

GREENSIDE FILM FACTORY

Attendance Policy For Parents/ Carers



September 2019

The Governing Body of Greenside School adopted this Policy on 1st April 2016.

GREENSIDE SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

At Greenside we strive to create an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to aspire to excellence, to achieve their potential and make accelerated progress. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend on time and every day unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. We believe in working together to support all our students achieve excellent attendance.

To be read in conjunction with our Leaflet Guide for Parents/ Carers on Attendance

2. Aims of the Policy

To promote regular attendance thus offering all students equal access to learning.

3. Objectives of the Policy

- Meet the Government attendance targets set for us.
- Create a clear procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/ carers.
- Ensure students are in school for the maximum number of days.
- This Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable our students to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

4. Governor Responsibilities

It is the Governor's legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools. The school's attendance figures are presented to the Local Governing Body on a termly basis.

5. School Responsibilities

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the Localities Team and support their work with students as necessary.
- To report to TEF as appropriate.
- To report to the Government on attendance twice a year.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance

6. Parent/carer Responsibilities

6.1

- To ensure students are in the playground by the start of the day at 8.55 a.m.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence.
- To request leave as far in advance as possible in writing on the school's '**Leave Of Absence Form**', giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

6.2 If parents/ carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to your child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

6.3 Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/ carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

7. Why regular Attendance is so important:

7.1 Learning:

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem. The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents/ carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

7.2 Safeguarding:

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -

Attendance
Behaviour Management
Health and Safety
Access to the Curriculum
Anti- bullying

7.3 Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

8. The Law Relating to Attendance

8.1 The Education Act 1996 requires parents/ carers to ensure their child receives an efficient full time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

8.2 Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

The Law Relating to Safeguarding

9.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

9.2 This means that under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).

10. Understanding types of absence

10.1 Students are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

10.2 Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments, interviews or tests which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

10.3 Unauthorised Absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent/ carer's request. This would be because the school does not consider the absence to be reasonable.

10.4 This includes:

- Parents/ carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

10.5 Please be aware that when a parent/ carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result, the absence may not be authorised.

10.6 Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent / carer to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

11. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

11.1 A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/ carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

11.2 We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

11.3 PA students are tracked and monitored carefully. All our PA students and their parents/ carers are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: additional support, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority.

12. Absence Procedures

12.1 If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on **every day** of any absence before 9am;
- Send a note in on the day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;
- Or, you can call into school and report to the School Office.

12.2 If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you if we have not heard from you by 9.20am
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Deputy Head or a member of our Leadership Group if absences persist;

- Refer the matter to an Attendance Education Welfare Officer if attendance moves below 85%.

13. Telephone numbers:

13.1 There are times when we need to contact parents/ carers about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

13.2 Parents/ carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to The Localities Team. She/ he will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

14. The Process for Monitoring Attendance

14.1 The expected level of attendance is 100% and 'good' attendance is 97% as set out in Government guidelines.

14.2 If your child's attendance drops below 97% you will be notified and be supported and encouraged to improve upon this.

14.3 If your child's attendance drops below 94%, you will receive a letter notifying you of your child's attendance figure. The letter will also explain that your child's attendance will be monitored over the next 2 weeks and the school will expect to see an improvement during this period.

14.4 If your child's attendance does not improve during this period, the school will arrange a meeting between you (the parent/ carer) and the Deputy Head or member of the Leadership Group.

14.5 If your child's attendance is below 90%, the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/ carer and the Head of School.

14.6 If the problems persist or fall below 85.1%, the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Team.

14.7 Please note that ultimately the Local Authority may take legal action.

15. Lateness:

15.1 Being on time is an important skill in life and it is also polite. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your daughter/ son misses the start of the day, they do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day and they are also at risk of missing work. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons and it can be embarrassing for the child therefore encouraging absence.

15.2 Students must line up in the playground by 8.55am when the morning bell is rung for the start of the school day.

15.3 All students are expected to come in through the playground unless another arrangement has been made to enter through the front door.

15.4 Those students arriving at 9.05am or after will be recorded as 'late'.

15.5 If your child arrives at or after 9.05am, they must report to the school office.

15.6 This procedure is for all children from Nursery upwards.

15.7 If a student is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that where possible, appointments for doctors and dentists are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

16. How we manage lateness:

16.1 The school day starts at **8.55am** and we expect your child to be lined up in the school playground by this point.

16.2 Registers are marked by **9.05am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

16.3 At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorized absence.

16.4 Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents/ Carers of students who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents/ carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem with a member of Leadership Group to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

17. Absences During Term Time:

17.1 Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence during term time'. These may be obtained from the school office or school website.

17.2 Leave of absence will only be granted where the Leadership Group/ Executive Head considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents/ carers will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.

17.3 Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/ carers to help us by not taking children away in school time.

17.4 There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. Please note that all holidays are recorded as unauthorized absences.

17.5 There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

18. School Targets

18.1 The school has targets to improve attendance and your daughter has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

18.2 Our School target for 2019-2020 is 97%

18.3 The minimum expected level of attendance for this school is 97% and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our students can be amongst the best in London.

18.4 Your first point of contact regarding your daughter/ son's attendance and/ or punctuality is their Class Teacher. Alternatively you may speak with a member of the Leadership Group to discuss any concerns or to seek advice or support.

19. Promoting Regular Attendance

19.1 Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents/ carers, students and all members of school staff.

19.2 To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our Newsletter;
- Report to you at least termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment;
- Celebrate good attendance during weekly Board Meetings and award prizes to winning classes.
- Have 100% attendance day initiatives throughout the year.
- Award individual certificates to individual students who have 100% for each term and the whole year.
- Reward good or improving attendance through class rewards, certificates and events.

20. Summary:

20.1 The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/ carers and to promote excellent attendance. Equally, parents/ carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

20.2 All school staff are committed to working with parents/ carers and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.