



# Attendance Policy

September 2022

## Good Attendance

### Why good attendance is important

Good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, safety, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

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. Regular absences from school can be stressful for some children as their school routine is disrupted and it can be difficult for them to re-join lessons after having missed 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.

### What we mean by good attendance

At Geoffrey Field 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 8.40am every morning.

### Attendance terminology:

Excellent attendance	98% - 100%	0-4 days missed learning
Good attendance	96% or 97%	4.5 -7.5 days missed learning
Causing concern	95% or 94%	8 – 11.5 days missed learning
At risk of persistent absence	93% - 90%	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

## **Sharing a child's attendance information with parents/carers**

The school will share information with parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels at the parent consultations in the Autumn and Spring terms and in the annual end of year report. This will detail the attendance percentage and the number of days of learning that have been missed because of absence.

Where attendance drops below 96% the school will contact parents/carers separately to parent consultations or the end of year report so that parents are aware that their child's attendance is causing concern and to work together on a plan to improve this.

## **Promoting and Celebrating Attendance**

We will always want to celebrate the good things that are happening in school and attendance is no exception. We monitor attendance rigorously and are always looking to celebrate where attendance is good or where it has significantly improved.

### Weekly:

- Each week the attendance of each class is announced in the whole school assembly. The class with the top attendance for the previous week get to have Geoffrey, the school mascot, in their class for the week.
- A message is sent to all parents congratulating the class with the highest attendance.
- The class also get their name displayed in the school entrance and on the information screen in the school office.
- Parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern will be sent a well done message each week their child has been in school every day.

### Half termly:

- Class attendance is published in the newsletter.
- Parents/carers of pupils who were in danger of becoming persistent absence (PA), who are already PA or severe absence are sent a well done letter if their child's attendance has improved over the past term

### Termly:

- We run an attendance challenge three times a year. All pupils who attain 96% or above attendance in the period of the challenge are awarded a certificate and put into a draw for a new bike.
- The class with the best overall attendance each term is awarded an afternoon treat.

### Yearly:

- All pupils whose attendance over the year is 96% or above are awarded a good attendance certificate and badge. The badges are the same colour as the year group that the pupil is in so they can collect the four different coloured attendance badges over their time at the school.
- Pupils with 100% attendance over the year are also awarded an additional prize.

### End of Key Stage:

- Pupils who have 96% or above attendance for each of their years at the school are awarded an attendance medal.
- Pupils who have 100% over their entire time at the school are awarded an attendance trophy.

The promotion and celebrations section of the policy will be reviewed and may be suspended if:

- school closes or is partially closed due to a COVID lockdown or another national emergency
- there is a period in which there is a high percentage of pupils in the school needing to self-isolate because of COVID.

This is to ensure that pupils who are legally not allowed to come to school are not disadvantaged in terms of rewards or celebrations for attendance.

## **Day to day management of attendance**

### **Coming to school on time**

#### **Morning start time and registers**

- All pupils must be in school by **8.40am each morning**.
- Parent/carers can drop their child off from 8.30am or between 7.30 – 7.50am if the child is booked into breakfast club.
- Morning registers are taken between 8.40 – 8.50am.
- Any child not in school by 8.50am will need to sign in the late book and will be recorded as late.
- The registers close at 9.10am. Any pupil arriving after 9.10am will have been marked as absent for the morning.

#### **Afternoon start time and registers**

Afternoon registration is different for different year groups because of our staggered lunches. Any pupil that goes home for lunch must be back in school in time for the afternoon registration.

- Year 3 and Year 5 afternoons start at 1.15pm. Pupils arriving after 1.30pm will be marked as absent for the afternoon session.
- Year 4 and Year 6 afternoons start at 1.30pm. Pupils arriving after 1.45pm will be marked as absent for the afternoon session.

### **Parent/Carer Responsibilities**

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
- the school asking you to keep your child at home to comply with the latest COVID guidance

Should a child's attendance fall to a level that starts to cause concern, the parent/carer is 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.

If the school or part of the school has to close and we move to remote learning, parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure that their child attends daily weekday remote live lessons and completes and submits work that is set for them on Google Classroom. Registers are kept of live lesson attendance and work completion each day. Where a child's special needs mean that they would be unable to access live lessons or access Google Classroom, it is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure the work packs provided by the school are completed and returned. Refer to Remote Learning Policy for more details.

### **Reporting your child's absence**

If your child is unable to attend school, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the school on the first morning of absence to explain the reason why their child is unable to attend school and how long they are likely to be absent for.

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

#### **Before 8am or after 4pm**

- Parent Mail app – absence notification
- Emailing [absence@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk](mailto:absence@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk) --

#### **Between 8am – 4pm**

- Phoning the school and leaving a message on the absence line 01189 375475 Option 1
- Parent Mail app – absence notification

### **Action the school will take if absence is not reported by a parent/carer**

First day of absence:

- The school office will message, via Parent Mail, 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 lunchtime, the school office will ring the parent/carer to ask them to explain the reason for their child's absence.
- If a child has a social worker, the school will notify them of any unexplained absences

Second day of absence:

- The school office will message and ring the parent/carer asking them to contact the school to explain why their child is absence from school for a second day.
- 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.

Third day of absence:

- The school will ring the parent.
- 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 Parent Mail advising that unless they contact the school before 3pm, the school will request a welfare check on the family from Thames Valley Police as we are concerned for the safety of the child as they have now been missing from education for three days.

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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> day, all of the days the child was absent for this period will automatically be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Medical appointments**

We ask that parents/carers make routine medical appointments such as dentist check-ups or optician appointments out of school hours or during the school holidays.

If a child must attend a routine medical appointment during school hours, we expect the child to come into school for any lessons before the appointment and return to school after the appointment.

Where a child needs time off school for a non-routine medical appointment, such as a hospital appointment or operation, we ask for proof of appointment be shared with the school office for the child's attendance records.

### **Granting leave of absence**

Only exceptional circumstances will be considered for authorised leave of absence. Parents should make a written request to the headteacher in advance of the requested leave of absence.

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/>

### **Holidays & Extended Overseas Visits**

We do not authorise any holiday in term time and do not class holidays as an exceptional reason for absence.

We do not authorise extended leave to visit relatives overseas during term time. If a parent/carer chooses to take their child on an extended overseas visit and this extends into term time or is wholly in term time, the school may discuss this with the admissions team at Reading Borough Council and notify parents/carers that their child's school place is at risk if the pupil is absent for 20 or more school days and there is no confirmed date for the child to imminently return from overseas and return to school. We may request evidence of proof of a return date such as confirmation of travel arrangements where a pupil has been absent for more than 20 days.

### **Entrance exams**

If a pupil is sitting an entrance exam for another school such as the 11+ entrance test, we will authorise absence for the day that the pupil sits the test. However, we will not authorise pupils to take study leave during term time to prepare for the test. Any preparation needs to be scheduled outside of normal school hours.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Each parent/carer of the child may be issued with a fixed penalty notice if the parent chooses to remove their child from school for a holiday, extended visits overseas or study leave in term time. Fixed Penalty Notices are issued where more than 15 sessions (7.5 school days) are missed over a school year.

## **COVID Absence**

We will support all parents/carers to follow the latest national guidance on self-isolation for pupils who have COVID. Absence in line with latest self-isolation guidance for children and/or schools will be authorised by the school.

Parents/carers should report to the school if their child has tested positive for COVID and the school will inform them of the latest advice around self-isolation, including how many days their child should remain away from school.

## **Geoffrey Field Junior Attendance Staff**

**Miss Hancock - Headteacher:  
Attendance Lead**

**TBC  
Attendance Governor**

**Mrs Burton - Pastoral & Family Worker (Mon- Thurs)  
Attendance concerns, supporting parents/carers to improve attendance for their child, long term absence.**

You can contact Mrs Burton:

*On the Y3 & Y6 entrance in the mornings*

*On the Y4 & Y5 entrance in the afternoons*

*Tel: 01189 375475 Option 3 email: [admin@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk)*

**Mrs Pilgrim & Mrs Bryan - School Office  
Day to day attendance, medical conditions, health care plans**

You can contact the school office about attendance and pupil absence at

*Tel: 01189375475 email: [absence@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk](mailto:absence@geoffreyfield-jun.reading.sch.uk)*

## **Contact about attendance with the school office**

<b>Parent/carers should contact the school office to:</b>	<b>The school office will contact parents/carers if:</b>
Inform school that your child cannot attend school (See Parent/Carer Responsibility section)	Their child is absent from school and the parent/carer has not notified the school on the morning of the first day of absence
Explain the reason why your child cannot attend school	To ask for a reason for the absence of a child if this has not been provided
Check if you are unsure whether to bring your child to school if they are unwell	Your child is in school but is too unwell to remain in school
Explain if their child is going to be late on a particular day and the reason why	They need to send a lateness letter because of poor punctuality
Share evidence of medical appointments that need to take place during the school day	To ask for evidence of a medical appointment if the appointment must take place during school hours
Notify the school about a medical condition that may impact attendance	Put together a health care plan, if needed, to support your child to access full time education
To request an exceptional leave of absence form (also available on the school website)	To notify you of the outcome of any requests for exceptional leave

## Contact about attendance with Mrs Burton – Pastoral & Family Worker

<b>Parent/carers should contact Mrs Burton if:</b>	<b>Mrs Burton will contact parents/carers:</b>
They are concerned about their child's attendance or punctuality	If there are concerns about their child's attendance or lateness
They feel there are barriers in school or at home that could impact or are impacting their child's attendance or punctuality	To discuss and suggest ways in which barriers to coming to school or coming on time could be resolved
Mrs Burton has contacted the parent/carer and asked them to make an appointment to discuss their child's attendance	To inform parents whether attendance is improving or not if it is already a concern
	To discuss return to school support for pupils who have had a long absence from school

## **Monitoring of attendance**

We rigorously monitor attendance as part of our duty to ensure that all pupils have access to their legal right of a full time education.

### Daily attendance

- We check that every child is in school every day.
- If a child is absent and we have not been notified by a parent/carer that their child will be absent, we will contact parents/carers on the morning of the first day of absence to check where their child is and to ensure that their child is safe if the child usually walks to school alone.
- If a child has a social worker, we will inform the child's social worker of any unexplained or regular absences.

### Weekly analysis:

- Class attendance
  - The attendance of each class is analysed each week. Any abnormalities, such as low attendance for a particular class or on a particular day for a class are explored.
- Individual pupils who have Persistent or Severe Absence
  - The attendance of individual pupils who fall into either category or who are in danger of falling into PA will be monitored weekly by the Pastoral & Family Worker.
  - The Pastoral & Family worker will contact parents directly if their child has been absent in any week to discuss this.
  - The school will send a well done message if the child has been in school every day in a week.

### Half termly analysis:

Each half term, we analyse and evaluate the attendance and absence of:

- The whole school and each cohort, looking at overall attendance, authorised absence and unauthorised absence, persistent absence and severe absence.

For each of these categories we analyse attendance for the following sub groups:

- Gender
- SEND
- Pupils who meet the Pupil Premium criteria
- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals
- Pupils with a social worker
- Looked after pupils

- Statistically significant ethnicity groups (2023/23 these groups are White British, Pakistani and Black African)
- Pupils whose attendance has fallen below good – 95% or 94%
  - Pupils identified whose attendance has dropped below good
  - Letter sent to parents notifying them of attendance drop and offering support for the pupil and/or parent/carer to improve attendance.
- Pupils in danger of Persistent Absence
  - The list of all pupils in danger of falling into Persistent Absence is reviewed, including whether attendance has improved over the last half term.
  - Actions are agreed for each pupil
- Persistent and Severe Absence
  - The list of all pupils with attendance at Persistent or Severe absence is reviewed, including whether attendance has improved over the last half term.
  - Pupils will be discussed with the LA Attendance Support Worker at the termly review meeting.
  - Actions are agreed for each pupil

### Benchmarking

The school benchmarks school attendance data against local, regional and national levels using:

- The DfE attendance analysis tool
- Weekly attendance data provide by the DfE - ‘Attendance In Education And Early Years Settings During The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic’
- Attendance data for Reading primary schools provided by the local authority
- Annual national attendance data for all state primary schools and for similar schools to Geoffrey Field

### Governors

The named Governor responsible for attendance is TBC.

The attendance Governor visits school three times a year to meet with those responsible for managing different aspects of attendance to:

- Understand and see in action the school day to day procedures
- Look in detail at attendance and absence data analysis
- Look at the impact of attendance initiatives
- Check that staff understand and have adequate training on attendance for their role
- Write a report for the Full Governing Body

The headteacher provides a written report to the Full Governing Body at each meeting detailing:

- Attendance and absence data for the school, cohorts and groups of pupils
- Persistent and severe absence data
- Benchmarking comparisons
- Attendance improvement initiatives and their impact



## **Support and actions to improve attendance**

Where school attendance is of concern, the school will work with pupils and parents/carers to remove any in school or out of school barriers to attendance or punctuality. We aim to have open conversations with pupils and parents/carers which build strong and trusting relationships by understanding the difficulties that there may be around attending school or being on time. Together, we will work to put the right support in place to improve attendance or punctuality, including getting early help if appropriate for any out of school issues that are affecting the child's attendance.

If, despite these efforts, the absence intensifies, the level of support will also increase, including working with the local authority and other services to safeguard the child's right to a full time education.

### **Lateness**

- Children who are not in school by 8.50am must enter through the school office and sign in the late book.
- Any parent/carer of a child who is late three or more times in a week will be sent a Lateness Reminder Letter. This reminds 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, a Continued Lateness Letter will be sent. The Pastoral & Family Worker will follow this up with a phone call to the parent/carer to discuss barriers to the child coming to school on time and support that can be put in place for the child and/or parent/carer to improve the situation. 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.

### **Attendance 95% and 94% - Early Intervention**

- Cause for concern letter sent making parents/carers aware that attendance has dropped below good and number of days of missed learning this equates to. 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.

### **Attendance 93% and below- 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.
- Parent/carer requested to attend meeting with Pastoral & Family Worker to discuss any in school or out of school barriers or any medical conditions that are impacting attendance.
- Parent-School attendance contract drawn up with parent/carer to address barriers and referrals agreed to any outside agency support that may be needed. This will be reviewed at the end of the half term.
- Weekly check on pupil's attendance and contact with parent/carer.
- Pupil attendance card – pupil collects stamps for each week they have been in school every day.
- 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.

### Persistent absence – below 90% - Targeted Intervention

- Red Persistent Absent Letter sent to parent/carer.
- Local authority Attendance Support Worker informed - letter or home visit
- 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.
- Pupil attendance card – pupil collects stamps for each week they have been in school every day.
- 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.

### Severe absence – below 50% - Targeted Intervention

- Red Severe Attendance Letter sent to parents/carers.
- Referral to social care to safeguard child's right to a fulltime 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.

### **Pupils with medical conditions and SEND that may impact attendance**

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.

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.

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.

### **Support for pupils after a lengthy 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:

- Return to school meeting
- 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 Pastoral & Family Worker, class teacher, pupil and parent/carer.

### **Sharing information and working collaboratively with external partners**

When a pupil's attendance is at risk of becoming or is at a level of Persistent Absence or Severe Absence, the school will work with the local authority and other local partners, including schools where siblings of the child attends, to share attendances and absence data for individual pupils. The aim of sharing this information will be to:

- Access the best support for the pupil and family to enable the child to access full time education every day
- Safeguard the child's right to a full time education

The school will also share with the local authority the names and addresses of any pupil:

- Who is added or removed from the school's register
- Who fails to attend school regularly
- Who has missed school for 10 days or more with the absence being recorded as unauthorised by the school

The school shares daily pupil level attendance data with the DfE through their School Daily Attendance Collection service.

## **Other relevant legislation, guidance and policies**

### Relevant legislation to this policy:

The Education Act 2010  
The Children Act 1989  
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006  
The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007  
The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

### Relevant government guidance

Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour  
Children missing education  
Keeping children safe in education  
Working together to safeguard children  
Elective home education  
Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions  
Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs  
Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges

### Relevant school policies

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  
Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions  
Remote Learning Policy  
Public Sector Equality Duty