



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

This policy was approved and ratified by

Cox Green School

on 13th June 2024

Version	Authorisation	Approval Date	Effective Date	Next Review
1	Full Governing Body	16/7/13	16/7/13	July 2015
1.2	Full Governing Body	7/7/15	1/9/15	July 2017
1.3	People & External Relations Committee	7/6/16	7/6/16	June 2019
1.4	Senior Leadership Team	22/5/19	22/5/19	May 2022
1.5	Senior Leadership Team	14/6/22	14/6/22	June 2025
1.6	Senior Leadership Team	13/6/24	13/6/24	June 2027



Introduction

Full attendance and good punctuality are key to achievement in school. We consider them vital to providing equal opportunities for all students, ensuring access to the full curriculum and achieving both academic and social success.

Cox Green will therefore work in partnership with students, parents and outside agencies to support all families, and ensure students make progress with their education and life beyond education. We recognise that students who are absent will miss important educational opportunities which will affect their grades. We do however acknowledge that some absences will occur from time to time due to illness or unavoidable family circumstances.

Aims:

- Work in partnership with parents/carers to secure full attendance and good punctuality. This means that students should have 96% or above for both attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that there are effective systems, known to all, to ensure attendance and punctuality is correctly recorded and monitored and evaluated accurately;
- Communicate with parents/carers regularly about attendance and punctuality;
- Reward positively for attendance and punctuality;
- Follow up any issues regarding attendance and punctuality with parents/carers and outside agencies to ensure a student attains a good attendance and punctuality record.

Expect	<i>Aspire to high standards of attendance from all students 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.</i>
Monitor	<i>Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.</i>
Listen & Understand	<i>When a pattern is spotted, discuss with students and parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.</i>
Facilitate Support	<i>Remove barriers in school and help students 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.</i>
Formalise Support	<i>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. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.</i>
Enforce	<i>Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention; a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education</i>

Attendance Legislation

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that the child may have. In this context compulsory school age is any time between the school term after their 5th birthday till the last Friday in June in the school



year that they turn 16. This can be regular attendance at school or by education otherwise. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. If a student is absent for more than 10% of school sessions they are deemed as persistent absentees.

Rewards

Our students are actively encouraged to achieve excellent attendance and punctuality, and to understand their importance in helping them to achieve academic success. Our tutor and assembly programmes promote and emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Cox Green School recognises those students who improve their attendance and punctuality record.

Attendance Practice

Improving attendance is a whole school responsibility. Parents, students and all members of staff have a responsibility to encourage and support students to ensure they reach at least 96% attendance. Targeted interventions are implemented where a student has declining attendance.

Attendance	90 – 100%	85 – 90%	50 – 85%	Below 50%
Code	A1	A2	A3	A4
Staff Focus	Form Tutors	Attendance lead	HoY, SAFE Manager and Attendance Officer	Senior Leadership Team and Attendance Officer

This robust monitoring is led by the Attendance Officer in conjunction with the SAFE Team, Heads of Year, Attendance Lead and SLT who work with their teams to ensure students maintain attendance above 96%. The link between attendance and attainment is regularly reinforced.

There are two categories of absence from school.

Authorised (Approved Absence)

Types of authorised absence that may be approved:

- Leave of absence – bereavement, funeral, wedding;
- Medical absence for appointments at hospital or orthodontists. (Non-urgent, routine check-up appointments should be made for after school hours or during the school holidays). Students are expected to be absent for the minimal amount of time and not absent for the whole day;
- Illness;
- Religious observance;
- If a student is excluded from school for a behaviour related incident, this is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised (Not Approved) Absence

Types of absence that will not be approved:

- Absence due to birthday, shopping for uniform, looking after family members;
- Holiday in term time;
- Late arrival to school after the register has closed has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence.



Unauthorised absence and persistent lateness can lead to parents/carers being fined by the Local Authority. All absence, authorised and unauthorised, will be analysed and subject to challenge, to ensure that any concern regarding frequency, pattern or validity is acted upon swiftly to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met.

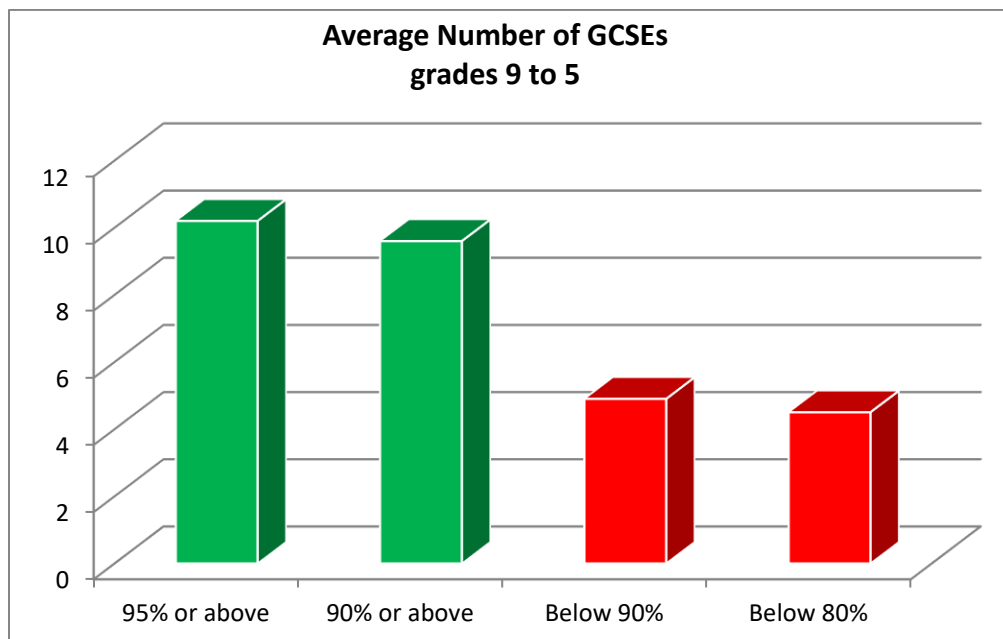
Students receive 2 session marks (AM / PM) each day. These registers are taken during lesson 1 and lesson 4. Every session must be marked in the register and given a code by the school. The absence will be either authorised or unauthorised; the school uses the reason for absence, the student's attendance history and knowledge of the student to determine whether absences should be authorised - if the school does not receive a reason for absence it will always be unauthorised.

Legally, only the Headteacher (or their delegate) can approve an absence from school. Absence will be recorded using the code recommended by the Department for Education Guidance on School Attendance. Request for absence in term time must be submitted in writing in advance to the Headteacher, who will treat every request on an individual basis and respond accordingly.

Attendance and Outcomes

Every School Day Counts	
0 days off school	100%
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%
Equates to 30 days off school each year	85%

The graph below compares the attendance in Year 11 and the average number of GCSEs at grades 9 to 5 (A* to C):



Intervention by Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)



The school conduct targeting support meetings each term to review all student's attendance with the Education Welfare Officer attached to the school. Severely Absent Students (attendance less than 50%) are automatically referred but the EWO will also work with other young people where the school identifies concerns. Education Welfare Officers are employed by the Local Authority to monitor the attendance and welfare of children. They can offer support and guidance if you are having problems getting your child to school. They also have a duty to ensure that parents are following their legal duty in ensuring their children have regular attendance.

The Education Welfare Service can advise parents on rights and responsibilities regarding attendance and exclusion, liaise with school staff, meet with children in school, suggest other agencies who might be able to help, visit families at home, and provide further information on the consequences of non-school attendance.

Fixed Term Penalty Notices

The law states that it is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child has regular attendance at the school at which they are registered. If after consulting with parents and the Educational Welfare Officer, attendance or punctuality of an individual student does not improve, the school may consider asking the Education Welfare Service to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. The circumstances in which a Fixed Penalty Notice might be issued include:

- Truancy;
- Parent-condoned absences;
- Persistent lateness;
- Unauthorised absences;
- Appearing in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a permanent exclusion or whilst suspended from school;
- Intentionally taking a holiday during term time

The National Framework for Penalty Notices was updated in 2024 and will come into effect from 19th August 2024. From this date penalty notices must be considered when a student has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence (equivalent to 5 school days) in a rolling 10 school week period. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session and the period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

If students have 10 unauthorised absences within this time period the school will make an assessment based on a case-by-case basis as to whether a penalty notice can and should be issued. The rate of the first penalty notice is £160 if paid within 28 days, which is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. The second penalty notice is £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate £80.

Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period; if there are subsequent offences prosecution or other attendance legal interventions would need to be considered.



Return to School After Long Term Absence/Integration:

Cox Green School is committed to ensuring that all students achieve their potential. Any barriers to learning are considered on an individual basis, and we therefore make flexible arrangements to integrate students back into lessons after prolonged absence, whatever the reason for the absence. Once again, a staged approach to this reintegration will be taken, as follows:

1. A meeting will take place with the student, parent/carer, SAFE Manager and any other relevant staff and or outside agencies. A tailored plan will be drawn up which will acknowledge the reasons for the student's absence plus temporary additional support arranged. All teaching staff and form tutors will be advised by the SAFE Manager in advance of an anticipated return. This is to enable all staff to plan how to re-introduce the student successfully;
2. Any barriers to re-engagement will be discussed and possible solutions explored. A member of staff may be appointed to act as a mentor to support the student and family. A modified or reduced timetable may also be utilised in conjunction with parental consent.

Religious Observance

There is no legislation or regulation or DFE guidance on this matter. The Headteacher will review each application reasonably, and in consultation with the members of the pastoral team and the parents. The school expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

Leave of Absence/Holidays During Term Time

Leave of absence including holidays may not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Only the Headteacher can agree exceptional leave of absence. Exceptional situations may be taken into consideration if a request for term time absence form is submitted to the Headteacher a minimum of 15 school days prior to the dates requested. If leave is taken without the Headteacher's authorisation, the leave may be marked as an unauthorised absence and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive punctually to school and to lessons. Punctuality is monitored on a daily basis; students arriving late to school/lessons without an acceptable reason may be issued with a reflection. Sanctions for lateness are issued by the students tutor or Head of Year as follows:

More than 15 minutes late over a week = L3 reflection (30 minutes)

More than 30 minutes late over a week = L4 reflection (60 minutes)

Every Minute counts. Lateness = Lost Learning (Figures below are calculated over a school year)	
5 Minutes late each day	3 days lost
10 Minutes late each day	6.5 days lost
15 Minutes late each day	10 days lost
20 Minutes late each day	13 days lost
30 minutes each day	19 days lost

If students persistently record late marks, a meeting will be arranged by the Attendance Officer. The school will record late marks as unauthorised absence if a student arrives at school after 9:30 or if a letter has been sent regarding student's punctuality. Unauthorised marks for punctuality may be referred to the Local Authority for issue of a Penalty Notice.



Communication of Policy

The Policy is published on the school website for parents and the staff intranet.

Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed every 3 years by Cox Green School.



APPENDIX 1:

Operational Procedures

Roles and responsibilities

Students will:

- Attend school every day unless ill;
- Arrive to school by 8.30am in good time for registration;
- Recognise that if they are late over the course of a school week a sanction will be issued.
- Attend all lessons during the school day and remain in these lessons unless instructed to by a member of staff;
- Take responsibility for lateness and non-attendance and accept the consequences of this;
- Sign out with the Attendance Officer if they are leaving school during the day. A student will only be allowed to leave site if the school are informed of the reason they need to leave by parents; this can be via email or a phone call.

Parents/Carers will:

- Ensure that their child attends school every day unless they are ill;
- Book medical, dental and health appointments during holiday periods and after school. Where this is impossible then evidence of the appointment will be provided;
- Take holidays during school holiday periods. Any holiday taken outside of the school holiday will be considered unauthorised and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Ensure their child arrives at school by 8.30am ready for morning registration;
- Notify the school by 9am on the first day and every following day of absence, including the reason for absence and an estimation of the likely length of absence;
- Respond to any text sent daily, indicating why their child is absent;
- Contact the school at an early stage about any concerns they have about their child's attendance;
- Recognise that the school will be concerned when any child fails to meet the attendance target and work with the school to improve their child's attendance.

Form Tutors will:

- Ensure students are registered accurately in accordance with their legal obligations;
- Follow up with students who have been absent, as part of their regular tutor group check ins;
- Any notes or communication must be passed onto the Attendance Officer on the same day;
- Speak to students who have missed sessions to find out the causes and report through relevant internal tracking systems;
- Inform pastoral staff of students causing concern;
- Celebrate, encourage and reward good attendance.

Class Teachers will:

- Ensure students are registered accurately in accordance with their legal obligations;
- Report any student who is absent without notification (i.e. potential truancy, leaving the classroom without explanation, regular interventions which narrow the delivery of the curriculum without prior discussion) using the school's learning walk or 'missing – not truanting' system;
- Provide work for students who are off on long-term sick if directed by SLT.

Attendance Officer will:

- Monitor and evaluate data to:
 - Identify individual absence and lateness to both school and lessons;



- Identify patterns of lateness and absence and the identification of trends by year groups, seasonal patterns, patterns and nature of unauthorised absence and vulnerable groups e.g. SEN, EAL, FSM, PP.
- Intervene and communicate with parents/carers of students who have declining attendance/punctuality levels;
- Set a termly individual student attendance target, monitor and record in planner;
- Initiate strategies to improve attendance with appropriate staff;
- Liaise with the Local Authority regarding Persistent Absentees and severely absent students;
- Liaise with the Local Authority and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school;
- Provide information on attendance and punctuality for parent reports, prospectus and DfE returns;
- Deliver staff training/advice and support regarding attendance to staff, highlighting use of the Attendance Tracker;
- Managing physical interventions (i.e home visits?)
- Support students with poor attendance by utilising the ERSA toolkit if appropriate.

Pupil Premium and Attendance Leader will:

Work with data systems to identify trends and ensure appropriate action plans are created and acted upon by the relevant parties. For example:

- Working with form tutors to prevent poor attendance with pupils identified as at risk;
- Working with Heads of Year on early intervention to reduce absence before it becomes habitual;
- Working with Senior Leader on targeted reengagement of persistent absentees.

Heads of Year will:

- Lead and manage Form Tutors to ensure the school attendance and punctuality target is met for their year groups;
- Ensure their Tutors arrive on time for registration and follow their legal obligations of accurately recording attendance and punctuality;
- Highlight/update attendance at Year Team meetings/assemblies;
- Identify students causing concern and analyse data of vulnerable groups e.g.: SEN, PP, FSM;
- Monitor and intervene with all students whose attendance is declining;
- Implement School Attendance Agreements for those students who become persistent absentees;
- Liaise with external agencies about students causing concern;
- Organise celebration events for good/improved attenders in their year;
- Work with parents and other external agencies as appropriate to raise attendance and punctuality percentages.

Senior Leader will:

- Ensure the attendance and punctuality policy takes account of all students;
- Provide information to Attendance Officer and Pastoral staff about SEN students;
- Identify patterns or trends that emerge from SEN data with regards to attendance and punctuality;
- Identify the areas of policy which will remove barriers to learning for all students;
- Model good examples of inclusive practice across the school;
- Model and promote effective teaching skills which show manageable differentiation to address student needs;



- Contribute to professional development to address effective teaching to improve attendance and behaviour;
- Develop links with support services to provide expert advice on SEN students;
- Provide feedback to LT on where good SEN practice exists within school and use this to provide training for NQTs and new staff;
- Develop good recording and monitoring procedures to inform practice, groupings and levels of support required. Lead and manage SAFE Managers, Attendance Officer and Office Manager to ensure the school attendance and punctuality target is met;
- Lead and manage the SAFE Team to ensure SAFE Managers monitor and evaluate attendance and punctuality;
- Set whole school, year group and 'vulnerable groups' attendance and punctuality targets and monitor and report progress towards these;
- Set attendance and punctuality targets as part of the performance management cycle for Heads of Year and SAFE Managers;
- Work with Heads of Year and SAFE Managers to identify students causing concern and analyse data of vulnerable groups e.g.: SEN, CLA, and FSM;
- Monitor the work of Heads of Year and SAFE Managers who are working with students whose attendance is below 85%;
- Provide regular report to Trustees, the Headteacher and parents about attendance and punctuality and write the relevant section of the SEF;
- Ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school.

The Headteacher will:

- Set attendance and punctuality targets as part of the school development plan, target-setting process;
- Monitor progress towards targets;
- Review Leave of Absence requests;
- Notify parents, as appropriate, that if a student of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents/carers are committing an offence;
- With the Leadership Team member compile an annual report with statistics to the Board of Trustees.

The Trustees will:

- Review the Attendance and Punctuality Policy each year and evaluate its impact;
- Review attendance and punctuality figures each term at the sub – committee and report to Board of Trustees;
- Ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school and is known by parents;
- Organise Trustees and Attendance and Punctuality Panels to see students and families about attendance issues



APPENDIX 2: The Attendance Tracker

- The Attendance Tracker will be prepared each week by the Data Manager and is available on the staff intranet for all staff to access.
- The tutor is responsible for the overview of attendance in their tutor group; however, they will be supported by Heads of Year, SAFE Managers and other staff with responsibility for attendance.
- The tutor should share tutor group attendance with their group issuing reward points where appropriate.

A staged approach occurs in order to intervene with student's each week their attendance declines. In summary these are as follows:

Escalations

Intervention	Description
Attendance Certificates	Issued throughout the year to students with 100% attendance.
HoY awards	Issued to students who have improved attendance.
20-day Challenge	A reward-based intervention to support and educate students whose attendance is classed as persistently absent (<90%) who, with support, would be able to improve attendance to >90%.
Tutor attendance competitions	A reward-based intervention to promote and encourage good attendance of students.
Attendance letters	A letter sent to parents to inform and highlight attendance concerns.
Daily absence texts	An SMS to advise parents of absence where the school has not been notified of the reason for absence.
Attendance calls	A phone call to discuss attendance concerns.
Attendance meetings	A meeting with relevant school staff to discuss attendance concerns and explore ways to improve attendance.
Home visits	Unannounced or announced visits carried out by the school, EWO or other relevant professionals to ascertain a student's location, carry out safeguarding checks and meet with parents and the student to offer support.



Medical referral	Support provided for students who cannot attend school due to medical needs.
ERSA	A toolkit to support students who are not attending school due to SEMH difficulties.
Reduced / Modified timetables	An altered timetable to support a phased return to school following a period of extended absence. This is a short-term measure which is regularly reviewed. The student's timetable is temporarily adapted to include reduced time in school or utilises our SEN hub to support students to return to full-time education.
EWO Support	Support from the local authority education welfare officer which is provided when attendance falls below 50% or where the school request additional support to improve attendance
Multi-disciplinary support	Intensive whole family support utilising early help support and working in collaboration with relevant parties e.g. school, social care, local authority, health professionals
Fixed Penalty notices	A fine which may be considered when a student has 10 unauthorised absences in a rolling 10-week period.
Attendance Contract	A formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school and provide support.
Education Supervision Orders	A formal legal intervention issued by the local authority and made through the Family or High Court, which is used to ensure the student receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. This is an alternative to provide a formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution.
Attendance prosecution	Prosecution of parents by the local authority for non-attendance where other formal support methods have failed, or support has been deemed inappropriate in the circumstances of the individual case.
Parenting orders	Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order.



APPENDIX 3: Child Missing in Education Process

The term 'Children Missing from Education' (CME) refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. 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 can fall out of the education system because they:

- Fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- Cease to attend, due to exclusion (e.g. illegal unofficial exclusions);
- Live a life style which involves travelling;
- They are withdrawn by their parents; or
- Fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new LA).

If the school has concerns about a potential CME case this will be referred to the local authority.

APPENDIX 4: Cox Green School Attendance Organisation chart

