

GREEN GATES PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy

Written: September 2011
Revised: June 2017
Review: June 2018

We are committed to providing an effective education for all pupils; to this end we will endeavour to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance. We aim to identify and act upon any problems which may impede full attendance as soon as possible. We believe that it is vital for parents and the school to work together to achieve this aim, thus clear lines of communication are vital.

To achieve this aim our attendance officer, Mrs Jackson, has day-to-day responsibility for the management and monitoring of attendance.

Our expectations are:

That children:

- will attend regularly
- will arrive on time
- will be appropriately prepared for the day i.e. with PE kit, reading book etc.

That parents:

- ensure that their children attend school on time
- contact school whenever their child is unable to attend (by phone, letter or in person)
- ensure that their children arrive at school properly equipped
- complete a leave of absence form for holiday requests and abide by the decision made by the Headteacher.

Attendance and responsibilities are included in our Home-School Agreement which is reviewed and signed annually. All parents have been issued with our Attendance Leaflet which is included in a starter pack for new families.

Encouraging attendance

Good attendance is encouraged right from the start of Nursery education. Although Nursery education is not compulsory, poor habits such as irregular attendance are hard to break once the child starts full time education and indeed, make settling into Reception far more difficult. School staff establish good communication with parents and contact will be made to discuss concerns or strategies which may be helpful to support the family via the Attendance & Welfare Officer. If necessary the Attendance & Welfare Officer may also be approached to provide support.

The Attendance & Welfare Officer closely monitors and supports children and their families throughout school and encourages a positive attitude towards attendance.

Once they start school children who achieve 100% attendance in a term will receive a certificate of attendance. This is facilitated by our Attendance Officer, and certificates are presented by the Headteacher in assembly. Children attending a whole year will also receive a special reward decided by the Headteacher annually.

There is a weekly presentation of a trophy to the class with the best attendance. Any class achieving 100% attendance during the week receive an extra playtime. Each class' weekly attendance is displayed on classroom doors to promote a team approach to positive attendance.

Children who arrive late

School begins at 8.55am. Any child who is not present by 8:55am is marked as late; children arriving after 9.30am will be classed as late after registration, this will be recorded appropriately on the SIMS system, including the time of arrival and reason for lateness. Children who are late must enter school via the main entrance so that the attendance officer can amend both the register and dinner numbers. In the event of a child arriving after the register has been collected or taken to the office, staff must ensure that the office are informed as soon as possible.

Parents will be informed by letter of regular lateness. If the problem continues, the school's Attendance Officer will contact parents to offer support. The attendance officer regularly monitors pupil lateness using reports from the SIMS system.

Registers

Registers are legal documents. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that they are marked at the beginning of each session. Registers are sent to the school office by 9.05am and again after lunch.

Registers for the Nursery are maintained as a record of attendance, but do not require checking by the attendance officer because the children are below the age of compulsory full time education. However, we do check them and any unexplained absence is pursued with a phone call to parents. Low attendance is addressed informally through the same procedures as full time school children.

In the event of a **fire drill**, the class teacher takes the register with them. Each teacher should count how many children are present in each session. It is the responsibility of the attendance officer to keep a record of authorised and unauthorised absences and to keep safe any notes received from parents regarding absence in the appropriate files. The Attendance Officer is responsible for totalling percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences for the purposes of reports to the Governing Body of the school, parent reports and for the annual return to the DfE.

Authorised/unauthorised absences

If a child is absent it is important that school is notified by letter, telephone or personal message; the reason for absence will then be recorded. A verbal message from a child regarding the reason for absence is **not** acceptable. The school's Attendance Officer will contact parents/carers of absent children for whom no absence notification has been received on a daily basis to ascertain their reason for absence (First Day Contact), this will be done as attendance data is entered onto the SIMS system. We aim to contact parents/carers by 9:30 each morning. A home visit will be made to the child's home address if school cannot make contact with the list of contacts, walking along the child's normal route to school.

It is considered reasonable to allow up to 1 week for a reason for absence to be forthcoming, if at the end of this time no explanation has been given the child will be considered to have had an unauthorised absence. Parents are sent reminders during this period. The school is required to record whether absences are authorised or unauthorised. Only the Head Teacher can authorise absence.

If there are repeated unauthorised or authorised absences, the Attendance Officer will inform parents in writing of the school's concerns. Should the attendance continue to be a concern, a second letter will then be issued with an opportunity to come into school and discuss it, no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence from this point. An Attendance

Welfare referral is only made if there is no improvement seen following the meeting and if the attendance is below 80%. Referrals will also be made should there be a pattern of absence, welfare concerns, medical reasons or unauthorised holidays.

If the Headteacher in consultation with the Attendance & Welfare Officer feels it necessary then the LA's attendance procedures will be set in motion. However, before this step is taken the school and the Officer will make every attempt to resolve any problem informally.

Pupils Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where pupils are at all times. Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission. Whenever possible parents are encouraged to arrange medical appointments outside of school time. Pupil must be signed out on leaving the school. If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate to contact the police and report the child as missing.

Leave of Absence

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations removing references to family holidays and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of allowing 10 school days holiday absence. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time. These amendments came into force from September 1st 2013.

The LA may consider taking further action when unauthorised leave of absence is taken at the following critical times and circumstances:

- At any time in September
- For any pupil whose attendance was less than 95% within the previous 12 months
- At any time during formal external exam times e.g. Y1 phonics test, Y6 SATs

Removing a child from school to take a family holiday will be recorded as **unauthorised** and referred to the LA. This may result in a penalty notice being issued to each parent of each child. The fine is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days.

The school follows the LA leave of absence policy.