

MANORBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL



Aiming for Excellence

ATTENDANCE POLICY

November 2025 Edition

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

Policies, Procedures or Practices:	Attendance Policy	DATE:	6.11.25
EIA CARRIED OUT BY:	PM	EIA APPROVED BY:	Learning Committee

Groups that may be affected:

Are there concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for a positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly; issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		Y
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication)		Y
Sexual orientation		Y
Marriage and civil partnership		Y
Pregnancy and maternity		Y
Race		Y
Religion and belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)		Y
Gender identity		Y
Gender reassignment		Y

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

Review Frequency	3 years
Reviewed by	Learning Committee
Latest version	November 2025
Approved by	Learning Committee
Next review due	November 2028

RATIONALE

At Manorbrook Primary School we recognise that there is a clear link between good attendance and pupils' educational progress. Ensuring excellent attendance is the responsibility of everyone involved: pupils; their families; all members of the school staff and governors. This clear link between attendance and progress was clarified in the August 2024 DfE guidance, "Working Together to Improve School Attendance":

"The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%)."

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the ways by which attendance and punctuality are managed by the school and to clarify our expectations and the role of parents / carers.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS:

Parental Responsibility

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

"It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives their education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a 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 a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school."

Source: DfE "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" August 2024

The School's Expectations

At Manorbrook, we expect parents to:

- promote the value of good attendance to their child;
- provide the school with up to date contact numbers and changes of address;
- notify the school, giving a clear reason, on the first day of their child's absence; (This can be by phone, email, letter or in person.)
- let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down.

The School's Roles and Responsibilities

The School will:

- make our **expectations** clear, consistently giving attendance and punctuality a high priority;
- ensure all new parents are made aware of this policy;
- encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that attendance is **effectively monitored** and any unexplained absences are followed up promptly;
- report to parents on their child/ren's attendance at the end of each school year;
- contact individual parents where there is concern about their child's attendance or punctuality;
- **listen to families** and investigate whether there are any home or school factors (or both), which are affecting a child's school attendance;
- **facilitate support** to overcome barriers to attendance, working with local services and agencies (including the Education Welfare Officer) as necessary to help achieve this;
- **formalise support** where absence persists, which may include using a measure such as a parenting contract or an education supervision order (see DfE guidance for details);
- **Enforce** attendance through statutory intervention if all other avenues have been exhausted.

All aspects of attendance monitoring are undertaken by the Deputy Head with Pastoral Responsibility. This reflects the high importance attached to attendance by the school, and ensures that the school's Senior Leadership Team and Governors are updated regularly on all attendance matters.

All the above roles will be carried out in line with the most recent DfE guidance:

[Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024](#)

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

If a child is ill and will not be attending school: parents are asked to telephone the school before 8:40 am on the first day of absence. A message may also be left on the office voicemail out of hours, delivered in person by the parent to the staff member on door duty, or given in a letter or email.

If the absence exceeds two days: an update phone call on the third day is required.

If we do not receive a telephone call or other message: the child will be entered in the register as absent and the office staff will text or email home to establish the reason. If no explanation is received in the morning, a phone call home will be made by lunch time to obtain an explanation for the absence. The family's other contact numbers will be called if there is no reply on the 'main' listed number. Repeat texts will also be sent or calls made on the morning of each subsequent day of the absence. If we do not receive an explanation on the day of the absence, the register will be marked as an 'Unauthorised absence'. It may not be possible to change this status at a later date so it is vital that school is contacted on the first day of absence.

If no message from any listed contact is received after two days: a member of staff may visit the home and knock on the door to check on the pupil's welfare and obtain an explanation for the absence. If we are still unable to obtain a reason for the absence and reassurance that the child is safe, we will refer our safeguarding

concerns to the South Gloucestershire Access and Response Team, and follow their advice for further safeguarding action.

If a child needs to leave school during the day for any reason: a note, telephone call or verbal message delivered in person is essential, stating the reasons why they need to leave, and saying who will be collecting the child from school.

The person collecting the child must come to the office to ask for the child to be brought from class. The office staff will either collect the child for the parent, or admit the parent so they can collect the child themselves and give them a 'yellow card' to present to the teacher. No parent can collect a child from class or the playground without giving a yellow card to the teacher. Once the child has been collected, the parent must return to the main office, where the secretary will sign them out.

If a child is brought back later the same day: the parent must sign the child back in at the office.

If a child is scheduled to attend an after-school club: parents must always notify the school to let us know that their child will not be attending, so we can inform the teacher running the club.

ABSENCE CONCERNS

If we have a concern about the absence of a child: we will discuss it with their parent /carer either in person or by sending a letter of concern. We send letters when a child's attendance drops below 90%, or when they have four or more broken weeks in a half term, or if any other attendance issues or patterns concern us in any way.

If attendance remains a concern: a School Attendance Meeting (SAM) will be held with the family. If deemed necessary by the school, an Education Welfare Officer will be invited to attend this meeting.

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half day (session) absence from school has to be marked in the register and given a code by the school. The absence will either be authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence

Absences can only be authorised by the headteacher.

An authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for an absence.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence.

We encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, a pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Absence for religious observance will be authorised if the day of absence is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm that it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Unauthorised absence

Any absences where the headteacher is not satisfied with the explanation given will be unauthorised. Examples of such absences include holidays in term time, shopping trips, occasions where the school feels a child is being kept home without good reason or where a child is late a long time after registration has finished and the parent/carer fails to provide an acceptable explanation.

In the event of no message being received on the first day of absence or after a reasonable number of subsequent attempts by the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If absence due to illness lasts longer than expected or becomes unexpectedly frequent, it may be difficult to authorise further absence due to illness unless there is information from the GP or School Nurse, or until the absences have been discussed at a School Attendance Meeting (SAM). If a medical consent form is agreed and signed by the parents then this does not remove the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the reasons for a child's absence.

However, it is equally important that pupils are kept away from school if they are infectious. Any child who has a tummy bug causing sickness or diarrhoea must be kept of school for 48 hours to reduce the risk of that bug being spread.

In the case of absence due to COVID-19, we will base our advice about recommended periods of absence on the latest guidance received from the local authority's Public Health officer. The school holds information about recommended absence periods for a wide range of other diseases and illnesses. Parents are welcome to call the office for guidance.

LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day, they might miss work or important shared time with their teacher and class. Arriving late can sometimes disrupt lessons and can be embarrassing or stressful for the child who is late. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill, which will help children as they progress through their school life and beyond.

How we manage lateness:

- We open the school doors at 8:40 am, as we expect our children to be settled in class before the school day starts at 8:50 am;
- At 8.50 am the back doors close and the registers open. From 8.50 am onwards, children must enter the school via the front office.
- Up until 9.15 am, pupils who arrive late, i.e. pupils who have needed to enter via the front office, are marked as 'late' in their class register.

- After 9:15 am children will be marked 'as late after registers have closed' which counts as an absence. This will be an unauthorised absence unless an acceptable reason is given for the lateness.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE (INCLUDING HOLIDAYS) IN TERM TIME

There is no automatic entitlement in law for 'leave of absence' during term time. Authorisation for leave of absence can only be given in 'exceptional circumstances'. Please note the following points:

All requests for leave of absence must be made in advance in writing to the headteacher or a senior member of staff acting on their behalf. Requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, at the headteacher's discretion or a senior member of staff acting on their behalf. Unauthorised absence of a certain number of sessions may result in the school requesting the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice, which will demand the payment of a fine. See below for details.

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence

Penalty Notices may be issued to one or both parents / carers for each of their children affected, if more than ten sessions* of unauthorised absence accumulate in the seven-week period that includes and ends with the holiday / leave of absence.

*(*A session is a morning or an afternoon, so one week off school equates to ten sessions missed.)*

Any person with day-to-day care of the child may be issued with a Penalty Notice: this could include grandparents, step-parents and partners.

This can easily occur when children are taken out for term-time holidays, **so we urge parents to bear the risk of a penalty notice in mind, if considering a term-time holiday.**

The Penalty Notices will be administered by South Gloucestershire Council.

What a penalty notice currently costs:

The fine is £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. This rises to £160 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

From the 2024 to 2025 school year, each parent will only get up to 2 fines for the same child in a 3-year period. If you get a second fine in 3 years it will be £160. If you do not pay the fine in 28 days you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school. If your child is off school 3 or more times within the 3 years you will not be fined but may be taken to court.

Example:

A two-parent family taking two children out of school for an unauthorised holiday would be liable for a total of £320 if paid within 21 days or £640 if paid between 21 and 28 days.

The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted - details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.