Attendance Policy

Swindon Village Primary School

Approved by:	Curriculum & Standards	**Date:** 6.10.26
Last reviewed on:	October 2026	
Next review due by:	July 2027	
Policy Type	Statutory	

1. Statement of Intent

At Swindon Village Primary School, we believe that excellent attendance is fundamental to ensuring that all pupils achieve their full educational potential, develop positive relationships and fully participate in school life. Regular attendance supports pupils' academic progress, wellbeing, safeguarding and future life chances.

The school is committed to promoting high levels of attendance and punctuality for all pupils through a culture of belonging, support and high expectations. We will work collaboratively with pupils, parents/carers, Gloucestershire County Council and external agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance and ensure every pupil has access to a full-time education.

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

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2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Ensure attendance is monitored effectively and consistently.
- Establish a whole-school culture that values good attendance.
- Identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Provide support for pupils and families experiencing barriers to attendance.
- Fulfil the school's safeguarding responsibilities.
- Meet all statutory attendance recording and reporting requirements.
- Work in partnership with families, the Local Authority and relevant agencies to improve attendance outcomes.

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Support Group will:

- Monitor attendance data and trends.
- Hold school leaders accountable for attendance outcomes.
- Ensure compliance with statutory attendance duties.
- Review this policy annually.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Promote a culture of excellent attendance.
- Ensure attendance is monitored effectively.
- Oversee attendance intervention and support.
- Ensure legal responsibilities are met.
- Report attendance information to governors.

Attendance Champion

The Attendance Champion will:

- Lead attendance improvement across the school.
- Oversee attendance monitoring systems.
- Support staff in implementing attendance procedures.
- Coordinate interventions for pupils with attendance concerns.

Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer will:

- Maintain accurate attendance records.
- Follow up unexplained absences.
- Monitor attendance patterns and trends.
- Coordinate communications with parents/carers.
- Issue attendance letters and arrange meetings as required.

Class Teachers

Class teachers will:

- Complete accurate attendance registers.
- Promote the importance of attendance.
- Identify emerging attendance concerns.
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly.

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Informing the school of reasons for absence.
- Working with the school to address attendance concerns.
- Providing medical evidence when requested.

4. Expectations of Attendance

Every pupil is expected to attend school every day that the school is open unless absence is unavoidable and authorised.

The school aims for attendance to be at least 96% for all pupils.

Good attendance means:

- Attending school every day.
- Arriving on time.
- Being ready to learn.
- Attending all lessons and activities.

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5. Attendance Registers

Attendance registers are legal documents and will be maintained in accordance with statutory requirements.

Registers will be taken twice daily:

- At the start of the morning session.
- At the start of the afternoon session.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8:50am** each school day.

Registers will be completed electronically using the school's management information system and will accurately record attendance in line with Department for Education requirements.

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6. Punctuality

Punctuality forms an important part of good attendance.

A pupil who arrives after the register has opened but before it closes will be recorded as late.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed may receive an unauthorised absence mark in accordance with statutory guidance.

Repeated lateness will be monitored and may result in parental meetings and support interventions.

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7. Reporting Absence

Parents/carers must contact the school on the first day of absence and each subsequent day unless otherwise agreed.

Absence should be reported:

- By telephone.
- Via approved school communication systems.
- By email where appropriate.

The reason for absence must be clearly explained.

If no contact is received, the school will follow safeguarding procedures and attempt to establish the pupil's whereabouts.

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8. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The Headteacher will determine whether an absence is authorised.

Examples of authorised absence may include:

- Illness.
- Medical or dental appointments.
- Religious observance.
- Exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher.

Examples of unauthorised absence include:

- Shopping trips.
- Birthdays.
- Holidays during term time not authorised by the Headteacher.
- Missing school without explanation.

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9. Medical Appointments

Routine appointments should be made outside school hours wherever possible.

Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school before and after appointments.

The school may request evidence of appointments.

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10. Term-Time Leave

There is no automatic entitlement to leave during term time.

Leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Parents/carers must submit a written request in advance.

Each request will be considered individually.

Unauthorised leave may result in penalty notices being issued in line with Local Authority and national guidance.

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11. Attendance Support and Early Intervention

The school recognises that barriers to attendance can be complex and varied.

Swindon Village Primary School is committed to working in partnership with pupils, families and relevant agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance as early as possible.

Where attendance concerns are identified, the school will adopt a support-first approach before legal intervention is considered.

Support may include:

- Informal discussions with parents/carers.
- Attendance review meetings.
- Individual attendance support plans.
- Early Help assessments.
- Pastoral support programmes.
- Mentoring and emotional wellbeing support.
- Reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND.
- Referrals to external agencies.
- Multi-agency meetings where appropriate.

Support plans will be regularly reviewed and amended to ensure the most effective strategies are in place.

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12. Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

The school will closely monitor pupils whose attendance falls below expected levels.

Attendance thresholds used for monitoring and intervention may be reviewed periodically in response to Department for Education guidance, Local Authority expectations, emerging attendance trends and individual pupil circumstances.

Persistent Absence

A pupil is persistently absent when attendance falls below 90%.

Interventions may include:

- Attendance monitoring letters.
- Parent meetings.
- Attendance support plans.
- Early Help referrals.
- Multi-agency support.

Severe Absence

A pupil is severely absent when attendance falls below 50%.

These cases will receive intensive support and may involve:

- Social care.
- Health professionals.
- Gloucestershire County Council Attendance Team.
- Other relevant agencies.

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13. Support for Vulnerable Pupils

The school recognises that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance and may require additional support.

Particular attention will be given to:

- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Pupils with medical conditions.
- Young carers.
- Looked After Children.
- Previously Looked After Children.
- Pupils known to Children's Social Care.
- Pupils experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Pupils who have experienced adverse childhood experiences or family instability.

The school will work with families and professionals to ensure attendance support is inclusive, proportionate and tailored to individual circumstances.

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14. Procedures Following Unexplained Absence

Where a pupil is absent without explanation, the school will:

1. Attempt to contact parents/carers.
2. Record all contact attempts.
3. Conduct home visits where appropriate.
4. Assess whether safeguarding concerns exist.
5. Seek support from external agencies where necessary.

Any unexplained absence may be treated as a safeguarding concern in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

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15. Children Missing Education (CME)

Swindon Village Primary School recognises its statutory duty to identify, monitor and support children who may be at risk of becoming Children Missing Education.

Where a pupil has prolonged or repeated unexplained absences and the school is unable to establish their whereabouts despite reasonable enquiries, the school will follow Gloucestershire County Council Children Missing Education procedures.

The school will notify the Local Authority when required under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Any concerns relating to a child becoming missing from education will be treated as a safeguarding matter and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

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16. Legal Intervention and Penalty Notices

Where support strategies have not secured improvements and unauthorised absence continues, the school may request formal intervention from Gloucestershire County Council.

The National Framework for Penalty Notices may apply.

Penalty notices may be issued where statutory thresholds are met.

Current national arrangements are:

- £80 if paid within 21 days.
- £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A second penalty notice within a three-year period is charged at £160.
- Further offences may result in prosecution.

The school will always seek to work constructively with families before legal intervention is considered.

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17. Attendance Data and Monitoring

Attendance data will be monitored:

- Daily.
- Weekly.
- Termly.
- Annually.

The school will analyse attendance information to identify:

- Individual concerns.
- Group trends.
- Vulnerable cohorts.
- Persistent absence.
- Severe absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

Findings will inform attendance improvement planning and intervention strategies.

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18. Safeguarding

Attendance is a safeguarding priority.

Poor attendance may indicate unmet needs, welfare concerns or safeguarding risks.

The school will work closely with safeguarding agencies where attendance patterns suggest a pupil may be at risk.

All attendance concerns will be considered alongside safeguarding information to ensure an appropriate response.

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19. Equality and Inclusion

The school is committed to ensuring attendance procedures are applied fairly, consistently and without discrimination.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered for pupils with disabilities, medical conditions and other protected characteristics in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

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20. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, Local Authority requirements or school procedures.

The Curriculum & Standards acting under delegated authority from the Full Governing Body, will review and approve this policy.

Attendance data, trends and outcomes will be reported to governors regularly to ensure effective oversight of the school's attendance strategy and statutory responsibilities.