Mickleton Primary School



Primary Attendance and Absence Policy

Approved by:	FGB	**Date:**	Sept 2026
Next review due by:	Sept 2027		

1. Statement of Intent

At Mickleton Primary School, we believe that regular attendance is fundamental to every child's educational success, wellbeing, personal development and future opportunities. We are committed to ensuring that every pupil attends school regularly and on time so that they can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. We recognise that absence is often a symptom of wider barriers and therefore adopt a supportive, child-centred approach which seeks to identify and address difficulties at the earliest opportunity. We are committed to working with pupils, families, Gloucestershire County Council and partner agencies to ensure every child can access their entitlement to a full-time education.

The school recognises that attendance and safeguarding are inextricably linked. Children who are absent from education, attend irregularly or experience prolonged periods of absence may be at greater risk of harm, exploitation, neglect, poor mental health difficulties, online risks and involvement in unsafe activities. For this reason, attendance is regarded as a safeguarding priority and all staff share responsibility for promoting, monitoring and improving attendance.

The school will:

- Promote a culture where attendance is valued and celebrated.
- Maintain high expectations for attendance and punctuality.
- Work collaboratively with children, families and external agencies.
- Remove barriers that prevent regular attendance.
- Monitor attendance closely and intervene early.
- Ensure attendance is viewed as a safeguarding priority.
- Support pupils with SEND, medical needs and vulnerabilities appropriately.
- Comply with all statutory attendance requirements.
- Adopt a support-first approach whilst maintaining clear expectations of attendance.

1.2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based upon:

- Education Act 1996.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024.
- DfE *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*.
- Gloucestershire County Council Attendance Guidance.
- DfE guidance relating to Children Missing Education.

The school follows the principle that improving attendance is everyone's business and adopts a support-first approach before considering legal intervention where appropriate.

2.3. Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 Governing Board

The governing board will:

- Promote high attendance expectations.
- Ensure attendance remains a strategic safeguarding priority.
- Review attendance data termly.
- Monitor persistent absence and severe absence.
- Monitor attendance of vulnerable groups.
- Hold leaders to account for attendance outcomes.
- Ensure appropriate resources are allocated to attendance improvement.
- Seek assurance that attendance concerns are identified promptly and responded to appropriately.
- Receive termly reports regarding attendance-related safeguarding concerns.

1.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Lead implementation of this policy.
- Monitor attendance across the school.
- Report attendance information to governors.
- Ensure effective intervention systems are in place.
- Liaise with external agencies where necessary.
- Authorise leave of absence requests in exceptional circumstances only.
- Ensure attendance is considered within safeguarding practice.

1.3 Senior Attendance Champion

The school has designated a Senior Attendance Champion who is responsible for leading and promoting the school's attendance strategy, ensuring compliance with statutory attendance guidance and driving continuous improvement in pupil attendance.

The Senior Attendance Champion will:

- Monitor attendance data, trends and patterns across the school and identify emerging concerns.

- Lead the school's graduated approach to improving attendance, ensuring barriers to attendance are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.
- Oversee the implementation of attendance interventions, Attendance Support Plans and targeted support arrangements.
- Work collaboratively with pupils, families, staff, governors, the Local Authority and external agencies to improve attendance outcomes.
- Ensure attendance is regularly reviewed, evaluated and reported to governors.
- Promote a culture in which good attendance is valued, recognised and understood by pupils and families.
- Ensure attendance is considered as part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities and wider inclusion strategy.
- Support staff in implementing attendance procedures and responding consistently to attendance concerns.

At Mickleton Primary School, the Senior Attendance Champion is Miss Britt, who has strategic responsibility for attendance and works alongside the Headteacher, pastoral staff, governors and external agencies to support pupils and families where attendance concerns arise. This role includes overseeing attendance improvement activity, monitoring the impact of interventions and ensuring attendance remains a key safeguarding and school improvement priority.

1.4 Staff

All staff will:

- Promote positive attendance.
- Record attendance accurately and promptly.
- Understand attendance as a safeguarding responsibility.
- Identify attendance concerns early.
- Escalate concerns in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- Support pupils returning following absence.

1.5 Parents and Carers

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day where possible.
- Notify the school before 8:30am on each day of absence.
- Work positively with the school to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.
- Engage with support offered by the school.

1.6 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day.
- Arrive punctually.
- Engage positively with support provided by the school.

3.4. Attendance Expectations

The school has high expectations for attendance and punctuality and expects all pupils to attend school every day unless there is a genuine reason preventing attendance.

The school aims for all pupils to achieve attendance of at least **96%**. Whilst there is no national attendance target set by the DfE, regular attendance is essential to ensure that pupils access the full curriculum and maximise their educational outcomes.

1.6.1 Attendance Categories

Attendance Rate	Category
96% - 100%	Good Attendance
90% - 95.9%	Attendance of Concern / Risk of Persistent Absence
Below 90%	Persistent Absence (PA)
Below 50%	Severe Absence (SA)

Persistent Absence (PA) is attendance below 90%.

Severe Absence (SA) is attendance below 50%.

4.5. Registration and Punctuality

School gates open at 8:30am.

Morning registration closes at 9:00am. Pupils arriving after this time will receive the appropriate national attendance code.

Afternoon registration is completed by 1:00pm and closes at 1:10pm.

The school will maintain attendance registers in accordance with statutory requirements.

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6. Reporting Absence

Parents must notify the school by telephone before 8:30am on each day of absence.

Where a reason for absence has not been received, the school will contact parents on the first day of absence.

The school will always seek to:

- Ascertain the reason for absence.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken.
- Determine whether the absence is authorised.
- Apply the correct attendance code.

Where the school is unable to establish a pupil's whereabouts, where repeated unexplained absence occurs, or where safeguarding concerns are present, additional checks may be undertaken. These may include welfare visits, liaison with Children's Social Care, consultation with relevant professionals, referrals to the Local Authority and contact with the Police where appropriate.

The school recognises that children missing education are at significant risk of underachievement, exploitation, neglect and harm. Attendance processes therefore contribute directly to the school's safeguarding systems.

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7. Understanding Attendance Concerns

The school recognises that attendance difficulties may arise from:

- Illness or medical needs.
- Mental health difficulties.
- Anxiety-based school avoidance.
- Special educational needs.
- Family circumstances.
- Bereavement.
- Bullying.
- Neglect.
- Exploitation.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Social or emotional difficulties.

The school will seek to identify barriers and provide support before attendance concerns become entrenched.

5.8. Supporting Attendance

The school operates a graduated support model.

1.6.2 Universal Support

- Positive attendance culture.
- Recognition and celebration of good attendance.
- Clear communication with families.

1.6.3 Targeted Support

- Attendance discussions.
- Parent meetings.
- Attendance monitoring.
- Pastoral support.

1.6.4 Intensive Support

- Attendance Support Plans.
- Multi-agency involvement.
- Early Help referrals.
- Attendance contracts.
- Local Authority support.

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9. Attendance Support Plans

Where attendance concerns arise, the school may implement an Attendance Support Plan.

Plans may include:

- Attendance targets.
- Identification of barriers.
- Pastoral support.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- SEND support arrangements.
- Reintegration programmes.
- External agency involvement.

Plans will be reviewed regularly and updated as required.

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10. SEND and Health-Related Attendance

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and medical needs can face additional barriers to attendance and will work in partnership with families to remove those barriers.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Phased returns.
- Flexible arrangements.
- Safe spaces.
- Pastoral support.
- Reduced timetables where appropriate.
- Adapted transition arrangements.

The school recognises that anxiety-based school avoidance and emotionally based school avoidance may significantly affect attendance. Where attendance concerns may be linked to anxiety, mental health needs or unmet SEND needs, supportive strategies and reasonable adjustments will be prioritised before legal intervention is considered.

6.11. Leave of Absence During Term Time

The Headteacher may only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

Family holidays will not normally be authorised during term time.

Requests must:

- Be made in writing.
- Be submitted in advance.
- Explain the exceptional circumstances being relied upon.

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12. Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent Absence occurs when attendance falls below 90%.

Severe Absence occurs when attendance falls below 50%.

The school recognises that pupils who are persistently or severely absent are statistically more likely to experience poorer educational outcomes and may be at increased risk of social exclusion, exploitation, neglect, mental health difficulties and wider safeguarding concerns. Attendance information will therefore be considered alongside safeguarding, behaviour, SEND and pastoral information.

1.6.5 Attendance Between 90% and 95.9%

The school will:

- Review attendance patterns.
- Discuss attendance with pupils and parents.

- Identify barriers to attendance.
- Offer appropriate support.
- Monitor attendance over an agreed period.

1.6.6 Attendance Below 90%

The school will:

- Arrange attendance meetings.
- Consider an Attendance Support Plan.
- Implement targeted interventions.
- Consider Early Help involvement.
- Liaise with external agencies where appropriate.

1.6.7 Attendance Below 50%

Attendance below 50% will be regarded as a significant concern requiring intensive intervention.

The school will:

- Implement enhanced monitoring.
- Hold regular review meetings.
- Work with external agencies.
- Review safeguarding risks.
- Escalate concerns where required through safeguarding procedures.

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13. Legal Intervention

The school will always seek to support families before legal action is considered.

Where support has not secured improvement and unauthorised absence continues, the school may request Gloucestershire County Council consider legal intervention.

This may include:

- Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Parenting Orders.
- Education Supervision Orders.
- Prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The national threshold for a penalty notice is currently 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

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14. Monitoring Attendance

Attendance data will be reviewed:

- Weekly by senior leaders.
- Half-termly by the Attendance Champion.
- Termly by governors.

Leaders will monitor:

- Whole-school attendance.
- Persistent absence.
- Severe absence.
- Attendance of pupils with SEND.
- Attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Attendance of vulnerable groups.
- Punctuality trends.
- Impact of interventions.

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15. Attendance and Safeguarding

Attendance is a safeguarding priority.

The school recognises that regular attendance is an important protective factor for children. Effective attendance monitoring supports the identification of pupils who may be vulnerable, at risk of harm or in need of additional support.

The school will:

- Treat unexplained absence as a potential safeguarding concern.
- Follow first-day response procedures for all absences.
- Escalate concerns where a child cannot be located.
- Consider attendance information alongside wider safeguarding indicators.
- Monitor patterns of absence for signs of vulnerability or risk.
- Work with partner agencies where concerns about a child's welfare are identified.
- Respond swiftly where children are at risk of becoming Children Missing Education (CME).

Attendance information forms part of the school's safeguarding monitoring systems and is reviewed alongside behaviour, welfare, SEND, child protection and pastoral information when assessing risk and determining support.

Leaders recognise that attendance data is a key safeguarding indicator and regularly review attendance patterns to identify children who may require early help, targeted intervention or statutory safeguarding action.

16. Monitoring and Review

Governors will receive termly attendance reports including:

- Whole-school attendance.
- Persistent Absence (below 90%).
- Severe Absence (below 50%).
- Attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Attendance of pupils with SEND.
- Attendance of Children in Need and Child Protection cohorts where appropriate.
- Attendance-related safeguarding concerns.
- Evaluation of attendance interventions.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governing Board. Any revisions will reflect changes in legislation, DfE guidance and local authority procedures.

School Attendance Aspiration: 96%+
Persistent Absence Threshold: Below 90%
Severe Absence Threshold: Below 50%