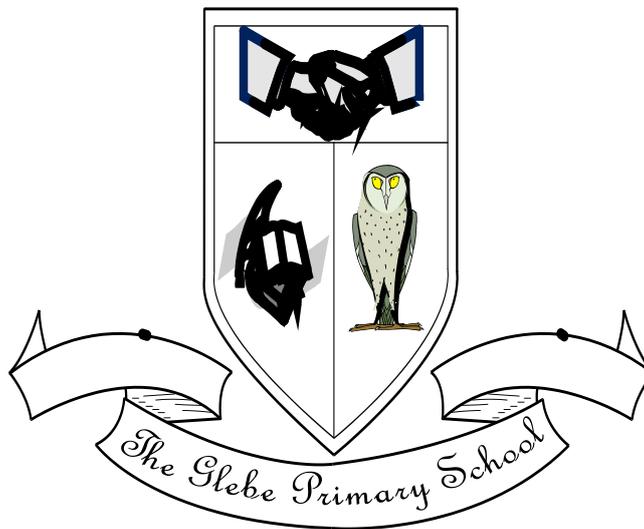


# THE GLEBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy and Procedures



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## Statement of Intent

### Gateway to Learning Where Every Body Excels

At The Glebe Primary School we believe that regular school attendance cannot be overestimated. Regular attendance is vital to a good education. Securing it must therefore be a high priority of the school, governors, L.A., parents and the pupils themselves. By failing to attend school regularly, pupils lessen the impact of the education provided for them. Pupil absence may seriously disrupt the continuity of teaching for themselves and others.

The aim of The Glebe Primary school is to facilitate our pupils' regular and sustained attendance at school by providing a full and efficient educational experience for all their students.

Parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- ◆ Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- ◆ Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum
- ◆ Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements
- ◆ Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance
- ◆ Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

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## School Attendance the Statutory Framework

Education Act 1944 - Establishes the duty of parents to ensure regular attendance of pupils.

Pupil's Registration Regulations 1986 - Establishes the criteria for the maintenance of Attendance Registers.

Education Act 1996 places a legal obligation on the Local Education Authority to provide education suitable to a child's age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs they may have and also Section 444 states that "The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law".

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1997 (amended) provides the new registration categories of Approved Educational Activity. (Amending Regulation 3(2), (3), (5) of the Education Regulations 1995).

Pupil Registration Regulations 1995 (amended) gives schools discretionary powers to grant leave for the purpose of a family holiday in term-time, due to exceptional circumstances.

Education Act 2002 (Section 53) enables an overall absence target to be set, covering authorised and unauthorised absence, supporting school improvement and raising community awareness of the issue (September 2003).

## Registration

There is a legal requirement upon schools to keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon sessions, pupils are marked present or absent. The Education (Pupils' Attendance Record) Regulations 1991 introduced a further requirement that attendance registers must show whether an absence of a pupil of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised. This is shown on our computer records.

Both staff and pupils should see the taking of registers as an integral part of the school day, as was indeed intended in law. Particular attention should be paid to accurate registration and to the preservation and security of registers.

Registers are taken by the class teacher. The class teacher has a password to access the register. The register is taken and saved so that the office receives a copy of the register.

Files are sent to each class. The files contain leave of absence requests, notice of absence and comments from the teacher.

If the child informs the teacher that they may be late to school due to an appointment the teacher can place this on the computerised site as a note. Messages received by the administration staff can also be added to electronic registers for individual children.

Monitoring and encouraging attendance is an integral part of the Head teachers' role. They have primary responsibility for monitoring the attendance of pupils' in the class groups and for contacting home with concerns about attendance and punctuality also ensuring that class teachers collect notes explaining absences and maintain an accurate register of attendance.

Stockton-On-Tees Local Authority requires our teachers to complete registers and the symbols shown in Table 1 are entered on the computerised records.

In accordance with current legislation, each class in school has an electronic attendance register. It is school policy that registers are completed and shut by 9.10am and 1.10pm and the information will then be returned to the school office.

It is our policy at The Glebe Primary to record a late mark, for children who arrive at school after class registration has taken place, code (L) for lateness and code (U) for unauthorised lateness. Registration closes at 9.10am.

We believe that pupils arriving late seriously disrupt their work and that of others. Our policy is to encourage punctuality. Five minutes will be allocated for registration purposes at the beginning of each session. Pupils' will be recorded as being late once registration has taken place.

It is the school's policy to actively discourage late arrival. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others. In recognition of local circumstances (such as bad weather or occasional public transport difficulties), we may keep registers open for a reasonable period.

For registration to mean anything at all, a firm line must be taken on late arrivals. To do otherwise undermines the whole purpose of registration and may serve to encourage other pupils to arrive late. Particular attention will be paid to emerging patterns of late arrival.

The school administrative system will be marked with a late mark and the administration assistant will monitor the registers of late marks weekly.

All accompanied children arriving late should be signed in at Reception.

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All Key Stage 2 children arriving late should sign in at Reception. Where a pupil does arrive and misses registration, his or her presence on site will need to be noted for purposes of emergency evacuation. Anyone arriving late must report to the school office. The pupil's record in the register will be amended as appropriate.

In responding to lateness, we will of course need to take account of the individual circumstances of each case. In some instances, enquiries may reveal that the late arrival stems from difficulties at home or other genuinely unavoidable circumstances. Teachers of pupils who persistently fail to arrive on time with valid reason need to keep the Head teacher informed. Further action may be taken if there is no valid reason for this lateness.

## Registration Procedure

Registers will be completed as quickly as convenient, preceding both daily sessions. Only 5 minutes of the school day have been allocated for the registration procedure. Registers will be sent electronically to the school office following this registration period.

The files will be sent to the office at the close of registration.

Pupils present will be so marked by a horizontal line on the register.

Pupils not present before the close of registration (9.10am) will be marked by an N in the register.

## Late

Pupils arriving at school after registration closes at 9.10am in the mornings must report to the school office where an adjustment will be made to the class register by applying An L in the present column on the register. This will be interpreted in the class register as a child present at school having arrived late after registration. This constitutes attendance for Health and Safety purposes.

If a pupil fails to attend registration for the afternoon session, an explanation note, a telephone call, a text or an e mail may authorise this absence, e.g. visit to doctor/dentist. Otherwise it will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised lateness after registration code (U), constitutes unauthorised absence and impacts upon attendance.

## Absence

Once we receive a reason for an absence, we may authorise that absence by inserting the correct symbol on the computer records. Reporting by telephone, verbally to a member of staff or a note are all acceptable.

Staff will operate first day response. Parents will be contacted on the first day, by phone, e mail or text.

If, after three weeks no satisfactory reason has been given the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

A list of symbols used for demarcating AUTHORISED absence on the computer records is included in Table 1.

**Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents.** The fact that a parent has offered a note or other notification (telephone call, text, e mail or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to agree to it. If the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered - or where no explanation is forthcoming at all the absence must be treated as unauthorised. Where parentally-condoned unjustified absence appears to be a problem in relation to a particular pupil, school will involve the Attendance Service at an early opportunity.

An excessive amount of authorised absence can also seriously disrupt continuity of learning and encourage disaffection. We must be alert to emerging patterns of authorised absence. We may authorise absence retrospectively where we are satisfied as to the explanation offered.

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Absences of pupils of compulsory school age without valid reason or for which no explanation has been provided will be treated as unauthorised.

Our policy deals in general with the categories of absence and cannot cover every eventuality. It will be necessary, on occasion, to exercise reasonable discretion when investigating some absences.

The Head teacher has the power to authorise 10 sessions leave of absence, due to exceptional circumstances, a year.

### Key Points

- Registered pupils of compulsory school age are required, by law, to be in school.
- Whilst it is right that schools should recognise that individual pupils and families have problems, the aim should always be to expect regular attendance.
- Lateness should be actively discouraged.
- Where a pupil is absent without prior authorisation, an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming (for whatever reason), the absence must be treated as unauthorised and the register annotated accordingly.
- Schools are not obliged to accept parental notes where there is reason to doubt the validity of the explanation offered.
- Explanations such as minding the house, looking after other children, or shopping trips within school hours will not be accepted as reasons for absence.

### Leave of absence

Parents do not have an automatic right to demand leave of absence for their children. Absences of more than 10 sessions leave of absence in one academic year may only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Parents are urged strongly to avoid taking family holidays during term time. If, however, parents apply to the school in advance, the school may grant up to ten sessions term-time absence in any academic year, only in exceptional circumstances.

To request leave of absence the parent/carer must submit a Request for Leave of Absence form to the Head Teacher with supporting evidence for the request.

Leave of absence will not be authorised for Year 6 children during SAT week and during the first week of the September term.

### Reporting Absence

At The Glebe Primary parents are required to report absences by telephone call, text or e mail on the first day of absence, followed by a written note on the pupils' return or a verbal message to the school administrative assistant is acceptable.

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## Attendance Procedures

### Intervention at School Level

#### Stage 1 - Monitor

This section describes the role of school in relation to improving attendance.

- 1.1 The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for monitoring attendance of the pupils in the class group and for collecting notes explaining absences, maintaining an accurate register and informing the Head teacher with concerns about attendance and punctuality.
- 1.2 The school will carry out first day response. Parents will be telephoned, text or e mailed on the first morning of absence
- 1.3 If a pupil is absent for three days and there has been no contact from home a text by school comms will be made followed by a phone call .
- 1.4 The administration staff will continue to try to contact home for a week. The school will contact the Local Authority Attendance service who will carry out further investigations.

#### Stage 2 - Attendance Concerns (CAF)

- 2.1 Any child under 90% will receive an attendance letter stating the concerns regarding attendance.
- 2.2 Home should be contacted, preferably by phone, text e mail or by letter if this is the only option remaining.
- 2.3 A record should be kept of all contact and conversations Parents/carers should be encouraged to visit school to discuss attendance and strategies for improvement.
- 2.4 The Head teacher should discuss the pupil with the Class Teacher and, where possible, see the parent. It is important to establish the reasons for poor attendance, the general health of the pupil, home circumstances etc. The parent should be given a target for the pupil's attendance, which is higher than their normal attendance rate.
- 2.5 A date for review of attendance should be set, no more than 4 weeks later.
- 2.6 If attendance has improved, then a letter of commendation should be sent home and pupil returns to STAGE 1.
- 2.7 If attendance has not improved, then options may include:
  - (i) Contact home to discuss the review and set a further review date.
  - (ii) Discuss with the parent areas of concerns and where other support might be appropriate.

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**A Reminder:** Only school may authorise a pupil's absence. All absences must be explained by the pupil's parents/carers.

### Referral to Attendance Service

Details of the procedure followed by the Attendance Officer may be found in the Local Authority's Attendance Procedures Document.

When making a referral to the school's Attendance Officer it is important that the following information is included:

- Action taken to date by the school.
- A print out of the pupil's attendance.
- Parent's/pupil's attitudes towards school and the school's intervention.
- Parental reasons for non-attendance.
- Action taken by school to resolve any identified problems.
- Information regarding any special educational needs the pupil may have, academic attainments and support being provided by the school.
- Information regarding potential aggression from the parents.

### Statements of expectations:

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

#### **At The Glebe Primary School we expect that pupils:**

##### **.What is expected of the pupils:**

- ◆ To respect themselves and others
- ◆ To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
- ◆ To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied
- ◆ To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging
- ◆ To be happy and encourage others to feel happy
- Will inform a member of staff of any problems they are experiencing which may impinge on their ability to attend school and access their education.

#### **Parents/Carers**

**At The Glebe Primary School we expect parents/carers to ensure:**

**What is expected of the Parents;**

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- ◆ To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum
- ◆ To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence
- ◆ To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness
- ◆ To work closely with the school and Attendance Officer to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance
- ◆ To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in special / exceptional circumstances.
- ◆ To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements

### **What is expected of the School:**

- ◆ To create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of
- ◆ To meet the legal requirements set out by Government
- ◆ To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance
- ◆ To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention
- ◆ To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences
- ◆ To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance
- ◆ To encourage open communication channels between home and school
- ◆ To develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees
- ◆ To develop procedures leading to a formal referral to the Attendance Officer
- ◆ To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum

### **Reward Systems**

Every week during celebration Assembly the class with the best attendance receives a certificate and a trophy. If the class has 100% attendance they will receive £10 towards a treat at the end of the year.

At the end of the term the class with the most certificates for attendance may have a treat e.g. own clothes day, video in the classroom etc

Any class with 100% attendance may have the option to have a non-uniform day the following week.

A reward will be given to those pupils' achieving attendance of 100% or more within the academic year.

### **Symbols for Marking the Register**

#### **Present**

Present	/
Home & Hospital Teaching ( Educated off site)	B
Present part -time/temporary education off-site/Support Unit	B

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Educational Visit	V
Work Experience	W
Dual registration	D
Late before the close of Registration	L
Approved Sporting Activity	P
Pupil not on roll	Z

#### **Authorised Absence**

Illness( not medical or dental)	I
Hospital, medical, dental, pregnancy	M
Annual Parental Holiday	H
Religious Festivals	R
Interview	J
Exclusions	E
Study Leave	S
Traveller Absence	T
Extended family holiday	F
Family holiday not agreed or an excess of days	G
Other circumstances (reason must be recorded by form tutor)	C

#### **Unauthorised Absence**

Late After the Close of Registration	U
Reason Not Yet Provided	N
Unauthorised absence not covered by other code	O

#### **Symbols used but not counted in Figures**

Pupils not in school - Staff Only	X
School Closed for Holiday	#
Enforced School Closure	Y

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# ATTENDANCE POLICY

This Policy has been approved by the Governing Body of the  
Glebe Primary School

On:

To be reviewed in:

Chair of Governors: .....