

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Approved June 2020

Review by July 2023

Little Gaddesden School aims to encourage all pupils to achieve the maximum level of attendance.

Under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly the school where he/she is a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorize an absence, and only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

**Rights and Responsibilities**

**School**

We expect pupils to attend school regularly and on time, in a fit condition to learn. The staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will investigate all absenteeism and lateness. The staff will support the attendance of the pupils and will deal with problems that may lead to non-attendance.

The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality. We will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. Pupils must feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent or late and that follow up action will be taken.

- pupils who find punctuality difficult will be set targets for improvement.
- pupils who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will have work sent home when appropriate.
- the Headteacher will make an annual report to the Governing Body on attendance matters.
- the Headteacher will liaise with external agencies when appropriate.
- every effort will be made to match the curriculum to the pupils' needs.

**Parents and Pupils**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and in a condition to learn.

Parents are responsible for informing their child's school if he/she is absent. This should be done on the first day of absence. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed in writing when the child returns to school.

Parents should not book holidays during term time. Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. The school holds individual records of attendance/punctuality for each pupil.

### **Registration**

Registers will be called promptly in the class at 8.50am and 1.00pm at the latest and recorded on the office computer.

If a pupil is persistently late, the parents will be contacted.

Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the pupil has to be recorded as 'unauthorised absent' for that session.

The Headteacher will inspect all registers each half-term to ensure that correct procedures are being followed, total being entered etc.

### **Authorised/Unauthorised Absence**

Legislation which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 makes it clear that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is for the Headteacher to determine what constitutes exceptional circumstances and the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

The Governing Body policy is that the Headteacher is empowered to issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence and may apply to the Local Authority to do so.

### **Procedures for following up Absences**

If a pupil is absent without an explanation the office will contact the parents.

If a pupil is persistently absent the parents will be invited to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

If a pupil returns after a period of absence and fails to bring a note, or the explanation offered by the note is unsatisfactory, the Headteacher will contact the parents and subsequently the Attendance Improvement Officer.