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Policy Owner	Rebecca Brown- Head Teacher
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This Policy should be read in conjunction with	See page 3 for further legislation
Senior Attendance Champion	Rebecca Brown- Headteacher
Deputy Attendance Champion/ Attendance Officer	Rose Ryan George- School Based Family Worker

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, safety, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Our aim as a school is to work collaboratively and in a supportive way with our pupils and parents to ensure attendance is in line with national expectations.

Pupils who are late or miss school regularly are missing learning. Pupils who miss learning are in danger of not making the progress that they could if they were in school more regularly. Furthermore, regular absences from school can be stressful for some children as their school routine is disrupted. It can be difficult for them to re-join lessons after having missed the teaching in previous lessons.

Nationally at the end of KS2, pupils with the highest attainment have higher rates of attendance over key stage 2 compared to those with the lowest attainment. *(DFE: The link between attendance and attainment in an assessment year Research Report March 2025)*

What We Mean by Good Attendance

At Geoffrey Field our definition of good attendance is simple:

- **Being in school regularly**
  - Good attendance is judged as **96% or above.**
  - This means children being in school for at least 182.5 days out of the 190 school days a year.
- **Being on time every day**
  - This means being in school by 8.30am every morning ready to begin their work.

Attendance terminology:

Excellent attendance	98.0% - 100%	0-4 days missed learning
Good attendance	96.0% to 97.9%	4.5 -7.5 days missed learning
Causing concern	94.0% to 95.9%	8 – 11.5 days missed learning
At risk of persistent absence	90.0% - 93.9%	12 – 19 days missed learning
Persistent absence	Below 90%	20 or more days missed learning
Severe absence	Below 50%	95 or more days missed learning

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance and School attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010
- It also refers to:
- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

- ➢ Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- ➢ Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- ➢ The link governor for attendance is S. Appleby

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- ➢ The 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 penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the deputy head to be able to do so
- ➢ Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- ➢ Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- ➢ Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels

Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:

- Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance/ Senior Attendance Champion

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- ➢ Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- ➢ Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- ➢ Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- ➢ Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- ➢ Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- ➢ Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- ➢ Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- ➢ Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- ➢ Creating intervention or 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 Rebecca Brown (Head Teacher) and can be contacted via emailing admin@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk or by phoning the school office on 01189375475.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- ➢ Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- ➢ 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 education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- ➢ Advising the headteacher/ deputy headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Rose Ryan George (School Based Family Worker) and can be contacted via emailing admin@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk or by phoning the school office on 01189375475.

3.5 Class Teachers/ PPA Cover

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office via the online system Arbor.

3.6 School Office staff

School Office staff will:

- ➢ Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- ➢ Monitor absences recorded on Arbor/ school phone line
- ➢ Contact parents in line with the policy if no reason for absence has been noted
- ➢ Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Senior Leadership Team or the School Based Family Worker where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- ➢ All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- ➢ All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- ➢ Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend and be on time **every day** that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as:

- ➢ the child being too ill to attend
- ➢ being given permission for an absence in advance from the school

Parents must:

- ➢ Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- ➢ Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- ➢ Call the school to report their child's absence and reason by 8.30am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return- we acknowledge there may sometimes be an emergency where this is not possible
- ➢ Provide the school with **more than** 1 emergency contact number for their child

Should a child's attendance fall to a level that starts to cause concern, the parents/carers are expected to proactively engage with the school and the support they are offering to prevent the need for more formal support.

Should a child's attendance fall to a level of persistent or severe absence, the parent/carer is expected to engage with the formal support offered by the school and/or local authority to help understand their child's barriers to attendance and to prevent the need for legal intervention.

Parents/carers can report their child's absence from school in the following ways:

- Arbor– absence notification – *Reporting absence on Arbor is the school's preferred method of reporting and we encourage parents to use this method for ease.* https://support.arbor-education.com/hc/en-us/articles/19947254592029-Logging-absences-on-the-Parent-Portal-and-Arbor-App
- Phoning the school and leaving a message on the absence line 01189 375475 = Option 1
- Emailing admin@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- ➢ Attend school every day, on time.
- ➢ Use our school values and strategies to support them in being ready to learn.

4. Recording attendance

Morning Registration			
8:30am	8:40am	8.40 – 8.45am	8:50am
School Begins	**Gates Close**	**Registration**	**Late**
Parents/carers drop their child off at 8.30am and children filter directly to class for their early morning tasks.	All pupils are expected to be in school and lessons begin at 8.40am.	Morning registers are taken.	Any child arriving after 8:50am in the morning will be recorded as **late.** The minutes late are noted for patterns and monitored.

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes
- 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, where 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 3pm. Pupils should arrive at school for 8.30am. Attendance registration window closes at 8.50am. Anything after this is marked as late.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8am, or as soon as practically possible, by reporting it on the Arbor absence portal or calling the school office on 01189375475.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where 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.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

This can be done by ringing the school office or completing a 'leave of absence request' form which can be collected from the front office.

Where possible, the pupil should:

- ➢ Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- ➢ Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- ➢ Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- ➢ After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

As a school we track the minutes a child attends late to school. These are monitored alongside our attendance %. Being late to school adds up in the time a child is missing their education and the early morning tasks that take place are carefully planned to meet gaps in learning. A child who is late regularly is missing this learning.

Any parent/carer of a child who is late three or more times in a week will be rung by a member of SLT or Office to have a supportive chat about any barriers that they may be experiencing in the morning. During this chat we will remind parents/carers of the start time for pupils and start of day support available, such as breakfast club.

Where a child has already received two lateness letters in a half term and punctuality continues to be an issue, the parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting with senior leadership to discuss barriers to the child coming to school on time. Where appropriate referrals for external agency support such as Early Help may be agreed.

If the child's punctuality does not improve despite the support of the school, a referral will be made to the local authority Attendance Support Worker.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

First day of absence	● The school office will message, via Arbor, the parent/carer of any pupil who is not in school during the morning of the first day of absence to ask them to contact the school to notify them of the reason for this absence. ● If the parent/carer has not contacted the school by **9:30am,** the school office will ring the parent/carer to find out the reason for their child's absence. ● If there is no reply, they will contact the second emergency contact on the child's file to ask them to contact the parent/carer and ask them to call the school as a matter of urgency. ● If a child has a social worker, the school will notify them of any unexplained absences in line with Early Help support.
Second day of absence	● The school office will message and ring the parent/carer asking them to contact the school to find out why their child is absent from school for a second day.
Third day of absence	● The school will ring the parent and any contacts we have listed again. ● If the parent/carer does not answer the call or does not contact the school, the school office will send the parent a message via Arbor advising that a home visit will be carried out today by school after we have sought advice from children's social care. ● A home visit will be completed by members of the Senior Leadership Team. ● This may be escalated depending on the advice received from CSPOA due to concerns for the safety of the child as they have now been absent from education for three days.

After returning from an unexplained absence:
Child returns to school after an absence but parent/carer has not contacted the school and/or no reason is provided for the absence:

- ➢ If the child returns to school after an absence, the school will continue to contact the parent/carer up to the 5th day after the absence to gain a reason for the child's absence.
- ➢ If no contact can be made or no explanation given after the 5th day, all of the days the child was absent for this period will automatically be recorded as unauthorised.
- ➢ Where a child's attendance is already of concern, the school may require written evidence to support further absences, which will otherwise be classed as unauthorised.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be shared at parents evening and with you in your child's end of year report.

We will also send your child's attendance record with any monitoring letters that are sent.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur. Examples include:

- Medical emergencies (where medical paperwork is provided)
- Family emergencies (e.g. death of a relatives)

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form- A leave of absence form can be downloaded from the website link below or requested in person from the school office https://www.geoffreyfieldjuniorschool.co.uk/parent-information/ The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health 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 parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to celebrate high attendance and not just focus on poor attendance.

Promoting and Celebrating Attendance

We celebrate good attendance as this is something that impacts on children's outcomes very significantly. We monitor attendance rigorously and celebrate where attendance is good or has significantly improved.

Weekly:
HEROs (**H**ere, **E**very day, **R**eady and **O**n time):

- **Geoffrey**, the giraffe is awarded to the class with the best overall attendance (by %) for the previous week

A message is sent to all parents on our weekly newsletter congratulating the class with the highest attendance. The class also gets their name displayed in the school entrance and on the information screen in the school office.

Weekly
Class attendance is published on the school website. Attendance winners announced on the newsletter.

Half termly:
Parents/carers of pupils who were in danger of becoming persistently absent (PA – ie below 90% attendance); who are already PA or severe absence are sent a well done letter if their child's attendance has improved over the past term.

Yearly
Parents/carers are informed of attendance through reports.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis. These may involve meeting with our School Attendance Officer from RBC.

7.1 Attendance contracts and support

We use attendance contracts as a form of support when attendance sits in the PA concern range.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route

where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate. This is child and family centered and will take into account any circumstances beyond school.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree to an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

7.2 Education supervision order

- In cases where voluntary early help plans have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.
- An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.
- An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.
- In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.3 Notice to improve

If the national threshold (10 sessions or 5 school days in a 10 week period) has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for RBC.

It will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- ➢ Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met **(10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)**
- ➢ Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- ➢ Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- ➢ Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

Attendance	**Category**	**School Action**
94% - 95%	Cause for Concern	● A cause for concern letter is sent making parents/carers aware that attendance has dropped below 'good' (96%) and the number of days missed from learning that this equates to. ● The letter invites parents/carers to contact the school if they feel they would like to discuss their child's attendance or if they would like support to improve their child's attendance.
90% - 93%	Early Intervention	➢ **Amber attendance letter** sent to parents/carers informing them that their child's absence level is in danger of falling into persistent absence. ➢ The letter invites parents/carers to contact the school if they feel they would like to discuss their child's attendance or if they would like support to improve their child's attendance and discuss any medical conditions that are impacting attendance. ➢ Weekly check on pupil's attendance and contact with parent/carer. ➢ Local authority Attendance Support Worker notified if parent/carer is not willing to engage in early intervention support with the school or if attendance continues to fall.
Below 90%	Persistent Absence	➢ **Persistent Absent Letter (red)** sent to parent/carer. ➢ Local authority Attendance Support Worker informed - letter or home visit -

	Targeted Intervention	Parent/carer invited for local authority Attendance Panel Meeting with the LA Attendance Support Worker and school. ➢ The local authority will facilitate early help support from external organisations where this is needed. ➢ Weekly check on pupil's attendance and contact with parent/carer. ➢ The local authority may provide formal support which could include a formal parenting contract and/or legally binding Education Supervision Order in the Family Court. ➢ An Attendance Panel Review Meeting will be held 4-6 weeks after the initial panel meeting to review progress. ➢ Where parents/carers are not engaging with the support to improve their child's attendance, the local authority may enforce attendance through legal intervention through a Fixed Penalty Notice for irregular attendance or prosecution in the Magistrates Court for non-attendance or non-compliance of an Education Supervision Order.
Below 50%	Serve Absence	➢ **Severe Attendance Letter (red)** sent to parents/carers. ➢ Referral to social care to safeguard children's right to a full time education. ➢ Daily check on pupil's attendance and contact with parent/carer if pupil is absent. - Parental meeting with local authority Attendance Support Worker, school and other relevant outside agencies. ➢ The local authority will facilitate multi-disciplinary support for families. ➢ The local authority will provide formal support which could include a formal Parenting Contract and/or legally binding Education Supervision Order in the Family Court. ➢ Where parents/carers are not engaging with the support to improve their child's attendance, the local authority may enforce attendance through legal intervention through a Fixed Penalty Notice for irregular attendance or prosecution in the Magistrates Court for non-attendance or non-compliance of an Education Supervision Order.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority and work together to ensure reasonable adjustments and/or interventions will be timely and appropriate, well-chosen and targeted. We have many supportive strategies we can trial and put in place such as: contact with our school based family worker, access to the sensory room, start of day jobs or specific adults to meet and greet.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Some pupils with medical conditions, and some SEND, face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore our attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as they are for any other pupil.

Parents should consult the NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

Where needed, we will work with parents/carers to:

- ➢ Help overcome barriers
- ➢ Make referrals for additional support to health services or the local authority in a timely manner
- ➢ Put into place an individual healthcare plan or adjust an ECHP where necessary to help the pupil access their full-time education.
- ➢ Provide, where possible, access to educational materials
- ➢ Link with our school based family support worker for additional support

Pupils with long term illnesses, lengthy hospital stays or other health conditions may need additional support to continue their education such as alternative provision provided by the local authority or a temporary part-time timetable to meet their needs. The school will support parents/carers to ensure that their child can access the most appropriate education.

Where a short term, temporary part-time timetable is agreed as the best course of action, the school will authorise the absence for the times when the child is not in school.

Reasonable adjustments and/or interventions will be timely and appropriate, well-chosen and targeted.

8.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Where a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period of time, the school may consider one or more of the following supports to enable a positive return to school for the pupil:

- ➢ Holding a return to school meeting with parents and/or pupil
- ➢ Part-time timetable in the week/s leading up to full time return
- ➢ Pastoral support sessions prior to and during the return to school
- ➢ Adaptation of health care plan where in place

The decision about whether support is needed and which support would be most appropriate will be made between the Senior Attendance Champion, Family Worker, class teacher, pupil and parent/carer.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- ➢ Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and

- ➢ Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- ➢ Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- ➢ Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- ➢ Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- ➢ Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- ➢ Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or the school based family worker, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- ➢ Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- ➢ Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- ➢ Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- ➢ Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- ➢ Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- ➢ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- ➢ Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- ➢ Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the head teacher and chair of governors At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: ● In police detention

		● Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or ● Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Attendance Short Policy

At Geoffrey Field we expect all children to have at least good attendance.

Our definition of good attendance is simple:

- **Being in school regularly**

We class good attendance as 96% or above.

This means children being in school for at least 182.5 days out of the 190 school days a year.

- **Being on time every day**

This means being in school by 8.30am every morning.

Our aim is to work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure good attendance for their child. Where a child's attendance is of a level of concern we want to have open and honest discussions with parents/carers about in-school and out of school barriers, medical or SEND needs that may be affecting attendance and support the pupil and parent/carer to find solutions to these.

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend and be on time every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as the child being too ill to attend or being given advance permission for an absence by the school. Parents/carers must notify the school with a reason for any absences. Tel: 01189 375475 email: absence@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk

Parents/carers can only apply for absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. We do not authorise holiday in term time. Fixed penalty notices may be issued for holiday absences of 10 sessions (5 days) in a rolling 10 week cycle.

Attendance	**Days learning missed**	**Parent action**	**School action**	**Local authority action Education Welfare Service**
98% - 100% Excellent attendance	**0 – 4 days**	**Continue sending child to school regularly**	**Celebrate attendance**	**No involvement**
96% - 97% Good attendance	**4.5 – 7.5 days**	**Continue sending child to school regularly**	**Celebrate attendance**	**No involvement**
LESS THAN GOOD ATTENDANCE				
94% - 95% Cause for concern Attendance below good level expected	**8 – 11.5 days**	Ensure child is in school regularly Consider school offer of support	Early Intervention Concern letter home Offer of support	No involvement
90% - 93% At risk of Persistent Absence	**12 – 19 days**	Ensure child is in school regularly Meeting with the head teacher or school based family worker Attendance contract Engage with offer of school support	Early Intervention Amber letter home Meeting with parent/carer Focus on barriers to attendance Facilitate early help support from external agencies	Notified if attendance continues to be a concern and parent/carer does not engage with school support

Below 90% **Persistent Absence**	**20 or more days**	Ensure child is in school daily Attendance Panel Meeting with the head teacher or school based family worker and EWO Engage with formal support offer from school and LA	Targeted Intervention Red PA letter home Support to remove in school barriers to attendance Referral to Education Welfare Weekly monitoring + contact with parent/carer	Letter home or home visit Facilitate early help from external agencies to remove out of school barriers Formal and legal intervention: Parenting / Contract/ Education Supervision Order/ Fixed Penalty Notice
Below 50% **Severe Absence**	**95 or more days**	Ensure child is in school daily Multi-agency Meetings Engage with formal support offer from school and local authority	Targeted Intervention Red SA letter home Support to remove in school barriers to attendance Referral to social care Weekly monitoring + contact	Letter home or home visits Facilitate multi-agency support for family Legal intervention: Fixed Penalty Notice or court prosecution

Attendance Concerns

Red Warning Letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to inform you that your child's attendance has **dropped below 90%.**

This means they have had 20 or more days of missed learning this academic year. More than 1 in every 10 lessons has been missed. As per our attendance policy, our Attendance Welfare Support Worker will be automatically notified that your child's attendance has fallen below 90%.

We appreciate that each family's circumstances are different and we strive to work in partnership with parents to provide the best education for every child. We want to ensure that pupils and families feel well-supported and will strive to work closely with you to improve your child's attendance.

If there are any particular reasons for the recent lower attendance that you wish to discuss, please do get in touch as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Brown

Headteacher

Attendance Concerns

Amber Warning Letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

Your child's attendance has fallen recently and is currently between 90 - 93%. This means that your child's absence level is in **danger of falling into persistent absence** and equates to between 12 - 19 days of missed learning. This automatically leads to a conversation between school and local authority (Attendance Support Worker, previously EWO).

At Geoffrey Field Junior School, we consider 'Good attendance' is between 96 – 97% and I am sure you will be keen to see an improvement in your child's attendance.

We recognise that each family's circumstances are different and want to work in partnership with parents/carers to provide the best education and support for every child.

If you feel there are specific reasons for the recent low attendance that you would like to discuss, please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Brown
Headteacher

Good Improvement in Attendance

Dear Parents/Carers,

I just wanted to write to acknowledge the good improvement we have seen in attendance since Autumn half term. **They are in the top 10% of most improved for attendance since the end of October** and this will undoubtedly have a positive impact on their learning. As you know, we believe that children do their best learning when they are in school every day and when they arrive on time.

The school will continue to monitor all pupils' attendance throughout the year and keep you informed as attendance is a team effort between home and school. You will most likely hear from your child whether they have had a visit from Geoffrey the Giraffe, our attendance mascot or Ophelia the Otter, who visits the most punctual class each week. These mascots are a great way to promote good attendance which we class as above **96% or above**.

Thank you for all your undertakings in supporting your child's improvement in their attendance and we hope to continue to see more of them over the course of the year.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Brown
Headteacher