

GREENBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY



September 2024

Attendance Policy

1. Aims

This school aims to ensure that every child will want to attend school. This is achieved by creating a warm, welcoming and secure atmosphere where pupils feel valued. A stimulating and accessible curriculum is delivered in a physically clean, bright and attractive environment.

We believe that punctuality and good attendance are essential for all pupils so that they can benefit from what our school has to offer. We aim to help parents and pupils appreciate the importance of good school attendance.

2. Legislation and Guidance

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 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

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

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The headteacher 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

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance

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
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- 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 L Walsh (Deputy Headteacher) and can be contacted via office@greenbank.rochdale.sch.uk

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for;

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- Registers must be taken in silence and on time, reporting all absences to the school office and attendance officer to follow up.
- Teachers to report any patterns or irregularities to the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance.

School admin staff (including the Children's Welfare Officer – Mrs Matthew)

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Update registers to reflect any absences and leave a comment on the register detailing the reason for the absence, adding initials to the comments so they can be identified if further information is needed.
- Transfer calls from parents to the Children's Welfare Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- The Children's Welfare Officer will make phone calls to discuss attendance concerns.
- The Children's Welfare Officer may make home visits to discuss and check on the attendance of a child.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school or come to the school office to report their child's absence no later than 9:15am 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 1 emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day and evidence is provided
- Provide medical evidence where attendance falls below 92%.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time and ready to learn.

Contact details of staff involved in monitoring and improving attendance.

Headteacher	Mrs S Hartley	office@greenbank.rochdale.sch.uk 01706 647023
Designated Senior Leader for attendance	Mrs L Walsh	office@greenbank.rochdale.sch.uk 01706 647923
Children's Welfare Officer	Mrs Y Matthew	office@greenbank.rochdale.sch.uk 01706647923

4. Registration/Lateness

- School opens at 8.45am and starts at 9.00am.
- Children will be late if they arrive after 9:00am.
- Latecomers will have to use the main school door.
- Lateness will be recorded by the administrator. If a child arrives after 9:00am the code entered on the register will be an L meaning late before the register closes. If a child arrives after 9:15am a U code will be entered meaning late after the register closes and this late mark will be unauthorised.
- If a child is frequently late, the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance, School Admin staff member, Children's Welfare Officer or Education Welfare Officer will contact the parents.

If a child does oversleep, parents are urged to send them to school as quickly as possible after they get up.

Parents are spoken to on arrival and reasons for lateness are discussed and logged. Parents will be asked to sign in their child on the Inventory system for fire regulations and safeguarding purposes.

Weekly log of late students is to be checked by the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance or the Children's Welfare Officer and parents/ carers spoken to or emailed about making improvements to punctuality.

For codes entered into the register see Appendix A

5. Notification of Absence

Parents are asked to contact school on the first day of absence with the reason for a child's absence. This may be by a phone or reporting in person to the school office. **Parents are asked to contact school daily for the duration of the absence to inform the school on any updates around the absence.** Parents/carers are asked to contact school of a child's absence no later than 9:15am. Parents are expected to give a reason for absence and an expected return date.

The school administrator will add a message about the absence on the register for the class teacher. In addition to this the Headteacher, Designated Senior Leader

responsible for attendance and the Children's Welfare Officer are made aware of the absences.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If your child's attendance is below 92% medical evidence would be required to enable us to authorise this for example a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If no reason is given for an absence, the administrator will use Truancy Call (i.e. contact the parent's mobile phone) or phone the family on the first day of absence, wherever possible to find out the reason for the absence. Where parents cannot be contacted by phone, a letter requesting an explanation will be sent to the parents.

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.

If school is not made aware of the reason for an absence a Home Visit may be undertaken by school or an Educational Welfare Officer.

At the end of the week if no reason for absence has been received, then school will send a letter requesting a reason to be provided. School will also contact the Education Welfare Officer.

6. Authorised absence

It is noted that only the Headteacher or Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance (in the Headteacher's absence) can authorise absence.

Illness or medical/dental appointments

- If a child is ill an authorised absence will be awarded. This will be reviewed dependent on the reason for the illness and the number of days a child is off school.
- All medical and dental appointments should where possible be arranged outside the hours of the school day or during the holidays.
- If a medical or dental appointment has to take place during the school day this absence will only be authorised if evidence of the appointment can be shown to school eg: appointment card, email or text showing appointment details.
- Parents should be encouraged to bring children to school if there is time before the appointment, and return them to school as soon as possible afterwards.
- School will challenge parents where a child has missed a whole day of school due to a medical appointment.
- If a teacher doubts whether the absence was genuinely due to illness, the Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance, Children's Welfare Officer or the Headteacher should be informed.

Religious observance

Absence for religious observance will be authorised. The Headteacher will inform parents/carers how many days they can take for Eid following guidance from the Local Authority and school community.

7. Unauthorised absence

The following are not considered acceptable reasons for absence from school:

- Minding the house
- Looking after younger siblings
- Shopping during school hours
- Going for a haircut
- Visiting relatives
- Going on holiday
- Going to a wedding
- Trips to the airport
- Staying off due to an appointment for a parent or sibling.
- Staying off when a parent is feeling unwell and is not able to bring the child to school.
- Absent due to a parent/carers appointment
- Not realising the date a new term at school starts

The Headteacher will only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.

If a child is ill and has more than two days off school then in some circumstances this may be an unauthorised absence unless school is shown evidence that the child is ill eg: attends a doctor's appointment or receives over the counter medication from the chemist.

Children who miss 5 days or more without permission will at this point be referred to the Children Missing in Education Team (CME Team)

School opens at 8:45am and children need to be in school by 9:00am at the latest to ensure they are not late. School finishes at 3:15pm. **Parents/Carers should not be requesting to collect their children before 3:15pm unless a child has a medical appointment. If your child has an appointment and proof can be shown this does not mean other siblings can be taken out of school early – alternative arrangements must be made for collecting siblings at 3:15pm.** The above list of unauthorised absences including collecting other siblings from other schools due to similar school finishing times are not acceptable reasons. If families collect their children earlier than 3:15pm without a valid reason then the Educational Welfare Team in the Local Authority will be informed.

Penalty Notices (fines) due to unauthorised absences in term time

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, per child £160. If this is paid within 21 days then the fine will reduce to £80. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

On the 2nd offence of any unauthorised absence, the penalty notice will be £160 with no provision for a reduced fine.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).

The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes where a 'U' code is recorded. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.

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

8. Holidays in term time

Head teachers have discretion to grant leave during school term time, but this is not an automatic entitlement. The law governing such leave of absences was changed on 19th August 2024.

Under the new regulations, head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

[Department for Education guidance](#) summarises the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance, and explains how they apply to local authorities, head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents.

Unauthorised leave of 5 or more school days (equivalent of 10 sessions) will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to each parent/carer with Parental Responsibility, this includes parents who have not travelled with the child.

Parents are notified that Unauthorised Leave in excess of 20 school days will result in the loss of the child's school place. A referral will also be made to Local Authority's Children Missing Education Team.

Penalty Notice (fine) amounts change for each offence (fine amounts are outline in the above paragraph - Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences in term time)

School procedures for Leave of Absence in Term Time (including holidays)

- School holiday dates are sent out promptly to parents before the start of the school year, with a reminder that trips abroad should be planned for school holiday times.
- All parents have to complete a Leave of Absence in Term Time Form and arrange to see the Senior Leader responsible for Attendance to discuss their child's absence from school, if going abroad this should be completed **before flights are booked**. The Senior Leader should explain the possible damaging effect of long absence on the child's education.
- Parents must give a definite return date. The Senior Leader may stipulate an earlier return date.
- Parents are informed that if their child is absence for more than **20 school days** the child will lose his/her place in school, unless a suitable reason for continued absence has been given.

- If parents fail to obtain permission from the Senior Leader the holiday period will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If a child fails to return on the due date, communication will be made with parents, asking the parents to contact school by a given date and indicating that if they do not make a response by this date, the child's name may be removed from the register and a referral will be made to the Local Authority's Children Missing in Education Team.

Parents are also reminded that they should not take children who are in Year 2 or Year 6 out of school, nor should they take any child during out of school in May – this is due to children in these year groups taking part in SATs.

9. Persistent absentees

A child who has an attendance figure below the 90% threshold is classed as a Persistent Absentee and will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Parents of Persistent Absentees will be invited to an Attendance Meeting with the Education Welfare Officer and the Senior Leader responsible for Attendance to discuss their child's attendance.

Parents who fail to attend an Attendance Meeting will receive a follow up visit from school.

Where the absences continue parents may be served with a Penalty Notice (fine) which may lead to court action.

A child who has an attendance percentage below 90% will be closely monitored and the Education Welfare Officer will be informed. Greenbank Primary and the Education Welfare Service will monitor all children who are deemed to be Persistent Absentees and will challenge all absences including: illnesses and medical appointments.

10. Attendance Monitoring

Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- 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.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to all 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

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
- Individual reward charts are used for identified Persistent Absentee children to encourage attendance and work towards a target. Full weekly attendance is rewarded with a lucky dip prize.

11. Working with parents

We will communicate our Attendance Policy to parents through our school website, our school communication app, newsletters, informal contacts, Parents' Evenings and specific letters concerned with lateness or absence.

We will stress the need for good attendance so that children can make optimum progress. At all times, parents will be encouraged to approach school if they are experiencing difficulties getting their children to school. Each child's attendance will be entered on their school report.

12. Rewarding good attendance

We will celebrate good attendance at Greenbank in a variety of ways;

- Class Attendance Certificates are awarded weekly for the best attendance and punctuality.
- Every child who has 100% attendance and 100% punctuality receives a raffle ticket for a weekly prize draw. The raffles will be drawn in the weekly assemblies.
- Children with 100% attendance at the end of half term will receive a certificate.
- Children with 100% attendance at the end of each full term will receive a certificate and reward.
- Children with 100% attendance for the whole school year receive a certificate and a prize.

Appendix A Register Codes

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

Code	Definition	Reason for code
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning register
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon register
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before the register closes
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Authorised Absences

Code	Definition	Reason for code
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been suspended or 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 during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised Absences

Code	Definition	Reason for code
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 wide O if no reason has absence has been provided after a reasonable amount if 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	Reason for code
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsary school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is a 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

Greenbank Primary Attendance – Key points

The government has introduced new rules for attendance in schools from 19th August 2024. To support parents/carers with attendance matters we are sharing the following information. **Greenbank Primary wants to support parents/ carers to avoid receiving a Penalty Notice (fine) for children being absent from school (unauthorised absences).**

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS ILL?

If your child is ill please remember to phone or leave a message on the school answer machine or school website **each day** to give school an update on your child's absence - 01706 647923. School may phone for clarification or further information about an absence. Home visits may be undertaken to support families.

SHOULD I KEEP MY CHILD OFF SCHOOL? Information from the NHS website

Coughs and colds

It is fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a high temperature (38C or more), please keep them off school until it goes.

Sore Throat

You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat.

Vomiting

Children who are vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick for at least 2 days (48 hours). However we do allow children to come into school after 1 day (24 hours) if parents/carers believe that the vomiting is related to having eaten food too quickly in the morning or the night before eg: milk or eggs.

Diarrhoea

Children who have diarrhoea should stay away from school until they have not had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

High Temperature

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away. A high temperature is 38C or more. Use a digital thermometer, which you can buy from chemists and supermarkets, to take your child's temperature. If your child has a high temperature, they might: feel hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, feel sweaty, look or feel unwell.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Please try to make doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours. School hours are 8:45am to 3:15pm. If your child is well enough to be in school then they should not be taken out of school for a doctor appointment. Medical consultant appointments eg: hospital appointments will be allowed during school hours if they cannot be changed. Proof of all doctor and dentist appointments will need to be shown to school in order for an authorised (M) mark to be recorded on your child's attendance record.

***** Children should not be leaving school early towards the end of the school day as this affects their education and the education of others ***** Most dentist and opticians appointments can be made for half term holidays. Please support your child to have a good education by making appointments in the school holidays or after school during term time. The Education Welfare Officer in the Local Authority will be informed of all early collection of children.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES AND PENALTY NOTICES (FINES)

Please remember the new attendance rules from 19th August 2024 means if your child misses 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) over a rolling 10 week period parents/carers will receive a Penalty Notice (fine). **This does not just mean 5 days unauthorised absences in a row.** Unauthorised absences could be made up of lates after the register has closed (U mark from 9:15am), days off school that are unauthorised as school does not have the evidence to award an authorised mark (I or M) or taking your child out of school during term time.

EVERY SCHOOL DAY MATTERS

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing!

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

How are parents fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are per Parent, per child.

If parents/carers take a child, or children, out of school for an unauthorised absence, each parent will be issued with a penalty notice fine, for each absent child.

For example: two siblings absent for leave during term time would mean that each parent will receive two separate fines. **(This Fine would be £640)**

First Offence

The first time a penalty notice is issued for term time leave or unauthorised absence the amount will be **£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.**

The amount is **reduced to £80 per parent, per child if the fine is paid within 21 days.**

What are Unauthorised Absences?

Examples of Unauthorised Absences are;

- A Term time holiday or visit. **Please speak to school before booking any flight tickets if travelling abroad.**
- Late after the school register closes (arriving at school after 9:15am with no proof of reason).
- An absence school does not agree to be a reasonable reason for a child's absence (please see the school's Attendance Policy)

Second Offence (within 3 years)

If parents/carers take a child, or children out of school for a second time a penalty notice will be issued;

£160 per parent, per child and paid within 28 days. There is no reduction for prompt payment.

Third Offence (within 3 years)

If parents/carers are issued with a penalty notice a third time for either term time leave or unauthorised absence the case will be presented directly to the Magistrates' Court and a fine of up to £2,500 can be issued.

10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10 week period

Penalty notice fines will be issued for **term time leave or unauthorised absence** of five or more days (10 sessions), in a 10 week school period.

What happens if I do not pay a fine?

If parents/carers do not pay the fine within the timescales, the council may refer the case to the Magistrates Court for non-school attendance proceedings under the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006.



Greenbank Primary School

GOVERNORS' POLICY ON LEAVE IN TERM TIME AND HOLIDAYS

Holidays

Parents are expected to arrange holidays during school holiday periods when children can enjoy them without their education being disrupted. The Government's and Governors' policy is that holidays in term time will not be agreed as they have a detrimental effect on children's education.

Other Reasons

Requests for leave in term time for other reasons should only be agreed in **very exceptional circumstances** for the shortest possible period.

The governing body has authorised the Headteacher to act on its behalf. The governors also expect applications for leave in term time other than for holidays to be refused. In very exceptional circumstances discretion may be appropriate, although this will very rarely happen and no more than 10 days will normally be agreed. If parents, take children on an unauthorised visit for 5 days or more a penalty notice (fine) will be issued.

Applications

Parents must complete a form available from the school **at least 1 month in advance**. They should provide supporting evidence of the exceptional circumstances and why the leave must be taken in term time instead of in the school holidays. All applications will be considered carefully, including how the pupil's educational progress could be affected. Please note that the cost of a holiday **is not** extenuating circumstances.

Losing the school place

In addition to running the risk of a penalty notice and a possible criminal record; you also need to be aware that if you take your child/children on holiday during term time you risk losing your child/children's place at Greenbank Primary School. If your child is absent from school for 20 school days for a holiday your child will be removed from the school register. Greenbank is a very popular school and we have a waiting list in most year groups. Parents will have to re-apply for admission when they return but it may not be possible for the pupil to return to this school if there are no places available.

I have read and understood the Government and Governors' policy above.

Name of Pupil: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Class: _____ Year: _____

Surname of parent/carer: _____ First Name of parent/carer: _____

Signature of parent/carer: _____ Date: _____