

## Attendance Policy



'We can and we will'

GLEBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

### **Attendance Policy**

#### **Mission Statement**

At Glebe School, we believe in an ethos that values the whole child.

We strive to enable all children to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally.

#### **Introduction**

Attendance at school is clearly an important pre-requisite for a successful and fulfilling school career. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement and result in considerable long-term disadvantage to children and young people. Pupils who do not attend regularly may be placed at considerable risk and, in some cases, may be drawn into patterns of antisocial or criminal behaviour.

It is recognised, that pupils may have difficulties attending regularly for a variety of complex and often inter-related reasons. These may include:

- The pupils' educational, social and emotional development;
- The pupils' medical history;
- Social, economic and cultural considerations within the family and community;
- Factors operating within the school;
- Availability of appropriate support from statutory and voluntary agencies within the community.

It follows that the Local Authority, schools, parents/carers, pupil and the community at large need to work collaboratively in order to maximise attendance. A positive approach is needed which promotes access to education within an ethos which values learners, promotes equal opportunities and encourages the involvement of pupils and their parents/carers.

#### **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.

### **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](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/VI/chapter/II) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/VI/chapter/II>
- [The Education Act 2002](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/part/3/chapter/3) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/part/3/chapter/3>
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/2/crossheading/school-attendance)  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/2/crossheading/school-attendance>
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made)  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/made/data.html)  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/made/data.html>
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/made)  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/made>

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

Glebe School works with the PKW (Participation Key Worker) and the Local Authority (LA) to support in enforcing the legal framework as defined in The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5) and The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. These responsibilities are:

- Parents to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on roll at a school;
- The LA to provide education and to enforce attendance;
- Schools to register attendance and notify the LA of irregular attendance, unauthorised absence or any pupil who has unauthorised attendance of 10 days or more.

### **Parental Support:**

The role of the parent/carer in supporting the school's efforts in securing high levels of attendance is critical. At Glebe School we maintain close, effective and positive links with our parents and ensure that they are contacted at an early stage to deal with unexplained absences of their child. Parents/carers are expected to contact Glebe on the first day of absence to inform the school the reason for the non-attendance of their child.

### **Pupils:**

We expect pupils of all ages to contribute to securing good attendance. We ask pupils to:

- Listen to their parents/carers and the school;
- Communicate with parents/carers and the school about any worries or anxieties;
- Go to bed at an appropriate time, come to school punctually and be ready to learn.

### **School Procedures**

#### **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

Registers should be filled in on the class computer using the class log in details at 9am in the morning and 1:15pm for EYFS and KS1 or 1:30pm for KS2.

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.

Termly and annual totals have to be reported to the DfE, the LA and in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents. Our school website also gives information about the percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences in each year.

#### **Punctuality:**

Regular lateness can have a detrimental effect on:

- The child's learning;
- The learning of others;
- The child's sense of belonging ;
- The child's behaviour.

Doors open at **8:40am** and children are expected to be in class by **8:50am** each morning. If a child has not been registered by 9am, they are deemed to be late and this will be recorded in the register. If arriving after 9am, children will also need to be signed in the late book at the school office.

**The close of the register is 9.30am and after this time, it is recorded as an unauthorised absence.**

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Lateness tends not to be a particular problem in the afternoon. However, children who arrive at school after **1:00pm in KS1 and 1:30pm in KS2** are deemed to be late and the register is closed (meaning pupils arriving after this time are deemed to be absent without authorisation) at 1.40pm.

Punctuality is monitored by the school and the parents of children who are persistently late will:

- Receive a series of letters from the Headteacher confirming the school's concerns.
- Be asked to attend a formal meeting with the Headteacher as necessary.

If no improvement is made, the matter will be reported to the PKW.

### **Absence Procedures:**

On the first day of absence, we expect parents to make contact. As a school, we have a responsibility to safeguard our pupils, therefore a phone call will be made by the School's Welfare Assistant (Miss Varney), if there has been no communication from parents/carers, that morning.

1. Class registers are completed on SIMS (School Information Management System) by teachers and saved by 9am **and** absent pupils are marked;
2. Pupils arriving late must enter through the front door and sign in at the school office. The pupil's attendance is updated on SIMS by the office staff and given code 'L' (arriving after 9am) or 'U' (arriving after 9:30am).
3. Voicemail and emails are checked for communication from parents regarding absence.
4. Office staff check with teachers that those marked as absent have not since arrived.
5. Office staff check if any siblings of the absent pupil are present.
6. **After 9:30am**, the welfare assistant will attempt to telephone those on the pupil's contact list, starting with the home phone and working down the list. If there is no answer, a message will be left if an answer phone/voice mail facility is available.
7. If no response has been received, from the parents/ carers, the welfare assistant will check with present siblings (if applicable) if reason of absence is known.
11. Office staff will then inform the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of absence.
12. SLT will carry out a risk assessment (see appendix 2)
13. If no contact is made, after all steps are completed and staff have suitable reason for concern, the appropriate outside agencies will be contacted (e.g. Services working with the family, such as a Key Worker; MASH team or police).

**If pupils are persistently absent with no satisfactory explanation then this matter will be passed to the Local Authority through the PKW.**

### **Absences**

Parents 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 9:30am** or as soon as practically possible.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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.

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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 in advance.

### **Medical or Dental Appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. 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.

The school office must be notified in advance of the appointment. This can be done by telephone, email or in person.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. See below for more information.

### **Recording Reasons for Absence in the Registers:**

All reasons for absence must be recorded in the register. All letters from parents should be initialled by class teachers, put in the paper folder and then sent to the school office. Administrative staff can then ensure that other relevant staff see the letters and they can then be filed.

### **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

Amendments to the 2006 regulations (which came in to force on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013) now removes references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Therefore, holidays will not be permitted during term time and, should parents take their children out of school for a holiday, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Such absences will be reported to the school's PKW who may, in consultation with the school, decide to issue a fixed penalty notice.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (updated in September 2013) levy penalty payments of £60 per parent per child which should be paid within 21 days. This sum doubles to £120 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay this sum may lead to a summons from a magistrate's court. Also, if unauthorised leave is repeated, the Local Authority Participation Team may summons each parent to the Magistrates Court without a penalty notice being issued.

However, we recognise there may be exceptional circumstances which can be considered by the Headteacher for leave during term time. For example a family illness or bereavement necessitating time away.

Statutory regulations demand that parents must make this request in writing to the Headteacher. The letter must contain the reason for the request and the dates, including the return date.

Each request will be considered individually and various factors will be taken into account such as:

- The child's attendance history;

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- Efforts that have been made to minimise the number of school days taken;

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments;
- 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.

Short periods of absence may be permitted for compassionate reasons. As the school has a large number of service family children we may consider authorising a short period of absence particularly for children of service personnel who have been or about to be deployed overseas. The criteria for authorising any such requests will be as noted above. Leave requests for performance licenses will be considered by the Head Teacher on an individual basis when the child's attendance for the year is above 95% and they are making expected levels of progress.

If the children do not return by the agreed date (contained in the letter of request and the Head teacher's authorisation) then, following a further 10 days period, **the child can be removed from the school role and referred to the school's education welfare service.**

If there are extenuating circumstances which prevent return on the planned date it is essential that parents/carers make every effort to contact school and explain the reason for the continued absence.

Please note that exceptional leave will NOT be granted:

- To those with poor attendance;
- During school examination and assessment periods;
- When the cost of leave is cited as a reason.

### **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.

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If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice. If unauthorised leave is repeated, the Local Authority Participation Team may summons each parent to the Magistrates Court without a penalty notice being issued. In some cases it may necessary for a Summons to Magistrates Court to be issued without a prior Penalty Notice being issued.

### **Persistent Absence**

When children's attendance falls below 90%, they are regarded as having persistent absence. As a school, we aim to keep this level as low as possible and certainly not above 2% of our pupil population. The school monitors the children who are at risk of having persistent absence in liaison with the PKW. The parents of children - whose attendance falls below or close to 90% - are written to by the Head teacher. If the attendance rate fails to rise over the next 4 to 6 weeks, then the PKW will contact the parents to offer advice.

Children who are already below 90% attendance will also be contacted (normally by the school at first but in some cases directly by the PKW). Again, their attendance will be closely monitored to ensure it is improving over each 4 week period. All pupils will have a first day absence call from school to ascertain why they are not in school. In consultation with the PKW parents may also be asked to provide medical evidence for each absence. When pupil attendance does not improve sufficiently (in consultation with the PKW) then an attendance panel will be arranged.

Attendance and punctuality forms part of the school's ongoing pupil progress tracking. Teachers will report attendance concerns to senior leaders particularly when it is having an impact on achievement. Senior leaders will take this matter up with the parents involved including pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium.

### **School Refusal**

When a pupil first presents with school refusal, the school will work with the child and parents to put the following strategies into place:

- Taking early action on non-attendance (e.g. meeting and sharing information with parents);
- Providing extra support from staff, e.g. Pastoral Support Worker;
- Looking into factors that could contribute to absence (e.g. bullying, SEND issues) and making reasonable adjustments where needed (such as extra support in class; intervention programmes, social skills groups and allocating a buddy to provide peer support).

If, after trialling these strategies, the child's attendance continues to be a problem, then the school will make a referral to the Key Participation Worker, who will provide further support for the family. Ultimately it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child attends school and the school is obliged to follow persistence absence procedures, as outlined earlier in this document.

### **Home School Links:**

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Monitoring and encouraging attendance is an integral part of the class teacher's role along with the Headteacher, the Deputies and office staff. When concerns about attendance are identified (through regular monitoring by the school) parents will be contacted initially by letter and then, if attendance has still not improved, parents will be asked to meet the Headteacher or Deputy to discuss the concerns and strategies to resolve the problems. If it is felt to be useful the PKW may be invited to this meeting. Similarly, parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to resolve difficulties with attendance and punctuality.

### **Strategies to be Used When Tackling the Early Signs of Absenteeism:**

Glebe School aims to adopt early intervention strategies when dealing with poor attendance or punctuality. The primary strategy is to develop a regular dialogue with parents/carers and pupils to ensure the school is fully aware of the issues that may be contributing to poor attendance and punctuality. The school, with the help of the PKW, will aim to put strategies in place to address these issues.

### **Specific Procedures Used by the School to Identify Patterns of Poor Attendance:**

- Monitoring authorised absences – excessive numbers of authorised absences such as illness may need following up with the Welfare Assistant;
- Monitoring patterns of lateness – are parents/guardians aware that the child is regularly late?
- Identifying patterns of absence – are children absent on particular days e.g P.E. or swimming days.

### **Monitoring Procedures:**

- The Headteacher will have overall responsibility for monitoring attendance registers;
- The Participation Key Worker will visit the school at least twice a year to monitor the attendance policy and marking of registers;
- The school's Local Authority link officer receives a copy of information relating to authorised and unauthorised absence and this is included in the Annual School Review process;
- Attendance figures are submitted to the LA and DfE as part of the national and local monitoring of attendance.

### **Attendance Targets:**

The DfE expect children to attend at least 96% of the time. Glebe is set, each year, its own attendance target. This will be monitored and reported upon. The Headteacher and PKW will meet regularly to monitor data, discuss individuals and agree action.

The school positively reinforces good attendance and punctuality by:

- Having a weekly class competition, with the award of a shield, to identify the class with the best weekly attendance (by percentage);
- Annual competition with a reward of a visit to the cinema or golf etc. for the class who has the best average attendance through the year including a gold certificate award for children achieving 100% attendance over the whole academic year;

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- Dealing with bullying immediately and firmly (see anti bullying policy);
- Providing SEN Support Plans for those children with special educational needs or medical needs;
- Liaising with appropriate agencies where support for parents is needed;
- Providing Pastoral Support Programmes for those children at risk of exclusion;
- Regular newsletter items on good attendance.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The governing body**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

#### **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.

#### **The attendance officer**

The attendance officer, at Glebe, is the Welfare Assistant (Miss Varney. She:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level;
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher;
- Works with the PKW to tackle persistent absence;
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues;
- Decides when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

#### **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.

#### **Office staff**

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

### **The Role of the Local Authority:**

The Local Authority supports schools and parents in the area of attendance by means of the Early Intervention and Prevention Service. Key Participation Workers may follow up referrals by:

- Communicating with parents/carers by letter or phone;
- Seeing a pupil in school;
- Seeing pupil and parent/carers in school;
- Arranging home visit;
- Liaison/referral to other professionals/agencies.

The outcome of any intervention is communicated back to school.

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PKWs may, in extreme cases, consider the use of legal action in relation to school non-attendance.

This policy will be reviewed by staff and governors on a regular basis.

**Review Date: June 2020**

**To be Reviewed : June 2021**

## 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
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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

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<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

**Appendix 2**

**Risk Assessment of Emergency Contact in Unexpected Absences**

**No apparent risk:** There is no apparent risk of danger to the child. This may be appropriate for children who we have reason to believe are absent from the provision but not at harm due to previous patterns of behaviour or information from other people e.g. a child who often goes on holiday at this time of year and parents always fail to inform you. Continue to make enquiries but it would not be proportionate to contact police at this stage.

**Low or medium risk:** The risk of harm to the child is assessed as a possible but minimal risk **OR** the risk of harm to child is assessed as likely but not serious. This may be relevant for those children where there are no additional vulnerabilities, however, you have minimal contact information and making parental contact is always difficult.

**High risk:** The risk of serious harm to the child is assessed as very likely. This would be relevant for children already considered vulnerable. This may be due to risk of neglect or physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Also consider child sexual exploitation and Prevent, in addition to protected characteristics; mental health, forced marriage, honour based violence, trafficking, and female genital mutilation. This may also be relevant for those children where the absence and lack of ability to make parental contact is highly unusual.

- 1) If this is assessed as 'No Apparent Risk' or 'Low/ Medium Risk' the Headteacher, along with SLT can make the decision to continue to make enquires and not contact the police if they do not feel that this is necessary or proportionate. These cases should not be ignored and must be monitored over time and consideration given to escalation if there is a change to the circumstances that has increased the level of risk.
- 2) If assessed as 'High Risk' the school will consider contacting the appropriate services, such as Hillingdon MASH (Multi Agency Safe-Guarding Hub) team. Where there is a need for an immediate response then contact the Police.
- 3) School enquiries continue and any further information shared with appropriate services/Police
- 4) Follow safeguarding procedures to record concerns, actions and decisions.