

Gwladys Street Community Primary and Nursery School



Attendance Policy



Every Second of Every Day
Counts

Vision Statement

To provide the stepping stones for a successful and fulfilling future with the Gwladys Street Family, celebrating generations of success.

Aims

We want our school to be one:

1. Where everyone has access to an engaging, creative and challenging curriculum that promotes a love of learning.
2. Where everyone feels safe, happy and secure in our learning community.
3. Where everyone works in partnership with the wider school community.
4. Where Golden Opportunities are provided in an Inclusive Setting.
5. Where everyone respects each other and works as a team to achieve our GOALS.
6. Where children develop lively, enquiring minds, self-confidence and independence.
7. Which promotes a healthy lifestyle and positive, spiritual and moral values.

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its 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.

Gwladys Street C. P. and N. School believe that 'Every Second of Every Day Counts' as this supports children's good or accelerated progress at school. All staff are aware that good attendance also aims to promote safeguarding of the children. We believe that all children should aim to have 97% or above attendance.

2. Legislation and guidance

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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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 original entry
- 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

See **Appendix 1** for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.00 am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.05 am and will be kept open until 10.00 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00 pm – key stage 2, 1.20 pm – key stage 2 and will be kept open for 30 minutes.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers **must** notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 10.00 am or as soon as practically possible.

- *Parents must ring school to speak to the main office or speak to a member of staff on the door and leave a message.*

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, or if absence is already near or under 90% and medical evidence must be provided.

Furthermore, if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents 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 will be notified of this during a phone call to school.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; however, advance notice is required for authorising these absences. Evidence **must** be shown at the school office.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance and a leave of absence must be filled in at the office. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed – 10.00 am - will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Parents/carers will be challenged about lateness and if persistent then parents/carers maybe referred to the Educational Welfare Office.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If parents/carers do not phone school on the first day of absence, then school will begin a 'First Day Response' call to ensure that contact is made to determine the reason for the child's absence. If no contact is made, it may be necessary for school staff or the Educational Welfare Officer to do a home visit to ensure that the child is safe. At this point, parents/carers maybe informed of their child's attendance and if it is recorded as unauthorised.

If school is not satisfied with a parent/carer's explanation, then they may refer to Careline.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Parents will be notified termly of their child's attendance through termly 'Traffic Light' letters. It is part of the termly parent/carers' evening and also annually in the written end of year report. Parents are informed weekly of their child's class attendance through the Parent App and Website.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Examples of any exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time are as follows:

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional;
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs";
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative, if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional; **Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there WILL be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.**

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of the above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the governing body prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

Evidence would be required in each case.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Examples of unauthorised absence:

- *Holiday during term time*
- *Shopping or looking after children*
- *Birthday of pupil or member of the family*
- *Closure of another sibling's school for an INSET day or being used as a polling station*
- *Child did not want to come to school*
- *Keeping children off unnecessarily*
- *A sibling has an appointment*

Reduced timetables

The school maybe advised in extreme circumstances to implement timetable arrangements. In this case the code X will entered on the registered for children not of school age and C for other circumstances.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

We use a variety of methods to promote good attendance at school which includes:

- *All teachers discuss attendance each day with their class and discuss the class' attendance daily.*
- *Assembly attendance each Friday.*
- *Three best class attendances will celebrate with a party/film/extra sport lesson*
- *Texts to be sent home to parents/carers*
- *Certificates and prizes*
- *Targeted attendance charts.*
- *Class attendance is recorded in the two key stage 2 halls.*
- *Special trips/visitors.*

- *Raffle tickets for prizes.*
- *Prizes for parents*
- *School administers Calpol with parental agreement to ensure that children are able to continue with their school day.*
- *Prizes for best Key Stage*

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents/carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2) on the first day of their child's absence or speak to a member of staff.

If parents/carers fail to contact school, then a 'First Day Response' call will be triggered.

If after contacting the parent/carer, a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10% from the pupil's full attendance level. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

When a child is educated off site, it is school's responsibility to monitor the child's attendance and still implement first day response system. Please refer to the Safeguarding policy.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school, analyses vulnerable cohorts and individual pupil level

- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Promotes good attendance across the school using the website, displays, assemblies, celebrations.
- Organises the attendance bus/breakfast club to support parents/carers for a limited/agreed amount of time. (Letter for attendance bus – **Appendix 2**)

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

They are responsible for ensuring the register is fully complete by 10.00 am and also follows up unexplained absences to ensure the correct code is recorded on SIMS. (**Appendix 3**)

7.5 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for supporting the school's attendance policy and sign up to the Attendance Charter **Appendix 4**. Parents/carers will promote good attendance to their child/children and understand the importance of attendance to the social and academic development of their child. They will ensure they contact school on the first day of absence and will maintain contact with school during their child's absence. Parents/carers ensure they aim for their child to achieve 97% attendance.

7.6 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on SIMS. They will support the attendance officer to ensure the correct codes have been recorded and challenge punctuality. They will record late pupils (after 9.30 am) on the SIMS system.

Office staff will also support with the unexplained absences to ensure registers are updated.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed the Attendance Officer each year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody

Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2

Gwladys Street Community Primary & Nursery School
Walton Lane
Liverpool
L4 5RW
Headteacher: Miss N Booth B.A. Hons, PGCE, NPOH

Tel: 0151 525 0843
Fax: 0151 530 1453
www.gwladysstreet.org

Dear Parent/Carer,

School attendance is essential if your son/daughter is to maximize their educational opportunities. Interruptions in school attendance not only disrupts your child's education, making it difficult for them to catch up on work, but can also affect their social life within school. It is the school's responsibility to provide the best education possible. We can only do this if your child is punctual and attends school regularly.

It is important that children are punctual for school as this can affect their school attendance. Being late so frequently means that children miss valuable learning time. Good punctuality ensures that lessons start on the most positive footing and it avoids classroom disruption for other children.

As you are aware we provide support for attendance and punctuality with our school minibus. The minibus is to ensure all the pupils who are collected, can arrive back in school by 9.00 am. Your child has been selected to help you improve their attendance and punctuality by supporting you with a regular routine. This support will be reviewed regularly.

The children are picked up by two members of the Gwladys Street staff and will be picked up between 8.00 am and 8.40 am and your child must be ready to leave with their belongings for this to run smoothly. Your child will only be collected from their home address that we have on our school records.

Parents/Carers must agree and understand to the following terms:

- *The child is ready to leave their home when the minibus arrives.*
- *If there is no answer after three times the staff – the minibus will only wait one minute before leaving.*
- *If your child is ill that morning, you should still answer the door and inform staff.*
- *If no answer/or your child is not ready when the minibus arrives, then a letter will be posted through the door.*
- *Parents/carers must be courteous to Gwladys Street staff.*
- *If any of the above is not followed or their child is unable to behave appropriately on the minibus, then your child may lose their place immediately.*

Please sign the form below if you give permission for your child to be collected on the school minibus.

Yours sincerely,

Miss N Booth
Headteacher

I have read and understood the above letter and give permission for my child _____ class _____ to be collected by the school minibus/car on a morning to improve my child's attendance and punctuality.

Parents'/carers' signature _____

Date _____

Appendix 3

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Liverpool
L4 5RW
Headteacher: Miss N Booth B.A. Hons, PGCE, NPOH
www.gwladysstreet.org

Tel: 0151 525 0843
Fax: 0151 530 1453

Dear Parent/Carer,

You child was recently absent on _____ for _____ day/s. However we have yet to receive the reason why your child absent during this time. Please can you complete the form below and return to school as soon as possible. If we receive no notification by the end of next week, then the absence will be recorded automatically as unauthorised which might as a consequence involve the school's Educational Welfare Officer.

Can we remind you that children should aim to achieve 97% attendance each year to ensure they make good progress at school.

Yours sincerely,

Class teacher.

My child _____ class
_____ was absent on the dates of _____
because

Parent/carer's signature

Please return to school as soon as possible.



Parents/Carer's Attendance Charter

Academic Year:

Name of child:

Parent/carers with responsibility:

I/We agree to the following:

- *To support good punctuality by ensuring my child will be on time as I recognise that this is a life skill.*
- *I aim to promote good attendance and try to ensure they can achieve 97% attendance by the end of the year.*
- *I will ensure that my child/children are not absent unnecessarily.*
- *I understand that 'Every Second of Every Day Counts' and school is working hard to ensure my child makes good or accelerated progress.*
- *I support the school's Attendance Policy.*

Signed _____
