



# **Attendance Policy**

**REVIEWED AUTUMN 2015**

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**'Green Lane - A Big School with a Big Heart'**

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## INTRODUCTION

Green Lane Primary Academy recognises that good attendance and punctuality are central to raising standards and pupil attainment. We are very proud of our attendance and have worked positively with parents to ensure the vast majority of our pupils attend school regularly and maximise their learning.

This policy underpins our Academy ethos and aims:

- To maximise attendance of all pupils, ensuring the widest range of learning opportunities.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties.
- To analyse attendance data to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Attendance Officer and Local Authority.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school on time each day, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence, or later arrival, disrupts teaching routines and so may also affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

## PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

**To help us all to focus on this we will:**

- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall into the 'Cause for Concern' category.
- Promote and celebrate good attendance with a weekly Attendance Award and certificates.
- Report to parents/carers about each child's attendance with their end of year school report.

## **ABSENCE**

Every half day absence is recorded as either Authorised or Unauthorised and this is reported to the Local Authority and DfE. Illness, from time to time, cannot be avoided but any other absence during term time will only be authorised in 'exceptional circumstances' and at the Co-Head Teachers' discretion. Medical/dental appointments should be made outside of school hours: where this is not possible, an appointment card/letter will be needed in order to authorise the absence.

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME**

There is no entitlement to leave of absence in term time and no leave will be authorised unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. All applications for leave of absence must be made to the Co-Head Teachers at least 10 days in advance of the required leave and the 'exceptional circumstances' clearly outlined on the application form.

In making a decision, the following factors will be taken into account:

- The exceptional circumstances to be considered.
- The time of year/term.
- Whether the child will miss preparation for tests or the actual tests.
- The child's previous attendance record over the past twelve months.

If an application for leave of absence is refused, the Co-Head Teacher will inform parents of the reasons. Teachers will not provide work to be done during a leave of absence as the vital teaching input will have been missed.

### **UNAUTHORISED LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

1. If a child is removed for a leave of absence without authorisation the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences will be reported to the Educational Welfare Service who have the authority to issue a Warning Notice and, in repeated cases, a Fixed Penalty Notice.
2. Where a pupil does not return to Green Lane Primary Academy immediately after the end of a period of authorised absence, then the whole of the absence will be classified as unauthorised.
3. In both of the above instances, parents may be advised by letter of the need to make an appointment to speak with one of the Head Teachers before the child is returned to school.
4. If a pupil has been continuously absent from Green Lane Primary Academy for a period of 4 weeks, and both the Governing Body and our Attendance Officer have failed after a reasonable enquiry to locate the pupil, or the pupil has failed to return from unauthorised leave, then the pupil will be regarded as 'Missing from Education' and their names will be removed from the Admissions Register at Green Lane.

N.B. If return tickets are not purchased at the time of planning the leave, failure to acquire return flight tickets would not be considered a reason for non-return within the four week period.

The effect of the removal of a pupil's name from the Admissions Register will be that when the pupil tries to return to Green Lane Primary Academy, he or she will no longer automatically have a place.

Parents are free to re-apply for admission but places are not guaranteed as Green Lane is popular and vacancies are filled very quickly. Additionally, if places are available it may not be in the same class as before the absence.

## **MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

If a child is absent due to illness, parents should notify school by telephone on the first day of absence. Attendance is carefully monitored by our Learning Mentor and PSA who follow up any unexplained absences on the first day.

Patterns of absence are closely monitored and parents are notified by letter if attendance becomes a 'Cause for Concern'. If this becomes a 'Serious Concern' our Attendance Officer will also be involved through home visits or discussions in school with parents.

Attendance definitions will be reviewed annually in line with DfE guidance.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss vital teaching and information. Pupils arriving late can also disrupt lessons. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and beyond.

### **Monitoring Lateness:**

The school day starts at **8.50 am** and we expect all children to be on their colour spots and ready to come into school when the bell rings. Registers are completed once the children are in the classroom.

Children arriving after this time enter school via a 'late door', have their names recorded for monitoring purposes and are marked late in the register. After **9.00 am**, entry is via the main entrance and the reason for lateness recorded.

Punctuality is monitored weekly by our Learning Mentor and where this becomes a concern parents are informed by letter. If lateness continues, parents are invited to come into school to discuss this further and plan actions for improvement.