



Gosford Park Primary School

Policy for Attendance and Punctuality

‘Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind.

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1. Context:

Gosford Park has high expectations for attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times. We support pupils and their families to ensure that good levels of attendance are achieved. Our school target for attendance is at least 97%, however we continuously strive to achieve 100% attendance for all pupils. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and good communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance. If there are problems which affect a pupil’s attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

**We are currently amidst a global pandemic – expectations around attendance and isolation periods are frequently changing. As a school, we will continue to be responsive to changes instigated by the DFE and Local Authority but these may not always be documented in our policy.*

2. Aims:

This policy aims to engage parents to work in partnership with the school to increase awareness and recognise the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

- We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by: Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

3. Legislation and Guidance

Leave of Absence - The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding leave of absence which stated:

Headteachers are no longer permitted to authorise absence for holiday taken during term time.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996 *
 - Part 3 of The Education Act 2002 *
 - Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006*
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- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments) *
 - The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 *

* see appendix 4

Penalty Notices

If a parent takes a pupil on holiday or out of school in term time, it will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents may be liable to further action, including the issue of a fixed penalty notice and possible prosecution through the court systems. (See appendix 1)

Head teachers may now only grant leave in term time where the **circumstances are exceptional**, for example:

- Death of parent/carer, sibling or close family member of the pupil for funeral only not extended leave

- Life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- Religious observances, that are date specific are often taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time – not extended leave

Some exceptional circumstances need careful consideration, the fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. Unavoidable means an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

If there are exceptional circumstances, which lead you to request leave in term time for your child/ren, complete a 'Leave of Absence' form, which you can obtain from the school office. The Head Teacher will then decide, on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a child to be absent during term time. With each application the Headteacher will consider the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Regulations **do not** allow school to give approval after the event. If parents do not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents will be liable to further action, including the issue of a fixed penalty notice and prosecution through the court.

Persistent unauthorised, unauthorised absence or lateness over a 5 week period

A pupil who has 10 school sessions that are recorded as unauthorised, in a 5-week period - will be investigated further. School will initially contact the family and invite them in for informal discussions, the situation will be monitored and if no progress is made details will be forwarded to The Attendance and Inclusion Service and a Penalty Notice may be submitted - **See Appendix 3 for protocols.**

Children Missing Education, Addition & Removal of pupils from Roll

- A child's name will be removed from the register if they move to another school. This may only be done with the Headteachers consent once it is clear that another school is admitting the pupil.
- A child may also be removed from roll if the parents fill in a 'Removal from Roll form' prior to them leaving. These actions will only be completed with the Headteacher's consent and once it is clear that another school is admitting the pupil.
- When a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence (e.g. school holidays) or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. (CME - DFE 2016)

- As a school we will notify the local authority when we are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations (Annex A – CME, 2016). This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points. When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A, CME - DFE, 2016).
- We will also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to our admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school. (CME - DFE, 2016)
- If a child changes to 'Education at home', we will ask the Attendance and Inclusion link to visit before removing a child's name from the register in order to confirm the place of education. We will also gain in writing the parents wish for their child to be educated at home and submit relevant paperwork to the Local Authority.

Any Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

4. Roles and responsibility

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole school.

Head Teacher:

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with DFE and Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To reinforce the use of Penalty Notices, in line with DFE and Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To regularly report to governors on attendance and punctuality.

Deputy Headteacher:

- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance & punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquires.

- To oversee the analysis of weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.
- To liaise with the Family Worker to monitor the systems used, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with external agencies such as the Attendance and Inclusion Team and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being maintained.
- Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To revise and amend the policy as required.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school of an absentee and to contact parent's/carers by letter when needs arise.

Family Worker:

- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To implement first day calling when necessary
- To liaise with LA attendance officer
- To complete attendance related duties in time with the regulations within the policy.

Admin Team:

- To check the school answer phone and email system, and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To support parents, children and visitors to sign in and out using the electronic system
- To ensure absences are recorded and checked (in class) before 9.45am
- To promptly inform the Deputy Headteacher if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- To accurately record reasons for absence and update class registers as and when required, adhering to policy at all times

Staff:

- To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the SIMS register system
- To maintain clear communication with the Deputy Headteacher regarding attendance and punctuality within year groups
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance, both formally and informally
- To promptly inform the Deputy Headteacher of pupils who persist with poor attendance and punctuality.

Governors:

- To appoint a governor responsible for attendance and punctuality.
- Consult with Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher over the Attendance and Punctuality.

- To discuss attendance and punctuality with the governing body and show an understanding of attendance and punctuality at Gosford Park.

Parents:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- To actively seek updates on your own child's attendance asking for print out, speak to Deputy Headteacher or class teacher
- Only keep a child at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school before 8.30am on the first day of absence & give daily updates
- If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach-aches etc children should come in to school and parents report the condition to the child's class teacher. If the child's condition deteriorates as the day progresses, the school will contact the parents to arrange collection.
- Routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school time wherever possible.
- Parents should supply the school with evidence of medical appointments and pupils must attend school prior to and after the appointment time.
- If a child's attendance falls below 96% (the national expectation) then any further illness related absences will only be authorised when supported by medical evidence. If no evidence is supplied then the absence will not be authorised.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on the child's attendance.
- To provide medical evidence when a child's attendance drops below 97% eg; prescription, photo/evidence of prescribed medication – showing date and child's name, appointment card or appointment text, letter of invite to attend appointment.

5. Recording Attendance

Time	Protocol for school	Time	Protocol for Nursery
8.45am	School doors are opened	8.40am	School doors are opened
8.55am	School doors are closed Registration takes place now	8.55am	School doors are closed Registration takes place now
9am	Main gates locked – now enter via main school reception & sign in as late	8.55am	External gate locked – now enter via main school reception & sign in as late
3.15pm	End of school day	11.45am	End of Nursery Session

Registration

Class teachers are required to mark registers at the start of each session as follows.

Year Group	AM register	PM register
Nursery	8.55am	NA
Reception	8.55am	12.40pm
KS1	8.55am	12.50pm
KS2	8.55am	1.15pm

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30amj or as soon as practically possible. Parents can phone school and leave a voice mail or can email the admin team

admin@gosfordpark.coventry.sch.uk If the absence is Covid related we have a dedicated Covid address – Covid@gosfordpark.coventry.sch.uk

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Examples of reasons for absence we do not consider acceptable:

- Birthday
- Shopping for school uniform or new shoes etc
- Thought it was a Teacher Training Day
- Missed the bus
- Feeling tired

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carers notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This can be done in person, via phone or email to the admin team. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The pupil's parent/carers must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Examples of authorised absences would include:

- Approved sporting activity
- Illness, when evidence is provided
- Medical and dental appointments – supported by evidence
- Day of religious observance. Only one day can be authorised and this must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious authority
- Interviews for school places
- Family bereavement
- Attendance at a support for learning session: Speech and Language; Dyslexia, CAHMS etc

Lateness and Punctuality

All morning registers are taken at the same time of 8.55am, if children arrive after this but before 9.30am they will be recorded on our registrations system using the code 'L' for late. The register is closed at 9.30am; children arriving in school after this time will be recorded as 'late after registers have been closed' and code 'U' given.

Parents are required to complete an electronic login at the school entrance for any child that arrives after 9am. The reason for lateness will be requested and a record kept of the accumulative minutes of lost learning.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We believe that good or improving attendance should be rewarded at individual and class level. To promote this, at intervals throughout the year children will receive rewards to encourage and celebrate good attendance and improvement with attendance. During the course of the year we may run events to promote attendance and punctuality such as 'Early Bird Week' and our Non Uniform Friday.

Parents of children who have patterns of poor attendance or punctuality will receive support from our Deputy Headteacher or our Family Worker. These families will be set personal targets to enable their children's achievement and attainment to improve.

Parents are informed about their child's pattern of attendance at given times throughout the year.

- At the beginning of a new academic year if last year's attendance was below 90% - persistent absentee
- During parent consultation – 3 times a year
- Child's annual school report
- Weekly newsletter updates of whole school attendance
- Individualised 'Traffic Light Letters' sent to home addresses for children with poor attendance

On a termly basis the Headteacher reports on attendance to governors.

School, Early Help and Attendance and Inclusion in Partnership

The school works very closely with the Children and Families First Team to promote good attendance. When staff are concerned about a child's attendance, in the first

instance they report a concern to the Attendance Lead who will then contact parents/carers or make a referral to Attendance and Inclusion. In this instance they would state the reasons for school's concern and the Attendance and Inclusion Team may investigate further. They may make contact via letter or by home visit, the outcome of the referral is communicated with either our Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher.

Pupils whose attendance is **90% and below** are identified as Persistent Absentees and the Early Help team may contact the family to offer support in improving their

child's attendance/punctuality. Early Help may be offered to the family to ensure they receive the relevant support to improve their child's/children's attendance.

Through such we aim to raise parents/carers awareness of the implications of poor attendance and how we can support families to improve attendance.

- Children are required by law to attend school 190 days per year.
- The Government states that every pupil's attendance should be at least 97%
- Being **LATE** after the close of registration (U) will also **reduce** your child's attendance percentage.
- **All absences whether they are authorised or unauthorised will reduce your child's attendance percentage.**

Attendance over 1 Year – 190 school days

If your child's attendance during one school year is...	That is equal to days absent	Which is approximately weeks absent
97%	7 days	1.5 weeks
90%	19 days	4 weeks
85%	29 days	6 weeks
80%	38 days	8 weeks
75%	48 days	10 weeks

A range of strategies are employed to improve attendance.

- Daily first day calling and communication via School Comms system
- Regular notifications and letters for parents/carers with a computerised print out showing pattern and percentage of absence
- Home visit from Deputy Head &/or Family Worker or Attendance and Inclusion Team, alongside an invitation to parents to attend consultations to discuss ways of improving attendance and setting of individual targets
- Where a child or children have been identified with poor attendance and/or punctuality the family may be offered Early Help to support them in making improvements.
- Parent Contracts are also offered to parents of Persistent Absentees.
- With the support of the SENDCO - Co-ordinate interagency meetings involving other agencies such as School Nurse, Behaviour Support Services, Social Services, Child and Mental Health Services
- Requests for leave that do not meet the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria will be declined

Policy to be reviewed in September 2023/24

7. APPENDIX

CME – Children Missing Education, Statutory guidance for local authorities. DFE. September 2016.

Appendix 1

Documents that support the use of prosecution –

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60.

If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £120.

If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

“If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence.”

The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that:

Penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child. These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in you having a criminal record.

Appendix 3

Children Missing Education, Statutory guidance for Local Authorities 2016.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Appendix 4

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996 [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/6)
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002 [Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/26/part/3)
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/2/crossheading/school-attendance>
- The Education (pupil registration) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, amendments)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>

Appendix 2

Registration Codes

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration (attending other establishment)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Family holiday
I	Illness (not med/dental appointments)
J	Interview
L	Late (before reg closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Abs (not covered by other code)
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work Experience
#	School closed to pupils & staff
Y	Enforced closure
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Pupil not on roll
-	All should attend / No mark recorded