# Attendance Policy

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| Date of Policy: | September 2026 |
| Persons responsible: | Assistant Head (Pastoral) |
| Approved by Full Governors: | October 2026 |
| Date of next review: | July 2027 |

## 1. Aims

We are committed to providing the highest quality of education and safeguarding and look to parents and carers to support these objectives. The Crypt School has high expectations for every pupil's attendance and offers support to those who find attendance challenging. Securing good attendance must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff.

We appreciate the barriers to accessing education can be wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. School should be a calm, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

The school is committed to working in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

At The Crypt School we want to ensure that every pupil achieves their full potential. In order to do this, it is imperative that every pupil attends school on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. In line with our school values we hope pupils will take pride in attending everyday school is open.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. Parents and carers have a responsibility and legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly. Equally the school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and its attendance policy to parents. School attendance data must also be made available to our Local Authority and the Department for Education (DfE).

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Promoting and supporting punctuality.

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the DfE and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. This policy is 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 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Gloucestershire County Council (Local Authority) guidelines and 2026-29 Attendance Strategy.
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE February 2022)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE updated July 2026)

# 3. Procedures

## 3.1 Attendance register

Our school day is from 8.35am until 3.15pm. Our morning register opens at 8.35 and closes at 9am.

Pupils are expected to arrive at school by 8.30am in order to be in their tutor groups ready for registration at 8.35am.

An attendance register is taken twice during the day. Morning registration is at 8.35am. Form tutors complete these registers. Afternoon registration is at 12.15pm and subject teachers complete this afternoon register at the start of Period 4. Each pupil is marked as either present (am /, pm \) or not present (N).

If a pupil arrives at their tutor room after 8.35am but before 8.45am they must explain why they are late and ask that their tutor amend the register from Not present (N) to Late (L).

If a pupil arrives at school after 8.45am they must sign in at Reception.

Teachers should take registers at the same time for all pupils to ensure consistency.

Sixth Form students all have a fob and are asked to fob into school when they arrive and before they attend morning registration. These fobs are used for students to sign in and out of school if they leave the school site at lunchtime.

Some Sixth Form students will be granted home study from Term 3 onwards in Year 12 which means they can leave school at 13:15 if they have no lessons in the afternoon. Students fob out to leave the site.

**Any arrivals after the register closes at 9am will then be marked as U. This is absence and affects attendance percentages.** Please also see the Lateness and punctuality section.

## 3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence, and each subsequent day of absence, by 8.30am or as soon as is practically possible after this. The method of notification is via the daily absence report form on the school website or, if this is not possible, via email (attendance@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk) or telephone on (01452) 530291.

Please ensure you provide your child's full name and tutor group (Year group and either JC, WEH, JM, RR or DW).

Parents/carers are also expected to email or call the school every day that their child is unwell offering an update. This is to aid the successful transition of the pupil back into school after illness/absence.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

In line with our school values, we ask parents / carers to show integrity and be honest about the reason for absence. 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, appointment text confirmation or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for evidence unnecessarily.

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 line with NHS guidance, children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

Concussion: In line with Headcase guidance, pupils should remain at home and under adult supervision for 24 hours from any concussion incident.

Furthermore, the guidance advises:

*-Get assessed by an appropriate Healthcare Professional onsite or access the NHS by calling 111 within 24 hours of the incident.*

*-Rest and sleep as needed for the first 24 - 48 hours – this is good for recovery.*

*- Minimise smartphone, screen and computer use for at least the first 48 hours. Limiting screen-time has been shown to improve recovery*

## 3.3 Medical or dental appointments

We strongly encourage parents/carers to make medical 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. This includes attending school before an appointment and returning punctually afterwards.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as authorised absence providing advance notice has been given, alongside a completed form and copy of medical letter, appointment card or screen shot of electronic appointment confirmation.

If a pupil is likely to have regular medical appointments or interventions, we advise parents/ carers to contact the Head of Year to discuss how school can support the wellbeing and academic progress of the pupil.

## 3.4 Lateness and punctuality

If a pupil arrives after 8.35 but arrives in their tutor room before 8.45am they can request their tutor amend the register to L. This is a late mark. It is the responsibility of the pupil to ensure they have made their presence known. A pupil who arrives after 8.45am will need to sign in at Reception.

Pupils arriving late but before the register closes (9am) will be marked as late (L).

**Pupils arriving late after the registers have closed (9am) will be marked as U (unless there are mitigating circumstances that are acceptable to the Attendance Officer- eg: private bus company traffic issue). This is unauthorised absence and will impact upon the pupils attendance percentage.**

Lateness is monitored by the Attendance Officer in conjunction with the Pastoral Team, with ongoing issues addressed by Head of Year and Form Tutors.

Three late marks (arriving after 08:35) may result in a Behavior Detention - at the discretion of the Attendance Officer and Head of Year.

If 5 lates occur within one term, the Attendance Officer and Head of Year will contact the pupils, parents/carers to discuss the reasons behind the lateness and put a plan in place to address this, which may include a Late Report.

In the Sixth Form, pupils may become subject to a Late Report. An initial green report would be monitored by the Form Tutor. This could be escalated to an Amber Report monitored by the Head of Year, then a Red Report, monitored by the Director of Sixth Form.

The exception to this rule is for pupils travelling on school buses. Persistent lateness of any bus should be taken up with the bus company.

## 3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure the correct safeguarding action is taken where necessary and then identify if the absence is authorised or not, including recording the correct code to reflect this. When a pupil is absent with no known reason, a text message will be sent to parents. If no reason is then received the Attendance Officer will telephone parents to discuss the absence.

A member of the Pastoral team may also call or visit home to conduct a supportive welfare check and discuss any adjustments needed to support the child returning to school. We aim to focus on support first through relationships and conversations

## 3.6 Reporting to parents

Parents/carers are provided with access to attendance data via Bromcom and the My Child At School App.

Parents/carers will also receive letters at key points in the school year alerting them that their child's attendance is a concern, or praising their excellent attendance.

## 3.7 Queries regarding attendance

Any queries regarding attendance can be emailed to attendance@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk.

# 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

## 4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The Headmaster may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be truly "exceptional circumstances". Each request is considered individually and a leave of absence is granted at the Headmaster's discretion. In line with our school values, we are grateful for parents/carers showing integrity and being honest about the reason for absence.

If parents wish to request leave, they are required to complete an "Absence in exceptional circumstances" form (available on the website under Our Parents/Attendance) which goes to the Attendance Officer (attendance@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk). This will then be logged before being submitted to the Headmaster for his consideration as to whether the request meets exceptional circumstances criteria. Requests must be submitted with as much notice as possible, at least one month in advance of dates requested for holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours

- One off events which are unavoidable, examples include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral.
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. Parents and carers should let School know in advance of any planned absences for religious observance.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes.
- Study Leave

## 4.2 Unauthorised absence

Our term dates are published on the school website over a year in advance in order that holidays can be arranged without disruption to education. Due to strict government guidelines, we are unable to authorise any absence during term time, except in exceptional circumstances.

Unauthorised absence is where The Crypt School is not satisfied with the reasons given for absence.

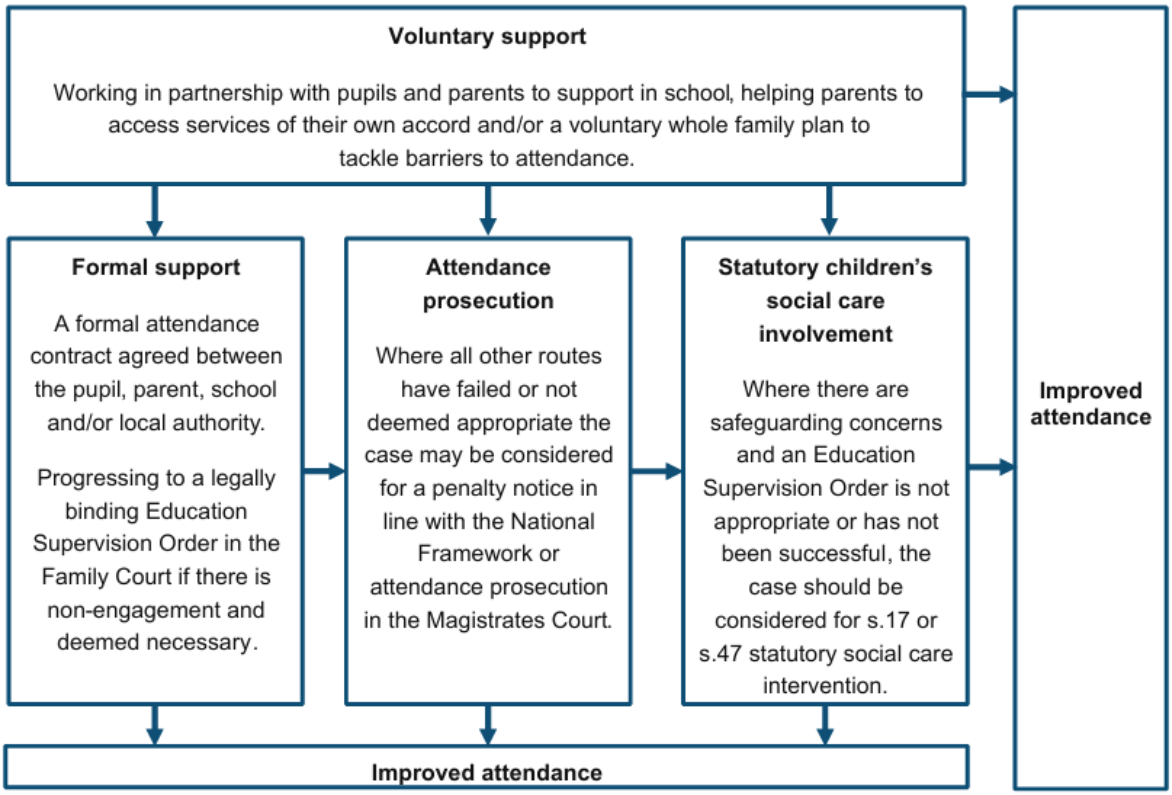
Examples of this include –

- Family holiday taken in term time without Headmaster approval. Retrospective approval cannot be given.
- Taking additional days prior to any agreed dates in the case of exceptional circumstances. Retrospective approval cannot be given.
- Not returning to school on the agreed date after permission has been granted due to exceptional circumstances. Retrospective approval cannot be given.
- No reason has been provided as to why a pupil is absent.

# 5. Legal action to enforce school attendance

In line with guidance from Gloucestershire County Council and the DfEThe Crypt School operates a support first approach. Before considering legal action, we provide support to families to improve attendance. Legal action is a last resort after all other avenues have been explored.

## Providing support first before attendance legal intervention




The school may 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. Notices to Improve and Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

**Notice to improve**

A Notice To Improve may come from the Local Authority if a child has 10 unauthorised absences within 10 school weeks, if parents do not engage with offers of support. Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority.

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. Parents/ carers You could receive a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a prison sentence of up to 3 months. The court may also issue you with a Parenting Order.

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

## 6. Attendance monitoring

The vast majority of pupils and parents/carers at The Crypt School understand the benefits of attending school regularly. Where we have concerns about a pupil's attendance we will work closely with parents/carers and the pupil concerned to understand any barriers to achieving high rates of attendance. Pupil absence will be reviewed and discussed using the staged approach in Appendix 1.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall attendance rate is less than or equal to 90% the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need the absolute support from parents to tackle this. Persistent Absentees are tracked and monitored carefully through the pastoral system. Wider support services will be utilised to remove barriers to attendance and local authority involvement will occur if methods offered are not reducing absenteeism.

Absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with the Board of Governors.

**Vulnerable pupils (including Looked After Children)**

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor; pupils being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions may be indicative of a range of safeguarding issues. If a Looked After Child is not attending or there are concerns about their attendance, the School will immediately seek advice from the Local Authority's Virtual School and the child's social worker, as well as communicating with the child and parent/carer.

## 7. Attendance and absence codes

On each occasion the register is taken, the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age).

A full list of available codes is in Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

**a. The Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headmaster to account for the implementation of this policy.

**b. The Headmaster**

The Headmaster is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Governors.
The Headmaster also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices where necessary.

The Deputy Head (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing) meets regularly with the Headmaster to discuss concerns.

c. **Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)** oversees Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) and may support children and families where attendance issues are more complex or social workers are also supporting the family.

d. **Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral)** is the school Attendance Champion.
Championing and improving attendance across the school.
Monitors attendance at a school level, and at pupil level when significant concerns exist.
Discusses attendance data and trends with Heads of Year.
Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and making 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/ carers.
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.
Attending DfE Attendance Hub meetings to learn and share best practice in promoting attendance.

**e. The Attendance Officer**
Monitors attendance data at school and individual pupil level.
Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral).
Provides Heads of Year with attendance data on a monthly basis.
Works with other key school staff e.g., Pastoral Support Workers and SENDCo to tackle persistent absence.
Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.
Benchmarks attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
In the Sixth Form attendance is monitored by the Year 12 and Year 13 Pastoral Support Workers.

f. **Form Tutors**
Form tutors are responsible for the accurate and timely recording of the register. Morning register is to be taken at 8.35 with pupils marked present or absent. Pupils arriving late can be amended to show L until 8.45am. Any pupil arriving after this must sign in at Reception.

**g. Class Teachers**
Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance in every lesson. Registers must be taken within the first 15 minutes of each lesson, and updated in the case of any pupils who arrive midway through a lesson. Afternoon registration must be taken at 12.15pm.

**g. School Office staff** are responsible for:

- Signing in pupils who arrive late, recording reasons for lateness.
- Transferring calls from parents/carers 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.

- Updating Bromcom when pupils are sent home unwell.
- Informing the relevant Head of Year or Pastoral Support Worker when they notice a concerning pattern of lateness or a pupil regularly leaving school early due to illness.

h. **Parents/carers** are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time. When their child is too ill to attend - complete the Google form to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day and that if this is not possible, attendance occurs before and afterwards, minimising the time the child is away from school.
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help their child overcome any barriers to attendance.
- Inform school of any suspected or diagnosed special educational need, medical condition or disability which may impact attendance.

i. **Pupils**

Responsibility is one of our school values. As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, pupils are required to:

- be aware of the School's attendance rules and timings. This is communicated through their Student Information Booklet, school staff, parents/carers and the school timetable.
- speak to their Form Tutor/Head of Year/Pastoral Support Worker if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- be punctual when arriving at school in the morning and attend lessons on time
- attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate equipment for the school day. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable.
- follow the correct school procedure if they arrive late, or depart early from school - including signing in/ out at Reception as required.
- sign in on the iPad at Reception for any appointments or specialist lessons in school including LAMDA and peripatetic music lessons.

## 9. Promoting good attendance

School celebrates excellent attendance and improvements in attendance levels on a termly basis. This may include year or form group celebrations, hot chocolate treats, praise postcards or phone calls, or public recognition in assemblies, where appropriate. Additionally, 3 merits are awarded to pupils achieving 100% attendance in a month.

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Senior Attendance Champion. The policy will be approved by the full governing body.

## 7. Links with other policies

This policy links to:

Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

## Appendix 1: Five Stage Attendance Improvement Procedure (Years 7 - 11)

We know there are many reasons why children and young people may struggle to attend school. These can include anxiety, health needs, friendship issues, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), family circumstances, or other barriers outside the school environment.

That's why our approach, in line with GCC Attendance Strategy, focuses on support first. Pupils may move to the next stage if attendance does not improve.

**Stage 1 -** Initial Concern

- Attendance falls below 95%
- Pupil spoken to and supported by Form Tutor, Head of Year and/ or Pastoral Support Worker
- Letter to parents outlining how many hours of learning has been missed (letters sent at the discretion of Attendance Officer and Heads of Year, for example in the case of a bereavement)
- Attendance Officer and Heads of Year continue to monitor and support

**Stage 2**

- Further communication with parents
- Pupil further discusses barriers to attendance with Form Tutor,Head of Year, and/ or Pastoral Support Worker and recorded on MyConcern
- A Pupil Attendance Agreement completed with pupil , Tutor and Head of Year.
- Review in 4 weeks - if no improvement escalate to stage 3

**Stage 3**

- Further communication with parents
- Arrange a meeting in school including Head of Year and/ or Assistant Head (Pastoral) g) and Attendance Officer
- Written attendance agreement completed at stage 2 reviewed and agreed with parents/carers
- Medical evidence may be required to authorise any further absence due to illness
- Review in 4 weeks - if no improvement escalate to stage 4

**Stage 4**

- Letter to parents, warning of prosecution and invitation to attend a meeting
- Formal Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) to identify specific barriers to attendance (such as health, welfare, or additional needs) and draw up a Parenting Contract.
- Focus of the meeting should be on support and how to improve attendance and prevent legal proceedings being initiated. It is an opportunity for everyone to share views and ideas about what might help, including new strategies or interventions that may be worth trying.
- School may draw on Gloucestershire County Council Inclusion Services or health and voluntary partners to put multi-agency support around the family at this point.
- Review in 4 weeks

**Stage 5**

- Attendance Improvement Meeting Review – outcome either:
  -Improvement but targets not met – continue and set review 2 date **or**
  -Targets not met, request for legal action to the local authority in line with their procedures