

Goddard Park

Community Primary School



Headteacher: Mike Welsh

Everybody learns, everybody cares

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of last review – November 2015

If our pupils are to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them, good attendance and punctuality are essential.

AIM

To maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality throughout the School.

This will be achieved by:

- Establishing procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality;
- Rewarding good attendance and punctuality;
- Establishing clear registration systems for class teachers;
- Establishing clear procedures to distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence and late registration;
- Developing effective referral systems when a problem is identified, involving external agencies where necessary.

Staff, governors, pupils and parents will work together to implement this policy.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our pupils have the right to an education. Regular attendance and punctuality at School are essential:

- If pupils are to make good progress in their work;
- If pupils are to develop to their full potential;
- If pupils at primary age are to develop the discipline in School to prepare them for adult life.

The effects of missed schooling will often be:

- Learning affected and potential not reached.
- Disrupted group work.
- Essential teacher time taken up with explanations of missed work to absentees.
- Difficulties forming relationships and settling into groups.



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RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

- To ensure their children attend School regularly. This is a parent's legal responsibility.
- As far as possible to arrange medical appointments outside School hours.
- To avoid family holidays and visits during term time.
- To discourage absence for minor ailments.
- That if parents are aware of a problem that prevents their child from wanting to come to School, they discuss it with the class teacher or headteacher, rather than keeping their child at home.
- To help promote good attendance and punctuality.
- To follow School procedures for reporting absence, including telephoning the School Office on the first morning of illness.
- To ensure their child arrives at School on time.
- To ensure that their child is signed in at the School Office should they arrive late.

If their child is unavoidably absent from School, parents should:-

- Contact the School e.g. telephone on the first morning of absence.
- Send a letter to confirm the reason for absence to the child's class teacher when the child returns to School.
- Apply to the Headteacher, in advance, for permission for leave of absence e.g. Planned absence from school, religious festivals/observance.
- Be aware that any unexplained absences are recorded as unauthorised; this is recorded on School reports.
- Be aware that time off School for visits to relatives, shopping or long weekends will not be authorised and if taken will be recorded on their School record.
- Be aware that if a child arrives at School after 9.10am this will be recorded as an absence.
- Be aware from September 2015 the Government has said that absence below 90% is deemed to be persistent absence and will initiate attendance meetings with the school/Legal Officer.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PUPILS

- To be in School on time.
- To sign in at the School office if arriving late.
- Not to use minor ailments to stay off School.
- To discuss any problems with a member of staff (class teachers, headteacher or teaching assistant).

RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL

For class teachers.

- To take register promptly and accurately in the morning and afternoon.
- To take any opportunity to request a reason for absence from the parents, when notes are not provided (this includes the use of appropriate outside agencies to contact Parents).
- To note reasons for absence and record in the register, showing if the absence is authorised or unauthorised using the recommended codes.
- To discuss any concerns with the Learning Support Mentor, then Mrs B Mann, Deputy Head who will take appropriate action.
- To encourage pupils who are trying to improve their attendance.

- To notify parents promptly of any concerns regarding attendance.

For the School Office.

- To attempt contact with parents (through an appropriate agency) each day of any unexplained absence to establish the reason.
- To produce certificates for those pupils who have 100% attendance.
- To send letter home informing parents of child's good attendance.
- To send letter home to request explanation for absence where none has been provided; to inform of persistent lateness or possible attendance meetings.

For Headteacher.

- To ensure registers are accurate and apply the standard coding in accordance with DFE guidelines for reasons of absence. (Appendix 1 – Absence Codes).
- To keep a record of each academic year's register for the following three years.
- To delegate responsibility to suitable person within school who will meet with Local Authority Officer to discuss pupils with difficulties with School attendance.
- To decide when the issuing of a fixed penalty notice under Section 23 of the Anti-Behaviour Act 2003 is appropriate.

For Mrs B Mann, Deputy Head with responsibility for attendance

- To liaise with class teachers on issues of pupil's attendance.
- To liaise with parents and pupils on issues of attendance.
- To ensure the actions for the school/Headteacher are in place and followed.

For School Governors.

- To review and update the Attendance Policy.

SCHOOL RESPONSES TO ABSENCES

The law requires all Schools to indicate in the register whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

If a child is expected at School but does not arrive, attempts will be made to contact the parent on the first morning of absence through an outside agency. They will report any reason given for the absence to the School within a few hours.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence means that the Headteacher has either given approval beforehand for the pupil to be away or that the explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification.

After an absence, even if the School receives a note, telephone or personal contact about an absence, it is not obliged to accept that as a valid reason for absence. Only the Headteacher, within the context of the law, can authorise absence, not the parents. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the explanation or receives no explanation at all, the absence has to be treated as unauthorised.

Accurate use of register codes (Appendix 1) within the School will allow the teachers and School Attendance Officer to determine quickly the basis of the authorised absence in question.

Planned Absence from School – there is a discretionary power for the Headteacher, in exceptional circumstances, to grant planned absence from school during term time in accordance with arrangements made by the Governors of the School. No parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as a right. Unauthorised holiday will result in a recommendation for a Penalty Notice being sent to the Local Authority Named Officer for Legal Process that may result in a fine of £60 per parent per child.

Unauthorised Absence

The School is not able to authorise absences for repeated long weekends, shopping etc. and these will be recorded as unauthorised absences.

When no satisfactory explanation is received or the pupil has truanted, an unauthorised absence is recorded.

All unauthorised absence is regarded as truancy by the Government and will be entered on pupil's individual School reports.

SCHOOL ROLL

- The law requires the School to keep an admission register that acts as the School Roll.
- The admission roll should contain details of the pupil from the day that they are admitted to the School (Education Regulations 1995).
- Pupils should only be removed from the School roll in accordance with the Education Regulations 1995.
- Copies of each year register must be kept for three years.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Children Missing In Education

Keeping Children Safe in Education March 2015

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers.

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

The local authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Goddard Park follows the guidelines for CME as specified by Swindon Education Welfare Service, which details actions to follow and the form to complete after a maximum of 5 days of non-school attendance. The information then needs to be passed to the Local Authority Named Officer for CME before the 10th day of absence. The Officer will then carry out a series of checks. If there are child protection concerns the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the Child Protection Referral and Assessment team.

Appendix 1 – Codes for registers.

Appendix 2 – Parent's Attendance Booklet (this policy made simple)

Appendix 3 – Standard Letters:

- Request for holiday in term time.
- Concerns regarding lateness.
- Concerns regarding attendance.
- Request for explanation of absence.

Appendix 1. Absence Codes

Present / Approved educational activity

- / - Present on time
- B - Educated off site, (NOT DUAL REGISTRATION) e.g. Taster day at Dorcan
- D - Dual registration, e.g. attending PRU on certain days of the week
- L - Late but in within 30 minutes of time due
- P - Approved sporting activity
- V - Educational visit, inc. Marlborough House, 3D, School trips
Can also be used for extended absence due to illness (e.g. broken leg) if a comprehensive programme of work is provided and marked.

Authorised Absence - authorised by teacher - NOT PARENT!

- E - Excluded (no alternative provision made)
- F - Extended family holiday (over 10 days in any year - only in exceptional circumstances and agreed by Headteacher)
- H - Holiday - up to 10 days per year at Headteacher's discretion. Over this would be coded differently probably as unauthorised absence (see code G)
- I - Illness
- M - Medical or dental appointments (not illness)
- R - Religious observance
- T - Traveller absence
- C - Other authorised circumstances - to be used sparingly for rare occasions and agreed special occasions where no other code is applicable e.g. bereavement, marriage, etc.

Unauthorised Absence

- U - Late by more than 30 minutes and where this is part of a pattern of lateness
- G - Family holiday not agreed or days in excess of the agreement
- O - Unauthorised circumstances
- N - No reason given

Attendance not required

- # - School closed to pupils
- X - Non-compulsory school age absence
- Y - Enforced closure (e.g. heating breakdown)

Appendix 2.

See Attendance Booklet for Parents attached

Application for planned absence from school in term time

Parents do not have a right to take their children out of school for holidays during term time. By law you must ask permission for your child to miss school. We advise parents NOT to disadvantage their child’s education by taking a holiday during term time. It is up to the Headteacher to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. If the absence is not authorised you risk a £60 penalty notice. This could be £60 per parent if paid within the 21 days or £120 is paid up to 28 days.

Parents wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation well in advance of the proposed leave.

PARENTS SECTION (to be completed first)

Name of child			Class	
Name of parent/guardian				
Address of child				
Postcode		Telephone number		
About the request for your child’s leave of absence	Reason for taking a holiday in term-time			
	Would (s)he miss any SATs Assessments?			Yes / No
	Is the proposed absence during the months of September or May?			Yes / No
	Would (s)he be absent for more than ten school days?			Yes / No
	Has (s)he already had leave during term-time this school year? (If so, please give dates and number of school days leave)			Yes / No
	Did (s)he have leave of absence during term-time in the previous school year?			Yes / No
Length of absence (school days)		From (date)		To (date)
Emergency telephone contact				
Parent’s/Guardian’s signature				

SCHOOL SECTION

Current attendance percentage	
Holiday in Term Time	<p>(i) approved <input type="text"/> school days – <i>any future requests in the same</i></p> <p><input type="text"/> <i>school year will not be considered</i></p> <p>(ii) not approved <input type="text"/> school days</p>
Headteacher's signature	

Please return a copy of this form to the parent after consideration

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Dear

.....has arrived late in School on more than one occasion recently. He/she has also been late on numerous occasions this term. Under the legal Attendance Regulations this is now regarded as an unauthorised absence if he/she arrives in School after 9.10am. I would not wish to record this on his/her School records and would therefore request that he/she arrives between 8.35am and 8.40am, **at the latest**, each morning.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Welsh.
Headteacher.

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Dear

Please find enclosed attendance breakdown sheet for from S/he has arrived late in School on occasions. Please ensure that s/he arrives between 8.30am – 8.40am. S/he should enter school via the playground entrance.

As you will already be aware, a Penalty Notice is a fixed fine issued by Swindon Borough Council at the schools request for unauthorised absences from school. Penalty Notice fines can also be issued when child's late arrival to school reaches an unacceptable level.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Welsh.
Headteacher.

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Dear

Your child was absent from School on the following dates:

.....

.....

without any explanation from you.

All absences are closely monitored and must be accounted for. Could you please complete the tear-off slip below and return to your child's class teacher as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Welsh.
Headteacher.

My child was absent from School for the reasons shown (e.g. illness, holiday, appointment).

Date	Reason	Date	Reason