



# Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery

## Attendance Policy

Policy date: September 2022

Review date: September 2023

Reducing absence from school is a key priority for Suffolk and for Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery. Regular school attendance is vital in ensuring that children maximise the educational opportunities available to them. It is also an important element in safeguarding them from harm.

We believe attendance at school is vital not only for a child's ability to learn and achieve, but also for the social skills they learn interacting with their peers and adults; for learning habits that will last into later life; and for equipping them to compete in employment and the working world. Research also shows the positive impact that good school attendance has on the academic achievement of pupils:

- > 94% = Very good chance of getting 5 A\* - C Grades
- 93% = Good chance of getting 5 A\* - C Grades.
- 90% = Less than 50% chance of getting 5 A\* - C Grades.
- 88% = Less than 35% chance of getting 5 A\* - C Grades.
- < 88% = Less than 30% chance of getting 5 A\* - C Grades

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## Introduction

- 1.1 Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its children 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 – children, 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 has been drawn up after consultation with the whole community and 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 Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our children 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 Leader

The Headteacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person, known as the Attendance Leader, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team, are made regularly available to all staff, children and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance) and that a report is prepared for the governing body half termly. She 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 are responsible for the completing the attendance registers using the codes (below).

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	NO LONGER A VALID CODE

<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

- ii) The register will be called promptly at **8.40 am** and at **1pm** by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.

Registration finishes at **8.50** in the morning and **1.10** in the afternoon.

If your child arrives after **8.50** he/she will be marked **late**

If your child arrives after **9am** he/she will be marked as **absent**

If your child arrives after **1.05 pm** he/she will be marked **late**

If your child arrives after **1.10 pm** he/she will be marked **absent**

## 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 unauthorised absent 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. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the headteacher.
- ii) Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery 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 Grace Cook

Primary School and Nursery 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 leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example –
    - a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
    - a pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's / student's overall pattern of attendance will be considered,
    - in **exceptional** circumstances, permission has been granted for a family holiday for which the parents have sought permission in advance (see Page 8 for the school's policy on term-time holidays);
  - (b) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
  - (c) where the child has a medical appointment (although parents should make these out of school hours wherever possible, and return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand);
  - (d) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
  - (e) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parent belongs;
  - (f) the child is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which requires him/her to travel, the child has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits **and**, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;
  - (g) 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:
  - no explanation has been given by the parent;
  - the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
  - the child is staying at home to mind the house;
  - the child is shopping during school hours;
  - the child is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday;
  - the child is absent from school on a family holiday
  - the child 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 child 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 School Attendance Leader 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 Leader will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.
- 3.2 Attendance is monitored by class and by reasons for absence. The attendance of children in 'vulnerable groups' is also monitored.
- 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 Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in class. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment. Weekly attendance figures are displayed prominently in school.
- 4.2 Rewards: Children are rewarded individually for 100% attendance each half term (certificate also sent to parent) and term (individual certificates presented to children) and classes compete each week to achieve the best attendance and become the owners of the 'Attendance Bell'.
- 4.3 Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery has procedures for dealing with unexplained absences within a week.
- 4.4 First-day calling  
Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned/sent a text on the first day a child is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage children 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 send a letter to them by first class post.
- 4.5 School Strategies to Tackle Absence  
The Attendance Leader is responsible for the school management of attendance, policy and systems to ensure that Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery intervene in non attendance at an early stage.

The headteacher will monitor all children with attendance below 95% each half term. A letter will be sent to parents outlining the consequences of this poor attendance and inviting the parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences.

With the support of the school's Education Welfare Officer, plans will be put in place with the parents to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

Where there is little or no improvement in attendance or families submit repeated holiday requests (within year or year on year) Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery will invite parents to attend an Attendance Panel consisting of the headteacher, a governor and the Educational Welfare Officer to offer further support, advice or intervention. In extreme cases the school may request Social Services intervention.

#### 4.6 Educational Welfare Officer(EWO)

The school is in regular contact with the Educational Welfare Officer, both informally by telephone and at formal meetings approximately each half term. All children with concerns regarding their attendance are discussed with the EWO and actions are planned to work together to improve the attendance of the child. This may involve a home visit from the EWO, request to parent to attend a Panel (see above), further monitoring or a warning / penalty notice (see 7). Regulations (Education Pupil Regulations 2006) require schools to inform the LA of every pupil who has been continuously absent without a good reason (i.e. the absence is unauthorised) for 10 school day or more. Schools must also inform the LA of every pupil who fails to attend regularly which is interpreted to mean those pupils who have patterns of unauthorised absence without amassing 10 continuous absence.

#### 4.7 Lateness and punctuality

Children are expected to arrive at school on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late.

Children who arrive after the register closes (see para. 2.3.(iii) on page 3) 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 child to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes.

A child who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other student with an emerging pattern of absence. (See para. 4.5). This means that children with 10 lates (which are equal to 10 sessions of unauthorised absence) may be subject to a penalty notice. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Persistent lateness may also result in a penalty fine as unauthorised lateness will contribute to the overall unauthorised absence total for a child.

#### 4.8 Parents whose children who arrive late for school but before the register closes on a regular basis will receive a letter outlining the importance of punctuality and notice that their punctuality is being monitored. If a family is in agreement and would like further support with getting their child(ren) to school on time they may be referred to the school's Family Support Worker.

#### 4.9 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Families arriving late should therefore report to the main office and sign in using the online system. **It is important that all children arriving late follow this procedure.**

#### 4.10 For the same reason it is important that children leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day sign out and back in again at the main school office on the system.

### 5. **Term-time holidays**

#### 5.1 Term-time holidays are actively discouraged by Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery.

- 5.2 Parents/carers do not have a legal right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time. Where parents/carers need to apply for exceptional leave, they should do so at least 3 weeks prior to absence, writing to the Headteacher with a clear reason to the request for absence.
- 5.3 Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery will consider every application individually; its policy is NOT to grant leave of absence other than in the most exceptional circumstances.
- 5.4 Time off school for family holidays is not a right. An application must be made in writing using the form mentioned above, with appropriate evidence & in advance.
- 5.5 Leave of absence is defined as an absence other than an annual family holiday, wedding, birthday or celebration event. Such an event may be an unfortunate need to attend a funeral, or to attend a child's pre-arranged hospital appointment (but not a regular appointment at your GP, Optician or Dentist).
- 5.6 Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery will only consider authorising leave of absence for:
- a Family crisis ;
  - Armed Forces personnel returning from active duty;
  - Funerals, weddings, visiting ill relatives ;
  - A pre-arranged hospital appointment that cannot be changed ;
  - Religious observance of a Nationally or Internationally recognised occasion ;
  - Sporting events (county level and above);
  - Approved educational activities.
- 5.7 Requests for leave of absence for the following reason will not be authorised:
- A family holiday, regardless of a parent's employment restrictions;
  - Family celebrations (e.g. Birthdays) ;
  - A regular GP, Optician or Dentist appointment ;
- 5.8 Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery will respond in writing to all requests to take a child out of school.
- 5.9 Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery will NOT authorise family holiday during term time.
- 5.10 Unauthorised absence totalling 10 sessions (5 days) or more will be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice Fine. More information about Local Authority Penalty Notice Fines can be found on the Suffolk County Council website at [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk).
- 5.11 Extended leave will NOT be authorised

### **Grace Cook Primary School & Nursery Leave of Absence Guidelines**

Type	Able to authorise	Evidence required
Holiday in term time	No	N/A
Holiday in term time (services/military)	Yes	Yes
Wedding*	Yes	Yes (if possible)
Visiting terminally ill relative*	Yes	No
Funeral*	Yes	No
<b>*Weddings, funerals and visiting terminally ill relative</b>		
	Local – 1 day	Out of county – 2 days
Religious festivals (only actual festival day(s))	Yes	Yes (if possible)
Sporting events (county level and above)	Yes	Yes
Approved educational activities	Yes	Yes
<b>Unauthorised absence totalling 10 sessions (5 days) or more will be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice (Fine).</b>		

***In all circumstances the school will only consider authorising one term time holiday during a child's life at our school. All subsequent holidays will be subject to a penalty notice.***

## **6. Penalty Notices (Fines)**

For full details of the 'Suffolk County Council - Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, Penalty Notice Code of Conduct' please ask at the school office or go to <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/pupil-attendance-and-welfare/school-attendance-and-penalty-notices/>

### Circumstances where a Penalty Notice will be issued

The criteria for issuing Penalty Notices will be where a child –

- i) has been identified for the first time as having 10 sessions (a session being a morning or an afternoon) of unauthorised absence;
- ii) In the company of a parent, has been stopped under Section 16 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (i.e. during a 'truancy sweep' conducted by Police and EWOs) and the parent has failed to give a satisfactory explanation for the child's absence which the school has confirmed is unauthorised.

Penalty Notices will not be used in the case of children looked after by the LA (LAC).

Parents will not receive more than one Penalty Notice per child in any academic year. However, if a Penalty Notice has been issued and concluded, but unauthorised absences continue the school will immediately refer to the EWO who has the power to take further action.

## **7. Attendance in the Early Years (until a child is aged 5)**

Although Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery acknowledges attendance at school is not mandatory until the term after a child reaches the age of five, it supports the assertion made in Charlie Taylor's 2012 DfE review 'Improving attendance at school' that for some children leaving it until they are of school age to tackle attendance issues is already too late.

Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery wishes to work with parents to ensure good habits, a love of school and an understanding of the value of education are instilled at this crucial stage, right at the start of their child's educational journey. It is for this reason that all school based procedures mentioned in this policy will apply to all children in the Reception classes regardless of age.

Although no legal procedures can be pursued if a child is not of mandatory school age, Reception children with attendance issues will be discussed with the EWO and support offered to the family via the schools own resources such as Pupil Premium funded projects.

## **8. Parents' / carers' responsibilities**

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), who will be supported and encouraged by Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery.

Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery 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.



Parents will also be expected to:

- notify Grace Cook Primary and Nursery on the first day of absence via a telephone message (01449 833094) or speaking to a member of staff on the phone to ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school as outlined in the Home School Agreement.
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

## **9. Governors' responsibilities**

Section 175 (2) - The governing body 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

## **10. The Curriculum and Attendance**

All children will be taught about the importance of regular attendance and who to talk to if they are having difficulties that mean they do not want to come to school or that prevent them from attending school regularly.

## **11. Conclusion**

Regular school attendance is a necessary contributor to ensuring positive outcomes for all children. These include:

- supporting children to reach their potential and enjoy the fulfilment this brings
- safeguarding all children
- supporting children's emotional, social and health development
- fulfilling the school & LA statutory duty to promote the safety & welfare of children
- membership of a school community which builds confidence, gives children a sense of belonging and teaches them to contribute to and be responsible for the well-being of others
- supporting engagement in further education, employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support a prosperous and fulfilling life-style.

*We encourage honesty and transparency in all that we do and this includes pupil absence. We work in close partnership with our Education Welfare Officer who regularly monitors pupils absence. If the authenticity of the absence appears to be in doubt, then the school will request parents to provide evidence to support the period of absence, otherwise the absence will be unauthorised and a penalty notice (fine) issued.*





## Request to take your child out of school (Leave of Absence)

To: The Headteacher of Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery

Name of Child/ren

Date of Birth

Class

I, being the Parent of the above child/ren, request that you consider a 'leave of absence' from school

**from** (date absence will begin)

**to** (date child will be back at school)

due to the following exceptional circumstances.

*(for guidance, please refer to the back of this form)*

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I have read the guidance notes **(over)** and understand that permission for a family holiday will **not** be authorised and that my actions may incur a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority. Due consideration of attendance (including that of a previous school) will be taken into account. I have attached relevant evidence to support my request.

**Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian:**

**Date:**

**To be completed by the school:**

Date:		Headteacher signature:		
No. of days Authorised:		Reason(s): (see over for explanation)	Type 2 holiday (military/service)	
			Type 3, 4, 5 (family event)	
			Type 6, 7, 8 (Religious, Sporting, Other approved ed. activity)	
			Other exceptional circumstance	
No. of days Unauthorised:		Reason(s): (see over for explanation)	Type 1 holiday	
			Additional days (Type 3 – 8 circumstances)	
			Unauthorised absence >10 days in last 12 weeks	
			Reason given is not an exceptional circumstance.	

This absence <b>will</b> incur a penalty notice (fine).		This absence <b>will not</b> incur a penalty notice (fine).	
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Child is not of statutory school age, please see attached letter	
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## Guidance on requesting Leave of Absence

- Grace Cook Primary School and Nursery will consider every application individually. Its policy is **NOT** to grant 'leave of absence', other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays or celebrations **is not a right**. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence and in **advance**.
- Leave of absence is defined as an absence other than an annual family holiday, birthday or celebration event. Such an event may be an unfortunate need to attend a funeral, family wedding, a sick relative or to attend a child's pre-arranged hospital appointment (but not a regular appointment at your GP, Optician or Dentist)
- Grace Cook Primary School will consider **AUTHORISING** 'leave of absence' for
  - Armed Forces personnel returning from active duty
  - Funerals, Weddings
  - A pre-arranged hospital appointment that cannot be changed
  - Religious observance of a Nationally or Internationally recognised occasion
- Requests for 'leave of absence' will be deemed **UNAUTHORISED** for;
  - A family holiday, regardless of a parent's employment restrictions
  - Family celebrations (e.g. Birthdays)
  - A regular GP, Optician or Dentist appointment

Type	Able to authorise	Evidence required
1. Holiday in term time	No	N/A
2. Holiday in term time (services/military)	Yes	Yes
3. Wedding*	Yes	Yes (if possible)
4. Visiting terminally ill relative*	Yes	No
5. Funeral*	Yes	No
<b>*Weddings, funerals and visiting terminally ill relative – time authorised</b>		
	<i>Local – 1 day</i>	<i>Out of county – 2 days</i>
		<i>International – up to 3 days</i>
6. Religious festivals (only actual festival day(s))	Yes	Yes (if possible)
7. Sporting events (county level and above)	Yes	Yes
8. Approved educational activities	Yes	Yes
Unauthorised absence totalling <b>10 sessions (5 days)</b> or more will be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice Fine. <i>More information about Local Authority Penalty Notice Fines can be found on the Suffolk County Council website at <a href="http://www.suffolk.gov.uk">www.suffolk.gov.uk</a></i>		

- Grace Cook Primary School will **NOT** authorise family holiday leave during term time.
- Grace Cook Primary School will respond in writing to all requests to take a child out of School.
- Important:** The local Authority Education Welfare Services will actively seek to track and take action where necessary for those parents who persist in taking their child/ren on holiday during term time. In such cases the Local Authority will notify the parent concerned and issue a Penalty Notice where necessary. We urge all parents to be aware of this when making their decision.

**We encourage honesty and transparency in all that we do and this includes pupil absence. We work in close partnership with our Education Welfare Officer who regularly monitors pupils absence. If the authenticity of the absence appears to be in doubt, then the school will request parents to provide evidence to support the period of absence, otherwise the absence will be unauthorised and a penalty notice (fine) issued.**

# Attendance – a guide for parents September 2022

## 1. Why is attendance so important?

Quite simply, if your child is not at school we can not teach them! Attendance at school is vital not only for a child's ability to learn and achieve, but also for the social skills they learn interacting with their peers and adults; for learning habits that will last into later life; and for equipping them to compete in the working world.

In Reception, Year 1 and 2, your child will learn to read and write, the two skills most fundamental to success, enjoyment and ease in later life. Children with poor attendance at this crucial stage struggle to keep up and catch up with their peers in these areas for the remainder of their school career.

As a person with a passion for education, literacy and lifelong learning – why wouldn't I be obsessed with ensuring your child is in school for the maximum time possible?

## 2. How can you help then?

At the first sign of a problem contact your child's class teacher and openly discuss any worries you have about your child. It is important that we quickly identify and work together to solve any problems which could lead to poor attendance. My door is also always open if you need support with matters that affect your child's attendance. Together we can always find a way forward.

## 3. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. Children can flow into school from 8.30 (Soft start) The morning register will be called promptly by **8.40 am** and the afternoon register at **1pm**.

## 4. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at **8.50** in the morning and **1.10** in the afternoon.

If your child arrives between **8.55am** and **9am** he/she will be marked **late**

If your child arrives after **9am** he/she will be marked as **absent**

If your child arrives after **1.05 pm** he/she will be marked **late**

If your child arrives after **1.10 pm** he/she will be marked **absent**

*Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office, and sign in via the online system. If a pupil is late on three or more occasions a meeting will be arranged with a member of staff to discuss reasons/ difficulties for lateness.*

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

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on each day that their child is absent. If you do not phone us, we will endeavour to contact you. This is because we share responsibility with you for ensuring your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance. If we cannot make contact with you, then we will need a written explanation of the absence on your child's return to school. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

## 6. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness (Cases of recurring absence through illness will need to produce a doctors note)
- Emergency dental/medical appointment
- Day of religious observance
- Close family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school in advance, giving full details. Time off school for family holidays or celebrations **is not a right**.

## 7. What is unacceptable?

Requests for 'leave of absence' will be deemed **UNAUTHORISED** for;

- A family holiday, regardless of a parent's employment restrictions
- Family celebrations (e.g. Birthdays), day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, parental illness, looking after siblings
- A regular GP, Optician or Dentist appointment

## 8. Is there any circumstance that may lead to my request for leave during term time being authorised?

Type	Able to authorise	Evidence required
9. Holiday in term time	No	N/A
10. Holiday in term time (services/military)	Yes	Yes
11. Wedding*	Yes	Yes (if possible)
12. Visiting terminally ill relative*	Yes	No
13. Funeral*	Yes	No
<b>*Weddings, funerals and visiting terminally ill relative – time authorised</b>		
Local – 1 day      Out of county – 2 days      International – up to 3 days		
14. Religious festivals (only actual festival day(s))	Yes	Yes (if possible)
15. Sporting events (county level and above)	Yes	Yes
16. Approved educational activities	Yes	Yes

*Please do not lie about your child being ill when you are in fact taking them on holiday! It puts your child in a very difficult position as generally children do not enjoy lying to adults they trust. We always find out as most are simply unable to contain their excitement and want to tell us all about the fun they have had. In these circumstances the absence is always unauthorised and if the absence was for more than 10 sessions a penalty notice (fine) will be issued.*

## 9. I have heard that the school issues fines -will I get a fine?

If your child has had 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence then the answer is 'yes'. Remember unauthorised absence is not just holiday. Lateness and absences where you have not let us know why your child is not in school are also unauthorised.

You will also be issued with a fine if you and your child are stopped on a 'Truancy Sweep' (carried out by the Local authority) and you do not provide a suitable explanation as to why your child is not in school.

## 10. My child is not yet 5, does the school's attendance policy apply to me?

We wish to work with parents to ensure good habits, a love of school and an understanding of the value of education are instilled right at the start of their child's educational journey. It is for this reason that all school based procedures mentioned in the attendance policy will apply to all children in the Reception classes regardless of age.

Although no legal procedures can be pursued if a child is not of mandatory school age, Reception children with attendance issues will be discussed with the EWO and support offered to the family via the schools own resources such as Pupil Premium funded projects or the Family Support Worker.

**Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or support regarding attendance.**

**I thank you for your continued support of your child(ren) and our school.**