

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Greenway Academy values: '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. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school'. School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2013

Greenway Academy expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times. We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

- At Greenway Academy, we are continuously working towards our goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. The school minimum target for all pupils is 97%.

Overall Aims:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality:

The Legal Framework:

There are legal obligations on:

- The parent(s) to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register
- The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

Headteacher (HT):

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with national policies and procedures.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with West Sussex Local Authority policies and procedures.

Head of School (HoS):

- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquiries.
- To oversee the analysis of/analyse half termly/yearly data and respond to findings with special emphasis on Pupil Premium/Free School Meal Children (as a key vulnerable group).
- To meet with the School Office Manager to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with external agencies such as the Education Welfare Officer and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To revise and amend the policy, as required.

School Office Manager (SOM):

- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.
- To monitor weekly attendance data for their year groups.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To promptly inform the HoS, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- To produce half termly/yearly data for HT/HoS/Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to analyse.
- To record reasons for absence and updating class registers.
- To implement the daily checking of registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
- To contact parents/carers by letter, following 3 instances of lateness or absence.
- To maintain SIMS attendance records in line with this policy.
- To liaise with and report to with outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service.
- To maintain clear communication with the SLT regarding attendance and punctuality within their year groups.
- To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.
- To work with the HoS with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

Staff:

- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the register system.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This is done on the school's system at 8.45am and 1.30pm.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought.
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection.
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- **To promptly inform the HoS, of pupils who persist with poor attendance.**
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Pupil Learning Conferences.

Parents:

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. **If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents, to collect them.** If pupils' have a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know. Pupils' should be brought back to school after appointments.

Pupils should miss as little time as possible.

Therefore, parents are expected to:

- **Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day. The school day starts at 8.45am and pupils should be in their classrooms for registration at this time.**
- **Pupils arriving after 8.45am but before 9.00am when the register closes will be marked as arriving late with an 'L' code (arrival before register closes). Pupils arriving after 9.00am will be marked as arriving after the register has closed with a 'U' coding and this will result in an unauthorised absence being accrued. Unauthorised absence is considered an offence under the Education Act and may result in a referral to the Local Authority which could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or Court action being instigated.**
- The school advises parents, should there be a need, that the above timings may be altered on an individual pupil basis if issues around punctuality persist.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school time, wherever possible.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence for their child.

- Provide a written explanation of absence, including dates of absence as soon as their child returns to school.
- 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 learning.

The Local Authority, through the Educational Welfare Service, is expected to:

- Support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions.

This is a formal legal system, which involves fining parents for their child's poor attendance over a specified period of time. The action is taken with any identified pupils. **All families are formally written to by the school, outlining the process.** Formal meetings are held after a specified period of time, for pupils with continued poor attendance. Targets are set and attendance is monitored for a further specified period of time. **EWS court section issues fines to families, whose pupils fail to improve their attendance.**

Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance:

Aims:

- To ensure good attendance and punctuality (above 97%) is regularly promoted and supported and remains high profile across school.
- To achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality (above 97%) through rewarding good attendance and punctuality.

Weekly Celebration Assemblies

Celebration Assemblies are held every week on Friday. Classes who meet the school's expectations are rewarded with a Class Attendance Certificate. Classes achieving 100% attendance will receive a Gold Class Attendance Certificate. The certificates will be displayed in their classroom.

School Newsletter

Each month, the school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of number of days absent. It also includes information about any initiatives, which the school is using, to promote attendance and punctuality.

Annual Awards

All pupils achieving 100% attendance for the year (Sept-July) will earn the School's Good Attendance Badge (enamel) in the Attendance Assembly

School Attendance Board

The board includes attendance information and information about the classes with the highest attendance and punctuality. Details of how parents can support the school by improving their child's attendance and punctuality, is also included.

The School Learning Environment

A welcoming, organised learning environment, which supports and celebrates its learners is a key factor in ensuring children enjoy school and attend regularly. All staff ensure that their learning environments are of a high quality. Regular, rigorous environmental audits are carried out by the SLT, to ensure this.

Staff Promoting Good Attendance

It is important that teachers are regularly promoting good attendance with their classes. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and this is celebrated.

Annual Attendance Rewards

At the end of the school year, there is a special reward for children who have achieved attendance at 100%. The HoS organise and lead on the end of term attendance incentives.

Attendance Certificate

Children with 97%+ attendance, receive a special attendance certificate, signed by the Headteacher to take home and keep. Certificates are presented annually to reward those who achieve excellent attendance.

Only pupils achieving 100% attendance and 6 lates or less for the whole school year, are eligible for the end of year reward.

Sharing attendance data

Pupils are informed on a weekly basis of attendance/punctuality achievements. The class achieving the highest attendance/punctuality, and the number of pupils achieving 97% -100% attendance are shared in weekly assemblies.

This develops healthy competition between year groups to improve attendance. It also engages the form teacher in conversation with their classes about attendance.

Pupil Learning Conferences

This provides an opportunity for class teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance. Where necessary a target for improving attendance is set. The class teacher then monitors this. If there is no improvement in attendance/punctuality, the pupil is referred to the HoS.

Monitoring and Recording Attendance & Punctuality

Class Registers

Class registers are recorded every morning and afternoon. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever member of staff has been directed to take the register for that session.

Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate and submitted at key times (see below).

Morning Register

Class registers remain open until 8.55am. At that point, the teacher may submit their final register.

From 8.55am children arriving late will come into school through the main office, where the office staff meet children. The children's names and classes are recorded in the 'Children Arriving Late' Diary. This is to ensure that no children are missed on the register due to arriving in school late.

Children arriving after 9:00am are recorded as 'L' (late after register closed) in the register. Children arriving after 9:15 are recorded as 'U' (unauthorised absence) in the register. The School Administrator officer then checks that the children who have arrived late have been marked 'P' (present) in the registers and corrects any mistakes or inputs codes for children who are known to be absent. The administrator then begins first day absence calls.

Afternoon Register

Registers must be submitted by 1:40pm teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence.

School Attendance Letters

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Data

The HT and HoS monitor the punctuality reports regularly. This may involve speaking to parents directly, or via a phone call. Letters regarding the school's concern over lateness may also be sent, explaining how much learning pupils are missing. If it does not improve, parents are invited in to school, to discuss the concerns with the HoS and plan a way forward. If lateness does not improve following the meeting, then the family will be referred to the ESW who will contact parents warning them that further action may be taken.

IMPORTANT:

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

Monitoring First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first day absence call will be made. The follows this system:

- Phone parents' contact number(s).
- Repeat this during the first morning of absence if no response.
- and update contact numbers.

The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child's name on the first day absence sheet and this is filed in the absence folder. The SOM must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code. If the SOM has not been able to contact parents after 2 days then the absence is recorded as 'O' (unauthorised).

Attendance Meetings

The HoS/SOM monitor individuals, classes, year groups, different ethnic groups, SEN and FSM pupils. They identify patterns and trends in absence/punctuality, including persistent absence. The systems and structures are then followed, to improve attendance for these individuals or groups. Letters are sent out to parents whose children's attendance is below 90% and parents who are concerned about their child's attendance, are invited to work in partnership with the school.



Summary of procedures to promote good attendance/punctuality:

The following tables show specific procedures to maintain and encourage excellent attendance at Greenway Academy.

Daily procedures	By whom	Outcomes / action
Parents ensure pupils arrive at school on time	Parents/carers	
Parents inform the school by 8.45 am, if their child is absent that day	Parents/carers	Office/Support staff update registration codes
Pupils arriving late to school are registered at reception	SOM	Absence mark on SIMS amended to a late mark by SOM (School Office Manager).
Teachers record attendance using the school's system. This is done at 8.50 am and 1.10 pm. Complete attendance/punctuality record for HoS – as required. Send to the office by 9am	Teachers/Supply staff Teacher/TA	Staff use a paper register, if required. Teacher takes responsibility for promptly informing HoS/SA of concerns.
1st day absence phone calls are made to inform parents of their child's unexplained absence for that day HoS informed of attendance/punctuality issues – parents contacted, if required	SOM HoS	SOM updates attendance codes
Parents provide written note, including dates of and reason for absence upon the child's return to school	Parents	SOM collects at reception/Teachers collect these and pass on to SOM for filing

Weekly procedures	By whom	Outcomes / action
Attendance/punctuality statistics produced by year group and school	SOM	Entered into Attendance Overview spread sheet to allow for monitoring and analysis
Attendance/punctuality statistics produced and shared in Celebration Assembly, displayed on the School Attendance Boards	SOM	Parents are able to see which class(es) have been successful with their attendance and punctuality.
Absence codes for individual pupils are updated using SIMS to show reason for absence	SOM	Information provided here is used to provide targeted interventions as appropriate

Greenway Academy

Half termly and termly procedures	By whom	Outcomes / action
Analyse attendance/punctuality data to monitor trends and progress	SOM/HoS	
Assemblies to promote attendance/punctuality and share term's data and progress	SOM/HoS	
Discussions as required in response to specific attendance/punctuality concerns of a particular cohort of pupils	HT/HoS	
Individual attendance/punctuality discussed with pupils and families, at parents' evenings	Class teachers	Mentoring and advice on attendance/punctuality issues provided to all families
Analyse attendance/punctuality data and information to identify cases of concern and develop appropriate interventions	HoS	Targeted intervention for individual concerns
Meeting to discuss individual cases, monitor progress and refer new concerns. Support and meeting provided for pupils and families.	HT/HoS	
Review success and impact of attendance/punctuality strategies for the term	HT/SOM/HoS	Amend and refine interventions as appropriate

Extended Holidays

In line the 2013 Amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations, **leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstances**. The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk. The school may contact outside agencies in order to ensure that a visit is legitimate and safe for the child/children.

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

- death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (medical evidence required) .

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

If you have exceptional circumstances, which have lead you to request leave in term time for your child/ren, please make the request in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then make a decision, 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.

Penalty Notices

If a child is taken out of school without the Headteacher's authorisation, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken.

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 £120.

- If this is paid within 21 days the amount reduces to £60.
- 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.

- Parents includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child (and applies whether or not that person lives with the child) or who has care of him/her.

These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in you having a criminal record. West Sussex County Council has an advice line: 03302 228200.

Updated June 2018

Date agreed by the Governing Body: 27.06.2018

Signed: (Chair of the Governing Body) Mr R Sanders

