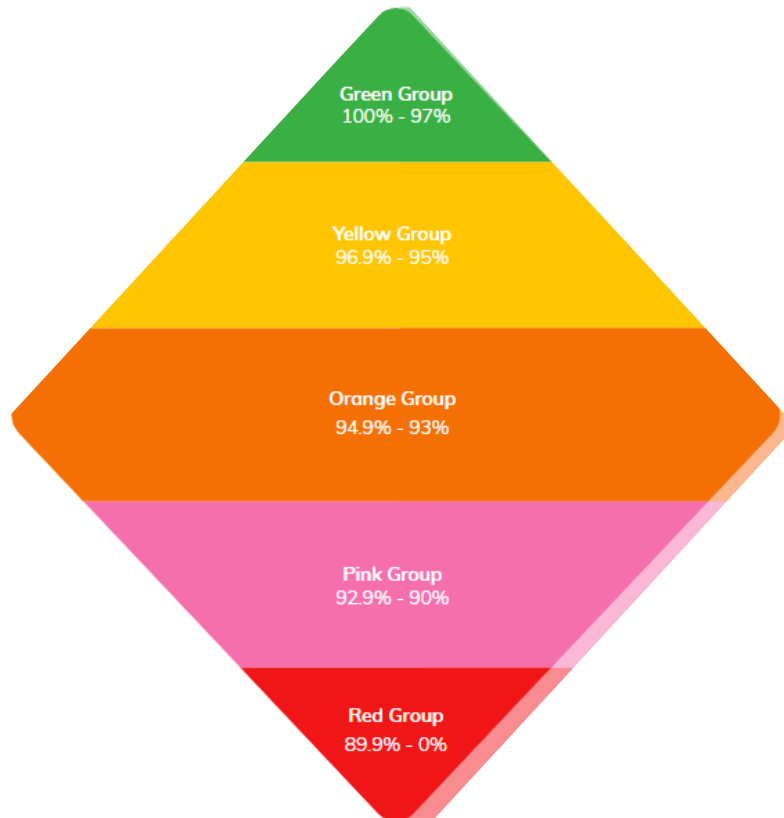


## Diamond Initiative

# TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS



At Cambian Devon School we are committed to providing all pupils with the best education possible. In order to do this, we need all children to attend regularly and punctually throughout the school year.

We are launching the Diamond Initiative as a way of improving attendance levels.

The colours of a Diamond will be used to indicate the level of each child's school attendance.

- **Green 100% - 97%**
- **Yellow 96.9% - 95%**
- **Orange 94.9% - 93%**
- **Pink 92.9 - 90%**
- **Red 89.9% - 0%**

We are pleased that the school already has lots of pupils whose attendance is very good.

Our goal is that all our pupils will meet the green target of 97% and above attendance each half term.

**We are asking for the co-operation of parents and carers to improve the life chances of their children. You can help us by:**

- Making regular school attendance a priority to ensure that your child is able to access **ALL** the opportunities available to them whilst they are on roll at our school.
- Encouraging your child(ren) to come to school punctually.
- Telephoning on the day of an absence and sending a letter or email to explain absence on return to school.
- Ensuring your child returns to school as soon as he/she is able to do so following illness.
- Wherever possible, you should take your holidays during school holidays.
- Letting us know of any changes or circumstances at home which may affect your child. Any such information will, of course, be kept in the strictest confidence.
- Supporting your child and us by attending parents meetings and taking an interest in your child's schoolwork.

**Interesting fact** - If your child has only 90% attendance over his or her whole 11 years at school they will have missed over one year's education!

The school is aware that a child's poor attendance could be due to genuine illness or other authorised circumstances. If this is the case we understand and hope that your child's attendance improves during the next monitoring period.

You need to be aware that, although you may provide a reason for absence, it is the school which decides if the reason is valid and if the absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

**Unauthorised absence includes:**

- Arriving after the register has closed.
- All day dental/medical appointments.
- Birthdays.
- Shopping – even for school clothes.
- Extended family holidays (unless there are exceptional circumstances).
- Looking after sick relatives or younger children.

If your child's attendance is unsatisfactory you will be offered support from their keyworker. It is important that you work with the school to help your child overcome any attendance problems.

The school intends to reward all pupils in the GREEN group at the end of the school year.

The Education Act 1996 requires parents to ensure their children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have.

The law says that parents/carers whose children of compulsory school age are absent from school without good reason are committing an offence.

If, despite support from the school and the Attendance improvement Officer, your child continues to be absent without good reason, Devon County Council may take the following legal action:

**Either –**

Prosecute the case in the Magistrates' Court under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1).

This means you are committing an offence even if your child is missing school without your knowledge. The offence carries a fine of up to £1,000 for each parent. If you do not attend court for the hearing the matter may be dealt with in your absence and a penalty imposed.

**Or –**

Prosecute the case in the Magistrates' Court under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1A).

This means Devon County Council believes you knew your child was failing to attend school and failed, without reasonable justification, to ensure he/she did so. This offence carries a fine up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment for each parent. If you fail to attend court for such a case to be heard you could be arrested and brought to court.

Any Attendance concerns that you may have can be discussed with the following:

**Keyworkers can be contacted via email**

**Rebecca Jones  
Administrator  
Tel: 01803 524 537**