

GILTHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Last update, MAR 2016

Gilthill seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for every student to reach his/her full potential. All staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect a child's:-

- Attainment at school
- Relationship with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- Confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others
- Good habits for life leading into the world of work

% attendance per year		
100% excellent		Pupils with this attendance should achieve the best grades they can and will give them a good start in life.
Above 97% Very good	5 days absent	Pupils with this attendance should achieve the best grades they can and will give them a good start in life.
90% Below expectation	19 days absent	Pupils are missing up to a month of school per year and may fall behind in maths and literacy, it will be more difficult for them to achieve their best.
85% Cause for concern	29 days absent	Pupils are missing 6 weeks of school (half a term). It will be difficult for them to achieve their best and referral to the Local Authority Targeted Support will be considered.
80% Referral for Support	1 day every week	It will be almost impossible to keep up with work. A referral to the Local Authority Targeted Support will be made. Parents of pupils with this level of attendance could be issued with a penalty notice and it may lead to court action by the Local Authority.

Legal Requirements

It is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school age to ensure that he or she receives the appropriate full time education. The education should be "suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise" (s.36 of the Education Act 1944, as amended by s.17 of the Education Act 1981).

Schooling is not compulsory but education is. Parents whose children are on the school register have a duty to ensure that their children attend regularly and if they fail to do so they may be found guilty of an offence (s.199 of the Education Act 1993)

Parents must notify the school of the reason for absence. The school then decides if the absence can be authorised. The responsibility for enforcing school attendance lies with the Local Authority which delegates it's responsibility to the Attendance and Behaviour (Targeted Support) Service.

The school is required to maintain an accurate register for each session as a legal document.

The school is required to submit to the DfES a termly return which records

- Authorised absences as a %
- Unauthorised absences as a %

Attendance Registers

Each class has an attendance register which is marked at the beginning of the morning session at 8.45am and the afternoon session at 1.10pm. The register should be marked in ink, red to indicate the child is present and black ink to indicate an absence. The guidance on recording and managing attendance is found at the front of the registers. Teachers are advised to check the guidance at the beginning of each academic year and to note any changes.

Parents are asked to notify the school by phone, letter or verbally as soon as possible before 9.30am with the reason for absence on or before the first day of absence. If the reason for the absence is not known when the register is marked the absence should be recorded as a black circle, and unauthorised until the reason can be established. A record of the reason for absence should be recorded on the form held within the register. Each child's annual report will show the % attendance for the year and how many authorised and unauthorised absences the child had in the period. The school figures for absences also appear on the school website and in information to parents.

School Procedure

Once the registers are marked they are sent down to the school office. The absences are checked and if no reason is known why the child is absent then a phone call is made to the parent to establish the reason for absence.

All phone calls taken by staff with reasons for absence should be logged in the log book in the school office. If the reason for absence can not be established on the first day of absence then a letter is sent to the parents requesting they give the reason their child was not in school. This is usually sent when the child returns to school. If the absence is for a prolonged period of time the Attendance and Behaviour Service is contacted to help establish the whereabouts of the child.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, school registers for pupils of compulsory school age must distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences.

The following reasons for treating a pupil's absence as authorised are:

- because of sickness or some other unavoidable cause
- because of a day of religious observance by the religious body to which parents belong
- because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and no suitable arrangements have been made for them by the Local Authority e.g. transport
- because of attendance at another school at which he or she is registered
- because he or she has been granted leave of absence
- when attending work experience or participating in approved public performance or following the death of a close member of the family
- when on an approved visit to another school or educational visit

Parents are asked to avoid arranging medical or similar appointments during school hours if at all possible. Where parents wish to take their children away from school for a long period, the Headteacher will discuss the impact such a break would have on the child's education.

Holidays during term time

Parents cannot demand an absence for a holiday as a right. Parental requests for leave of absence for a holiday should be made on the holiday form (ref.S61) well in advance of the proposed holiday. Schools have been instructed that from September 2013 the headteacher cannot authorise any holidays in term time unless there are exceptional and extreme personal circumstances to be taken into account. In these cases, a detailed written reason explaining the circumstances should accompany the request and the school will make the final decision. Even in extreme circumstances the school must consider the educational impact of any absence on a pupil's progress and will look carefully at previous attendance before making a decision. Parents' annual leave, financial costs (cheaper holidays) or a family birthday will not be considered exceptional circumstances.

Monitoring Absences

The school will monitor absences across the school and advise any parents where the absence rate is below 95%.

At the half yearly point all parents will receive an attendance update. A letter of concern will be sent to any child whose attendance falls below 85%.

The parents are given the opportunity to discuss their child's attendance and ask for support at any time with the school.

Rewards for Good Attendance

A postcard will be sent to congratulate children on achieving 100% attendance in a term.

Postcards are sent to children at the end of the year for very good attendance 97% to 99%.

Children who have 100% attendance for the whole of one academic year will receive a gold postcard and will be treated to a lunch with the school governors.

The children will also receive an award from the Rollaston and Mansell Trust which was set up by founder members of the Greasley Board Schools to reward 100% attendance.



GILTHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs S Lamb

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you that (child's name) attendance at the half year point is --% which falls below the threshold for good attendance. The governors have set a target of 97% for this academic year.

We will be monitoring her/his attendance during the next term and hope that it improves. This will give your child a good chance to achieve their target grades and be well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The Local Authority Targeted Support Service assist schools in the monitoring of children whose attendance falls below 85%. If you wish to discuss your child's attendance please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Lamb
Headteacher

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100% excellent		Pupils with this attendance should achieve the best grades they can and will give them a good start in life.
Above 97% Very good	5 days absent	Pupils with this attendance should achieve the best grades they can and will give them a good start in life.
95%	10 days absent	Pupils with this attendance are likely to achieve their target grades and be prepared for secondary school.
90% Below expectation	19 days absent	Pupils are missing a month of school per year and may fall behind in maths and literacy, it will be more difficult for them to achieve their best.
85% Cause for concern	29 days absent	Pupils are missing 6 weeks of school (half a term). It will be difficult for them to achieve their best and referral to the Local Authority Targeted Support will be considered.
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