



REGISTRATION & ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy outlines Gatley Primary School's approach to ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of all children, which is regarded as essential for our children's education. It outlines how these expectations work in conjunction with the DFE Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022) and the relevant legislation including:

The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
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Headteacher
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Chair of Governors
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Introduction

Good attendance and time keeping are very important. It helps to settle children into school routines and to develop good attitudes to work. Children need to attend school to benefit from their education and to ensure the best possible learning outcomes. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and creates a barrier to learning. Absence from school can also affect children's friendships and self-esteem. It is important that we all work together as partners to ensure all children attend and achieve.

Ensuring children's regular attendance at school is a parent or guardians legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility within the context of this school. *Failing to attend this school on a regular basis is considered a safeguarding matter.* As a school we will work proactively with our families to ensure that every child's time in school is maximised in order for children to achieve their full potential.

Aims

The aim of Gatley Primary Attendance and Registration Policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils and to ensure this is recorded accurately. Regular attendance at school is key to steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its Attendance and Registration Policy is adhered to as much as is possible.

Gatley Primary School takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support. This document is supported by our policies on safeguarding, anti-bullying, behaviour and other associated teaching and learning policies.

Within this policy we aim to:

- To promote the education surrounding regular attendance;
- Create a welcoming and stimulating environment where pupils feel safe, secure and wanting to attend school;
- Act inclusively, with clarity, with our attendance reporting procedures adhering to legal frameworks;
- Work proactively with families to monitor, track and deal promptly with non-attendance;
- To introduce effective procedures which have a positive impact to improve attendance;
- To support parents in ensuring that children arrive on time for school, ready to learn.

Legal framework

The *Education Act 1996* states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable —

- (a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age —

- (a) when they attains the age of five, if they attains that age on a prescribed day, and
- (b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following his attaining that age.

Prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March

The aims and expectations of this policy apply to each and every child in our school, regardless of their age, as it is our strong belief that regular attendance at school is fundamental to a child's being able to fulfil their achievements and sustain a healthy wellbeing; this expectation is part of the offer of a place at Gatley Primary School.

Roles and responsibilities

Governing body

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff;
- annually review the school's attendance rules and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents and children to implement the rules effectively;
- Support and challenge the school's implementation of this policy through involvement in school monitoring and school reporting around attendance data;
- ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children and staff;
- take time at governors' meetings to regularly review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year;
- ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data;
- ensure that senior leaders make the necessary referrals to the local authority and other relevant agencies in individual cases of non-attendance;
- provide information requested by the Secretary of State, including the termly absence data the department collects.

School leadership team

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families;

- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement;
- coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full review;
- ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues;
- ensure that legislation and government guidance on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislative changes and how to implement them;
- report to the governing body each term on attendance records, data and provision;
- ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively;
- develop and engage with multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend;
 - have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education
- document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings;
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).

Teachers and support staff

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families;
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement;
- ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue (See Appendix 1)
- ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily (See Appendix 2);
- contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed;
- work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.

Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an active role in the opportunities the school provides to support learning;
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home;
- encourage and support their children's aspirations;
- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment;
- follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school (Appendix 3), and include an expected date for return;
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours;
- use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises;
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance;

- develop and sustain regular routines at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance;
- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time.
- inform the school in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren) along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live.
- sign a home-school agreement.

Pupils

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- attend school every day on time;
- come to school ready to learn with the equipment they need to learn;
- talk to a trusted adult if they are unhappy so that we can support them in feeling happy and safe in and outside of school;
- sign the home-school agreement

Recording and Reporting Absences

Registers are the legal documents held for the recording and reporting of attendance. The register is taken twice daily. For children in the morning, the first register is taken at either 8.40am or 9.00am dependent on their wave of entry; for all Year 6 pupils this is always 8.40am. Children must attend school at the start of their chosen/directed wave time. Wave times are not flexible and can not be used interchangeably to extend or shorten the school day.

The second register is taken in the afternoon following the children's lunch break. Registers close 10 minutes after their opening time and should be completed by the adult teaching the class using SIMs.

Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.

Office staff should make it clear on the school register when taking attendance whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Where staff have concerns regarding absences, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Teaching staff will mark the register with / (am present) or \ (pm present) when a child is present in school. If they are not present they should be marked with 'N' which will enable the office staff to locate the child during register checks.

When a child is to be absent from school, without prior permission, parents should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence. They should contact the school each day of absence providing a reason for the absence. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents or carers.

1. Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make a phone call to alert the school on the first day/each day of absence. In reporting the absence, parents should explain what the nature of the illness is. This will be recorded as 'I' in the register. A period of illness for 5 days or more, will result in the teachers contacting families as a check-in and to offer additional support.

Frequent periods of illness will be a trigger for the school expression attendance concerns and will be monitored to enable the relevant support to be instigated under the school's safeguarding duty of care. This may include the involvement of the School Nurse or other health care professionals.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper. If these are not provided on request it may result in the absence continuing to be classed as unauthorised.

Please see the Medical Conditions Policy for absence periods for some conditions including Covid-19.

School work will not be issued for periods of illness as it is important that children rest and recover from their illness. Prolonged or extended periods of illness may result in work being issued if the illness is preventing the child from returning to school ie: recovery from a operation or surgery. It is viewed that most treatments or extended illness will enable to return to school if the right support is in place. This plan should be constructed with the relevant health care professional.

2. Medical or dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible and parents should make the school aware of when the appointment is and when the child will be returning within that school day.

Regular and repeated periods of illness could be a cause for concern. These periods of illness absence are monitored and external agencies such as the School Nurse maybe asked to support where necessary.

** If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, school can request parents to provide medical evidence (Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes) to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness and will advise parents of their intention.*

If a pupil is not is school for a session because they are attending a medical appointment, this will be recorded as 'M'. School work can not be issued for time missed for medical appointments.

3. Authorised absences

There may be some exceptional instances where the school will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement. This will be recorded as 'C'.

4. Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. This will be recorded as E.

5. Family holidays and extended leave

Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Under current legislation, schools are now only allowed to authorise leave of absence for any reason if satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist which outweigh the harm caused to a pupil's education by missing school and will not be for extended periods of time.

Both the school and the Local Authority take the issue of school attendance very seriously and parents should be aware that where leave of absence is taken during term time without permission they may be issued with Education Penalty Notice fines

Parents may request a leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. **Requests for leave of this type must be made in writing to the Headteacher at least 28 days/ 4 weeks in advance of the leave being taken.** In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement, which requires the child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration.

Retrospective applications will not be considered, and this time taken will be processed as unauthorised absence. The Headteacher may only grant such requests in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher's decision is final on whether the request is approved, and the length of absence approved.

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing and will outline the details of when the child is expected to return to school. Parents should contact the school immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

It remains the headteacher's sole decision whether to authorise any request for absence during term time and the headteacher's decision is final

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents may be subject to further action by the school or prosecution by the local authority.

Extended periods of absence, without authorisation, may also result in the validity of child's place at the school being explored.

Authorised absences will be recorded as 'C' or 'H' and unauthorised will be coded as 'G'. School work will not be issued for either authorised or unauthorised holidays.

6. Religious observance

Gatley Primary School recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends and will allow authorised absence for these times.

Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

This will be recorded in the register as 'R'.

7. Unauthorised absences

An absence will not be authorised where the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Where parents/carers have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is regularly attending school, we may consider issuing a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a fine (£60 if paid within 21 days, £120 if paid within 28 days) imposed on parents.

When considering whether to issue a penalty notice, we will have regard to:

- the Department for Education's statutory guidance, School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures.
- the local authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.

In the event that a penalty notice is issued but is not paid within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to proceed to prosecution. The local authority also has separate powers to prosecute parents if their child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly.

Unexplained Absence

The School Office staff will attempt to make immediate contact with parents whenever a child is absent from school without explanation. If this is not possible, contact with the pupil's emergency contact list will begin. We expect all parents to report any absences to the school by no later than 9.00am with a reason for their child's absence. If this is illness related we ask that additional information is provided to help the school understand the nature of the illness. Absences can be reported by: phoning the school office, emailing the school office or reporting an absence via Parentmail. The school considers unreported absences a safeguarding concern and will do everything within its reasonable powers to establish the reasons for why a pupil is not in attendance at school.

On the 10th consecutive day of unexplained absence the school will report the pupils as Missing from School to Stockport Children's Services Contact Centre.

This is recorded via the MASSH and home visits are conducted on day 3 of no contact by DSL. This will be coded as 'O' (unauthorised) on the register.

Other Reasons for Absence

All absence requests should be recorded by parents using the schools form and will be considered on a case by case basis with a strong bias towards the fact that children must attend school and that it is a parent's legal duty of care to ensure this is the case.

Other codes which could be considered are found in Appendix 2

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

All pupils in school are expected to hold an excellent attendance record, in line with or above the school's average of 97%.

Children become a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason, including authorised absences. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects.

During half termly attendance monitoring, PA triggers are identified and cause for concern letters may be issued. All cases of PA are automatically made known to our Education Welfare Officer or Stockport Family School Age Plus Worker to discuss an action plan to best support and increase attendance.

There is a graduated response to the management of persistent absence (See appendix 1).

Absence Procedures: following up absences

Class registers analysed by the school office at the end of the registration period. Where there are unexplained or unauthorised absences, the school will contact the parents or carers. If this is not possible, contact will be made with the emergency contact list or with parents via email, text message or parentmail.

If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, teacher will contact the parent or carer to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help. This may be done in conjunction with issuing letter 1 cause for concern.

Following this letter, non-improved attendance may result in a second letter being issued – letter 2 further concerns.

Ultimately, where a child has been continuously absent from school for a period of 20 school days or more, and where the absence was unauthorised and both the school and LA have been unable to establish the whereabouts of the child after jointly making reasonable enquiries, the school may remove the child from the school roll. The school will notify the local authority when such action is taken.

There is a graduated response to the management and support for absences (see appendix 1).

Late arrivals

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon. In the morning registration begins at 8.40am for early wave and 9.00am for second wave.

Pupils who arrive after this time but within the registration period will be marked as an 'L' in the register for late. The morning registration period ends at either 8.50am for wave one or 9.10am for wave.

A prompt start to the school day is essential. Late arrival to school means that children are missing out on vital educational provision and is disruptive to their learning and other pupils.

How we manage lateness:

We have 2 waves of entry which we ask that you choose from and stick to during the school year. These are: Wave 1 – 8.40am – 3.10pm **OR** 9.00am -3.30pm.

For all our Year 6 pupils their school day starts at 8.40am and 3.10pm.

Children who are late for their wave of entry will need to be signed in through our school office on our electronic entry system. Once signed in, pupils will be given a late slip which they will need to take to their teacher in the classroom. The teacher will update the register with a late mark. If a child is later than 9.30am, the register will be coded as 'late after register closed'; this is classed as an unauthorised absence and coded as 'U' in the register.

The school also takes the attendance register during the afternoon of each school day. If a pupil is not present at the time that the afternoon registration takes place, they will be marked absent. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised.

If pupils are late more than 3 occasions over a half term, the classteacher will contact parents to discuss ways in which we can work together to improve punctuality. There is a graduated response to the management of lateness as this can be trigger for safeguarding concerns (see appendix 5).

Reasonable Adjustments:

Where a child's Education Health Care Plan identifies a health care need or a Health Care Plan indicates this need, we understand that there may be an increased level of need for attending medical appointments during the school day which may be unavoidable or that there maybe prolonged periods of absence or that these children may be more susceptible to illness. Whilst this will still be monitored, reasonable adjustments surrounding the timeframes for monitoring may be extended under the support and guidance of the Educational Welfare Officer or the other external agency advice. A pupil's EHCP should be robust enough to ensure a pupil with SEND or health care needs, can and should be attending school full time.

Education Welfare Officer/Stockport Family School Age Plus Worker

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be solved this way, the school may have to refer children to the Local Authority 'School Age Plus Worker' or Education Welfare Officer. This worker will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if unauthorised absences persist, these support workers can use sanctions such as Education Penalty Notices, Parent Contract or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

Rewarding Excellent Attendance and Punctuality

Each week the class with the highest attendance will be given the rewards day (Friday) to use the agility track for their playtimes.

Where pupils are struggling to attend school on time, we may work with families to adapt our Dojo points to reward pupils for their punctuality as a short term measure to boost this attendance.

Monitoring of Attendance

Attendance is monitored daily as part of our safeguarding duty of care. Attendance statistics are collected half termly and are used to monitor the implementation of the graduated responses by DSLs. Termly information is fed back to governors in the Headteacher's report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Graduated response – Attendance triggers and expectations

97%+	In line or above school's target
95%	Attendance threshold brought to parents attention in parents evenings
92%	Letter 1 issued: cause for concern in meeting with class teacher
90%	Letter 2 issued: concerns regarding absence letter issued in meeting with classteacher and phase leader
85%	Attendance has not improved from the above actions being deployed, meeting with classteacher and DSL/DDSL regarding a Team Around the Child process.

Appendix 2: Register Codes

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
H	Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
I01	Authorised absence due to illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)
I02	Authorised absence due to illness: confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
J	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an interview
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided

O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance)
X	Not required to be in school
X01	Non-compulsary school age absence - not counted in possible attendances
X02	Pupil self-isolating with Coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
X03 (2020-21 academic year)	Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) INSIDE school setting
X04 (2020-21 academic year)	Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) OUTSIDE school setting
X05	Pupils required to self-isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory)
X06	Pupil not in school because they have been advised specifically by their Doctor or public health authority that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should not attend
X07	Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in Government advice
X08 (2021-22 academic year)	Not attending in response to outbreak management
X09 (2021-22 academic year)	Self-isolating: close contact required to isolate by NHS Test and Trace
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances

Colour	Description
	Present
	Authorised Absence
	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
	Unauthorised Absence
	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations

Appendix 3: School Performa for Requesting Absence

Leave of Absence Form

This form should be completed and submitted to the Head of School within two weeks of the start of the proposed leave of absence. Separate forms should be completed for each child if there is more than one.

Parents/carers are reminded that fixed term holidays taken without permission may result in the issuing of a fixed penalty fine by the Local Authority of up to £120 per parent, per child.

Parents/carers are also reminded that the Leave of Absence for the purpose of holidays in term time can no longer be granted, save in the most exceptional circumstances.

Name of Child:	
Class:	
Name of Parent:	
Siblings at another school:	Name: Name of school:
Home address:	
Phone number:	
Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	
Number of school days absent:	
Reasons for request:	

Appendix 5: Graduated response to lateness

3 lates over a half term.	Parents contacted via classteacher to make them aware and offer support.
5 lates over a half term	Letter 1 – cause for concern issued- in meeting with classteacher.
7 lates over a half term	Letter 2- concerns regarding attendance issued- in meeting with classteacher and phase leaders. Punctuality monitored over 2 week period. If lateness persists, referral to DDSL/DSL and external agency support explored.

Appendix 6: Graduated response to Persistent absence

10% of sessions missed	<p>But this is explained by one or two instances of illness OR This is a result of a holiday taken during term time OR This is a result of Covid related absence;</p> <p>The pupil's attendance will be kept under monitoring and reviewed in next attendance sweep.</p>
10% of sessions missed	<p>This is due to sporadic (random/ not chunked) absence (illness or other), letter 1 will be issued – cause for concern – in a meeting with the classteacher. A focus on support will be discussed.</p> <p>Pupil's attendance will be tracked.</p>
More than 10% of sessions missed	<p>This is due to sporadic (random/ not chunked) absence (illness or other), letter 1 has been already issued, letter 2 – concerns regarding attendance – will be issued in a meeting with the classteacher. A focus on support will be discussed.</p> <p>Pupil's attendance will kept under 2 weekly review.</p> <p>If there is no improvement following this 2 week review, external support instigated from EWO/ School Age + worker or School Nurse – referral to DSL or DDSL.</p>

