



# Greenbank Primary school

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date of adoption: September 2023  
To be Reviewed: September 2024

# Whole School Attendance Policy

## Greenbank Primary School

### Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when they join our school and regularly thereafter through our school Newsletter and other relevant opportunities.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape the policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an Annual basis.  
This policy is due for a review on: September 2024

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## Introduction

Greenbank Primary School recognises the clear link between the attendance and achievement of pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

Greenbank Primary School believes teachers, parents, carers, pupils and all members of the school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring pupils attend to achieve. This Policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

## Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16. Parents are expected to perform their Legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age attend regular.

## Aims

The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Greenbank Primary School to support learning and development. For all pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a percentage attendance target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation of all pupils achieve at least 97%. ***As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.*** We aim to:

- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality at Greenbank Primary School.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

## Promoting Regular Attendance at Greenbank Primary School:

This is everyone's responsibility, members of staff, parent/carers and pupils.

To help us all focus on this, school will ensure:

- Appropriate interventions are in place to improve punctuality.
- An appropriate curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly.
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes the school and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
- Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged and Looked After pupils and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.

- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/carers are kept informed of pupils' attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
- Good attendance and punctuality are rewarded through regular incentives.
- Attendance and punctuality are discussed with pupils in class and at assemblies.
- Staff attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.

## **Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures**

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

### **Expectations of Parent/Carer**

**Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.**

- Ensure your child arrives for school on time. School gates open at 8:40am. School gates close at 8:50am. Children in class by 8:55am. Nursery starts at 8:50am.
- Parents must telephone school, or parent app if your child is to be late.
- If late, sign your child into school on arrival and state a valid reason for lateness
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours or in school holidays.
- Contact school before 9:30am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, give child name and class and particulars of illness for example fever, vomiting the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a phone call is made from school to yourself as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the safeguarding team if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact. Miss Rowlands, Mrs Garnett.
- **In case of emergency** we need up to date contact numbers (three number if possible) at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of two emergency contact details be provided)
- Appointment cards/slips will be provided by parents as proof if there is no alternative but to book in school time, e.g. if a specific clinic runs in school hours.
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be made in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays. Absence Forms can be requested from the school reception office and on the school website.

### **If we have no contact from a parent and a pupil is absent we will:**

- Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9:30 am.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised. If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- if a pupil is absent for 3 days or more a Welfare call will be made.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carer will be invited to meet the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- If absences persist the Head teacher and Designated Attendance Lead will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.

## **Understanding types of Absence**

Greenbank Primary School has to record every absence that a pupil takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence and in writing on the pupil's return.

### **Authorised Absence**

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence such as a prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- Absences which have not been explained.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. From September 2018 Greenbank Primary School can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer to case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

### **Persistent Absence**

- Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DFE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The Department for Education (DFE) expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.
- Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.
- Parent/Carers are asked to contact the school office in the first instance, where they will be sign posted to a relevant member of staff

### **Why Regular Attendance is very important:**

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off, often find it quite difficult to catch up and do well.

90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year

**Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.**

### **HOW WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND REWARD GOOD ATTENDANCE AT GREENBANK:**

Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weekly attendance figures for each class are published on the newsletter and all classes above <b>97%</b> are highlighted</li><li>• Classes which achieved 97% or above will receive a class reward.</li></ul>
Termly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Best class receive a treat</li><li>• All 100% children from previous term awarded certificate.</li></ul>
Yearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All children with 97% attendance and above receive individual prize and certificate.</li></ul>

### **The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**

- The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carers and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school.
- The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists the EWO will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings which include; Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

## **Leave of absence in term time**

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

A penalty notice will come into effect on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the child being absent from school.

**Parents must complete a 'Leave of absence form' attached at the end of this policy PRIOR to any leave of absence from school/ The Headteacher or Deputy Head may request a meeting prior to such absence.**

## **Lateness/punctuality**

At Greenbank Primary school all pupils are expected to arrive on time every day of the school year. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. The school gates open at 8:40am every day and all pupils should be in class by 8:50 am. If a pupil misses the start of the day they will miss valuable input work, late arriving pupils disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence. If a pupil continues to arrive late, the parent/carer will be contacted and be invited to meet the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The end of the school day is also just as important that your child is picked up on time - 3:15pm Nursery to Year 6. The same also applies to any after school club.

Please phoneschool immediately if you think you are going to be late.

If a different person than yourself is picking up your child, then you must contact the school in advance as your child will not be handed over until we have received parental notification.

## **THE EFFECTS OF LATE ARRIVAL TO CLASS**

Arriving 5 minutes late each day:

- 5 days a week = 25 minutes lost learning time a week
- 39 weeks a year = 16 hours and 15 minutes lost learning time a year
- 7 years in our school = 113 hours and 45 minutes learning time lost

## **WHY PUNCTUALITY IS SUCH A GOOD THING**

Being on time:

- Gets your child's day off to a good start so he/she can settle straight into the school day
- Sets positive patterns for the future
- Leads to good attendance
- Leads to better achievement
- Leads to understanding that school is important and education is valuable

## **WHY LATENESS IS SUCH A BAD THING**

Being Late:

- Gets your child's day off to a bad start
- Disrupts the lesson for everyone
- Can place your child in an embarrassing situation as other children notice and comment upon them being late
- May lead to your child feeling confused all day. He/she will have missed out on vital instructions, information and bits of news at the start of the day

## **How we manage lateness**

The school gates open at 8:40am every day and all pupils should be in class by 8:50 am. Nursery starts at 8.55am. Registers are taken by 9am by the class teacher and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class at that time. School recommends that pupils arrive by 8:45 am.

- Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice.
- All parents must record on a slip a valid reason as to why their child is late

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the school office on 0151 522 5748, who will offer support to resolve the problem.

## **People Responsible for Attendance Matters at Greenbank Primary School**

All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support therefore is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success.

Our Designated Attendance Lead is Ms L Kameana

Our Attendance and Welfare Officer is Mrs Garnett

## **If your child is leaving our school for any reason our parents are asked to:**

- Email the school/Headteacher giving full details of the reason for the move, including any date of a move new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the expected start date.
- If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided. The school will always conduct a home visit in this circumstance and the EWO



**Table of Rewards/Escalation of Interventions**

Attendance %	Red Amber Green	Intervention	Lead Responsibility
100%  Attendance is Excellent (Green)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Trophy</li> <li>• Rewards and praise</li> </ul>	Class Teacher  Welfare Officer  Senior Leader
99% - 97%  Attendance is Good (Green)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewards certificates</li> </ul>	Class Teacher  Welfare Officer  Senior Leader
96.99% - 92% Attendance to be monitored (Amber)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to pupils &amp; contact parent/carers</li> <li>• Calls to parents. Letters home (stage 1)</li> <li>• Support to return to school</li> <li>Wellbeing and Safeguarding visits</li> <li>Early intervention</li> </ul>	Class Teacher  Pastoral Staff Senior Leader       EWO
Below 92%  Attendance Serious  Concern		(Stage 2) meeting with headteacher   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Plans</li> <li>• Legal intervention</li> </ul>	Senior Leader Pastoral staff  Governors  EWO

## Greenbank Primary School

### Request for leave of absence in term time

#### Guidance Notes

From the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the new legislation gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. **Unless in exceptional circumstances.**

A request for leave of absence must be completed and returned to the school office **BEFORE** commencement of the leave of absence.

Please ensure that you provide as much information as possible to the school to enable them to consider your application.

Please read the notes on the reverse of this form before completing.

Name(s) of Pupil(s)	Class

Name of parent/carer <b>MOTHER:</b>
Address:
Email address:
Mobile number:

Name of parent/carer <b>FATHER:</b>
Address:
Email address:
Mobile number:

Date of start of leave:
Return date to school:

**CONTINUED OVERLEAF**

Please give full details of the reason for absence:

I confirm that the information on this form is true.

I agree to keep the school informed of any changes to my travel arrangements or if my child is unable to return school on the agreed date.

I am aware that if my child does not return to school by the date provided that he/she is at risk of losing their place at this school.

**I am aware that both parents will be fined for time which my child is absent from school, that has not been authorised and when it totals 5 or more school days.**

Signed:

Date:

**Your request will be considered by the Headteacher. If it is not agreed by school the leave of absence will not be granted. Leave taken without the agreement of the school will be regarded as unauthorised absence.**

.....  
For school use only

**FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY;**

**Date request received**

Current/previous year's attendance

Do the dates clash with any end of year tests?

Days taken in Current academic year.

Days taken in previous academic year.

Current level of unauthorised absence.

Has the request been considered by the headteacher?

is Absence authorised / unauthorised:

Code:

Reason if the absence is unauthorised:

Headteacher

Signed:

Date: