attendance lead to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence

approved by the school as being part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as authorised absence.

Absence through competing at regional, county or national level in sport – Parents/carers of able sportspersons can seek leave of absence from school for their child to participate in a regional, county, national or international events or competitions. It is down to the headteacher to decide whether or not to authorise and they may need to discuss the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for you child to arrive late/early to attend coaching/training sessions are also at the discretion of the headteacher and are not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless an education tutor is provided.

Service families - The ministry of Defence (MoD) issue additional guidance to school with regard to term time absences for the children of service families. This is provided because it is acknowledged that the operational needs of the Armed Forces may legitimately prevent a service family from taking holidays within the school holidays. When deciding whether to authorise a and application for leave of absence from a service family, the headteacher will consider the circumstances, the child's attendance record and the year which the child is in.

Gypsy Roma and Traveller families – Absence of a child from a traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the traveller is away the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code.

Religious observance

We recognise that pupils of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance:
Falls during school time and has be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs
The absence will be authorised. We ask that parents/carers notify the school at least 3 weeks in advance.

Absence due to illness

Parents need to notify the school on the first day of the absence. Keeping a child off school with minor ailments such as a slight headache or slight cold or because they are tired after a late night is not acceptable and will not be authorised. Repeated absences will require us to request that parents/carers obtain medical evidence from their doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost).

Part-time (or reduced) timetables

All pupils of compulsory age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary with a view to becoming full time. This can only be in place if the school has agreed to the pupil being absent for part of the week and therefore the absence must be authorised.

Medical conditions

Pupils attending our schools may have medical conditions, either long or short term that will affect their attendance at some stage in their school career. We understand that pupils with medical conditions are more vulnerable and have greater needs than the majority of their peers and therefore

may have more genuine reasons for absences for medical reasons or experience greater social needs than others. It is our responsibility to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent school attendance whilst they are facing the challenges of ill health and remove the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering external support and reasonable adjustments, for example, supporting their ongoing learning.

One of our aims is to support children back into schools as soon as their health allows because we know that this is best for the child. We aim to help ensure that the reintegration process encourages maximum attendance is resumed as quickly as possible. This includes working with families, ensuring that they understand how important regular attendance is to their child's development and health.

It is crucial that our schools receive and fully consider advice from healthcare professionals and listen to and value the views of parents and pupils. We understand that some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. Some pupils may also have special educational needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. We will ensure that staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need, their healthcare plan is closely monitored and implement an individual healthcare plan if needed.

Attendance Codes

/ - present
L – late (before register closes)
U – late (after register closes)
D – dual registered
P – participating in a supervised sporting activity
V – Educational visit or trip organised by school
B – The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. This may include attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school. This code must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity i.e., when a pupil is at home doing some schoolwork. pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code.
K – The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority. Schools must also record the nature of the provision (for example, attending courses at college or attending unregistered alternative provision. Schools should ensure that the arrangements are in place whereby the provider notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
C1 – Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2 – Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.
C – Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
J1 – Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for
employment or for admission to another educational institution
T – Parent travelling for occupational purposes. Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a pupil's attendance was to fall below an acceptable level consideration may be given to attendance enforcement.
E – Excluded but not attending alternative provision
I – illness (not medical/dental appointments)
M – Medical/dental appointments
R – religious observance
G - family holiday, (not agreed or authorised)
N – reason for absence not yet provided
O – Absent without authorisation
X – not required to be in school (e.g. non compulsory school age, Covid)
Q – unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements

Other absences, such as school closures, are not counted in attendance calculations.

Leave of absence without authorisation

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the LA attendance officer. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice.
If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.

Since 1st September, 2024 we have followed the new National Framework for Penalty Notices from the DFE. The rate per parent per child will be £80 if paid within 21 days and raising to £160 if paid between 22 AND 28 days.
There is a new national threshold of 10 unauthorised absences (equivalent of 5 school days) within a 10 week period for which a penalty notice must be considered. This can span over 2 terms.
If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3 year rolling period there will be no option to pay the lower rate.
If a parent commits a 3rd offence in a 3 year period, the LA will consider options available to improve attendance (including a consideration to prosecute) under section 444 of the |Education act 1996.
The current penalty notice letter will change to a Notice to Improve.
Contact ross.terris@cornwall.gov.uk

If the penalty notice is not paid, each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which a child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks.

THE PROCESS FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

The school will monitor attendance each half term (more regularly for individuals with poor attendance). Analysis will be used to provide regular reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with parents, SENDCO, safeguarding lead. It will also be used to identify patterns and trends such as particular days, particular lessons etc. Data will be benchmarked against local, national and regional levels.

Our schools will follow a graduated response based on the following percentage attendance:

100% attendance - This is excellent attendance
99% - 96% attendance - Your child's attendance is good and you are giving them the best chance of success.
95% - 93% attendance – Early Intervention support – Attendance at this level is possibly becoming a concern, it will be tracked and monitored.
92%-90% attendance- Targeted additional support, attendance will be tracked and monitored and may trigger an intervention/discussion with parent/carer to prevent them becoming persistently absent
90% - 80% attendance – Targeted Intensive Additional support – your child is considered a **Persistent Absentee** and their attendance is of serious concern. If you child missed 10% (3 weeks/30 sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason they are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in their learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment, social interaction and future earnings. Pupils who are persistently absent will be subject to interventions on a graduated response scale, including mandatory reporting to the LA when there are 10 sessions of cumulative absence (session being one of am or pm) or 15 days of consecutive or cumulative absence marked with an I for illness (this includes illness due to mental health).
79% - 50% attendance – Bespoke provision – Your child's attendance will now be seen as a **safeguarding concern**.

Below 50% attendance – Bespoke provision – Your child's attendance will now be seen as a **serious safeguarding concern**. You child is considered a **Severe Absentee** and will be subject to intervention from the local authority, legal interventions, statutory action including fixed term penalties, court proceedings and possible referral to other outside agencies for a supported return.

Stages of intervention from the local authority

VOLUNTARY SUPPORT – Helping parents to access services of their own accord and/or a voluntary whole family plan to tackle the barriers to attendance

FORMAL SUPPORT – A formal parenting contract agreed by the pupil, parent, school and/or local authority. Progressing to a legally binding Education Supervision Order in the Family Court if there is non-engagement and deemed necessary.
STATUTORY CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE INVOLVEMENT – Where there are safeguarding concerns and an Education Supervision Order is not appropriate or has not been successful the case should be considered for S17 or S47 statutory social care involvement.

ATTENDANCE PROSECUTION – Where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate, the case should be considered for attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court (or a FPN for irregular attendance).

What is a parenting contract?
A parenting contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. It is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. It is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. It should be explored before moving forward to an education supervision order or prosecution. (See p35-38 Working Together to improve school attendance May 2022).
What is an Education Supervision Order?
Where a voluntary early help plan or formal parenting contract has not been successful, an Education Supervision order (ESO) can be a useful alternative to provide legal intervention without crimination prosecution. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead and social care to agree an ESO would be more suitable than a S17 (children in need) or S47 (child protection) plan. ESO's are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in advising and directing to full-time education. (see pages 38 and 39 Working Together to improve school attendance May 2022, updated July 2026).
What is a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)?
These can be used by schools where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and the absence constitutes an offence. They are intended to prevent the need for court action and must be issued in line with Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and can only be issued by a headteacher or someone authorised by them, a local authority officer or the police. All schools must send copies of these to the local authority.
FPN's may be issued where parents allow their child to be seen in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. (See pages 43, 44 of Working Together to improve school attendance May 2022, updated July 2026).
The penalty is £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days but before 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28 day period, the local authority will decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. There is no right to appeal.

How can you support your child to attend?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best dealt with between the school, the parents/carers and the child.

If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to enable them to stay away from school. This may give the impression that attendance does not matter and could make things worse.

Please do contact your child's class teacher in the first instance to openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons such a difficulty with learning, friendship problems, family difficulties, bullying issues etc. It is important that we communicate effectively to identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to overcome this.

In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional and we may be able to make referrals or signpost you towards assistance.
To encourage you child to attend school:

- Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning
- Show your child you value their education
- Be interested in what they are doing at school, talk to them about what they have learnt, their friendships etc.
- Speak positively about school to them

For many parents, a child starting school may be their first experience of being separated. This can seem daunting at first but thinking and speaking of it as a new and exciting adventure will help both parents and children. The transition into a settled and happy school life also depends on routine and regular, punctual attendance can help as much as any other intervention.

If you have any worries, then please do not hesitate to contact your child's classteacher. We are here to help and support you and your child.

Working to improve attendance

As a school we will work with families and other partners to improve attendance in the following way:

EXPECT – Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

MONITOR – Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND – When a pattern is spotted, discuss with parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them

FACILITATE SUPPORT – Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

FORMALISE SUPPORT – Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE – Where all avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

RECORDING ATTENDANCE
We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether the pupil is

- Present
- Attending an approved of-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

LATENESS

Punctuality is an important life skill.

Children must be in class by either 08.45 am or 9.00am. each day depending on key stage. Registers will be taken as soon as possible after that time and will be closed at 09.05am for KS2 and 0920 for EYFS/KS1.

Lateness will be monitored by the school. If a parent arrives late then the classteacher will speak to them at the end of the school day to discuss their reasons and to explain how being late affected their child. Late arrivals will need to be reported to reception where lunch can be ordered and the lateness logged. If the arrival at school is after the registers have closed, the pupil will receive a 'U'. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'.

Where possible doctor and dentist appointments should be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem. Referrals will be made to the local authority attendance officer or the MAASH(Multi Agency Support and Safeguarding Hub (MASSH) if it continues after this stage.

GOVERNORS

Improving attendance requires constant focus, and effective whole school approaches require regular ongoing support, guidance and challenge. All governing bodies should therefore:

- 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, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individuals or cohorts who need it most
- Monitoring attendance figures of the whole school
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy and its effectiveness will be reviewed by the Headteacher and the Governing Body. It has been written according to the "Working together to Improve School Attendance" guidance from the DFE published May 2022, updated July 2026.

Amended: October 2026
Next Review: October 2027

Executive Headteacher: Miss Paula Blackburn
Attendance Lead: Jo NIcholas

APPENDIX ONE: LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM BELOW

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Pupil Name: Date of Birth: Class/Form/Year:

First Date of Absence: Date of return: No. school days absent:

Exceptional reason for absence: (please describe the rare, significant, or unavoidable circumstances for this request)

Name of parent (who child resides with)

Home tele no. Mobile telephone no.

Email address

Signature of parent

FOR HEADTEACHER/GOVERNORS
DATE RECEIVED:

CURRENT ATTENDANCE % LAST YEAR'S ATTENDANCE %

EXCEPTIONAL REASON ACCEPTED: YES/NO

NAME AND SIGNATURE

DATE PARENT INFORMED

THIS ABSENCE HAS BEEN AUTHORISED / UNAUTHORISED.