



Attendance & Punctuality Procedures

November 2016

School Procedures

Ethos and Aims

We believe that punctuality and good attendance are essential for all pupils, to ensure they can benefit fully from their education to reach their full potential, both academically and socially. We aim to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any barriers to this are identified and acted upon as soon as possible. The school aims at 100% attendance for pupils and promotes good punctuality, as this sets a positive work ethic now, and for the future (see Appendix 1).

Parent/Carers should be aware that if they fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually they may be prosecuted under section 444 Education Act 1996 by the Local Authority.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents, Guardians and Pupils

Parents/carers of children of compulsory school age are legally required to ensure that they receive full-time education. Parents/carers are also responsible for informing the school of any absence as soon as possible; the school expects to be contacted each day of the absence. This can be done by telephoning the school, by personal contact or by written note. The reason for absence and when the child is expected to return to school should be stated. Pupils are expected to arrive at school punctually. Persistent lateness can be seen as absence and is managed in the same way as poor attendance by the school. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school before the morning bell, prepared to begin the school day.

Governors

The governing body has ultimate responsibility for attendance at school. This is delegated on a daily basis through Head Teacher and SLT. Governors regularly monitor the effectiveness of attendance procedures and practice.

School Attendance Leader

The designated senior member of staff responsible for absence at George Tomlinson Primary School is the Deputy Headteacher. The Deputy Head is supported by the school's Leadership Team. Attendance is regularly monitored so that pupils at risk of persistent absence can be identified. Investigations are made to understand the nature of the problems, identifying how the school can support parents in meeting their legal responsibility. A range of actions may be taken according to the percentage of absence and reasons provided by parents/carers; these may include completing a CAF or a referral to Children's Services.

Class Teachers

Registers are computerised and are taken before 9.00am and 1.00pm (Years 1 & 2) and at 1.30 pm (Years 3, 4, 5, & 6). Registers close 30 minutes from the start of the school day. The time of late arrivals is noted and absences recorded, in the class register. Class teachers contribute to procedures by promoting good attendance with their class and highlighting those with poor attendance/punctuality. Class teachers must immediately alert the Designated Teacher for Child Protection if they believe or suspect that an absence may be due to a CP issue.

Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer manages the operational aspects of attendance monitoring, for example; entering reasons for absence onto SIMS, co-ordinating the Late Gate and collating and analysing attendance data. The Attendance Officer works in collaboration with the Office Manager and the wider staff including the Leadership Team.

Leave of Absence

The school can approve absence. The school does not have to accept the parent/carers offered explanation as a valid cause for absence. There are certain circumstances outlined in the DfE guidelines that the school categorises as authorised absence. The guidelines are based on the needs of the community and the kinds of reasons parent/carers may wish their children to take leave of absence.

The schools follow the guidelines for authorising absence as listed below

School Procedures

- Illness, emergency medical, dental and hospital appointments. It is expected that routine check-ups, including hospital review appointments should, as far as possible, be made during holiday periods or after school hours.
- Family bereavements
- Attending a religious observance
- Off-site activities (These fall into two categories; educational visits or individual activities e.g. an examination)
- Exclusion (Excluded pupils are treated as authorised absence. They will remain on the school's register unless permanently excluded when the situation has to be reviewed)

George Tomlinson Primary School does not authorise a leave of absence for extended periods during term times e.g. extended holidays or visiting family abroad.

Holidays during Term Time

George Tomlinson Primary School operates the DfE zero tolerance approach to extended holidays and notifies parents/carers of this so that they can make informed decision about removing children from school for this reason. We refer children with unauthorised extended holiday absence to the local authority who arranges for fixed penalty fines to be issued. Currently the fine is £120 per child for each parent. If this is paid within 14 days the fine is reduced by 50%. Our intention in issuing fines is to emphasise the importance and negative impact on children's progress and achievement caused by extended periods of absence.

Lateness

The morning bell rings at 8.45am to indicate that lesson time is beginning. Pupils should be on the playground at least 5 minutes before bell time so that they can enter school calmly with their class and organise themselves ready for the first lesson. All lateness is recorded and lateness after the registers close is marked as absence. If a pupil regularly arrives late for school we monitor and offer support to develop strategies to improve their punctuality.

Breakfast Club

George Tomlinson Primary School runs an established Breakfast Club. The aim of the club is to promote punctuality and good attendance. Breakfast Club may be a useful option for families where there are barriers to punctual attendance. Breakfast Club is run by trained school staff and is open from 7.45am.

Late Collection of Children

Persistent late collections are monitored and the school attempts to support parents/carers with this by helping to develop strategies to improve their punctuality in collecting their children. The school operates an after school club which may be useful for families who are unable to collect their children on time from school however it is not a drop in facility and pupils must register to attend.

School Procedure

The school monitors attendance and lateness weekly. Issues relating to pupil attendance are followed up during half termly review periods.

The monitoring period is week 2 of each half term.

Appendix 1

