



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

every school day counts!



Our vision at Harrow Gate Primary Academy is to create a positive, welcoming and secure atmosphere where children, staff and parents/carers feel valued and where an exciting and stimulating curriculum is provided in an engaging and attractive environment. In order for children to achieve their utmost, full attendance is not only an entitlement but is vital.

Attendance policy Aims

Our consistent policy and practice on attendance will enable us to:

- * Enable our children to take the fullest advantage of the educational opportunities which our Academy has to offer
- * Increase achievement and attainment
- * Avoid disruption to learning
- * Enable our children to grow and develop personally and socially
- * Value high levels of attendance and punctuality
- * Reduce levels of unauthorised absenteeism and lateness
- * Reassure parents/carers and the wider community that good attendance is a priority issue for our Academy
- * Ensure our children are safe, as children who are not in school may be at increased risk
- * Work in partnership to overcome the barriers or perceived barriers to attendance
- * Monitor our data effectively to identify those most at risk
- * Prepare our children for the time-keeping discipline of adult life

Why is attendance important?

It helps to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school;
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

Regular school attendance is an important part of giving your child the best possible start in life and is important to your child's future.

For example, children who miss school can frequently fall behind with their work and do less well in exams.

Research suggests that children who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of getting involved in antisocial behaviour or crime.

By law, all children of compulsory school age (five to 16) must receive a suitable fulltime education. Once your child is registered at a school, **you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If your child fails to do so, you risk being served a penalty notice or being prosecuted**

Authorised absence

There is an expectation that every child attends school every day unless there is genuine sickness or a legitimate reason for them not doing so. Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointments
- Family bereavement
- Days of religious observance

Absence may also be authorised for exceptional circumstances which must be discussed and agreed in advance with the Academy. Harrow Gate Primary Academy will not authorise excessive amounts of absence, particularly where children have a history of irregular attendance.

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the Academy to be unacceptable or not genuine.

- Absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances:
- Where no explanation has been offered by the parent/carer
- The explanation is unsatisfactory e.g. shopping, birthdays
- Family holidays which have been taken without prior consent
- Lateness after close of registers without a satisfactory explanation

Regular unauthorised absence (persistent absence) (Red)

A child is deemed to be a persistent absentee if his or her attendance is less than **90%**, regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised. Parent/carers of children with persistent absence may incur a penalty notice but it is hoped that the preventative work that the Academy and outside agencies will undertake with families will help to secure improved and regular school attendance.

School Attendance Panel Meetings (Amber)

Should a child continue to demonstrate unexplained absences, they may be subject to fast track procedures in order to secure good attendance, including a school attendance panel. This is a supportive approach to explore and overcome any possible barriers to attendance. An action plan will be drawn up and targets will be set for any child involved. Other agreements may involve providing the Academy with evidence of medical appointments and demonstrating co-operation with agencies involved. Failure to work with the Academy and other agencies may result in legal action being taken, such as the issuing of penalty notices, prosecution, an Education Supervision Order and a Parenting Order.

