



# **GORDON INFANT SCHOOL**

## **Attendance Policy**

**Agreed: October 2008**

**Implemented: October 2008**

**Review: June 2010**

**Type of policy – Statutory**

### **Introduction**

At Gordon Infant School, we are committed to providing the best possible education for our pupils. We believe that regular attendance at school is vital for effective learning. Children who miss days at school, or arrive late, find it difficult to keep up with class work, disrupt learning for other pupils, and miss out on vital social bonding time with their peers.

### **Aims and Objectives**

This policy sets out targets for pupils' attendance rates, strategies for improving attendance and guidelines for authorising absences.

### **Consultation undertaken**

The DCSF attendance website:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance>

### **Authorised Absence**

Children are expected to attend school on every statutory day. Term dates are published at the beginning of the year so that parents and carers can organise holidays and appointments outside of school time.

Absence is authorised when a valid reason for non-attendance is accepted by the Headteacher. This may be for the following reasons:

- Agreed holiday leave (not normally more than ten school days in each academic year except in some incidences when prolonged holiday is granted for ethnic minority pupils.)
- Confirmed illness (initial notification by telephone on the first day of sickness, confirmed by letter on the first day of return)
- Absence for a short period of time for a medical appointment.  
A pass must be obtained from the school office if a child is to attend a medical appointment. This acts as authorisation that the child is out of school for a valid reason. The child must be signed back into school upon return.

### **Unauthorised absence**

It is the decision of the Headteacher whether the absence is authorised or not, but the following categories must count as unauthorised absence:

- Reason for absence not notified to the school

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- Holiday leave beyond the ten day limit
- Reasons not accepted by the Headteacher
- Lateness after 9.30 a.m. without an acceptable reason.
- Absences will not be sanctioned for any year group during statutory testing in May/June, or for children whose overall attendance has been poor (less than 95%), except in exceptional circumstances.

Persistent lateness is detrimental to a child's learning, and will be addressed. Children should arrive at school by 8.50am. Children who miss registration must be signed in at the office. The school has a breakfast club, and there is a 'walking bus' to help parents/carers who find it difficult to get children to school on time. If children arrive at school late, parents will be sent a letter. Persistent lateness will be investigated by the EWO.

The Headteacher will investigate absences, and will strive to find a solution to whatever circumstance is preventing the child's attendance. Attendance is recorded on children's end of year reports. Attendance levels will be reported to the DCSF at the end of KS1 transfer

### **Contacting parents**

If a child is absent from school and no notification has been received by the end of the first day, the school will contact the parents/carers to establish the reason for absence.

The school will keep a record of the number of times, dates and responses that contact has been attempted.

This record will be kept on the child's school record folder.

### **Links to other policies and school vision**

School Prospectus

Home-School Agreement

Behaviour Policy

### **Roles and responsibilities**

- The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the attendance register, and advising governors and the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) of any cause for concern.
- The Governors are responsible for monitoring the attendance policy, and ensuring that registers of admission and attendance are kept.
- It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the register is called each morning and afternoon session of each school day. A document is attached inside each class register to ensure that the regulations and school policy is adhered to.
- Class teachers are responsible for setting a good example in their own attendance and punctuality, and for alerting the Headteacher to any problems

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- The EWO is responsible for following up any concerns over attendance and punctuality, liaising between home and school to resolve any difficulties. In extreme cases, the EWO is empowered to take parents/carers to court for failing in their duty to send their child to school.

This Policy will be brought to the attention of parents in the School Prospectus and also during meetings held before children start school.

### **Safeguarding Children**

At Gordon Infant School, we acknowledge that in order to safeguard all children, anybody working with children should take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to the children's welfare is minimised. If there are any concerns about children's welfare, appropriate action to address the concerns should be taken.

### **References**

This policy informs the five Every Child Matters outcomes set out in the Children Act 2004:

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Be healthy                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Stay safe                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Enjoy and Achieve            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Make a positive contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Achieve economic well-being  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Appendix A

### MARKING THE REGISTERS

Staff are responsible for marking their own register by 9.05 am at the latest. Registers are legal documents and should not be altered in any way so that previous errors are obliterated entirely i.e. the use of Tippex is prohibited. Any alterations should be documented in the appropriate column at the right hand side of the register.

Black and red ink ballpoint pens only should be used. Felt tip pens and pencils must be avoided. Erasable pens must not be used. Children present should be marked with a diagonal mark in RED INK. Children absent should be marked with an oval in BLACK INK. The appropriate code for absences should be marked inside the oval in BLACK INK.

Staff should keep a running total of authorised and unauthorised absences so that they can be reported on at the end of the academic year. When these totals have been entered for the week the register should be signed in the appropriate box at the bottom of the page. Totals for the morning and afternoon sessions should be marked in black ink in the appropriate boxes at the bottom of that day's column. Any late children should be indicated by adding a + sign and the number of latecomers. All children arriving late must have their names entered in the appropriate register in the Reception area outside the school office.

In extreme weather, i.e. heavy rain, snow etc. children not present by 9.05 a.m. should not receive a mark of any sort. Registers should be returned to the office as normal. In these circumstances, the normal diagonal mark to be entered in the register by the teacher or secretary on their arrival.

Authorised holiday absence can be marked in advance where the appropriate form has been submitted and permission granted. Pencil may be used for this, in case arrangements are changed, but must be inked in when the holiday is taken. All absence notes should be sent to the office and retained. Where absence is notified verbally, staff will be informed by means of an internal memo.