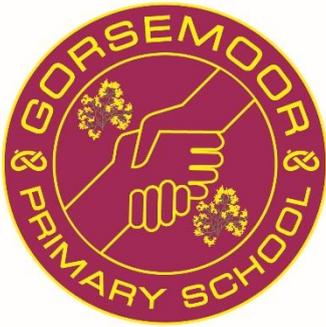


Attendance Policy



Date of Issue: June 2016

Review Date: June 2019

Approved by the Full Governing Body
on 15th June 2016

Audience: Staff/Governors/Public

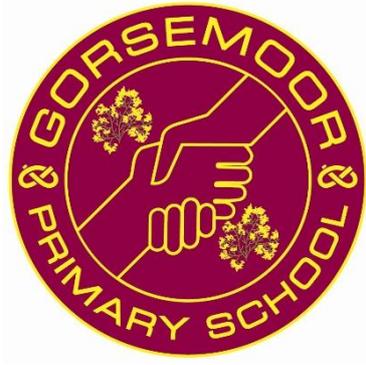
Frequency of Review: Every three years

Postholder responsible for Review: Headteacher

Recommended associated documents:

Safeguarding

Missing Children in Education



Gorsemoor Primary School Attendance Policy

**Based on the
Staffordshire Model**

Provided by Entrust | May 2015 | V2

March 2017 Addendum



ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy is based on the Department for Education document **'School Attendance: statutory guidance and departmental advice' October 2014**

We publish our attendance policy on our school website. Parents or carers are regularly made aware of the terms of our policy – particularly with reference to the use of external agencies and the intended approach to the use of Fixed Penalty Notices or other parental measures to improve attendance. This includes parents/ carers of pupils who join our school roll mid-year.

Key Principles:

- Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.
- Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community
- This Policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the well-being of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, and support for children with medical needs.
- All children should be in school, on time, every day that school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable

School Responsibilities:

- We will promote positive behaviour and attendance through our use of curriculum and learning materials and will recognise good attendance appropriately. We promote attendance through a personalised and differentiated curriculum and stimulating learning resources, so that pupils are encouraged to enjoy, achieve and stay safe during their time at Gorsemoor.
- We will work with parents to resolve problems which may affect a child's attendance. We will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this. At Gorsemoor, we will involve representatives of other agencies that work with the school such as the School Nurse or representatives of the Local Support Team such as Education Welfare Workers where required in order to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance. Educational Welfare Officers are employed by the Authority to work with schools to resolve difficulties and in carrying out their statutory duties they may initiate court action where the absence rate is unacceptable.
- We will be proactive in encouraging attendance for all pupils through ensuring parents and pupils receive information on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and will react swiftly to intervene to improve attendance of individual children should this become a concern. At Gorsemoor, we encourage good attendance and recognise it through attendance awards. At the end of each term, parents are sent a record of their child's attendance which is graded according to attendance percentage. If appropriate, your child will be rewarded for 100% attendance.

Parents or Carers Responsibilities:

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly. They should also ensure their children arrive on time, appropriately dressed and with the relevant equipment.
- Inform school straight away if your child cannot attend and give the reason. This must be on the first day of absence, by telephone or letter, stating the reason for absence and the expected duration of the absence. If the absence continues beyond two days, the school should be notified every two days.
- Try to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day
- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance
- Encourage good routines at home which promote a healthy lifestyle including enough sleep
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Do not book holidays in term time – this will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised absence includes any days away from school for birthdays, days out, shopping, preparing for holidays etc.
- Seek advice from your G.P. if you are not sure how long to keep your child off school with an illness
- Ensure school has all your up-to-date contact details.
- Encourage your child to enjoy school and make the most of all the opportunities available to them.

The importance of good attendance and its link to attainment:

- The Department of Education has published research into the effect that missing time from school can have on chances of succeeding in tests and exams. ([February 22nd 2015 Department of Education](#)). The research is based on data from all schools in England going back several years.
- The results are very clear – missing even small amounts of time from school can have a significant effect on achievement.
- For example, at the end of the 2012/13 Academic year 94% of pupils who were present all the time achieved 5+ GCSE A* - C or equivalent. Where attendance dropped to between 85 and 90% only 75% of pupils achieved these results. This equates to an absence of around 1 week per year during Years 10 and 11 and clearly illustrates the impact of attendance on attainment.
- The same pattern is also seen at primary school level, where pupils missing up to just 14 days of school in key stage 2 (normally age 11) are a quarter less likely to achieve level 5 or above in reading, writing or maths tests than those with no absence.

Admissions Register:

School keeps an admission register which records the date that each child joined the school and their personal details including those of their parents and of their previous school.

All schools (including academies) must keep a record of attendance register entries for at least 3 years and inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register.

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 where they;

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children);
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

Elective Home Education:

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child then we will inform the Local Authority via Entrust at enquiries@entrust-ed.co.uk of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register. Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record.

Attendance data and targets:

The Local Authority does not prescribe individual school targets for attendance or persistent absence. School should include here a realistic but ambitious target for whole school attendance and persistent absence and may want to consider setting targets as part of its equality objectives for pupils with protected characteristics or other disadvantaged or vulnerable groups.

This data included for two terms is available annually for the previous year in October whilst full year data is not available until March of the next year. This two terms data appears in school Raiseonline reports. Full year data is important and provides the full picture of attendance patterns for the school.

Definition of persistent absence:

Persistent absentees are defined as those pupils missing around 15% or more of the typical amount of possible sessions across a given period. From September 2015 this definition will change to include pupils missing 10% or more of possible sessions. For the Academic Year 2015-16 only, data will be collected and published nationally for both measures to allow continued comparison.

Specific Procedures related to Gorsemoor:

- Parents should notify the school on the first day of absence, by telephone or letter or email (admin@gorsemoor.staffs.sch.uk), stating the reason for absence and the expected duration of the absence. If the absence continues beyond two days, the school should be notified every two days

In the case of bereavements, please let the school know as soon as possible - if someone in your family dies, Gorsemoor staff want to make sure that children are treated sensitively through their difficulties.

- Our electronic registration program follows a code system appropriate to social inclusion legislation Registration times are 8.55 am (morning) and 1.15 pm for KS1, 1.35 pm for KS2 (afternoon). Registers should be taken using the SIMS program within the first ten minutes of school morning and afternoon sessions. If SIMS is not available for any reason, staff should send a reliable pupil to the school office for a paper list of pupils. The register should be completed on the list and returned to the school office. Pupils should not be marked present unless the member of staff has seen them. Registers are a legal document and it is essential that staff use the headcount facility to check numbers.
- Being late is unacceptable except in genuine, unavoidable circumstances. Late arrivals are monitored and recorded on our electronic register system. Late arrivals are also requested to sign in at the main entrance by the School Office.
- At Gorsemoor, we will encourage good attendance and recognise it through attendance awards. At the end of each term, you will be sent a record of your child's attendance which is graded according to attendance percentage. If appropriate, your child will be rewarded for 100% attendance.
- Unauthorised absence: Any absence which has not been authorised by the school is recorded as unauthorised.
 - You will be contacted by text or phone call within two days of the start of the absence, if there has been no communication from you;
 - The Education Welfare Officer will be asked to visit after 3 days of absence without adequate explanation, or earlier in the case of a persistent absentee;
 - Parents of persistently absent pupils will be expected to attend a meeting to resolve problems of attendance;
 - Legal action will be taken if persistent problems cannot be resolved.

Involving other agencies – the Local Authority must be informed of the absence of any child for a continuous period of 10 days or more without school's permission but school should involve the Local Support Team and take due regard of safeguarding procedures where absence of a particular child is less than 10 days but presents a cause for concern. For detail see monitoring below.
- **Leave of absence during term time:** Leave can only be authorised as 'leave' by the school (not the parent). Leave will not be granted except in genuine, unavoidable circumstances. Only absences authorised by the school can be accepted. These are when:
 - The pupil is ill.
 - The pupil is absent with leave granted by the Headteacher.
 - The pupil belongs to a religious body which sets aside days for religious observance.
 - The pupil is prevented from attending by unavoidable causes.
 - The pupil has been excluded for a fixed period.
 - The pupil has been permanently excluded, but an appeal is in progress. (Once the permanent exclusion is confirmed, the pupil will be taken off the school roll on the day following the confirmation.)

The school may refuse to accept a note from parents if the explanation given is not a valid reason for absence, or if the pupil's attendance is below 90%.

- **Exclusion:** If your child has seriously misbehaved, the Headteacher may exclude him or her from the school, for a set number of days. You will be sent a letter to explain the situation and to tell you what you need to do to support your child's return to school. Pupils who have been excluded are not allowed on the school site. They must stay at home and work. They must not, by law, be in a public place during school hours. Work will be supplied by the school. On rare occasions, pupils may also be permanently excluded by the Headteacher, if their behaviour is damaging the education of other students, or compromising their safety. If this happens, you will receive a letter to explain the situation.
- Monitoring and analysis of attendance data by our Assistant Headteacher ensures appropriate action is in place to encourage good punctuality and attendance for all pupils including vulnerable groups. Unauthorised absence will be viewed seriously and steps will be taken to discover the reasons by:
 - requesting the Education Welfare Officer to visit after 3 days of absence without adequate explanation, or earlier in the case of a persistent absentee;
 - inviting the parents of persistently absent pupils to work with the school to resolve problems of attendance;
 - involving the Education Welfare Officer in overcoming the problems of non-attendance when the steps taken by the school have been unable to promote a pupil's regular attendance;
 - telephoning or texting home to enquire about the absence of persistent non-attendees and informing the EWO if this is not successful.

Should these steps fail to secure a pupil's full attendance, it may be necessary for the LA to initiate court action. In accordance with Staffordshire Local Authority Penalty Notice Protocol, fixed penalties may be applied if other strategies do not bring about an improvement in attendance. Use of Local Authority Fixed Penalty Protocol as a parental measure to improve pupil attendance in accordance with the Department of Education [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures Statutory Guidance January 2015](#)

The Headteacher is responsible for administering, communicating, reviewing and evaluating this policy.

Continued below

Legal Framework:

- The Education Act 1996 ;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2010, 2011 and 2013
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999;
- The Education Act 2002; and The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011. ;
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;

- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003;
- The Education Act 2005;
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments; and
- The Education and Skills Act 2008.
- The Equality Act 2010

Appendices:

1. [Staffordshire Code of Conduct](#) for Issuing Fixed penalty notices from 01/01/2018
2. Gorsemoor school 'Leave of Absence' request and Guidance
3. Example letter to parents related to levels of attendance
4. Department for Education [Guidance –Pupil Attendance](#) including use of national codes to record attendance or reasons for absence in registers
(Click for link)

Signatures and Date of Review:

**Appendix 1 STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Families First Targeted Services**

**STAFFORDSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITY
Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices**

See separate link on website

Appendix 2 Gorsemoor school 'Leave of Absence' request

Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

See separate link on website

Appendix 3 Example letter to parents

See separate link on website