

St Gabriel's C of E Primary School

Excellence with Compassion



ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Spring 2026

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 97% 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. (See appendix 1 for guidance on how much time should be taken in particular medical circumstances). 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, notify/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 or proof that they have sought medical advice if their child requires more than two days' absence due to real illness. If a child is ill enough to require 2 days off school, it is advisable to seek medical advice.

Punctuality

Children who arrive after 9.05am 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. If no explanation is given, the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

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

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

Liaison with the local authority

School holds 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 or who have taken unauthorised term time holidays, 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.

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, contact by the Inclusion Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) may be made to explore ways to support the family and if no improvement is made, the Headteacher will send a second letter to the parents, the Headteacher will then 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 and may be referred to the Local Authority, 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
- Children with Excellent attendance will get a gold certificate at the end of the year. Children with 'Good' attendance will receive a silver certificate.
- Support from the Inclusion HLTA

Reviewed: Spring 2026

Next review: Spring 2028

The Staffing and Community Committee approved this policy in Spring 2026

Appendix 1

Medical/illness guidelines for absence – taken from <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

<p>Coughs and colds It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.</p>	<p>High temperature If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.</p>
<p>Chickenpox If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.</p>	<p>Impetigo If your child has impetigo, they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.</p>
<p>Cold sores There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.</p>	<p>Ringworm If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.</p>
<p>Conjunctivitis You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.</p>	<p>Scarlet fever If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.</p>
<p>COVID-19 If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school. Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and they either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a high temperature • do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities <p>What to do if your child has tested positive Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.</p>	<p>Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease) You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.</p>
<p>Ear infection If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.</p>	<p>Sore throat You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.</p>
<p>Hand, foot and mouth disease If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.</p>	<p>Threadworms You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms. Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.</p>
<p>Head lice and nits There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.</p>	<p>Vomiting and diarrhoea Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).</p>