St Johns Road, Tiffield, Northampton, NN12 8AA

Attendance Policy

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Authorised by: Martin Mason
Position: Chair

Review date:	Revisions/Amendment details & reasons:	Reviewed by:
01.09.25	Update – changes in am and pm registration time	AJ
25.6.24	Update	CR
19.9.24	Updated attendance code added as per DfE guidance	CR

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.

Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are legally entitled.

Supporting parents to meet their legal obligations to ensure their children attend regularly by providing early intervention and help for families, working in partnership with other agencies.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

School census guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is **Amy Johansson** and can be contacted via the school office **01604 878977, Mobile 07584 172351** or amyjohansson@thegatewayschool.co.uk.

3.4 The attendance administrator

The school attendance administrator is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

Working with the school's Attendance Support Officer to tackle persistent absence.

Advise the Pastoral Manager (approved by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The attendance administrator is **Rachael Hayward** and can be contacted via **01604 878977** or email rachaelhayward@thegatewayschool.co.uk

3.6 School Administration Staff

School Administration staff will:

Take calls from parents/carers regarding absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

Make sure their child attends every day when they are timetabled for lessons.

Call the school to report their child's absence and the reason by **9.30am** on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence) and advise when they are expected to return.

Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child, and to have the availability to collect their child during school hours should this be necessary.

Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

Attend every timetabled session on time.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

Present

Attending an approved off-site educational activity

Absent

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

The original entry

The amended entry

The reason for the amendment

The date on which the amendment was made.

The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

Whether the absence is authorised or not

The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.

The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8.45am** on each school day.

Morning registration takes place between **8.45am** (when school starts) and **9.15am.** Pupils arriving after this time are marked as late. A late mark counts as an absence but because our pupils are mostly transported to school, they can often be late through no fault of their own. In such cases common sense and discretion will be used to record a student's attendance mark.

Afternoon registration takes place at **12.20pm.**

4.2 Unplanned absence

First Day Absence Contact

The student's parent/carer must notify the school by **9.30am** if their child is unable to attend for any unavoidable reason, such as illness. (see also section 7).

Parents must notify the school by 9.30am for all subsequent day of absence.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Following up unexplained absence.

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may visit the students home address.

Identify whether the absence is approved or not.

Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.

Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.

4.4 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment by contacting the school office and providing evidence of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.5 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence level at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Below are a few examples of where exceptional circumstances may be considered. These are unique to each family.

Decisions must not be discussed or shared. Failure to adhere to confidentiality may result in decisions being voided at governor level. Examples are: (not exhaustive list)

- When a family needs to spend time together because of an immediate family members bereavement, crisis, or serious illness.
- Funeral of parent, grandparent, or sibling
- Transport was not provided by the LA when it should have been.
- Children of service personnel about to go on deployment.
- Absence could be authorised for a wedding of an immediate family member and the invitation has been provided as evidence.
- One off sporting events/performing arts competitions.
- One day of absence could be authorised for an immediate family members graduation ceremony/passing out parade.
- Operations which require recovery time.
- Holiday request for child on SEN register with complex needs who may require a quieter time away.
- Break requests for children under social care involvement or those who are looked after or previously looked after.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via https://www.thegatewayschool.co.uk/policies/ Holiday Request Form.

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

5.2 Legal sanctions

If you take your child out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions) (83.33%) over a period of six weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action. This could include:

A Penalty Notice payable up to £120 fine without further reference to you for a penalty notice this warning is valid for 12 months.

Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.00.

Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500.00 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may consider:

The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.

Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Students are rewarded with points and are recognized in attendance assemblies. They can release points for prizes, six times a year.

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance administrator monitors students' attendance daily and reports to the Senior Leadership Team weekly, or sooner should a significant concern be raised.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.

Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular support meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school. See Appendix 2.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Blended learner support
- The Bridge
- Home Visits
- Interventions and enrichment curriculum
- Vocational options.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by **Amy Johansson, Pastoral Manager**. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma, and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel because of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Sample Attendance Support Plan Document

Attendance Support Meeting

Date of meeting: _____

Name of student: _____ **Form group:** ___

Current attendance: _____ **(a copy of attendance certificate to be attached)**

Name/s of parent/carer attending: _____

Name/s of TGS staff attending: _____

Voice of the student – reason for non-attendance:	
What is going well in school	What is not going well

Action Plan

Target Attendance: _____

Student views:

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6

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ADDENDUM

to The Gateway School

Attendance Policy

The Department for Education (DfE) has implemented significant updates to school attendance guidance, aimed at enhancing student engagement and reducing absenteeism. The new guidance titled 'Working together to improve school attendance' came into force on 19th August 2024.

The new guidance includes new attendance codes and the archiving of existing codes. All records of the old attendance codes will remain unchanged, but they will no longer be used for marking attendance.

Code changes

The following codes have been added:

- C1 - Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 - Pupils on part-time timetables
- Q - Pupils unable to attend school due to lack of access arrangements
- Y1 - Unable to attend - Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
- Y2 - Unable to attend - Widespread disruption to travel.
- Y3 - Unable to attend - Part of school closed.
- Y4 - Unable to attend - Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures)
- Y5 - Unable to attend - Pupils in the criminal justice system.
- Y6 - Unable to attend - Absence due to public health guidance or law.
- Y7 - Unable to attend - Any other unavoidable cause.
- K - Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
- J1 - Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

The following codes have been removed from use:

- H - Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
- J - Approved education activity as the pupil is attending an interview
- Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Attendance codes currently in use:

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
K	Education provision provided by LA	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school, or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C1	Other Authorised Absence	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
J1	Interview	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission into another educational institution
C2	Other Authorised Absence	Pupils on part-time timetables
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.

M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English, and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
I01	Illness	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for students absent due to non-coronavirus related illness (unless the truthfulness of the claim is in question). This code should not be used for medical or dental appointments.
I02	Confirmed case of Covid-19	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for pupils who have a confirmed case of coronavirus.
The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.		
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.

These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.		
D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y1	Unable to attend	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of school closed.
Y4	Unable to attend	Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures).
Y5	Unable to attend	Pupils in the criminal justice system.
Y6	Unable to attend	Absence due to public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil Not on Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed to Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance have Changed:

With the introduction of the New National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes came into force for Penalty Notice Fines on 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

5 consecutive days of term time leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of five or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there have been ten sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on the parents future DBS certificate due to failure to safeguard a child's education.