



GREENSIDE SCHOOL **Attendance Policy**

Introduction

Good attendance helps the pupils in our school community to maximise their learning.

At GreensideSchool, we recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil progress. Consequently, we are committed to promoting excellent levels of attendance in order to enable our pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Aims

This policy aims to support school, parents and pupils to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality.

In order that all pupils are assisted in reaching their potential Greenside School aims to:

- Encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance.
- Reduce Persistent Absence.

Greenside School believes that good school attendance assists pupils and young people to achieve the following 5 outcomes:

- To be healthy.
- To stay safe.
- To enjoy and achieve.
- To make a positive contribution.
- To achieve economic well-being.

Responsibilities & Expectations

School

- The school will provide a safe learning environment and maintain records of attendance according to legislation and guidance on a daily basis.
- Only the Headteacher (in their absence an Assistant Head) can authorise absence.
- The school will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality.
- Details of poor attendance/punctuality will be reported to the Attendance Improvement Officer.

Parents

- Parents/Carers have a legal obligation to ensure their pupil attends school.
- Parents/Carers must inform the school on the 1st day of absence and give a reason for their pupil's absence. Parents/carers will also maintain daily contact with the school until pupil returns to school.
- Parents/Carers are expected to ensure their pupil attends school regularly, on time, appropriately dressed.
- Parents can only request to take pupils on holiday during term time in exceptional circumstances.

Implementation

If a pupil is absent the parent will:

- Notify the school by telephone as soon as possible to the start of the school day.
- Give a reason for the absence.
- Give the expected return date.
- Provide, on request, evidence of offsite appointments – such as a hospital or dentist appointment letter/card.

If a pupil is absent the school will:

- Record the telephone notification of absence.
- If notification is not received, telephone parents/carers by 10am on the first day of absence and record the outcome of the call.
- Maintain regular contact with parents/carers throughout the pupil's absence.
- Keep written notification from parents/carers on file.
- Write to parents/carers requesting a reason for absence if it has not been provided.
- Record any absences as authorised or unauthorised according to current DfE guidelines.

Absence due to Illness

- In most cases, absence is genuine and therefore is marked as authorised on the register.
- Notification must be provided for all absences from school and the school will always follow this up.
- Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher (or an Assistant Head if the Headteacher is unavailable).
- Greenside operates a '1st day response' policy. This means that if the school has not been notified by 9:30am as to why a pupil is not coming to school that day a member of the admin staff will contact the parents/carer. The outcome of the telephone call will be recorded.
- Parents/Carers must give specific reasons for absence – being 'ill' is not enough.
- Parents/Carers may be asked to provide evidence stating that their pupil is too ill to attend school.
- Unless Parents/Carers have been given, by a doctor, a particular duration of 'absence through illness' they are expected to contact the school each day to report what is happening.
- Details of telephone calls are recorded and monitored.
- Registers are monitored on a regular basis by the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) to look at patterns of absence, identify individuals and/or groups absences etc.
- If attendance is not satisfactory then, in specific circumstances, the AIO may contact parents/carers directly.

Absence due to Medical Appointments

- We would request that all medical appointments are made after school or in school holidays.
- If a medical appointment is known in advance, parents/carers must notify the school in advance and, on request, provide evidence of the appointment.
- If an emergency appointment is made please phone the school before 9am. A message may also be left on the school's 24 hour answer machine, which is

checked regularly.

- Notification must be given if a pupil needs to leave school during the day. In such cases, the parent/carer must report to the school reception team, who will arrange for the pupil to be brought to the parent. The parent/carer will be expected to sign the pupil “out”, giving time and reason for the pupil leaving school early.

Term Time Holiday

- Although parents may make an application for leave of absence this can only be for an exceptional circumstance.
- The Headteacher will decide what determines an exceptional circumstance – however, guidance states that, in no circumstances will financial factors be considered to be exceptional.

Examples of Exceptional Circumstances include:

– The complexity and challenge of a pupil’s special educational needs means that holidays can only be taken outside of the high season; Close family bereavement. Close family weddings taking place mid-week or a significant distance from the home; Limitations imposed by charity grants and/or Social Services involvement such as where a holiday package is funded by a charity but dates are pre-fixed as part of the package.

Monitoring Attendance

- Registers will be taken by 09:30 each morning. Any pupil arriving after that will be recorded as being late.
- Registration details are transferred to an electronic database, which is the legal document.
- Parents/carers whose pupils are regularly late for school will be contacted to request an improvement in punctuality.
- The school will follow up persistent lateness, all absences and pupils with low levels of attendance.
- The school will monitor attendance on a daily/weekly basis.
- Parents/Carers who have not provided a reason for their pupil’s absence by the end of the week will be contacted.
- Each month, registers will be monitored and parents/carers of pupils with less than 90% attendance will be notified.

Records

- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- The rates of attendance will be reported via the school website and/or newsletters.
- A formal monitoring report is published and discussed by the governing body at the end of each academic year.
- Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. This may include the teacher phoning parents directly or asking the school office to contact parents.
- In certain circumstances, the teacher may ask the Assistant Headteacher – or Headteacher – to discuss the absence with the parent.
- If there is a longer-term concern about the attendance of a particular pupil, this will be reported to the Attendance Improvement Officer or a social worker on the children with disability team.

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil is classed as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. All persistent absentees are made known to the Attendance Improvement Officer and / or social worker on the children with disability team.

Persistent absenteeism damages a pupil's educational potential and, therefore, we will endeavour to work with parents/carers to improve attendance rates quickly. Persistent absentees are monitored carefully through our pastoral system and this is combined with academic support where absence adversely affects attainment.

Integrated Working

GreensideSchool works with other agencies and professionals to ensure that our pupils receive all the support available to achieve good attendance.

Exceptional Circumstances

- The school will actively seek to work with parents/carers where there is a genuine difficulty with attendance.
- Support strategies will be put in place for individual pupils where appropriate.
- When a pupil has an illness that means he/she will be away from school for over five days – and with the caveat that the pupil's illness may bar them from engaging in learning activities - the school will endeavour to ensure that he or she can keep up with their school work.
- If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the home education support service, so that arrangements can be made for the pupil to be given some tuition outside school.

Staff Responsible for Attendance Matters

- Headteacher
- Assistant Headteacher
- All class teachers
- Front office manager

Monitoring & Review

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher.
- The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years or earlier if deemed necessary.