

GOODYERS END PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This document is to enable the Governing Body of the school to fulfil its statutory responsibilities under Section 175 and that the school complies with legal requirements regarding the safeguarding of children of the Education Act 2002.

Adopted by the Governing Body:

Signed: Chair of Governors

..... Headteacher

Date: Spring 2020

Date of next review: Spring 2021

The review of this policy will be as and when required in response to national requirements and in light of continuous school-based monitoring and evaluation data.

Based on a LA model policy (April 2010)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Goodyers End Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

1.2 The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

1.3 The policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

2 SCHOOL'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at Goodyers End Primary School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

2.2 Attendance Lead

The Deputy Headteacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work undertaken by the Family Learning Mentor in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The Deputy Headteacher will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with staff, pupils and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance) and that a report is prepared for the governing body termly. (S)he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

2.3 Registration

i) The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day: once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Class teachers (who take the registers) and office staff (who process the registers) are responsible for the completing the attendance registers.

ii) The register will be called promptly at **8.55am** and **1.00pm** (Reception and KS1) / **1.15pm** (KS2) by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.

iii) The registers will close at **9.25am** and **1.30pm**. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will count as **absent**. Pupils who arrive before the register closes will be counted **present** but will be dealt with under the school's policy on punctuality and lateness (see para. 4.5 on page 5).

2.4 Categorising absence

i) A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked no reason given unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. Where no reason is given by a parent/carer after 10 days, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.

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ii) Goodyers End Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Goodyers End Primary School will therefore challenge parents about the need and reasons for their children's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**.

iii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the school **within 2 weeks**, the absence will remain unauthorised.

iv) Absences will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- a) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
- b) where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand);
- c) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, eg extreme weather conditions;
- d) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs;
- e) in other **exceptional circumstances** (e.g. a family bereavement) and **for a very limited period**.

v) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:

- o no explanation has been given by the parent after a period of 2 weeks;
- o the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- o the pupil being taken shopping during school hours;
- o the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- o the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission;
- o the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

2.5 Approved educational activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

2.6 Staff training

The Attendance Lead will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

3. COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

3.1 The Attendance Lead will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the governing body (see para. above). The report should include commentary against the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

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3.2 Attendance is monitored by year group, class and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils with special educational needs, Looked after Children and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

3.3 Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

4. SYSTEMS AND STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING AND IMPROVING ATTENDANCE

4.1 Attendance has a very high profile at Goodyers End Primary School and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in classes. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

4.2 First-day calling

Goodyers End Primary School has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be messaged (via text) and/or telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. Where it is not possible to make contact with parents on the first day of absence, the school will leave a message for parents/carers to contact the school as soon as possible with a reason for absence. . If no reason is provided within 10 days, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

4.3 School Strategies to Tackle Absence

The Attendance Lead is responsible for the school management of attendance, policy and systems to ensure that Goodyers End Primary School intervene in non attendance at an early stage (see Appendix 1).

Goodyers End Primary School will organise Attendance / Governor Panels to intervene in levels of non attendance when parents will be invited to discuss the issues of the attendance. During these meetings we will look to discuss barriers to children's attendance and how we can support families in overcoming these. Further support may be offered in school and/or by external agencies.

4.4 Referral to the Warwickshire Attendance Service

If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS). The WAS team will work with the school and families to improve attendance. If there is no improvement in attendance from the school target that has been set WAS will send reminder letters regarding a child's attendance, set a formal target period within which attendance would need to significantly improve. If there is no improvement legal action may be taken. Regulations (Education Pupil Regulations 2006) require schools to inform the LA of every pupil who has been continuously absent without a good reason (ie the absence is unauthorised) for 10 school days or more.

4.5 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be in their classroom for registration at 8:55am, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes (see para. 2.3 (iii) on page 2) will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. A reminder letter informing parents about the importance of punctuality will be sent. If punctuality does not improve a meeting will be arranged by the Deputy Headteacher to discuss reasons and strategies to improve. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to WAS.

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4.6 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the main office. **It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.**

4.7 For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day are signed out at the main office.

4.8 Celebrating Attendance

- a) Each week in assembly we celebrate and reward the class (per key stage) with the highest attendance for the previous week.
- b) At the end of each term (3 times per year), individual pupil attendance is celebrated during our ACE assemblies. Children with 100% attendance for the term will receive a reward.
- c) At the end of the academic year, we celebrate children who have had 100% attendance for the whole year.
- d) Throughout the year we also celebrate improved attendance by way of recognizing individual pupils.

5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

5.1 The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

5.2 The Headteacher **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.

5.3 Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

5.4 The Headteacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted. At Goodyers End, this will be a maximum of 10 days in any two-year period.

5.5 The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent.

5.6 Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice.

5.7 Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

5.8 It is important to note, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child.

5.9 If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

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Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

6 PARENTS' / CARERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child).

6.2 Goodyers End Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

6.3 Parents/carers will also be expected to:

- notify the school on the first day of absence by telephoning the school, leaving a message on the school answer phone if necessary
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. The school will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

A Guide for Parents/Carers is attached (see Appendix 2).

7 PUPILS' RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher.

7.2 Pupils should attend school on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their class teacher a note from their parents to explain the absence.

8 GOVERNORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

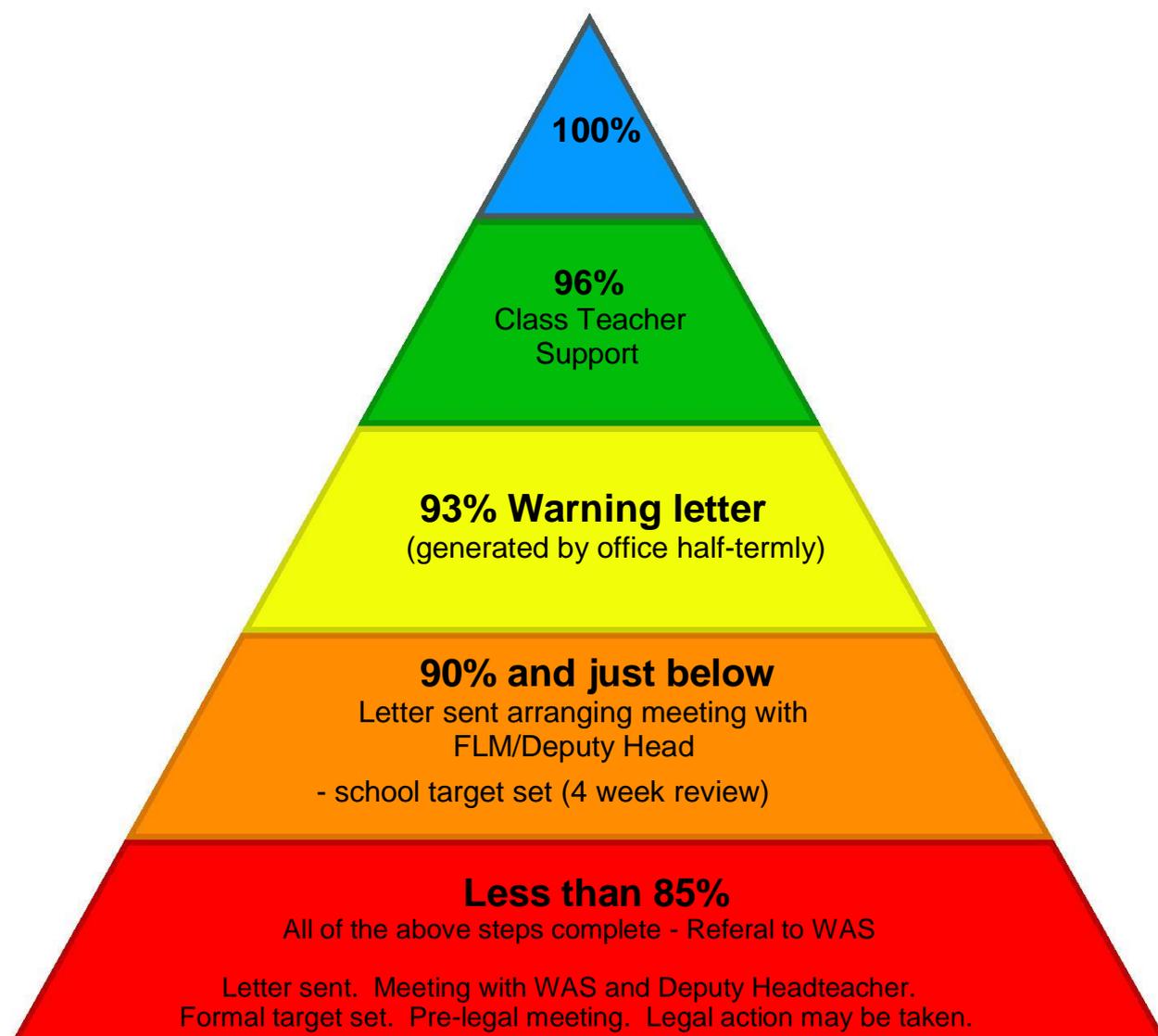
Section 175 (2) - The governing board of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The school will review this policy every year.

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Attendance Action Plan



First Day of Absence

Office to contact home and record reason for absence on SIMS

Fourth Day of Absence

FLM to contact home (by telephone and/or a home visit). Focus of contact to enquire how pupil is feeling, offer to send work home if further absence is expected, offer support from school. A note of this contact should be logged and kept on CPOMS. Inform parents they will be in contact again in a couple of days to see how pupil is if still not back in school.

NB: If a pupil is absent on a Friday and is still away on the following Monday and Tuesday then the FLM should call home on the Tuesday.

WAS Steps Followed:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Letter sent | 4. Pre-legal meeting |
| 2. Meeting with ACE and Deputy Headteacher | 5. Legal action may be taken |
| 3. Formal target set | |

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Thank you for your
co-operation.

Please contact the
school if you have any
concerns about
attendance you wish to
discuss.

School Information

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GOODYERS END PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY



A GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

When does my child need to be in school?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.55am** and the afternoon register at **1.00pm (Rec + KS1) / 1.15pm (KS2)**.

What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at **8.55am** in the morning and **1.15pm** in the afternoon.

If your child arrives between **8.55am** and **9.25am** he/she will be marked **late (before registers close)**.

If your child arrives after **9.25am** he/she will be marked as **late (after registers close)** - this will count as an **absence** on your child's attendance record.

Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office to register. . If a pupil is persistently late a meeting will be arranged with the Family Learning Mentor and/or Deputy Headteacher to discuss reasons for lateness and to address strategies from improving punctuality.

Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We expect parents/carers to telephone the school on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone/text you. However, we need a written explanation on your child's return to school. If we do not receive a verbal or written explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not

authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's attendance register and end of year report.

What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment (Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement (short period)

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate/appointment letter.

What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays etc.

Will the school contact me if my child is absent?

The school operates a first day response to absences and will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance. Note: you can leave a message on the school's answer phone if you wish to report an absence before the office opens at 8.30am.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your child will bring home a school diary each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your child as these are a vital link between school and home.

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons - difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

You may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with our Family Learning Mentor. We may also be able to signpost you to additional support outside of school to someone who works with families if attendance difficulties arise.