



GREENLEAS PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY for 2018-19

Introduction

At Greenleas Primary School we recognise the importance of good attendance and expect all children on roll to attend every day as long as they are well enough to do so. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from education it is essential that they attend school regularly and punctually. They should only be absent from school when it is absolutely necessary. Children are only expected to attend school for 190 days each academic year. At Greenleas Primary School there is a minimum expectation of 97% attendance over an academic school year.

We believe that children will attend school regularly if it is a happy and secure place and we work hard to create an environment where every child is valued.

School absence will disrupt a child's learning and may affect their academic progress. It may also disrupt their friendships and impact on their social and emotional development. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

School attendance is given a high profile throughout the school because we know how important it is. It is discussed at school assemblies, parents' evenings, staff meetings and governors' meetings. It is also included in school reports and newsletters. We also provide visual displays highlighting the importance of good attendance and punctuality in prominent positions within the school.

Once enrolled at a school parents have a legal responsibility as outlined in The Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child attends regularly and on time.

Attendance Expectations

Pupils

They will attend school regularly (a minimum expectation of 97% over an academic school year).

They will arrive on time (8:55am), appropriately dressed and prepared for the day.

They will discuss with their parents or class teacher any issues which are affecting their attendance.

Parents

They will encourage and support their child to attend school regularly (a minimum of 97%).

They will contact the school office when their child is unable to attend on the first day of absence, usually by 9:15am.

They will provide evidence of sickness when absent for more than 3 days.

Wherever reasonably possible, they will make routine appointments (e.g. medical, dental) outside of school time if this is not possible please give as much written notice as possible with a copy of the appointment slip.

School

Will provide a safe learning environment.

Will provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.

Will keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality.

Will contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence. Any unexplained absences will be followed up on the first morning of absence.

Will encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of rewards.

Will refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Social Welfare Service.

Registration Procedures

The school register is a legal document and therefore the marking of the register is important and needs to be accurate.

The school day begins at 9:00am and registers will be taken at this time. Any child not in the classroom at this time will be marked as absent. Any child arriving after this time will need to be signed in at the school office and will be marked as late using an L in the register. Minutes late will be recorded on the system. The registers will close at 10:00 am and any child arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence using a U in the register, unless a valid reason is provided.

If a child is absent

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record their absence on the register.

It is important that parents and carers inform the school of absence as soon as possible on the first day of absence, by phone call or email.

If school has not been informed of the reason for absence by the time the register closes the school office will contact the parent to find out why. This may also mean that more than one of the contact numbers school hold for the child will be contacted. Good practice would be for school to be provided with at least 3 contact numbers for each child.

If your child is sick and the sickness continues for more than three days we would expect you to consult your doctor. Evidence to explain the absence will be needed to support it being authorised.

If your child's attendance falls below 90%, which is the rate at below which the Department for Education class a child as being persistently absent from school, you will receive a letter at the end of the term and depending on the circumstance may be invited in to a School Attendance meeting. If this attendance does not improve your child's attendance may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service.

Failure by a parent to attend School Attendance Panel Meetings or cooperate with the Education Social Welfare Service can lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or a parent being prosecuted in the magistrates' courts.

If a child is absent from school for a continuous period of four weeks and no contact is made with school then the child may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service as a Child Missing Education.

Lateness

Punctuality is crucial. Lateness in to school causes disruption to the child's learning and also to that of other pupils in the class.

Children need to be in school on time at 9:00am each day when the registration period begins. It's important that all children make a good start to the day and are ready to learn. If a child arrives after 9:00am but before 10:00am [when registers close] they will be given a late mark [L] and minutes late will be recorded. Children who arrive late are often embarrassed and may not be in the best frame of mind to begin learning. They may miss out on something important. If children arrive after 10:00am [when registers close] they will be marked with a U which equates to an unauthorised absence, unless a valid reason is provided.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Parents are discouraged from withdrawing their children from school in term time for family holidays because this may impact on their progress. Head Teachers may only authorise holidays in term time in exceptional circumstances. This would be very rarely authorised. Examples may include leave from armed services, immediate family needs for a few days etc. Please note that holidays booked by other family members will not constitute exceptional circumstances. We understand that family weddings and events take place but would only authorise 1-2 days leave for such events. We also recognise that some parents have restricted leave due to work restrictions. In these cases we ask for a letter from the employer and

will consider requests for a week's leave for exceptional circumstances e.g. when a whole factory closes for annual holidays. We are actively working with the Local Authority to ensure that Fixed Term Penalties are applied for unauthorised holiday leave if attendance is below school expectations of at least 97%. That can amount to £120 for each parent, per child. For a family of 2 adults and 2 children that could add up to £480. Parents who believe their circumstances are exceptional are asked to complete an Application for Leave of Absence form. This form should be returned to the school well in advance of the proposed leave and before committing to any expense. Parents who remove their child from school claiming to be ill or otherwise unavoidably absent and are subsequently found to have taken a holiday will automatically receive a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Monitoring Attendance

The attendance of all pupils will be monitored by the School Office and the Headteacher.

Information reminding parents about the importance of good attendance will be sent regularly on the Friday Letter.

If the attendance falls below 90% or becomes a cause for concern a letter will be sent to the parent and they will be invited to attend a meeting with the Headteacher. During this meeting an Action Plan will be agreed to try and improve your child's attendance.

Reward Systems

As attendance at school is so important, we like to congratulate children with good attendance. At the end of each term there will be a celebration for all children with 100% attendance and those with at least 97% will be acknowledged. We would like to stress that this is not to be seen as a punishment for children who have not gained 100% attendance but as a celebration to those children who have been able to show resilience and attend school every day. We provide 100% badges- bronze, silver and gold each term for children who have gained 100% in a term. We will invite all children with 100% Gold attendance to a special event during the final week of the Summer term. We hope that if a child does not get 100% one term, they will be given something to aim for during the next term. Additionally, we will promote attendance through class rewards and certificates.

Attendance Statistics

School year = 190 days

Good attendance (School and DfE) is 97% or above.

Attendance below 90% is classed as a persistent absentee.

The table below helps to illustrate the impact of poor attendance.

Percentage Attendance	Number of school days missed	Average number of lessons missed
97%	1 week $\frac{1}{2}$ day	25
95%	1 week 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ days	58
90%	3 weeks and 4 days	76
85%	5 weeks 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ days Nearly half a term!	114
80%	7 weeks 3 days Over half a term!	152
75%	9 weeks 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ days	190
70%	11 weeks 2 days	228

	1 term's learning missed!	
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Appendices

Agreed Leave of Absence Request Form

Greenleas Primary school data with a comparison to the most recent National Data

Children Missing Education Procedures