

#NotInMissOut

Greenmeadow Primary School



Title	Attendance Policy
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Introduction

Greenmeadow Primary School is a thriving school, and every pupil plays a part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Attendance Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important

Learning

Any absence affects the pattern of a pupil's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

It is a legal responsibility that all families ensure that all pupils attend regularly. Permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding

Pupils may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each pupil is everyone's responsibility. Greenmeadow Primary promotes the welfare and life opportunities for all pupils via:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti- Bullying

Promoting Regular Attendance

Home and school must work together to encourage all pupils to value school life and create a pattern of regular attendance

To help us all to focus on this we will

- Give you details on attendance via our website and the Torfaen CBC website
- Report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates etc.

The Law relating to Attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- (a) To age, ability and aptitude and

(b) To any special educational needs he/ she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

The Law relating to Safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Fixed Penalty Notice

Greenmeadow Primary School will use fixed penalty notices (FPNs), in accordance with the regional fixed penalty guidance. Fixed Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate when:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive;
- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to holidays in term time or delayed return from extended holidays; or
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, in the current term. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival;
- Truancy, where the pupil has come to the attention of the police or public during school hours for being absent from school, without an acceptable reason.

The FPNs are actioned following detailed support and communication with families. The decision to issue a FPN is decided by the Education Welfare Officer, School Attendance Officer and the head. There is no appeal process for an FPN. Further information is available in the document, 'Local Code of Conduct Education Fixed Penalty Notices' (June 2014)

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping pupils off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

This type of absence can lead to sanctions and/or legal proceedings.




Whilst any pupil may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Attendance and Punctuality

If attendance is 80%, a pupil will have missed:

- 1 day EVERY week
- 6 days EVERY half term
- 12 days EVERY term
- 36 days EVERY year
- 180 days in five years...

...that's nearly **ONE WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR!**

	100% Attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success
	95% Attendance	2 weeks of learning missed	Poor attendance will impact on learning
	90% Attendance	4 weeks of learning missed	
	85% Attendance	5½ weeks of learning missed	Very poor attendance. At risk of prosecution!
	80% Attendance	At least 7½ weeks of learning missed	

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 20% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any pupil's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Parents will be informed of this immediately, when there is at risk of reaching the PA mark. PA students are tracked and monitored carefully.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent, you must

- Contact us on **01633 484320** as soon as possible on the first day of absence. If you need to report your child as absent, then please let us know by 9.00am at the latest.

Parents must provide their child's name, year group, class teacher and the reason for absence. Parents must give specific reasons for the absence and must not use generic statements like 'poorly' or 'feeling unwell'. This information allows us to accurately record all absences.

If your child is absent, we will

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our School Attendance Officer and/or Head teacher if absences persist
- Refer the matter to the Torfaen Education Welfare Service if attendance reaches a level of concern.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we must contact parents for various reasons, including absence, so we always require current contact numbers.

The School Attendance Officer

Parents are expected to contact school (School Attendance Officer) at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Torfaen Education Welfare Service. An Education Welfare Officer will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the pupil's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Fixed Penalty Notices.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arrival can disrupt lessons, be embarrassing and encourage further absence.

Being 15 minutes late every day will add up to TWO WEEKS of school missed every year.

How we manage Lateness

We expect pupils to arrive from 8.50am.

The school day starts at 9.00am and we expect pupils to be in class at that time.

Pupils are marked as late after 9.00am and with a 'U' code after 9.30am. Families could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If a pupil has a persistent late record, families will be asked to meet with the Head and/or School Attendance Officer to resolve the problem. However, families can approach school at any time if there are problems or wider issues regarding getting a pupil to school on time.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time will affect a pupils' schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to avoid taking pupils away in school time. Any savings you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to the pupil's education. Holidays taken in school term time may be classed as unauthorised and may attract penalties. We will consider each application on an individual basis.

School leaders and governors have set targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. Our End of Year attendance target is 95%+. We will keep you updated regularly about progress to

this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Lead Staff for Attendance

Claire Moses (Head)

Rachel Thomas & Lisa Partridge (School Attendance Officers)

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every pupil's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.