

St Gabriel's C of E Primary School

Excellence with Compassion



ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY 2022

Including Covid 19 Addendum

We strive for Excellence in all areas of school life, including attendance. Good attendance and punctuality to school are essential for students to achieve their full potential and gain from all areas of school life.

At St Gabriel's CE Primary School, parents and teachers work together to achieve good attendance and punctuality. We wish for children to reach their full potential, spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and physically. We wish for all children to develop good habits to help them to become supportive, caring, reliable and responsible adults. We promote good attendance and punctuality to help achieve these aims.

Responsibilities and duties of parents

The law requires school-aged children to attend full time education and it is the responsibility of parents to ensure children attend school regularly (at least 95% attendance) and on time. The *Home School Agreement* clearly sets out St Gabriel's CE Primary School's expectation of parental responsibility to make sure that children attend at least 96% of the time and arrive at school on time. All parents are encouraged to sign the *Home School Agreement*.

Sickness and medical appointments

Children should stay home only in cases of real illness. Medical appointments should be arranged to take place outside of school hours to avoid missing the school day and should only be made during school hours in exceptional circumstances.

When parents are aware that their child is ill, they should send a note to the teacher or school office, or call the school office to make school aware of their child's absence. An explanation should be given. Please note that school need not accept a parental explanation for a child's absence if the explanation is questionable.

Parents must provide a medical note if their child requires more than two days' absence due to real illness.

Punctuality

Children who arrive after 9.10am will have their names recorded in the lateness book and persistent lateness will be followed up by the Headteacher. Parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss strategies to improve punctuality.

Any child arriving after 9.30am will be recorded as an **unauthorised** absence for the morning session.

Notification of absence

Parents should notify school of their child's absence prior to the start of the school day on which the child is absent by calling the school office, providing a note, leaving a message on the school answering system or speaking with the school office or class teacher in person. Parents should provide a reason for their child's absence at this time.

Where school have not received notification from a parent of their child's absence, the school office will telephone parents between 9.10am and 9.30am on the day of the child's absence. If no contact is made, parents should provide an explanation to the school office staff or the class teacher on the child's first day of return to school. This will be recorded on the weekly sheet and formal records updated.

Responsibilities of the school

Registers must be completed accurately at the appropriate times

Registration of pupils is a legal requirement and takes place twice a day. Teachers must mark the register at the start of the school day and again after lunch. Pupils are marked by the class teacher as either present (X) or absent (A).

Registers are delivered to the office by two children from each class. The first is delivered by 9.10 am and the second **10 minutes after lunchtime and the start of the afternoon session**. Children who are missing after lunch must be reported to the office immediately.

If a child becomes unwell they should be sent to the office where their presence will be recorded by office staff.

Lateness must be identified on school records

School records must show if a pupil is late. If a pupil arrives between 9.00am and 9.30am, a recording of late (before registers close) is made. For children arriving after 9.30am, a recording of absent is made for the entire morning session.

Reasons for absence must be clearly explained in school records

Where the class teacher has been informed by a parent of the reason for a child's absence, the class teacher should record this on the weekly sheet found inside the Registration Folder. Where office staff are made aware of the reason for a child's absence, they will record this on the weekly sheet to make class teachers aware of reasons for absence.

If the school has not had an explanation within one week, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Liaison with the local authority

School hold regular meetings with the local authority's attendance service and Education Welfare Officer (EWO), now known as the Early Help Team. School are required by the

local authority to report any child whose attendance is below 90% with no change after 6 weeks.

Children with less than 90% attendance will be discussed with the Early Help Team Officer, who may decide to recommend that school make a referral to the LA for the issue a Fixed Penalty Notice under *Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003*.

Both punctuality and attendance are monitored in order to ensure support and encouragement for children and families who have difficulty achieving consistent punctuality and over 95% attendance. We provide recognition for children and families who achieve consistent punctuality and 100% attendance.

The parents of a child with an attendance of less than 90% will receive a letter from the office. If attendance does not improve and there continues to be persistent absence, the Headteacher will invite parents in for a meeting and an attendance contract will be discussed and signed. The purpose of this is to ensure that children and families are supported in ensuring that the child is in school.

Holidays in term time

There is no longer an automatic right to ten days' holiday in term-time. Family holidays will not be authorised in term time unless very exceptional circumstances exist and are agreed by the Headteacher. If traveling abroad in holiday time, it is important that families allow enough travel time and return to England in time for the start of the new school term.

If school are not made aware of a leave of absence and a pupil does not return to school within 20 days, the child's name may be removed from the school roll.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Absence from school will be **authorised** for the following reasons:

- Real illness
- Unavoidable medical appointments
- Religious observance (Local Authority permits 1 day per term)
- Exceptional family circumstances (such as a bereavement) at the Headteacher's discretion
- If permission has been requested, and granted by the Headteacher for an educational visit

Absence from school will **not be authorised** for the following reasons:

- Caring for family members
- Birthdays
- Absence of uniform
- Over-sleeping or missing the bus/train
- Shopping or haircuts

- Head lice (nits). These should be treated immediately with conditioner and a fine tooth comb
- Family holidays
- Failure to provide an explanation

Strategies for promoting good attendance and punctuality

St Gabriel's CE Primary School aims to provide an environment where every child feels welcomed and valued, and knows that they will be missed if they are absent.

School apply the following strategies to encourage punctuality and attendance:

- Children and parents will be reminded of the importance and value of good attendance through assemblies, newsletters and other means
- Classes with the best attendance will be praised
- Attendance figures will be displayed around the school and in Family Assemblies
- The Headteacher awards a class a certificate for every day that a class has 100% attendance
- If a class has 100% attendance for a week, the class receives a special certificate and the Attendance Cup to keep and display in their classroom
- When every pupil in a class is on time and present in a single day, the class is awarded a star that is used to cover a letter in the word 'excellent' which is displayed in the classroom. When all 9 letters are covered, £50 is awarded to the class, to be spent as a class
- All children with 100% attendance for a term will receive a certificate (handed out in the final week of term or first week of the following term). For one term's full attendance a Bronze Certificate is awarded; for two sequential terms of full attendance, a Silver Certificate; and for three sequential terms of full attendance, a Gold Certificate

Covid 19 Addendum

- School will closely follow the DfE guidance in regards to authorised and unauthorised absences due to covid. Depending on local and national restrictions, these rules are fluid. During the pandemic:
 - If quarantine restrictions are in place when a family travels abroad, parents should take this into consideration when traveling – plenty of time should be planned when returning to the UK to take account of the potential need to quarantine – absences can not be authorised if quarantine restrictions (or the likelihood of) are already in place when a family travels
 - If children are isolating because of testing positive, absences will be authorised
 - If children are isolating because they have covid symptoms or have been advised by school to isolate, absences will be authorised

Reviewed Spring 2022

Next review Spring 2024

The Policies Committee approved this policy in Spring 2022

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body: