

**Glenfall Primary School**

**Attendance Policy**

**School Attendance Statement**

At Glenfall Primary School we believe that full and regular attendance at school is a vital factor in achieving a successful education, and we therefore do everything we can to promote it. Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be 100% attendance all of the time. Students who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams. Regular attendance means that your child must: attend school every day unless there are justified reasons, arrive at school on time and attend all lessons. Requests for absence during term time have become more common in recent years. Real disruption to individuals’ educational progress is a result of the full attendance pattern being broken.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

* Safeguarding Policy
* Anti-bullying Policy
* Behaviour Policy
* Early Help Offer
* Disability Discrimination Act (Equal Opportunities)
* Pupil Premium Policy
* First Aid Policy

Policy review:

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| --- | --- |
| Staff reviewer | Amanda Newdeck  Rebecca O’Connor  Louise Seeley |
| Governor reviewer | Amanda Newdeck  Rebecca O’Connor  Louise Seeley |
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| **Version** | **Issue date** | **Summary of changes** |
| 1.0 | November 2022 | Revised policy  Changes made to timings  New link provided |
| 1.1 | February 2024 | Definition of regular attendance added |
| 1.2 | February 2024 | Statement added for children in Care |
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**SCHOOL POLICY**

The school will consider each request for absence on its merits, including previous attendance, but general principles are:

1. A leave of absence in order that a pupil may take part in a family holiday during term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances e.g. for service personnel returning from an overseas tour, during or after a family crisis, where a parent is unable to arrange a holiday during school holidays or for religious events. The decision to agree a holiday request will come from the head teacher
2. If a holiday request is refused and yet the holiday is still taken, the pupil’s absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority.
3. Leave will not normally be granted for pupils to go on holiday with friends or friends’ parents.
4. No leave will be granted to pupils in Year 6 during the SATS period in May.
5. Any absences in September at the beginning of the school year, brings a particular disadvantage as it prevents a child from settling down with a new teacher, and perhaps with new classmates. Parents are urged not to request leave at this time of year. This is an especially important time of year for Year 6 children. The Local Authority sends out vital secondary school transfer information and there are secondary transfer meetings, open days and visits for the Year 6 pupils to attend.
6. In some cases, such as an extended visit to relatives abroad, a trip may bring considerable educational benefit to the child. In such circumstances we might wish to discuss how the trip could be used as part of an educational programme, perhaps by the children keeping a holiday diary while away.

Children’s absence and late arrival at school is recorded in the registers, and is monitored by the school secretary, SENCO and if there are any problems regarding attendance, the Headteacher will arrange a meeting with the parents of the child to discuss it further.

**Attendance Targets**

As a school we set annual attendance targets. Glenfall Primary School expects every child to have an attendance rate of 100% unless there are very exceptional circumstances.

**Children in Care**

The Virtual School expects all schools to robustly apply their own Attendance Policy to all children in care on their school roll. We encourage our schools to adopt the following statement as part of their own attendance policies: The school recognises that children in care form a vulnerable group of learners. Regular attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign for a range of safeguarding issues. For these reasons, when monitoring and following up attendance issues the school will prioritise children from vulnerable groups including children in care. If a child in care is not attending or there are concerns about their attendance, the school will immediately seek advice from the Local Authority’s Virtual School and the child’s social worker, as well as communicating with the child and parent/carer.

**Conclusion**

We believe that our policy on attendance will help parents support our attempts to provide the best possible education for the children. The reinforcement of punctuality and full attendance has a powerful impact on educational progress.

## School Policy on Requests for Absence

**REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE**

These should be made:

* On the school Request for Absence form
* Well in advance of the proposed holidays, - and well before any bookings are made.
* By the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This covers the situation of children whose parents are separated or divorced, and who wish to go on holiday with the other parent or other relative. The parent/carer should make the request on behalf of the other parent or relative, in order to avoid any subsequent misunderstanding or disputes.

## Late Arrival & Absence due to Illness

**LATE ARRIVAL**

* When children arrive late (after 8:50am), parents must bring children into school via the main door and sign the late arrival book. Lessons are disrupted by the late arrival of pupils and the school discourages this whenever possible. If a child arrives after 9.15 am, without the parent having informed the school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

**ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS**

* If a child is ill and will not be attending school, parents are asked to telephone the school before 9.30 am on the first day of absence, and then everyday if the absence is for a longer period. If we do not receive a telephone call, the child is entered in the register as absent; contact will be made with the parents to establish the reason for absence as soon as possible. When the reason for absence has been discovered, a O in the register will be marked accordingly.
* If problems are experienced with making contact with the parent/s, a letter is sent home with the child on their return to school asking the parent for the reasons for absence, and for clarification of their contact telephone numbers.

## Penalty Notices & Unauthorised Absence

In line with government policy if your child is absent from school for five days (10 sessions) in a three-month period, without authorisation from school, we will issue a warning letter. If there are no unauthorised absences in the next 15 school days, no further action will be taken. If there are further unauthorised absences there will be no further warning and a Penalty Notice will be issued. Therefore, it is vital for parents and carers to have contact with school on the first day of absence.

**How is a Penalty Notice issued?**

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority at the request of the school. Fines are issued to each parent for each child. You will receive the Penalty Notice by post to your home address.

**What is the cost of the fine?**

The penalty notice allows you 21 days to pay a £60 fine. If you pay after the 21-day period, but within 28 days, the fine increases to £120. If the fine remains unpaid at this stage, the LA will usually initiate legal proceedings against you.

**How can a Penalty Notice be paid?**

Your Penalty Notice will include clear instructions on how to pay. There are two main ways and include either an online payment or payment via cheque. We cannot accept payment in part, by instalments or after the 28 day deadline.

**What happens if I do not pay?**

You will have up to 28 days from receipt to pay the Penalty Notice in full. If you fail to do so, the LA will usually initiate legal proceedings against you for failing to secure regular attendance for a child registered at a school. If you are convicted of this offence there are a number of possible sentences, including a fine of up to £1,000.

**Is there an appeal process?**

There is no right of appeal. Once a penalty notice has been issued, it can only be withdrawn if it can be shown that it was issued in error.

What happens if the Penalty Notice is paid, but my child still misses school? Parents/carers are not liable for prosecution for their child’s school attendance for the period in question once the Penalty Notice is paid. However, prosecution may be considered for further periods of absence not covered by the Notice. Prosecution will be considered if two Penalty Notices have been served in any single twelvemonth period.

**Who can I contact about a Penalty Notice that has been issued?**

In the first instance you should contact the Attendance Officer at the school your child attends, as the school will have requested that a Penalty Notice be issued.

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-attendance-and-exclusions-and-welfare/attendance-and-absence-from-school/>