



Attendance Policy

Name of school: Green Oaks Primary Academy

Person(s) responsible: Principal

Reviewed: September 2023

Next Review date: September 2024

Introduction

Green Oaks Primary is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all pupils. We believe it is extremely important for pupils to attend regularly and on time. This will give them the best opportunity to progress and success at school.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at schools is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason may result in prosecution.

Policy Statement

Green Oaks Primary School Academy places a high value on punctual and regular attendance. Every child in the school should be made aware of the importance of this. We would wish to foster this good practice throughout the child's school career and into adult life. We see the role of parents/guardians as an integral part of this policy, working in partnership with class teachers.

Irregular attendance leads to pupils missing important lessons and therefore not fulfilling their full potential.

Rights and Responsibilities:

Improving attendance at Green Oaks Primary Academy is the responsibility of everyone in the school community – pupils, parents and staff.

Aims:

To emphasise the importance of maximum attendance at school

To encourage pupils to take full advantage of their educational opportunity by attending regularly

To communicate to all relevant parties the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed 'authorised'

To stress the need for home and school to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance

School responsibility (Including how we promote a culture of high attendance and punctuality):

At the beginning of the academic year every child's attendance for the previous academic will be reviewed to determine patterns of good or poor attendance. Pupils with previous persistent absence will be monitored rigorously from September.

Staff will encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff). The school will employ a range of strategies (see below) to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will investigate promptly all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents/guardians. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently requesting a reason for a child's absence on their return to school.

At the end of each week the classes achieving:

- 100% receive the "GOLD" cup
- 98-99.9% receive a small laminated cup for display in the classroom

- 96%-97.9% receive a small laminated cup for display in the classroom

At the end of each term all classes with attendance above 96% will be able to choose their class reward from the "catalogue of treats".

At the end of each term, all children who have achieved 100% attendance will receive an attendance certificate and parents will be invited to celebrate with their child during achievement assembly. Furthermore "Good" attendance is recognised through Bronze and silver certificates for those above 96% at the end of each term.

At end of the Summer term, all children who have achieved 100% attendance for the year are presented with a certificate to keep at the assembly and an end of year treat will be arranged.

School will support any parents whose first language is not English or who have literacy problems in matters of communication.

Displays in school:

- share the pupils' names who have perfect punctuality each month and perfect attendance each month.
- share class success each week.

Parents/Guardians responsibility:

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and ready to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, parents are requested to notify the school on the first day of absence and keep the school informed thereafter should absence continue, by telephoning the school on 01604 715249 before 9.00a.m. A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received from the parent or guardian. If the authenticity is in doubt, the Academy may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other forms of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the Academy 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.

The Academy follows guidance from Public Health England in relation to absence due to illness and preventing spread of infections ('Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare settings'). Parents will be informed promptly of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance, by the class teacher, the Family Support Worker and finally the Principal.

Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. However, this will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the Academy in advance of the appointment and where ever possible evidence is provided.

Pupils' responsibility:

All pupils are expected to attend school and all their lessons regularly and punctually.

Registration:

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the office daily by 9.15am.

It is important to stress the importance of registration, both as a legal requirement and to ensure an orderly start to the session.

A class register will be taken at 8.50am and 1pm every day. Children who arrive after 8.55 am will receive a late mark. However, it is better to arrive late than not at all.

For security reasons, access to the school after 8.55am will only be gained through the main entrance.

Recording attendance

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will use the DFE codes to detail the attendance and absences.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Parents will be notified of the total number of authorised and unauthorised absences throughout the academic year on their child's annual school report sent home in July.

The attendance officers Mr Campion (Interim Principal) /Miss Clarke (FSW) /Admin are responsible for :

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Providing regular attendance/lates reports to staff and work together to discuss concerns
- Mr Campion leads on attendance across the Academy
- Mr Campion offers a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Mr Campion has oversight of the data analysis
- Mr Campion evaluates and monitors the processes
- Mr Campion devises specific strategies to address poor attendance or repeated lateness
- Mr Campion and Miss Clarke arrange phone calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance/punctuality issues.
- Mr Campion and Miss Clarke work with local partners to implement bespoke packages to improve attendance for those children with persistent absence or severe absence.

Monitoring of attendance

- We monitor attendance fortnightly, half termly and yearly. We identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and provide support for their families.
- We identify whether or not there are particularly groups of children whose absences may cause for concern.

- We use historic data and emerging patterns of attendance and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- We communicate with teachers attendance data.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence:

Parents should be made aware that it is the school which decides whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. A letter or verbal communication does not in itself authorise an absence.

Leave of absence forms can be requested from the office.

A request for leave of absence form may be completed and it will be handed to the Principal, who will then decide whether an absence can be authorised or unauthorised. This will be communicated in writing as to whether the leave of absence has been granted or not.

The Principal will only grant leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be "exceptional circumstance". A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupils is authorised to be absent for.

We define "exceptional circumstances" as when a family has no other reasonable option but to take leave during the school term. However these are rare.

The Academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

For example, absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

For example, absence from school will not be authorised for:

- Parents or other family member's illness
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Minding the house
- Caring for brothers/sisters/relatives
- Over sleeping
- Holidays

Family Holidays:

As an Academy we follow the government guidelines of zero tolerance of holidays during term time. If you consider your request to be exceptional circumstances, then you can apply for the time of using a leave of

absence form from the office. This must be completed prior to any absence and given to the Principal who will review each application. Feedback will be provided to the applicant by Principal.

Holidays (unless an exceptional circumstance) taken in term time will not be authorised and the Local Authority may administer fines to parents whose children have unauthorised absences.

Absence Expectations and Follow up:

If a pupil is absent from school and the parent has not informed us, we may contact the parent to obtain an explanation.

If we are unable to contact the parent, then on the child's return to school the class teacher will speak to the parent to gain an explanation.

If a pupil is persistently absent a letter will be sent to the parent informing them of their child's low attendance and that we will be monitoring the attendance over the next half term. The monitoring will be carried out fortnightly by the Principal or FSW.

If a pupil's attendance does not improve significantly during the monitoring period then a further letter will be sent to the parents inviting them in to an attendance surgery meeting with the Family support worker and then subsequently with the Principal. During this period the school will work positively with the pupil involved and may offer incentives and positive rewards.

If there is still no improvement, we will invite the parent to engage in a "Parent Contract" to identify the issues surrounding the poor attendance and seek actions together to support the family to improve the child's attendance.

If there is still no improvement we will seek advice from the LA Team, which could lead to a fixed penalty notice or court proceedings. The arrangements for these procedures can be found on the LA website.

We have a target of at least 96% attendance for each child.

We take attendance very seriously at Green Oaks Primary Academy and share a common interest in seeking to obtain consistent and regular attendance from all our children.

Lateness:

The Academy actively discourages late arrival by challenging pupils who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation.

At Green Oaks Primary Academy our day begins at 8.50 am and our registers close in line with national guidance at 8.55 am. Afternoon registers open at 1pm and close at 1:05pm.

Where a pupil arrives during the period when the register is open they may be marked present.

At Green Oaks Primary Academy learning starts at 8.55. Where pupils have been absent it is expected that they catch up on the work they have missed through intervention in the afternoons, and any additional homework. This will ensure that they catch up on the skills that they have missed whilst they have been absent in order to support them staying on track for age related expectations.

Incentives will be used with individuals to encourage punctuality.

Celebrations in assembly for class awards take place weekly and displays will celebrate those with perfect punctuality monthly.

Reporting to parents/carers

The Academy will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through parents consultations meeting and in the end of year written report.

Effective school attendance improvement and management



