



‘AIMING HIGH’

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 2024



## Glynne Primary School Attendance Policy

*Glynne Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.*

*Glynne Primary School is a Rights Respecting School and we recognise that all pupils have a right to an education and therefore should attend every day.*

[Article 28](#) of the UNICEF rights of a child states; Every child has the right to an education.

This policy adheres to the principles under Data Protection Law. For further information please see the data protection policy on our website.

### **Principles**

**Attendance is everyone's responsibility to ensure all children are in full time education. Everyone at Glynne is a leader in driving good attendance.**

Children should be at school, on time every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Children enter school from 8.40am and registration begins at 8.50am.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is better not to cover up their absence or give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half- day absence from school has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always communicated.

**Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, like illness or other unavoidable cause.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Children having time off for birthdays, day trips and holidays.

However leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g bereavement) or for medical appointments that need to be in school time.

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together; this is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Support Service. The ESS will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Local Authority.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact ESS themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

The Equality Act of 2010 states that there should be 'reasonable adjustments for disabled people.'

The staff members who monitor attendance (in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team) will consider individual circumstances before applying the procedures detailed in this policy.

### **Children who are absent from education**

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

Our school response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Glynne Primary School will use the following guidance on school attendance (Working together to improve school attendance) which includes information on

how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

## **Procedures**

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

On the first day of the child's absence the parent should telephone the school by 9.30am to explain the child's absence; alternatively a parent may send a note. The Integris register may be updated with a note in the register box to explain absence.

If a child has a medical appointment, then the school should be notified.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Deputy Headteacher if absences persist;
- Develop through communication with parents/carers a support plan to improve attendance.
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer if attendance is consistently below 90% and the support plan has not made a sustained improvement in attendance.

## **Holidays in Term Time**

The Headteacher should not be expected to agree to an absence for a holiday in term time. Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time, both educationally and socially.

The law states that children should not be taken out of school during term time for holidays. The Headteacher is unable to authorise any holidays unless it is exceptional circumstances. Each application is considered individually.

If parents need to take their child out of school during term time they should:

- Request the time off for their child at least 20 days before taking the time off.
- Never ask for time off during test periods, unless for exceptional circumstances

If parents would like to request an absence from school during term time, an application for 'Leave of Absence' must be completed at least 20 days prior to the absence. Each case will be considered individually and parents will receive a written reply stating whether the application has been granted.

If the application is rejected and parents continue to take their child out of school then it could be referred to the Education Support Service who may issue a Warning Notice advising that you may be liable to a Penalty Notice.

Penalty notices are fines imposed on parents. They are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends school.

The school follows the guidance on these fines which was made statutory in August 2024.

### National Threshold

All schools must consider a penalty notice when a total of 10 or more sessions (there are 2 sessions per school day) of unauthorised absence are taken within a ten-week rolling period.

### Who may be fined?

Penalty notices may be issued to **each** parent (for each child) who allow their child to be absent from school for ten or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling ten-week school period.

### Structure of penalty notices

The first time a penalty notice is issued the fine will be £160 **per parent, per child**. If this is paid within 28 days it will be reduced to £80.

The second penalty notice will be £160 per parent per child. The lower rate is not available.

If another unauthorised absence over the threshold is taken within a three-year period, other legal measures will be considered to address the absence concerns.

## **Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

### **How we manage lateness:**

If a child arrives late, after 8.50am but prior to 9.30am, the child must enter the School via the main front door, report to the School Office. The Office staff will then mark them "late but present", if this is appropriate. If a child is late after 9.30am the previous procedure will apply but the child will be marked as "unauthorised absence" unless a reasonable explanation is provided i.e. dentist/doctor.

The Office Staff scrutinise the registers each day to ensure accurate absence recording and to flag up any unexplained absences marked as 'N' by the class teacher, which are awaiting explanation.

### **How we manage attendance:**

The administration staff monitor weekly attendance figures, regularly checking using INTEGRIS, discussing any issues with the Deputy Head teacher (DH). The DH will monitor attendance every half term and will ascertain those children falling below 90% attendance or whose attendance is declining rapidly. A parent will be contacted by letter in the first instance if there is a concern about a child's attendance. If attendance does not improve over the next half term following the first letter a meeting will be arranged by the Deputy Head.

If attendance continues to be poor a second letter will be issued detailing the exact attendance figures for the child and how this equates to sessions and learning time missed. The DH will contact the family directly to offer support to encourage improved attendance. A support plan will be put into place at this stage.

The second letter states that if attendance does not improve after school support then the matter will be passed to the ESS.

Following this, the DH may contact the ESS and will prepare reports of attendance in school. The ESS will contact parents and may conduct a home visit if the problem persists.

The LA has a statutory duty to monitor school attendance and ESS will monitor attendance once a term. This helps in the identification of pupils whose attendance is causing concern.

### **Strategies for promoting good attendance**

Glynne Primary School will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The Rights Respecting school ethos must demonstrate that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken.

- Attendance data will be collected and monitored in order to inform school policy and practice.
- A weekly attendance award is presented in assemblies to the class who has the best attendance for the week.
- The percentage attendance figures for the previous week will be displayed in the classroom.
- Pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the year will be awarded a prize.
- Parents will be regularly reminded (via newsletters, parents evening) of the importance of good attendance.

### **Penalty Notices**

Please note this section links closely to our Behaviour Policy.

- Parents/Carers can be issued with Penalty Notices if a pupil who has been excluded contravenes the details set out in the Exclusion Letter as to their whereabouts during school hours throughout the duration of that Exclusion.
- Parents/Carers can be issued with Penalty Notices should their child take any Leave of Absence if they have not requested this, in writing, to the Head teacher (and/or completed a Leave of Absence Application) detailing the 'exceptional circumstances' they would want the Head teacher to take into consideration in deciding if any Leave of Absence can be agreed and Authorised.

- Parent/Carers can be issued with Penalty Notices should any Leave of Absence be taken without any Application/Request being made and agreed.
- Parents/Carers should ensure that any Request/Application is made in advance (at least 20 school days) of any Leave of Absence to be taken.
- Parents/Carers should consider ensuring that they know if any Leave of Absence requested can be authorised by the Head teacher before planning, booking or paying for any part of a Leave of Absence.
- Legislation dictates that a Leave of Absence Requests/Application can only be considered if it is from a Parent/Carer with whom the pupil normally lives.
- Leave of Absence Requests/Applications from a Parent/Carer that a pupil does not normally live with or from any other family member cannot be considered under any circumstances.

**People responsible for attendance matters in the school are:**

The Head Teacher, Miss T Powell, The Deputy Headteacher, Mr J Bennett and the school office staff Mrs L Henshaw and Mrs V Hamar.

Mr J Bennett