



**Goring C E Primary School**

**Faith, Love and Learning**

# **Attendance Policy**

**Autumn 2022**

**Review Date: Autumn 2025**

## **Mission – what is our reason for being?**

- **To educate**
- **To nurture**
- **To serve the community**
- **To develop children’s faith and spirituality**
- **To be inclusive**
- **To improve life outcomes**
- **To develop children’s life and learning skills**
- **To develop morals and principles**

## **Our Values**

- ✓ **Respect**
- ✓ **Aspiration**
- ✓ **Faith**
- ✓ **Fun**
- ✓ **Love**
- ✓ **Equality**
- ✓ **Self-Respect**

## **Our School Vision for 2025**

**To be a Church of England Primary School that: -**

- **nurtures each individual as a whole person to enable them to achieve their God given potential and to make outstanding progress.**
- **provides an exciting, broad and ambitious curriculum that equips learners for the future.**
- **as a community demonstrates love and respect for all of God’s creation.**

## **Introduction**

**All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education.**

**For each child to make the most of the educational opportunity available to him/her, a high level of school attendance is essential. We acknowledge that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning and educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and can affect a child's ability to develop positive relationships and friendship groups within school.**

**Goring Church of England (Aided) Primary School is committed to providing children with the best possible opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.**

**This policy seeks to ensure that all members of the school community share an understanding of the procedures in place to promote and monitor children's attendance and a shared a commitment to achieving high attendance for all.**

### **1. Aims:**

- To promote a positive and welcoming environment in which children feel safe, secure and valued**
- To promote opportunities to celebrate high attendance**
- To convey to children, to parents and all stakeholders, the importance of regular and punctual attendance and the link with achievement and attainment**
- To set out procedures to promote high attendance, punctuality and to address persistent absence**
- To ensure that attendance and punctuality is monitored effectively**
- To ensure that reasons for absence are recorded promptly and accurately**
- To maintain clear roles and responsibilities**

## **2. Statements of expectations**

### **2.i) Children**

**We will help to lay the foundations for children's growing awareness of their responsibility to themselves to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them and to play a full and active role in the life of the school.**

**What is expected of children:**

- **To respect themselves and others**
- **To understand the need to attend school regularly and punctually**
- **To help to ensure that they arrive at school on time**
- **To tell an adult if they are unhappy about something**
- **To be friendly and caring to others**

### **2.ii) Parents**

**Parents have a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly.**

**If a child is in the care of the Local Authority (a Child We Look After), the school will work closely with the carers to ensure that they recognise their parenting role where attendance is concerned and to ensure good attendance.**

**What is expected of parents/carers:**

- **To ensure that their child attends school and receives a full education**
- **To telephone the school on the first day of absence, providing a reason for absence**
- **To ensure that their child arrives at school in good time for a smooth start to the day and in a condition to learn**
- **To provide a reason for any lateness, signing in on the InVentry electronic sign-in system on arrival**
- **To take family holidays in school holiday periods**
- **To ensure that their child is in school during the time of compulsory testing (Yrs 1, 2, 4 and 6)**

### **2.iii) The School**

**The school will show a commitment to providing a safe, happy and secure environment that is conducive to the learning and well-being of every child. We will maintain a positive approach to attendance, recognising success, rewarding improvements and supporting parents/carers and children where attendance, lateness or persistent absence is an issue.**

**We will ensure good communication with parents/carers so that they are aware of the school's statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality,**

attendance and persistent absence of all children, and what we will do to promote high attendance so that children can make the most of the educational opportunities available to them.

What is expected of the School:

- To create a school ethos of which children will want to be a part
- To treat children kindly and with respect, inspiring trust and a willingness to share any problems at school
- To provide a motivating curriculum to inspire children to want to be at school and to learn
- To meet statutory responsibilities
- To promote punctuality and high attendance
- To develop systems and procedures to ensure that attendance, lateness and persistent absence is recorded accurately and that all absences are followed up
- To work in partnership with parents and ensure good communication and sharing of information between home and school
- To work with the Pupil Entitlement Service or other external agencies such as GPs to address attendance issues

### **3. School Procedures for Recording and Monitoring Absence and Promoting High Attendance**

Children will 'self-register' on arrival at school and by 8.45am at the latest, when the school day begins. Teachers will take registers electronically using the BromCom module at 8.50am. The register officially closes at 9.00am.

The register is a legal document and the teacher is responsible for recording in the register who is present and who is absent, in accordance with registration requirements and codes.

#### **3.i) Lateness**

School gates will open at 8.35am and be locked at 8.45am. A child arriving after the start of school at 8.45am but before the register is closed at 9.00am, will be marked present, but will be coded as late before registers close. The time of arrival should be noted in the appropriate column.

Parents/carers of children arriving after the gates have been closed at 8.45am are asked to enter the school through the main entrance and via the office, where office staff will ask the parent to sign in via the InVentry electronic system that records the name of the child, class, date, time and reason for lateness. This is important because of fire regulations.

Any child arriving after registers are closed at 9.00am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation e.g. attending

an early morning medical appointment, in which case, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Parents/carers will be asked to record the child's arrival and reason for lateness at the office using the InVentry system.

Afternoon registration will also be taken by teachers after lunch. The same procedures for lateness will apply.

### **3.ii) First Day Absence**

Parents are expected to telephone the school on the first day of absence. Office staff will enter the appropriate absence code in the register. On receipt of a note, office staff will enter the coding for the full period of absence.

Parents who have not made contact with the school by 9.30am on the first day of absence will receive a telephone call from office staff requesting the reason for absence. Office staff will note the reason for the absence in the class register. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised until or unless a valid reason has been received by the school.

If the school is not able to make contact after a second day of absence, the Head Teacher will send an email requesting parents/carers to contact the school with the reason for the absence.

### **3.iii) Ten days absence**

In the unlikely event that a child is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive sessions (ie 5 days) or 10 sessions over a 10 week period, the Head Teacher will notify the Local Authority by submitting a referral to the Pupil Entitlement Service (this is a legal requirement). The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

### **3.iv) Frequent Absence and Pattern of Absence**

Teachers (and office staff) will bring to the attention of the Assessment Lead any emerging attendance concerns.

The Assessment Lead will write to inform parents when a child's attendance falls below 90%.

In cases where a child begins to develop a pattern of absences, the Assessment Lead will contact the parents/carers and try to resolve the issue with them. If this is unsuccessful, the Assessment Lead will take the following action:

- Refer the matter to the school nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one
- Seek advice from the Attendance Support Worker or Pupil Entitlement

### **3.vi) Persistent Absence**

In cases where a child's accumulated absence, at any point in the year, reaches 10% (regardless of whether or not any of it is authorised), the Assessment Lead will investigate the reasons for absence and write to parents/carers promoting a strong message about the importance of their child's good attendance. If there is no improvement, the Assessment Lead will engage directly with parents, involving the SEND support teacher where necessary to facilitate and celebrate attendance and punctuality (e.g. the offer of a place at Breakfast Club, a 'hot chocolate Friday' reward for a full week's attendance, referral to the School Nurse, access to a learning mentor for counselling). Where these fail to secure an improvement, the school will seek the support of the Attendance Support Worker or Pupil Entitlement.

### **3.vii) Returning to School**

It is important that on return to school, especially after more than 1 day of absence, children are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that children are helped to catch up on missed work and that they and their parents/carers are brought up to date on any information/letters that have been passed to other parents or children.

### **3.viii) Absence notes**

Notes received from parents/carers explaining absence should be kept by office staff for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the child that may require further investigation, the notes will need to be retained for a longer period.

### **3.ix) Request for Absence in School Time**

Holidays in term time will not be allowed. Parents/carers will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a child's learning. The Headteacher will not authorise absence for the purpose of holidays except in exceptional circumstances but parents must apply in advance for permission, using the appropriate form.

Routine medical or dental appointments should not be booked to take place during school hours.

### **3.x) Fixed Penalty Notices**

A fixed penalty notice (FPN) is a fine given for unauthorised absence. A FPN may be issued when a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised.

## **4. Recognising and Promoting High Attendance**

The school will remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive a full education (e.g. the prospectus, promotional displays, Home/School Agreement (renewed annually), school website)

Children achieving 100% attendance for the year will be recognised as part of the Locality of Schools' initiative.

## 5. Clarification of Stakeholders' Responsibilities

**Governors are responsible for**

- Ensuring that the school promotes the welfare and educational potential of all children through an Attendance Policy
- Ensuring that the policy is reviewed every 3 years
- Monitoring the school's progress towards achieving its attendance targets through the Pupil Welfare Committee

**The Headteacher and Attendance Lead are responsible for**

- Promoting high attendance and punctuality
- Addressing attendance, punctuality or persistent absence issues
- Maintaining good communication with parents
- Recognising and celebrating high attendance
- Following the school protocol in communicating with parents/carers if the reason for absence has not been received or recorded in the register.
- Analysing the attendance of the whole school, cohorts and vulnerable groups
- Liaising with the Attendance Support Worker, Pupil Welfare Committee and Pupil Entitlement Service
- Reporting to Governors half-termly

**The teachers are responsible for**

- Maintaining an accurate electronic attendance register
- Drawing to the attention of the Assessment Lead, any child whose attendance or punctuality gives cause for concern
- Welcoming children back into school following an absence
- Ensuring that children catch up on work missed
- Ensuring that children and their parents/carers are brought up to date with any missed information

**The Administration Assistant is responsible for**

- Ensuring that parents of children arriving late provide a reason using the electronic sign-in system
- Registering late arrivals and recording the time of arrival
- Drawing to the attention of the Headteacher, any child whose attendance or punctuality gives cause for concern
- Telephoning parents/carers on the first day of absence if they have not contacted the school with the reason by 9.30am
- Entering the reason for absence in the register
- Updating the Attendance module on BromCom daily with information on any lateness and reasons for absence
- Assisting the Assessment Lead in tracking absence levels.
- In the Summer Term, providing a list of children achieving 100% attendance for the year

**Children are responsible for:**



- Respecting themselves and others
- Understanding the need to attend school regularly and punctually
- Helping to ensure that they arrive at school on time
- Telling an adult if they are unhappy about something

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school and receives a full education
- Telephoning the school on the first day of absence, providing a reason for absence and to confirm this in writing on their child's return to school
- Ensuring that their child arrives at school in good time for a smooth start to the day and in a condition to learn
- Providing a reason for any lateness and recording this using the electronic entry system at the office
- Taking family holidays in school holiday periods
- Ensuring that their child is in school during the time of compulsory testing (Yrs 1, 2, 4 and 6)

### Appendix 1: Attendance during coronavirus from September 2021

In March, when the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was increasing, no parent was penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school. Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance is therefore mandatory again.

Since shielding advice has paused nationally, except in a very few areas where the implementation of local restrictions is ongoing, all previously affected children should be able to return to school except where individual clinical advice not to do so has been provided. If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned about their child attending school, we will work closely with the family to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance of the measures we are putting in place to reduce the risk in school.

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus.

If rates of the disease rise in the local area, clinically extremely vulnerable children (or family members) may be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and, therefore, they may be temporarily unable to attend. These children will be marked as an X in the register.

**Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should stay at home for 3 days or until the cessation of symptoms. They should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.**

**Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. If they do test positive or experience symptoms, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.**

**As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine.**

**As a school, we will follow up with families if we are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. We can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, we may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes.**

## Appendix 2: School Protocol for Persistent Absence

