

# Attendance Policy

Golcar Junior, Infant & Nursery School



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	2.1 - August 2025 – Policy review, updates late information and fine costs.	

## **School Vision:**

At Golcar J I & N School our central purpose is to provide a safe, challenging and child friendly environment in which everyone is inspired to think for themselves, learn and achieve.

There is clear evidence from educational research to show the link between school attendance and educational achievement. Children with high levels of attendance achieve consistently higher results than those whose attendance is low.

It is well recognised that good, consistent attendance at school is crucial to a child or young person's prospects.

Reducing absence from school continues to be a priority both nationally and locally, because missing school damages pupils' attainment levels, disrupts school routines, affects the learning of others and can leave young people vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and crime.

Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. This policy is designed to enable children to gain maximum benefit from their school career. We all need to reinforce the message that **'every lesson counts'**

## **Aims**

- To maximise children's attendance at school
- To emphasise to parents and children the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- To put in place systems to minimise pupil absences.
- To ensure positive and consistent communication between home and school
- To implement an effective system of rewards and sanctions.
- To liaise with the LA and other agencies in connection with pupil attendance.

## **Procedures**

### **Lates**

Children are expected to arrive punctually. If your child misses the start of the school day then they can miss work and vital information from their teacher.

Being late disrupts lessons, may cause embarrassment for the child and also encourages absence.

All children are registered in their classroom at the beginning of each school session by a teaching member of staff. Registration 8.50am, registers will close at 9am.

Children who arrive after 9.00am to 9.15am will be marked as 'L' late will be recorded as late.

All late arrivals must report to the front office entrance where details will be taken for the reason for lateness. This information will also be recorded on the electronic register by a member of the admin team.

Children who arrive between 9.15am and 9.30am will be marked with a 'U' as late after registers closed. If your child arrives after 9.30am, in accordance with regulations, whilst your child is marked as present on site, the register will be marked as an unauthorised absence. If a child is late more than 5 times, per half term, parents will be informed by letter.

If a child continues to be late then the school will seek engagement from parents through a meeting with the headteacher/senior leaders or behaviour inclusion worker to discuss this matter further and resolve.

**You can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school.**

Arriving 10 minutes late every day is the equivalent to almost a whole hour of lessons missed each week for your child, which over the year adds up to nearly 2 weeks of learning.

**Sickness**

If your child is unwell and has to stay at home then parents are asked to inform us of this absence either by telephone or email by 9am on the first day of illness.

If the school have not been informed of a child's absence by 9.30am, the school will contact the parent to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. This will be done via telephone call. We call this first day calling. If the school office is unable to contact parents to ascertain reasons for absence, the headteacher/senior leadership team will be informed and will seek to make contact via any of the named contacts provided by parents for their child.

If senior leaders are unable to make contact with parents/named contacts for the pupil by 10:30 am then they make the decision for a home visit to be carried out by two staff members.

If an absence remains unexplained and there has still been no contact then the child's absence be will marked as unauthorised on the register and the school may seek advice from the Kirklees Education Safeguarding Team.

For safeguarding purposes this will then be recorded and logged and may result in the information being passed to Duty & Assessment.

Termly monitoring will be carried out by the school who will monitor students whose absence or punctuality is causing concern.

A letter will be sent out by the headteacher to parents of pupils who have less than 95% attendance each term. If a child's attendance does not improve, a letter may be issued requesting parents to arrange a meeting with the head teacher.

The persistent absence (PA) threshold means a pupil has to only be absent from school for around 19 days (38 sessions) or more to be described as a persistent absentee, regardless of whether absences are authorised or not. This equates to attendance of 90% or less. A letter will be sent out by the headteacher of pupils who are at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. This will then be reviewed after four weeks. If no improvement is seen, advice will be sought from Kirklees Education Safeguarding regarding next steps. Maintaining levels of persistent absence could lead to the school using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

**Medical Appointments**

We ask that parents please make dentist/medical appointments outside of school hours, where possible. If however you child does need to attend an appointment during school hours then please inform the school, in advance, either by letter, email or by filling in a medical slip which can be found in the information trays outside the main office.

Children leaving or arriving into school before or after an appointment must be collected by a parent, or other known adult, from the main office in order to sign the child in and out of school. If your child attends regular medical appointments then please ensure that the office are aware of all the dates in advance.

Children who are persistently late/absent may be asked to provide proof of attendance to a medical appointment.

### ***Authorised/Unauthorised absence.***

**Authorised absence** is where the reason offered by the parents is accepted by the school as valid, for example:

- Illness (Where the above procedures are adhered to)
- Visits to the doctor, hospital or dentist (Where the above procedures are adhered to)
- Bereavement of a close family member
- Where a pupil is absent with leave granted by the school
- Where the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs
- Absence for special occasions (e.g. graduation of a parent or sibling) may be authorised where schools have regard to factors such as the nature of the event, its frequency (i.e. a "one-off"), prior notification and the overall attendance pattern of the student.

**Unauthorised absence** is where no reasons are offered or the reason is not accepted by the school as valid, for example:

- Day trips and holidays
- Truancy
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive too late at school, after 9.30am
- Persistent minor ailments without the support of a doctor's note
- Minding the house
- Shopping trips, visits to the hairdresser
- Birthday treats

If the explanations given are not considered valid, they should be regarded as unauthorised. This type of absence can lead to school using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

At the end of the school's academic year, any student who has 100% attendance will be presented with a certificate.

Please note any absence including illness, medical appointments, term time leave, punctuality and unauthorised absence will affect your child's attendance rate and a letter will be sent home to make you aware that your child's absence is a cause for concern.

### ***Family Holidays or Extended Leave in Term Time***

The amendments that came into force in September 2013 to the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations make it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

It is up to the head teachers to determine whether circumstances are 'exceptional' and is up to head teachers to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school, if leave is granted.

It is acceptable to take a student's previous record in to account when making decisions.

**90% attendance, 10% absence – is the equivalent of missing half a day per week every week of the year**

Details of school term dates are published on the website and are available from the school office so that parents can plan holidays around them.

Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Absence during term time for holidays is therefore not considered an exceptional circumstance.

Parents must complete a leave of absence form (available from the school office) before any holiday is taken. Holiday leave cannot be authorised retrospectively. In such cases, it will be regarded as unauthorised absence.

No parent can demand leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday by right. All requests for holiday leave must go to the head teacher for authorisation.

A letter will be sent to the parents informing them if their request for leave of absence has been granted.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. These figures will appear in the school profile and the SEF. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their child(ren) attends.

School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

If an absence is unauthorised and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and noted in your child's record. This may result in each parent of each child being issued with a fixed term penalty notice of £80 if paid within 28 days, which goes up to £160 if paid within 42 days. Non-payment of a Penalty Notice will normally trigger a prosecution (under the provisions of section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or under the provisions of S103 (3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). The prosecution can only be for the original offence and NOT for the non-payment of the Penalty Notice.

