



GREATFIELDS PRIMARY

Excellence for all

Attendance Policy

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CONTENTS

1. Values.....	3
2. Overall Aims.....	3-4
3. Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality.....	4-9
4. Attendance Monitoring	10
5. Recording Attendance.....	10-13
6. Using Data to Improve Attendance.....	14-16
7. Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance.....	16-18
8. Summary of procedures to promote good attendance/punctuality.....	18-20
9. Extended Holidays and Term Time Absence	21-22
10. Children Missing Education	22
11. Legal Sanctions.....	22-24
12. Monitoring arrangements.....	24
13. Links with Other Policies	24
14. Appendix 1	25-27
15. Appendix 2	28
16. Appendix 3	29

1. Values

'Putting these measures on a statutory footing helps reinforce the importance of school attendance and the need to ensure families receive the support they need, when they need it, working together to ensure any barriers to attendance for children are removed.'

School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2024

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

- At Greatfields Primary School, we are continuously working towards our goal of 97% attendance for all pupils.

2. Overall Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.

- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

3. Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality

3.1 The Legal Framework:

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

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

There are legal obligations on:

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

3.2 Executive Headteacher/ Head of School

The Executive Headteacher/Head of School is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary in line with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Local Authority policies and procedures.

3.3 The Governing Body:

The Governing Body has responsibility for school attendance and will be familiar with current legislation. The Headteacher will report on attendance to the Governors at regular intervals. The Governors will form part of the School Attendance Working Party, who will ensure that the Whole School Attendance Policy is reviewed every two years.

3.4 Head of School and Attendance Officer:

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs Nawaz-Stevens and can be contacted via office@greatfieldsprimary.com
- Monitoring, reviewing and analysing attendance data to identify cohorts of various levels of absentees.
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Work with identified pupils and their parents to understand and address the reason for absence, including any in school barriers to attendance.
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority.

3.5 SENDCo:

The SENDCO will monitor the attendance of all following pupils:

- SEN Support
- EHCP
- EAL
- TAF pupils
- Vulnerable Pupils

They will support class teachers in the inclusion of attendance where appropriate. They will monitor identified, individual needs and levels of absence for the above groups and will refer to the appropriate member of senior staff for discussion with the Local Authority Attendance Officer when necessary.

3.6 School Office:

- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To promptly inform Head of school, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- To record reasons for absence and updating class registers.
- To implement the daily checking of BROMCOM registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
- To maintain BROMCOM attendance records in line with this policy.
- To report to the Local Authority, as requested any pupil that may be FSM as well as keeping up to date records of FSM pupils.
- To maintain clear communication with the Head of School regarding FSM, attendance and punctuality within year groups.
- To support with the admission and induction of new pupils.
- To support Head of School with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.
- To maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.

3.7 Staff:

- To complete the daily class attendance and punctuality chart, with the pupils.
- To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the BROMCOM register system.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This is done on the school's BROMCOM system by 9.00 am and 1.15 pm.
- To regularly remind pupils and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought.
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with families and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection.
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To promptly inform Head of School, of pupils who persist with poor attendance.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

3.8 Parents or Carers

The school wishes to work in partnership with families to achieve good school attendance. **The minimum target attendance for all pupils registered at this school is 97%, to ensure the best learning opportunities for all our pupils.**

Even though **97%** may sound high, it is still equivalent to approximately half a day absence every three weeks over the academic year. As further examples, if your child has **90%** attendance over an academic year, it means on average, that your child is absent from school for half a day a week. If the attendance level slips to **80%** then this is equivalent to missing one day of school a week. If a child's attendance continued at this level throughout their school life, by the time they

left school, they would have missed an entire academic year. At **75%** attendance the equivalent of approximately 1.5 days a week is missed.

Pupils with attendance below 90% are Persistent Absentees and pupils with attendance below 50% are Severe Absentees. Pupils who are persistent absentees are supported by school with interventions as well as encouragement to speak to a trusted adult in school about any worries they have about school. Pupils with severe attendance are supported further with a school action plan to ascertain and overcome barriers to non-school attendance. School may refer persistent absentees to the borough attendance officer.

Parents/carers have responsibilities for ensuring their child comes to school regularly, which are outlined in the Home-School agreement. Families of children of compulsory age are required to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)

Pupils should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If a pupil has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach-aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. Our first aiders are allowed to give medicines with a signed medical consent form. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect their child.

All medical appointments should be made outside school time. If this is not possible the appointment card should be shown in advance to the Office Staff and the pupil must be brought to school before the appointment and returned to school afterwards.

Day 4 of pupil absence will require the parent/carer to provide medical evidence for their child's absence. If medical evidence cannot be provided the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every Monday- Friday 8.35am on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return

- Provide the school with more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal; support
- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance to avoid their child becoming a persistent absentee.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered - including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to avoid their child becoming a persistent absentee as well as preventing the need for legal intervention.

3.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and be on time every day. Pupils should be ready to learn and be appropriately prepared for lessons. The target attendance figure for all pupils is a minimum of **97%**; this is equivalent to half a day absence every fortnight over the academic year.

3.91 Educational Welfare Service

The Educational Welfare service is expected to:

- Support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions.
- Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.
- Ensure that parents are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment, and involvement in entertainment and child protection.

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

4. Attendance Monitoring

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

5. Recording Attendance

Class registers are recorded using BROMCOM. The system ensures that no pupils are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever member of staff has been directed to take the register for that session. Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate and submitted at key times (see below).

5.1 Morning Register

Class registers remain open until 9:00am. At that point, the teacher may submit their final register and close down BROMCOM. The teacher may submit the register as many times as they wish before 9.00 am (e.g. if a mistake has been made or a pupil has arrived slightly late) but at 9.00am the register must be correct and submitted. From 8.45 am the school playground gates are closed. A member of the School Office will meet pupils arriving late. The pupil's names and classes are recorded in the 'Pupil Arriving Late' folder. This is to ensure that no pupils are missed on the register due to arriving in school late. Pupils arriving after 8.45am are recorded as 'L' (late before register closed) in the register. Pupils arriving after 9:00am are marked as 'U' (unauthorised late after the register has closed). The School Officer then checks that the pupils who have arrived late have been marked '/' (present) in the registers and corrects any mistakes or inputs codes for pupils who are known to be absent. The School Office/Social Inclusion Officer then begins first day absence calls.

5.2 Afternoon Register

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence. They should be completed by 1:30pm.

5.3 Punctuality

Regular attendance includes pupils being on time for school, every day.

The school gates open at 8:35am. Pupils enter into school from this time and make their way directly to their classrooms. The pupils should go to class to be registered. **The external doors and gates will be closed promptly at 8:45am. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child is in school before the school gates close at 8.45am.** Pupils arriving after this time will need to enter the school through the office and will be marked as late. The reasons for lateness are recorded by the parents.

School registers close at 9.00am, should a pupil arrive after this time they will be marked as U in the register. If a pupil receives regular U marks, the pupil will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer and parents may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). The FPN is £80 per child per parent which will increase to £160 after 21 days if not paid.

The afternoon session starts at **1.00pm (EYFS/KS1) 1.15pm (LKS2) and 1.30PM (UKS2).**

The end of the school day is 3.15pm.

In severe weather conditions, such as snow, it remains the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that the pupils arrive at school on time and are picked up promptly at the end of the day.

School operate a Breakfast Club 8.00 - 8.35am every day which is able to support parents and pupils with punctuality.

Therefore, parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform

- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.

5.4 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office or communicating through the My parent Ed app.

School will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

School may request 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.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

5.5 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

This can be done by sending in a screen shot of the medical appointment through the My Parent Ed App or via email. However, we encourage parents/carers 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 pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

5.6 Following up First Day Absence

If a pupil is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the family, a first day absence call will be made. The Attendance Officer follows this system:

- Registers are saved promptly
- Listen to absence calls, read absence emails
- Bring together registers, lates, absence calls - produce the list of pupils absent with no explanation
- Start first day calling for pupils absent without explanation, call everyone on the contact list until you get an answer. Leave messages if there is a voicemail option.
- Call the contact list at least twice
- If no reply at all from the contact list consider whether any pupils have additional agency support, such as a social worker, contact them.
- Make a prompt home visit.
- If you cannot get an answer refer immediately to children's services / MASH / Police and request a welfare call.

The family is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child's name in the register.

The Attendance Officer must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code.

5.7 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

6 Using data to improve attendance

Daily data sharing is mandatory and data is shared with the Department for Education. Data is also shared with all pupils as well as staff, who are informed on a weekly basis of attendance/punctuality achievements. The class achieving the highest attendance/punctuality, and the number of pupils achieving 97% - 100% attendance is shared in termly assemblies. This develops healthy competition between year groups to improve attendance. It also engages the teacher in conversation with their classes about attendance. Comparisons are drawn with national data on attendance and is also shared at termly Pupil Progress meetings allowing school to support children with targeted interventions and understanding the impact of interventions.

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

6.1 Parent/teacher Consultation Evenings

Individual pupil attendance data is shared with the class teacher prior to Parent Consultation evenings. This provides an opportunity for teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance as well as offering support to families where attendance and punctuality are a concern. Where necessary, a target for improving attendance is set. The class teacher then monitors this. If there is no improvement in attendance/punctuality, the pupil is referred to the Head of School.

6.2 Weekly Supportive Contact with Families

Attendance is rigorously monitored on a weekly basis for all pupils, with particular focus on vulnerable groups. The Attendance Officer and senior leaders analyse weekly attendance data to identify early signs of declining attendance, emerging patterns, and pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees. This enables the school to act swiftly and provide timely, targeted support to pupils and their families.

Where a pupil's attendance falls within the 90-93% range, the Attendance Office will make a weekly supportive telephone call to parents/carers.

These calls are intended to be supportive and collaborative, focusing on:

- Exploring any emerging barriers to attendance
- Discussing practical strategies to support improved attendance
- Offering guidance and signposting to additional support where appropriate

During these conversations, parents are also informed of the risk of their child becoming a Persistent Absentee should attendance decline further. Parents are advised that continued concerns may result in a formal meeting with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) in order to provide additional support and prevent further deterioration in attendance.

6.3 School Attendance Letters

Using the information gathered from the attendance data, the school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality. (Copies of all standard letter formats are included at the end of this document.)

6.4 Punctuality Folder

The School Social Inclusion Officer and Headteacher monitor the punctuality folder regularly. This may involve speaking to parents directly, or via a phone call. Letters regarding the school's concern over lateness may also be sent; explain how much learning pupils are missing. If it does not improve, parents are invited in to school, to discuss the concerns with the Head of School and plan a way forward. If lateness does not improve following the meeting, then the family will be referred to the EWO who will contact parents informing them that further action may be taken.

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

6.5 Attendance Meetings

The Headteacher and School Social Inclusion Officer monitor attendance and engagement across individuals, classes, year groups, different ethnic groups, pupils with SEND, those eligible for free school meals, and other identified

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

On a four-weekly basis, for pupils with attendance of 90% or below (persistent absence), a meeting will be held with the School Attendance/ Social Inclusion Officer, the EWO, and the parents to review absences, discuss barriers, and agree strategies and support to improve attendance.

Following the meeting, a plan of action will be agreed upon, detailing clear steps and responsibilities to support the pupil in improving their attendance. Progress will continue to be monitored regularly.

Continuous persistent absence, repeated lateness, or a significant drop in attendance may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued.

7 Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance

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

7.1 Weekly Celebration Assemblies

Celebration Assemblies are held every week on Friday. The class with the highest level of attendance will receive the weekly attendance cup and acknowledgment.

7.2 Monthly School Newsletter

Each month, the School newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of number of days

absent. It also includes information about any initiatives, which the school is using, to promote attendance and punctuality.

7.3 The School Learning Environment

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

7.4 Staff Promoting Good Attendance

Staff actively encourage good attendance through conversations with parents, sharing academic and personal benefits of regular attendance. It is important that all staff consistently promote good attendance within their classes, helping pupils understand its value and supporting a positive attendance culture across the school. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and this is celebrated.

7.5 Recognition and Rewards for 100% Attendance

Greatfields Primary School formally recognises and celebrates pupils who achieve 100% attendance, reinforcing the importance of regular school attendance to the whole school community.

Termly Recognition: Pupils who achieve 100% attendance for a term will be acknowledged during termly Headteacher Assemblies and will receive:

- A certificate
- A Headteacher sticker
- A small prize

Additional Termly and Annual Incentives: To further motivate pupils and engage families in celebrating sustained excellent attendance, the school offers additional incentives:

- Pupils who achieve 100% attendance at the end of the Autumn Term and Spring Term will be entered into a prize draw for a £25 gift card.

- Pupils who achieve 100% attendance across the academic year will be entered into a Summer Term prize draw, with the top prize being a bicycle.

Rewards are reviewed and decided by SLT on a yearly basis.

Through consistent monitoring, early intervention, and positive recognition, Greatfields Primary School promotes a culture where excellent attendance is valued, celebrated, and actively supported.

8 Summary of procedures to promote good attendance/punctuality:

The following tables show specific procedures to maintain and encourage excellent attendance at Greatfields Primary School:

Daily Procedures	By whom	Outcomes / Actions
Parents ensure pupils arrive at school on time	Parents/carers	
Parents inform the school by 8.45 am, if their child is absent that day	Parents/carers	Office Staff update registration codes
Pupils arriving late to school are registered at reception	School Office	Absence mark on BROMCOM amended to a late mark by School Officer
Teachers record attendance using BROMCOM. This is done by 9.15am and 1.30 pm.	Teachers/Support staff	Teacher/Support Staff use a paper register, if required. Teacher takes responsibility for promptly informing Headteacher or School Office of concerns.
1st day absence phone calls are made to inform parents of their child's unexplained absence for that day.	Attendance officer/School Office	Attendance officer/School Office updates attendance codes.

Head of School informed of attendance/punctuality issues issues - parents contacted, if required	Head of School	
Parents provide text message, email or telephone call including dates of and reason for absence upon the child's 1 st and subsequent days of absence.	Parents	School Office reports absence to teachers and Head of School in charge of attendance.
Parent/ carer does not contact school with reason for their child's absence	Head of School	Attendance officer and another member of staff complete home visit if there is still no response police will be called to ensure welfare check is completed.

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

Half Termly and Termly Procedures	By whom	Outcomes / Actions
Analyse attendance/punctuality data to monitor trends and progress	Attendance officer	Information provided determines action taken by Head of School.
Assemblies to promote attendance/punctuality and share term's data and progress	Head of School	Highest attending class receives the attendance cup to promote high attendance amongst pupils.
Discussions as required in response to specific attendance/punctuality concerns of a particular cohort of pupils	Head of School and Attendance officer	Information provided determines action taken by Head of School.
Individual attendance/punctuality discussed with pupils and families, at parents' evenings	Class teachers	Mentoring and advice on attendance/ punctuality issues provided to all families
Analyse attendance/punctuality data and information to identify cases of concern and develop appropriate interventions	Attendance officer and Head of School	Targeted intervention for individual concerns
Meeting to discuss individual cases, monitor progress and refer new concerns. Support and meeting provided for pupils and families.	Social Inclusion Officer and Head of School	Targeted intervention for individual concerns and support for families where required.
Review success and impact of attendance/punctuality strategies for the term	Head of School and Attendance officer	Amend and refine interventions as appropriate

9 Extended Holidays and Term Time Absence

In line with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Local Authority, 'Leave in term Time Guidance' and the 2013 Amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations, leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstances however, requests will be reviewed individually. The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk. The school may contact outside agencies in order to ensure that a visit is legitimate and safe for the child/children.

Executive Headteacher/Head of School may now only grant leave in term time where the circumstances are exceptional, for example:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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
- Traveler pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travelers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveler 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
 - death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
 - life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
 - parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)

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

If you have exceptional circumstances, which have led you to request leave in term time for your child/ren, please email the school office office@greatfieldsprimary.com with your absence request. The Head of School will then decide on whether or not the leave can be authorised.

10 Children Missing Education

Greatfields Primary school follow the guidance of the LBBB Children Missing Education and in accordance with the KCSIE 2024, ensure that pupil's attend school daily. First day absence calling is paramount and school carry out rigorous checks to ensure the missing pupil's whereabouts are known. This includes completing a home visit should the Social Inclusion Officer be unable to contact the pupil's parents/carers as well as calling police to carry out a welfare check.

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the academy day in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities'.

Monthly Pupil Absent Movement Forms and Off Roll reports are filed with the London Borough of Barking Dagenham to ensure all parties are sharing information to keep children safe.

11 Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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
- Whether the parent has engaged with school or the local authority to ensure their child attends school on a regular basis

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Greatfields Primary will consider a fine if a pupil misses 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

The threshold can be met with "any combination of unauthorised absence". For example, four sessions in term time plus six instances of arriving late.

The period of 10 weeks can also span "different terms or school years".

LBBB retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. This could include where parents "are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events".

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £80.

- If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £160.
- If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

"If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence."

The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that:

- Penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child.

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

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum of every two years by the Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

13. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1:

Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
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
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations

T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
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Appendix 2

Punctuality

Dear parent/ carer,

_____ have been late a total of _____ minutes since September. This equates to a total of ____ days and _____ minutes of lost learning time.

Missing out on lessons makes learning difficult and leaves your child vulnerable to falling behind.

School gates open at 8.35 shut at 8.45am, please ensure your child arrives to school on time. Continuous late attendance will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued.

We are able to provide free Breakfast Club which is between 7.30-8.35am to enable your child's punctuality to improve.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Nawaz Stevens

Head of School

Appendix 3

Dear parent/ carer,

RE: attendance

I am writing to make you aware the _____ has missed _____ sessions of learning their academic year which equates to _____ days/ _____ weeks absence. As a result, _____ is currently classed as 'persistently absent' by the Department for Education. Missing out on lessons makes learning difficult and leaves your child vulnerable to falling behind.

The average number of sessions missed by your child's classmates is 6 sessions which equates to 3 days. Further absence will now need to be supported by medical evidence. This could be a letter from your GP or prescribed medication.

Poor attendance puts your child at a disadvantage both academically and socially therefore it is imperative that your child's attendance improves.

If there are other difficulties that are making attendance a challenge, please do not hesitate to get in touch so that school can offer support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Nawaz Stevens

Head of School