

Gretton Primary School

Attendance and Registration Policy

"Attendance matters ..."

1. Rationale

At Gretton Primary we want to ensure that pupils take full advantage of all the opportunities on offer at the school; it is therefore essential that they attend every day they can. This policy sets out expectations and procedures so that this may be achieved.

Governors, teachers and parents need to be aware of their legal responsibilities in ensuring that pupils' attendance is regular, punctual and properly recorded. Parents of registered pupils of compulsory school age (5+) are under a legal obligation to send their children to school regularly and punctually and risk prosecution if they fail in this duty.

2. Definitions

There are three categories of absence:

2.1 Authorised absence

The Headteacher may authorise absence in the following circumstances: -

- Illness or medical/dental appointments
- Family bereavements
- Days of religious observance
- Public performances e.g. concerts etc.
- Music examinations or special tuition
- Approved sporting activity

A request for 'Leave of Absence' form should be completed by parents/carers and returned to school for authorisation prior to the date of absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

Legally, only the Headteacher can approve absences. We are under a legal obligation to record any absence outside the above categories as unauthorised.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should

determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below came into force on 1 September 2013. The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. For more details please see:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

The school holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these but may be subject to change.

All unauthorised absences appear in the annual pupil report to parents.

2.3 Exceptional Circumstances

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations above, holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- in **exceptional circumstances** permission may be granted for a maximum of five days of absence providing a child has a good (95% or higher) attendance record over the previous three terms.
- where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an 'Exceptional Absence' request form must be completed and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school Governors, no less than two weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year; parents will be informed whether or not the absence has been authorised.
- if leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare may be notified and fines may be issued.

3. Aim

- To maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

- To state the school's policy regarding attendance and registration so that roles and procedures are clear to all.

4. Objectives

N/A

5. Strategies and procedures

5.1 Notification of Absence or Lateness

Parents are required to notify the school of a child's absence in the morning of the first day, preferably by telephone or via the website/email. This will ensure that the school knows that the child is at home and has not left for school and not arrived. This also applies to lateness due to medical appointments etc. The administrators will endeavour to contact parents to clarify the situation if a message or reason for absence is not received by 9.30am.

5.2 Lateness

A child will be recorded as late if he/she arrives after 9.05 but before 9.10 in the morning and 1.35 in the afternoon. After this time, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence. The child will therefore need to report to the office after this time to ensure their attendance is recorded. Lateness makes for a difficult start to the school day and children may miss important messages or information.

If a pupil who has been marked as absent (after registration) and subsequently arrives, the absent mark must stand. An indication of the time of arrival will be recorded on the arrival 'signing-in' sheet.

If a pupil leaves school during a session and after registration due to sickness or medical appointment, the 'present' mark must stand but the parent/carer must sign the pupil out at the office.

Punctuality is a good habit to develop. Therefore, parents are urged to make every effort to ensure that their child is punctual. Class teachers will contact parents should there be any concerns regarding lateness.

5.3 Procedures at Registration Time

Teachers will call the register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions, recording the number of children present each time. At the end of each week totals for present/authorised absence/unauthorised absence are completed.

5.4 Monitoring Absence

The school administrators will monitor the registers on a weekly basis, focusing on absences.

5.5 Child Leaving School

When a child leaves the school other than at the end of Y6, steps will be taken to ascertain where they have transferred to, in order to link with Children Missing Education procedures. If this cannot be established within 10 working days the relevant Local Authority department will be informed.

6. Roles

6.1 The Headteacher will:

- Promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Be responsible for authorising approved absence.
- Ensure effective procedures are in place for recording and monitoring attendance.
- Analyse attendance data and report this, and any issues, to *Governors*.
- Oversee attendance procedures.
- Follow-up higher levels of absence, as identified in *Census* data, by meeting with the pupil's parent/carer.

6.2 Governors will:

- With the Headteacher, monitor, evaluate and review the attendance procedures annually, addressing any issues that may arise.
- In consultation with the Headteacher set targets for attendance.

6.3 School will:

- Implement consistently the procedures laid out in this policy.
- Maintain accurate records eg. data returns, class registers and absence books.
- Monitor attendance and follow-up unexplained absence by phone call or text on the first day of absence.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school prospectus and home-school agreement.
- Publish each child's attendance rate in his/her annual school report.
- Acknowledge good attendance by awarding 'full attendance' certificates at the end of each year.
- Collect and publish attendance data each year.
- Contact parents if there is a concern regarding a child's attendance.

6.4 Parents should:

- Make sure their child attends school regularly, arriving in time for the start of the school day.
- Let the school know, by telephone, personal message/note, e-mail or website, on the first day of absence, why their child is absent and when they are expected to return.

- Support the school by not taking their child on holiday during term-time and by arranging dental or doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Seek permission from school prior to any absence that is not medical - an 'exceptional absence' form is available for this purpose.
- Keep the school updated if their child has an extended period of absence due to illness.

7. Review period and date of next review

Last reviewed: September 2015 Next review: September 2016

8 Guidance on teaching

N/A

9 Links

- Safeguarding Policy