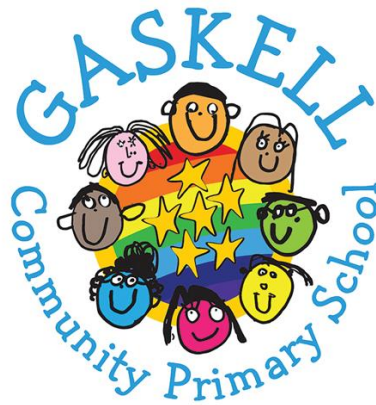


“Together
We Shine”



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Gaskell Community Primary School Attendance Policy

Approved by:

Last reviewed: July 2022

Next review: July 2023

Information for Parents and carers:

Your child's education is really important. Regular attendance at school increases your child's chance of getting good qualifications and a good job. Children need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in primary and secondary school.

Legal Requirements:

The school adheres to the legal requirements laid down by the DFE and:

- is open to all pupils for 380 sessions each school year
- maintains computerised attendance registers in accordance with regulations accurately records and monitors all absenteeism and lateness
- clearly distinguishes between absence which is authorised and absence which is unauthorised according to criteria laid down by the DFE
- submits absence returns and publishes information relating to levels of attendance and absence and includes details of these in the school's prospectus and annual reports
- sets annual targets to reduce absence and submit these targets in accordance with the relevant regulations

In order to improve the overall attendance of pupils in school we aim to:

- Make attendance and punctuality a **priority** for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- Implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Develop effective partnerships with supporting services and agencies through the Local Authority 'Early Intervention' Team
- Recognise and address the needs of the individual pupils when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Staff Responsibilities:

The Head Teacher and attendance team will:

- regularly communicate attendance information to parents through the school website, through newsletters, through parents' evenings or through other media
- collect and make effective use of attendance data to monitor progress/trends and set targets for improvement – for individuals, classes, year groups and the whole school
- provide clear guidance to staff on the practice of registration and on such connected issues as the appropriate categorisation of absence
- identify clear procedures to identify and follow up all absence and lateness (allocating individual staff roles and responsibilities)

- Make provision for first-day of absence contact in relation to pupils who are known to be poor attendees or who might otherwise be considered to be at risk.
- identify a range of both proactive and reactive strategies to promote attendance and address absenteeism, especially persistent absenteeism
- provide for a clear and unambiguous hierarchy of sanctions (see below)
- develop strategies which recognise and celebrate pupils' attendance achievements
- set up effective networks for liaising with other involved agencies and services such as Educational Social Workers (ESW)
- stress to parents the importance of continuity of learning, particularly in relation to family holidays during term-time
- Help create an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance, addressing school-based causes of poor attendance such as bullying, racism, an inappropriate curriculum, etc.

Class Teachers will:

- Take the attendance register at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions in accordance with appropriate guidance.
- Inform the Attendance Officer of any absentees, particularly those who are a cause for concern.

The Office Staff will:

- take telephone messages from parents/carers on the first day of absence and inform class teachers of reasons for absence so that registers can be changed accordingly
- text parents to find out reasons for absence when no notification has been given, particularly with children who are a cause for concern
- monitor registers to ensure guidelines are followed and entries are accurate
- produce electronic reports where appropriate
- Maintain a 'late gate' list in order to monitor punctuality
- Collect the names of absentees each morning; patterns will be analysed.
- Report to the Attendance Officer on a daily basis.

Governors will:

- discuss attendance data, including trends and patterns at the Curriculum Committee meetings, acting upon any issues which arise
- ensure that attendance data is communicated to parents through the school website
- review the Attendance Policy on an annual basis

Parents should:

- ensure that their children attend the school regularly, on time, properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn, as required by law
- ring the office **before 9:15am** when your child is absent or it will be unauthorised
- ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance
- always notify the school as soon as possible - on the first morning - of any absence
- not book family holidays during term-time; where this is unavoidable, parents should put their request in writing to the Head Teacher, outlining the reasons for the absence
- talk to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend so that problems can be dealt with at an early stage

The Law:

The law says parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. In exceptional circumstances, schools can allow parents to take their child out of class for up to 5 days in a school year. If a child is taken out of school without prior permission from the Head Teacher of the school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and noted on the child's record. This may result in parents being issued with a fixed penalty notice of £60 if paid within 28 days, which goes up to £120 if paid within 42 days. If this is not paid within 42 days, parents could face prosecution and a fine of £1000- £2500 and/ or 3 months imprisonment

Please see Bolton Council School Attendance code of contact and Penalty Notices:
[Information about school attendance and penalty notices \(bolton.gov.uk\)](http://bolton.gov.uk)

[Penalty Notice Code of Conduct \(bolton.gov.uk\)](http://bolton.gov.uk)

The Decision When deciding whether to allow term time leave consideration is given to:

- The child's age
- The time and duration of the leave
- The child's record of attendance
- The child's ability
- Previous term time leave

What Parents should consider:

There are times during a school year when a child may experience particular problems because of term time leave such as:

- Close to exams or tests, for example Standard Attainment Tests (SAT's) in Years 2 and 6
- During the first year at a new school
- At the beginning of a new school term

If you wish to take your child out of school during term time you will need to complete an application form and make an appointment to see our Head Teacher, Miss Barlow before you book your holiday.

If school refuses your request for term time leave and your child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and noted in your child's record and a penalty notice will be issued.

Persistent absence:

If you child has an attendance of 90% or less, the following procedure will be followed:

- If your child is absent from school, the attendance officer will be in touch to find out the reason why. If the reason is deemed unnecessary, we will ask that you bring your child in to school.
- If you have 5 unauthorised absences, you will be issued with a warning letter.
- If you continue to have 5 more unauthorised absences (10 in total) you will be issued with a penalty notice.
- After a penalty notice, if further absences continue, you will be invited in school for a meeting with Mrs Blakemore. We will put a 'parental contract' in place and set expectations for your child's attendance to improve. This will be over a four week

period. This meeting will be supportive and school will offer any support if needed which will be outlined in the plan.

- In some cases, we will open an Early Help to support families that need it.
- If the parental contract and attendance targets agreed have not been met school will report this to the local authority. The Local Authority will consider whether or not to report you for prosecution under section 4441 or 4441 (A) of the Education Act 1996.

Currently the potential penalties for a failure to ensure regular school attendance of a child include a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.

Lateness:

School starts at **8:50am**. We expect that all children are 'in the line at ten to nine'. Those children that are not will receive a late mark in the register.

If your child arrives at school after **9:00am** this will be classed as an unauthorised late in the register.

If your child has 5 unauthorised late marks, you will be issued with a warning letter.

If your child has a further 5 unauthorised late marks, you will be issued with a fine.

The fixed penalty notice is £60 if paid within 28 days, which goes up to £120 if paid within 42 days.

Attendance incentives:

We recognise that good attendance should be celebrated and rewarded. At Gaskell, we have many attendance incentives that run throughout the school year.

- **Hot spot.** School will choose 3 days at random. Whichever children are in on all 3 days will go into a 'hotspot' draw. Children will then be chosen to enjoy a special reward. Previous rewards included bowling and come dine with Lee.
- **Class battles:** Classes battle against each other to win the attendance reward at the end of the half term. We reveal which class in each year group has the highest attendance percentage for the week and that class receives a piece of a puzzle. Whichever class has the most puzzle pieces at the end of half term wins the attendance reward. Previous rewards included a pizza party and a 100ft bouncy assault course.
- **100 % attendance:** The children that have got 100 % attendance receive a reward at the end of the school year. Children are rewarded with a certificate, a medal and a special reward. Previous rewards included a fun day on the field and a McDonald's happy meal.
- **Reception:** We have separate rewards for the younger children as we recognise that they need more of an instant reward. In Autumn term we choose two weeks, if the children get 100 % attendance in these weeks, they get a bouncy castle reward. In Spring term we extend this to three weeks, if the children get 100 % attendance in these weeks, they get a popcorn and movie reward. In Summer term we extend this to four weeks, if the children get 100 % attendance in these weeks, they get a teddy bears picnic reward. Children in reception with attendance of 90% or less have a 'I love school' book. Every Friday they will tick in their book each day they have come to school, the children with 100 % attendance that week get rewarded with a sticker.

Attendance ladder:

Make sure your child is in school every day! If your child misses just one day, it can have a huge impact on their learning.

Take a look at the attendance ladder below:



Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities.