

# Godwin Primary School



## Attendance Policy

February 2023



## Attendance Policy

"Working Together"

Date	Review date	Responsible Person
February 2023	February 2025	Mrs J Phillips

### Rationale

Godwin Primary school recognises that regular attendance and punctuality are essential components of a child's education, having a direct influence on achievement and social and emotional wellbeing. Children who arrive at school promptly and attend regularly have a better chance at succeeding in their educational development; they feel happier and more secure in the school environment than children who are frequently absent or regularly arrive late. In order to make the most of the learning opportunities provided within school, children need to have the continuity of provision which consistent attendance allows.

### Aims

- Promote and encourage excellent attendance and punctuality from an early age.
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

### Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## Roles and Responsibilities

### - The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

These responsibilities will be carried out by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.

### - The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### - The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- [Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues](#)
- [Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers](#)
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Headteacher.

## - The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Promptly issuing registers and processing them on a daily basis.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance (the Headteacher)
- Working with the BDSIP Attendance Advisor to tackle persistent absence
- Consulting with the Headteacher on when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Emma Rix.

## - Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office 5 minutes after the morning/afternoon sessions start.
- Informing the Headteacher/Attendance Officer where there are concerns by completing the 'Notification of Concern' sheet in APPENDIX III.
- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings/days.
- Setting an example by arriving promptly to lessons.
- Welcoming pupils back to school following their return from absence. Teachers should consider a reintegration programme for children who have had extended absences.

## - School admin team

The school admin team will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record this on the school system
- Challenge, where appropriate, reasons for absence

## - Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.40am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

## - Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## Recording attendance

### - Attendance register

The school will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions of each school day, marking whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent

The attendance officer will update registers in line with the DfE attendance codes (see appendix 1) to show, for example, where pupils are:

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

and will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

Pupils must arrive in school between **8.40 and 8.50am** on each school day (8.30am for NARP(am), 12.25pm for NARP(pm) and Nursery).

The morning register for children in Years R to 6 will be taken at **8.50am** and will be kept open in the classroom until **8.55am**. Registers will close 30 minutes after this. All other registers will be taken within the first 5 minutes of the start of the session and closed 30 minutes after this time. Children arriving within the 30 minute period before the register closes will be marked as late (L). Anyone arriving after this will be marked as arriving after the register closed (U).

### - Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by **8.40am** or as soon as practically possible by calling or emailing the school office.

Absence due to illness will be marked as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or the child is repeatedly unwell.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### - Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum

amount of time necessary. **Parents are discouraged from taking older or younger children out of school when their sibling has an appointment.**

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

### - Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late, within 30 minutes of the register closing, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L).

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent (unauthorised), using the appropriate code (U).

### - Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may take further steps.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an attendance advisor (BDSIP).

### - Reporting to parents/carers

The DfE expects schools to report regularly to parents on their child's attendance record. At Godwin, this information is shared through termly parent consultations (October, February and July) and two written reports (February and July).

## Authorised and unauthorised absence

### - Approval for term-time absence

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

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, relevant context behind the request and the child's attendance history.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated, using the leave of absence request form, obtainable via the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see 'Planned absence' in the previous section for more detail)
- Religious observance (one day only) – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the

school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

## **- Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## **Strategies for promoting attendance**

Godwin Primary School encourages good attendance by:

- Providing a safe, caring and welcoming learning environment.
- Responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils.
- Publishing and displaying attendance statistics.
- Celebrating good and improved attendance.
- Celebrating good punctuality.
- Communicating expectations to parents.

## **-Half-termly**

- Each child with 100% attendance for a half term is awarded a place on the Attendance Tree.

## **-Termly**

- Each child with 100% attendance is presented with a certificate in assembly.
- Any child whose attendance shows great improvement is presented with a certificate in assembly. A letter/certificate will be sent to the parents of these children to thank them for their effort and support.
- Attendance data (RAG rated) will be shared with parents at Parents' Consultations in the Spring and Summer Terms

## **-Yearly**

- All children with 100% attendance receive a book prize in assembly.

- Throughout the year parents will be kept informed of school expectations and procedures through newsletters and parent meetings. Attendance will be RAG-rated before being presented at parents' evening (APPENDIX II).

NB: 100% attendance is defined by the school register showing all present marks. The exception to this would be those pupils granted leave for religious observance.

## Attendance monitoring

Godwin Primary School will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data at least fortnightly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### - Analysing attendance

Godwin Primary School will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### - Using data to improve attendance

Godwin Primary School will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders (as appropriate), to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### - Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

Godwin Primary School will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Work closely with the BDSIP Attendance Advisor to monitor and support attendance and punctuality
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school



- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated and, as a minimum, every 2 years by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Governing Board (via the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee).

### **Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix I: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appt	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## APPENDIX II: Sharing information with parents (RAG-rating)

**Rationale for Attendance policy:** Godwin Primary School recognises that regular attendance and punctuality are essential components of a child's education, having a direct influence on achievement and social and emotional wellbeing. Children who arrive at school promptly and attend regularly have a better chance at succeeding in their educational development; they feel happier and more secure in the school environment than children who are frequently absent or regularly arrive late.

In order to make the most of the learning opportunities provided within school, children need to have the continuity of provision which consistent attendance allows.

### Reporting attendance

In order to make attendance information more accessible, the following colour-coded system is used:

RAG rating	Attendance	Notes
Green +	100%	Excellent!
Green	96-99.9%	Well done! Attendance is above the school's target of 96%.
Amber	90-95.9%	Room for improvement - attendance is below the school's target of 96%. [90%= average of ½ a day missed every week]
Red	85-89.9%	Causing concern – child is on-track for Persistent Absence (PA). [80%=average of 1 full day missed every week]
Black	Below 85%	Extreme concern.

### Reporting punctuality

Punctuality is reported with the use of a coloured dot:

RAG rating	January (mini reports) Reporting up to 31 <sup>st</sup> January	July (full reports) Reporting on 5 half terms (September to Whitsun)
●+	No lates	No lates
●	1-2	1-5
●	3-4	6-10
●	5+	11+
●	5+ and often significantly late (ie: after 9.15a.m)	11+ and often significantly late (ie: after 9.15a.m)

### APPENDIX III: Notification of concern by class teacher

Child's name:	
Class:	
Teacher:	Date:

Reason for concern (eg: lateness, long absences, regular short absences etc)
Action already taken (eg: discussion with parent)
Any other relevant information

Child's name:	
Class:	
Teacher:	Date:

Reason for concern (eg: lateness, long absences, regular short absences etc)
Action already taken (eg: discussion with parent)
Any other relevant information

