



# Coton-in-the-Elms C/E Primary School

## Attendance Policy

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2	April 2020	Lisa McIntosh/ Stephanie Marbrow	September 2023	Updated to reflect latest national guidance.
3	August 23	Lisa McIntosh	September 2024	Refreshed, contents page numbered and highlights removed
4	July 2024	Lisa McIntosh	September 2024	Revised in light of new DfE legislation re Penalty Notices and their new guidance
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6	August 2025	K. Burton	September 2026	Updated. Typing errors and page numbering corrected

*Perseverance*

*Enjoyment*

*Awe and Wonder*

*Compassion*

*Excellence*

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## 1. Introduction

Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School offers all pupils a high standard of education through a varied curriculum delivered by a caring, talented team of staff. Children cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. School attendance is expected to be 100% for all children. We work to ensure that all parents/carers are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits for their children.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with children and families.

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This is the duty of any person with day-to-day responsibility for the child. Children need to attend school regularly, in accordance with the rules of the school, if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Coton-in-the-Elms School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure children are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours. We take a whole-school approach to achieve excellent attendance for all children.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of children who attend our school on our website. The policy ensures that all staff, governors and parents in our school are fully aware of and clear about actions necessary to promote good attendance.

**Data will be processed in line with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) UK, May 2018.**

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, children, and families.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our children.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring families follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND (Special Education Needs & Disability) they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The School ensures there are staff members responsible for attendance.

The School attendance officer is the headteacher and can be contacted via [headteacher@cotonintheelms.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@cotonintheelms.derbyshire.sch.uk). Staff, families, and children will be expected to contact the school office for queries or concerns about attendance or absence.

## **2. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding children/Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Lone Working Policy

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping Children Safe In Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a staff member, who is trained as a **designated safeguarding lead**, to oversee the attendance in school.
- Ensuring all families are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every child has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Ensuring the correct recording, notification and reviewing of children on part-time timetables, temporary managed placements or at dual placements.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring children do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling and encouraging good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual children to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated and recorded on CPOMS.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with children and families regarding attendance and absence.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance or punctuality.
- Informing the LA of any child being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Children are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Families are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school promptly if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting and encouraging good attendance with their children.

## 4. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

- **Absence:**
  - > Arrival at school after the register has closed
  - > Not attending school for any reason
  
- **Authorised absence:**
  - > An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent contacts the school to explain the absence.
  - > Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave

Only the headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Even if absence is supported by parent/carers, an absence will be unauthorised if not agreed with the headteacher.

### **Unauthorised absence:**

- > An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without a legitimate reason.
- > An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the knowledge or authorisation of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent/carers.

### **Persistent absence (PA):**

- > Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason authorised or unauthorised bringing their attendance to 90% or below

## 5. Attendance expectations – the law and statutory requirements

The Law and National Framework for Penalty Notices and Legal interventions:

- a) The Law relating to attendance
  - i Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that “the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:- (a) to age, ability, and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

li In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, we are unable to authorise any period of absence unless it is for exceptional circumstances, and in advance, as per the following extract from the above-mentioned regulations:

- iii. In accordance with Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, any deletions from roll will be made using the grounds for removal detailed in the statutory guidance.

The school have high expectations for children's attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated to families and children.

Children will be expected to attend school punctually every day and they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school gates are open from 8.40am and the school day starts at **8:50am** and children will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, children will be expected to be in the school gate by **8:50am at the latest**. Children will have a morning break and a lunch break –children will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **9:00am**. Children will receive a late mark (L) if they are not in their classroom by **9:20am**.
- The morning register will close at **9:20am**. Children will receive a mark of absence (U) if they arrive after 9.20am.
- The afternoon register will be marked by **1.05pm**. Children will receive a late mark (L) if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- The afternoon register will close at **1:10pm**. Children will receive a mark of absence (U) if they are not present.

Families should communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

## **6 Absence procedures**

Families must contact the school office before 9:00am on the first day and every subsequent day of their child's absence – It is a legal requirement that they will be expected to provide an explanation for the reason for absence, and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g., one school day.

Where a child is absent, and their family has not contacted the school by the time the registers have been checked; to report the absence, staff will contact the family as soon as is practical on the first day and every subsequent day that they do not attend school without contact.

The school will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school system.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a child is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable concern about the authenticity or impact of the illness.

Where a child has been absent without explanation, we will contact the family requesting the reason for absence. If we are unable to get the reason, we will send a letter requesting the

reason for absence to parents/carers to complete. If there is still no response by the specified date in the letter, then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O)

In the case of a persistent absentee, arrangements will be made for families to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the LA, if a child has missed 10 consecutive school days or more without authorisation.

If a child's attendance drops below 90 percent, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting to commence attendance monitoring will be arranged with the child's parents.

Where a child has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the child from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.

## **7. Attendance register**

The school uses RM Integris to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

All absences are recorded in the register as either authorised or unauthorised. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents/carers with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used by the headteacher to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to extremely, exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed



- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant children who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g., induction days.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

## 8. Authorising parental absence requests

Families are required to request a leave of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the attendance officer and the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the school, taking the best interests of the child and the impact on the child’s education into account. The attendance officer and headteacher’s decision is not subject to appeal.

### Leave of absence

In September 2013, the government introduced new regulations making it clear that headteachers **must not** give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are extremely exceptional circumstances.

Any requests for term time leave should be made on a **leave of absence form** available from the school office or website and handed in **10** school days before the first date of the requested absence. You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively therefore any absences that were not approved by the school in advance, will be marked as unauthorised.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine should leave be taken for a holiday which is not authorised by the headteacher (Attendance code G).

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory or planned assessment periods
- When a child’s attendance record shows **any** unauthorised absence
- Where a child’s absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

### Illness and healthcare appointments

Families will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, families will be expected to obtain approval for their child’s absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Families will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

## **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all children engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for children engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve additional homework. These arrangements will be approved by the local authority who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the child.

The child will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the child would be required to attend a school maintained by the local authority issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a child receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the child would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the local authority and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the local authority, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a child's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

## **Religious observance**

Families will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **10 school days** in advance.

The school will only accept requests from families for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the child's families would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

## **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

Where a child's parent/carer belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **10 school days** in advance. Absences will not be granted for children from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes. 9 of 21

## 9. SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that children with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support children who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled children to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a child's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, families will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSLs, and the Safeguarding /Child Protection Policy will be followed. All children will be supported with their mental health. Families are expected to engage with school and where this is not the case, the school may have to escalate the absence to a safeguarding concern.

If a child is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the Local authority if a child is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 consecutive school days, are placed on a temporary part-time timetable or a dual placement.
- Provide the Local authority with information, when necessary, about how the child's needs are being met.
- Help the child reintegrate at school when they return.
- Encourage the child to stay in contact with other children during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any children with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the child is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of children with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding regular (at least termly) meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Using any internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a child to have a temporary reduced timetable if this is in the best interests of the child.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **10. Leave during lunch times**

Families may be permitted to take their child away from school premises during lunch times in exceptional circumstances or if it is in the best interests of the pupil with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Families must submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunchtime.

## **11. Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence and parents/carers are not aware.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each child's learning.

All children are expected to be in their classes for registration, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any child with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the Families of the child, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy. Police will be contacted if the child's whereabouts are not known.

## **12. Missing children**

Children will not be permitted to leave school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school and parent/carer. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a child going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing child will inform the headteacher immediately.

- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Changing rooms
  - The library area
  - Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the child has not been found after **10 minutes**, then the families of the child will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parent/carer using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the families have had no contact from the child, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- A member of staff will record the incident, describing all circumstances leading up to the child going missing.
- If the missing child has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the child has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the child to ensure they are safe and well.
- Families and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the child has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that children understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

## **13 Children Missing from Education**

A Child Missing in Education is when a child's whereabouts is unknown and the school do not believe the child is absent due to illness or unavoidable causes. A CME is a safeguarding concern and the case may be referred to the Police or referred to Starting Point. Reasonable enquiries will be made through phone calls and/or welfare checks at the home using the last known address.

Should there be no further information about the child's whereabouts within 10 days then on day 10 of the unauthorised absence, a referral to the local authority will be made. School will follow the advice of the L/A. On day 20 of the absence, the pupil may be removed from roll, under Ground 1 of Regulation 9 of the above legislation.

The child's details will be logged onto the national School to School (S2S) DfE Portal to enable another school or LA to "claim" the child once located.

The school follows the statutory guidance Children Missing Education – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) and advice from the Local Authority.

**14 Elective Home Education** – see separate policy and DfE guidance Elective Home Education: guide for parents ([publishing .service.gov.uk](http://publishing.service.gov.uk))

## **15. Attendance intervention**

The school expects children to aim for 100% attendance.

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Conversations and informal meetings with parents
  - Sending texts, emails, and letters to parents.
  - Having a **weekly** review.
  - Engaging with local authority attendance teams.
  - Using fixed penalty notices.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the **Monitoring and analysing absence** section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the individual needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

**see Appendix 1 – Summary of Attendance monitoring procedures**

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Letters to parents/carers
- Whole class rewards
- Certificates
- Newsletter items

## **16. Working with Families to improve attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents, carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with children and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will offer early help or liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g., social care and the school nurse.

We will support families by working together to improve attendance by building effective relationships with families.

These could include;

- Regular meetings with parents through workshops and cuppa and a cake sessions.
- A welcome for parents
- A positive environment for parents and an open-door policy for parents
- Celebration events and assemblies
- Attendance rewards for children and celebration messages for parents

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The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each child wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a child where the child is absent without notification or authorisation. Both contact numbers will be used if necessary.

The school will ensure that parent/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – families will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, unless in certain circumstances, e.g., sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parent/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that they are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil and their families to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the child from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for child absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the child's experience in school, relevant staff and agencies will work with the child and family to resolve the issue. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g., they are related to issues within the child's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g., through an early help assessment, children's social care or the local authority, and will encourage families to access the support that they may need.

## **17. Persistent Absentee**

There are various groups of children who may be vulnerable to high absence and persistent absenteeism, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Children who are eligible for FSM
- Children with EAL
- Children with SEND

The school will use a number of methods to help support children at risk of becoming Persistent absentee to attend school. These include:

- Meeting with children to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on children who have rates of absence over 50 percent and will work with the local authority and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these children are facing.

Where a child at risk of persistent absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g., social care, to support the child in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe persistent absence following intervention may constitute neglect and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy.

## **18. Legal intervention**

### **Addressing Attendance Concerns,**

The school expects attendance of at least 96%

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely on parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns.

**If you have concerns about your child's attendance you should speak to the school.**

Depending upon the concern, the school will signpost parents to support. If a child's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of parental responsibility measures which include the issue of a penalty notice fines or other statutory action.

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after **one term**, the school will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team at the Local authority.
- Working with the Local authority to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Completing an early help assessment/ referral with the family.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the Local authority's code of conduct.



Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the Local authority to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

### **National Framework for penalty notices**

The new national threshold for consideration of legal action is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 weeks. A school week means any week in which there are at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, including late arrival after close of register (Attendance code U) and unauthorised leave in term time (Attendance code G)

If your child's absence falls into this category the school will decide if further offers of support is likely to improve the situation or if a request for legal action should be submitted to the local authority. A notice to improve will be issued to each parent/carers.

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve the pupil's attendance (usually 3 to 6 weeks depending on the individual case); however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after **one half term** the school will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team at the local authority.
- Working with the local authority to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place
- Completing an early help assessment/referral with the family
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the local authority's code of conduct to each parent.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the local authority to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

## **19. Monitoring and analysing absence**

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school, as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual children.
- Individual classes
- Other groups of children e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and children eligible for FSM.
- Children at risk of Persistent absence.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a **half-termly, termly and full-year** basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Specific days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will present this information to the headteacher or member of the senior leadership team **half-termly, termly and full-year** to celebrate success, identify trends and agree actions moving forward.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of children and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

## **20. Training of staff**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk children as part of their induction and annual refresher training.

The governing board will provide supportive challenge to the head teacher, where an attendance concern has been raised.

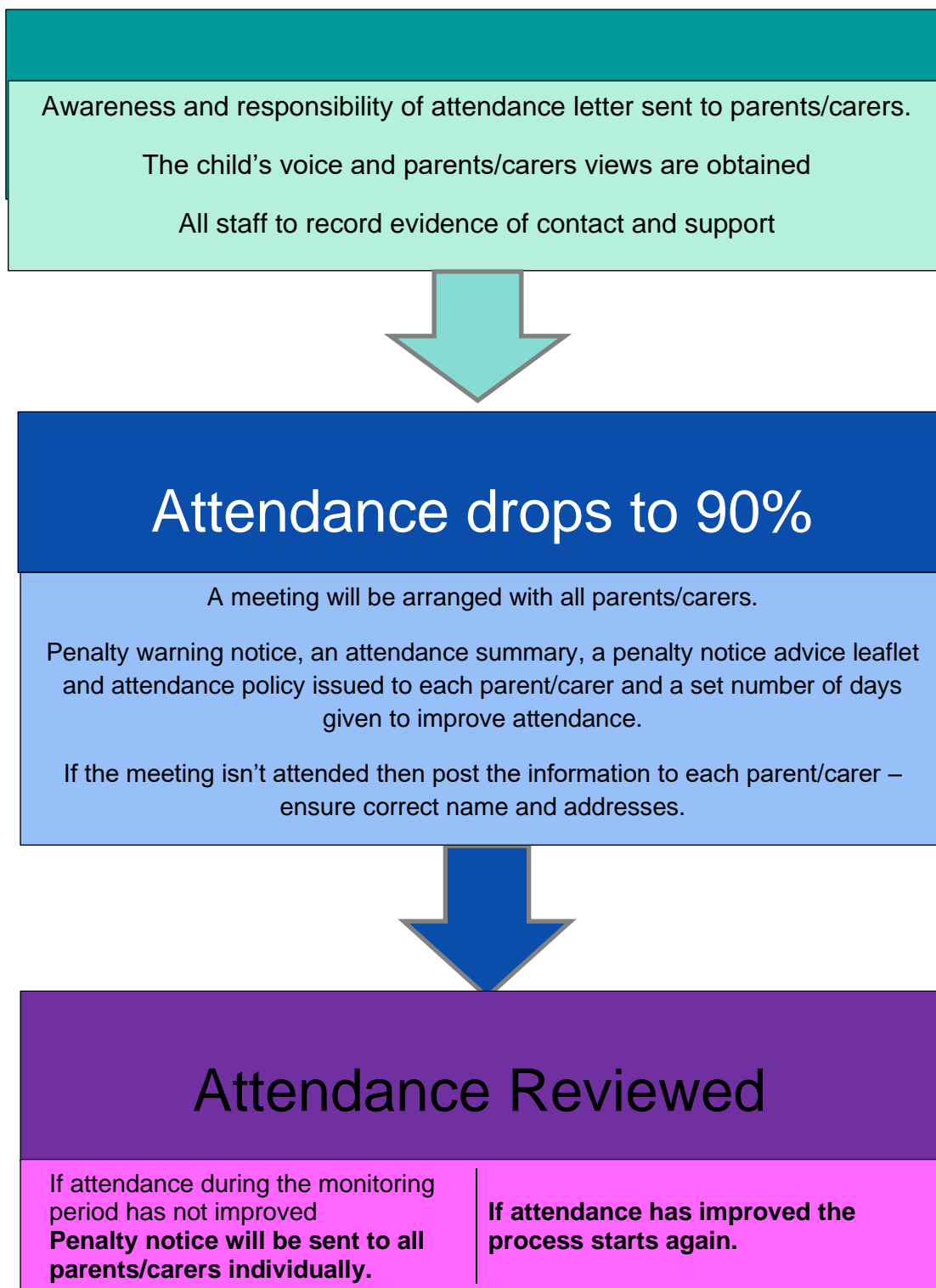
Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know-how such concerns should be managed.

## **21. Monitoring and review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The whole school attendance target is **97 percent**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body and the headteacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

**Attendance and Monitoring Procedures.**



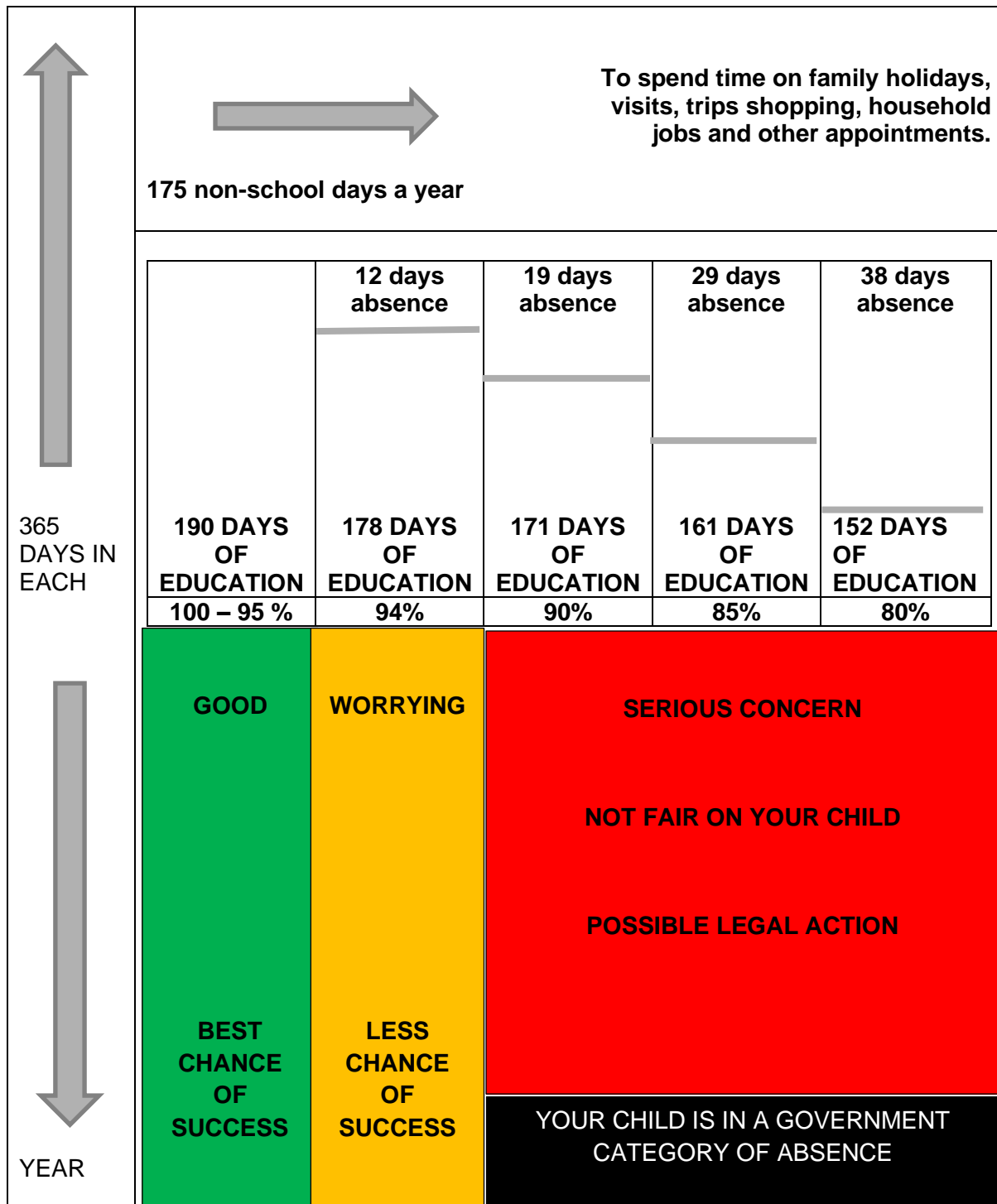
Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School has adopted the above attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where children's attendance falls below the standard:

Processes that support this are:

1. A report using RM Integris is run regularly by the SLT and attendance officer detailing **half-termly** and **annual** attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed regularly by classroom teachers. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the attendance officer.
3. Contact is made to the Families of any children marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence (o).
4. If a child's attendance falls to between **94 percent – 91 percent**, the attendance officer speaks to the child in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. The attendance officer also speaks to the family at the beginning or end of the day if possible or makes a phone call home to discuss this with families. A letter is also sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard.
5. If a child's attendance falls below 90 percent, an attendance review meeting is arranged with both parents. The child will start an attendance review period and a penalty warning letter will be given to both parents.
6. The child's attendance is **monitored for up to 30 school days** and if attendance does not improve after this time. A referral may be required to the school's local authority named contact for further action and advice.
7. After the **20 school day** monitoring period, and if targets are met, families will be contacted to congratulate the child and their parents on improving attendance. Communication and monitoring with the family continues until attendance stabilises to **above 94 percent**.
8. If targets are not met, the attendance officer would speak to the local authority named contact to consider next steps and a fixed-penalty notice being issued.

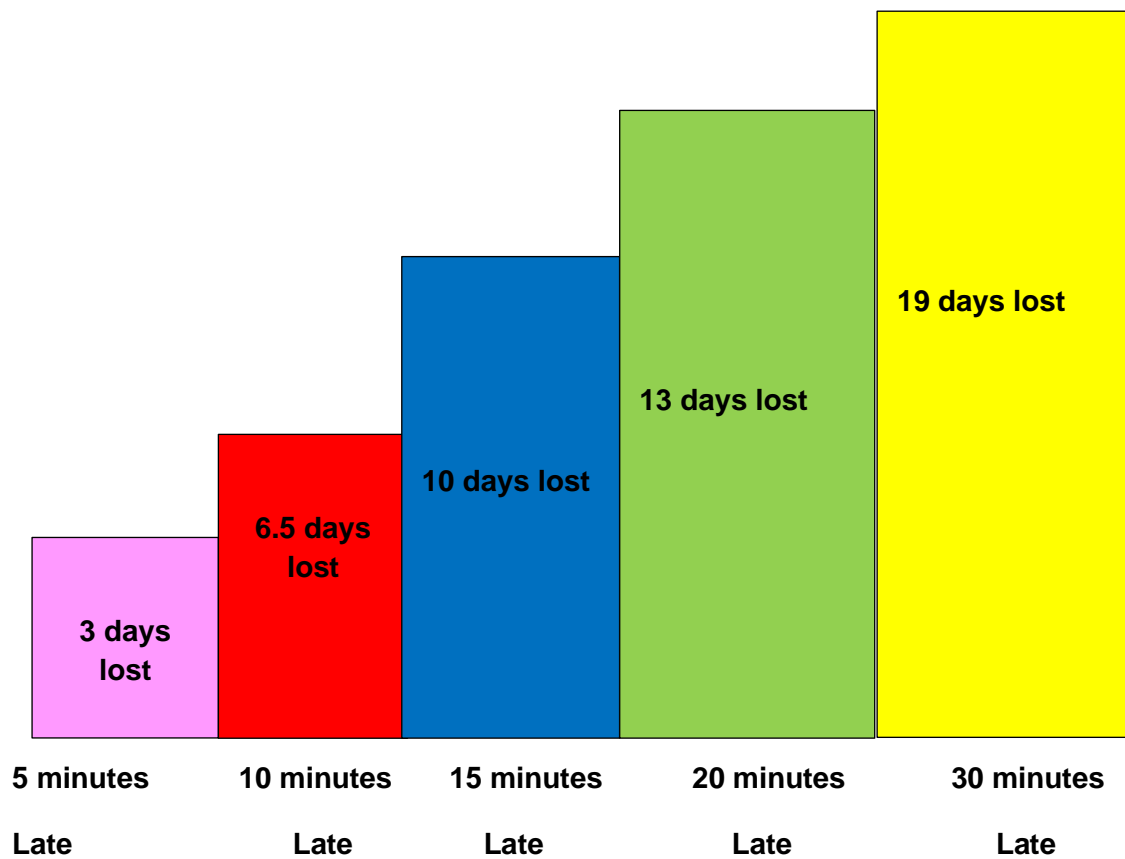
## Days off add up to lost learning

There is clear evidence to show that days off school impact on a child's attainment and progress



**Number of minutes late that add up to lost learning****EVERY MINUTE COUNTS**

If your child arrives late to school every day their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



(Over one academic year)