



GAMLINGAY
VILLAGE PRIMARY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Written by:	Senior Leadership Team
Approved by:	Governing Body
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AIMS

At Gamlingay Village Primary School we believe that children should attend school every day of the academic year. We do all that we can to encourage children good attendance. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is a positive ethos and culture that promotes a love of learning. In order to achieve this aim, we work hard to make our school a happy and rewarding environment for all. We also ensure that children who are unable to attend school, due to ill-health, are supported as appropriate.

ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

Under the Education Regulations 1995, the Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that the school keeps accurate attendance registers. At Gamlingay Village Primary School, attendance registers record the attendance of children who are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon session each day. They also record whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

THE SCHOOL YEAR

Children are expected to attend school for 190 days each year. One day counts as a morning and an afternoon session, a total of 380 sessions per year.

ATTENDANCE AND PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Parent/ Carers are responsible for making sure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn five between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 December; if they turn five between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory age on 31 March; if they turn five between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August.

PUNCTUALITY

It is important that children attend school on time each day; this is the parent/carer's responsibility. It is very disruptive for a class and the teacher, when a child is late after a lesson has started and it is equally distressing for a child to enter a lesson late.

Any child arriving after 9am must be signed in by a parent at the school office via the Sign IN App. School cannot accept a reason for lateness from a child. If no satisfactory explanation is received from a parent, by the end of one week, the absence will remain as an unauthorised absence.

At Gamlingay Village Primary School we expect children to be collected by a parent or a named adult, until Year 4. Class teachers should be informed of collection arrangements each morning, if they differ from the norm.

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

The school doors open at 8.45am. Children enter through individual class doors and proceed quickly into their classrooms for a starter activity provided by their class teacher. During this time, attendance registers are taken by the class teacher.

Morning registration starts at 8.50am and closes at 9am. If a child arrives during registration he/she will be marked as late (L). After 9am this becomes an Unauthorised Absence (U) for that session and cannot be changed. The afternoon register is taken in the same way at 1pm.

Parents/Carers are required to provide a satisfactory explanation as to why their child is late before an attendance code may be changed. It is important to understand that not all explanations given by parents/ carers are considered to be authorised absence and care should be taken with any reason given. Explanations from children are not acceptable, which means that the unauthorised mark given originally, will remain on your child's attendance record for that academic year.

ILLNESS AND MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

If your child is ill, please notify school on **the first day of absence** and each morning during the illness. This is the parent's responsibility. The answer machine is checked daily. Leave a message stating; name of child; class; the reason for absence; name of the person leaving the message and the time. You may also e-mail the office with this information if you prefer – office@gamlingayvp.org

No child should attend school until 48 hours after they have suffered sickness and/or diarrhoea.

If on the first day of absence a valid reason is not received a no reason mark will be coded against the child's name. If no valid reason is given within one week by a parent, then that absence will remain as unauthorised absence and cannot be changed.

Every effort should be made to arrange dental/medical appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, your child should be returned to school as soon as possible after the appointment. We may ask for evidence of the appointment for our records. Parent/carers are required to sign their child(ren) in and out of school via our electronic signing in and out system.

If your child becomes unwell during the school day, we will make every effort to contact you, so it is important that we have up to date contact numbers. Should your contact details change, please inform the school office as soon as possible.

ABSENCE

When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register. The school office will contact the parent/carer on the first day of absence if no reason for absence has been received.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher will inform the school office. The school will then contact the parent/carer immediately in order to check on the safety of the child, and a safe and well check may be undertaken.

**HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME ARE NOT AUTHORISED and may incur a
penalty fine**

*In exceptional circumstances, parent/carers may seek authorisation from the
Headteacher.*

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE and PERSISTENT ABSENCE

The national expectation for attendance is 96% or more.

All attendance and absence are monitored closely by the school; figures for whole school attendance are published. Records of your child's attendance are kept year on year for comparison.

Should your child's attendance fall below 90% in a six-week period then this is classed as persistent absence. All absence is followed up by the school initially. Sometimes, absence may involve the support and intervention of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

We use the 'three letter' system to alert parents to the fact that there may be a problem with attendance. If a pattern of absence or regular absences emerge, during monitoring, you will receive a letter from the Headteacher (attendance falling below 95%) outlining the concerns. You will be invited into school to discuss this child's file with the Headteacher and to agree targets. A record of this meeting will be kept on your file. Should there be no improvement in attendance the EWO will become involved, and this may incur a fixed penalty; it may even incur a custodial sentence.

THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is able to support and advise parent/carers on many issues including frequent lateness or regular absence from school. The EWO visits regularly to monitor whole school and individual attendance. Any persistent lateness or absence may be followed up, by letter, home visits and even fixed penalties or more lengthy and costly penalties or prosecution in a magistrate's court.

DEFINITIONS OF ABSENCE

Authorised absence – an absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received a reason from a parent/carer as required, an example of this could be when a child has been ill.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences and supported absences by parents will be classed as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, or if a parent keeps a child at home because the parent or relative is ill, this is not an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence – an absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher.

Exceptional Circumstances – some absences may be authorised due to exceptional circumstances. This could be:

- A short absence to attend a special religious/cultural festival, may constitute an exceptional circumstance
- Bereavement in the immediate family

Requests for holidays during school time, because the cost is cheaper, or parents have not been able to take the time during school holidays, **does not** constitute exceptional circumstances

LONG TERM ABSENCE

Occasionally, a child is absent from school due to illness or a medical reason, sometimes this might be long and protracted. In this instance the school will work with the family and outside support services to provide the best possible solution, which may include arrangements for tutoring out of school.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Governing Board of Gamlingay Village Primary School to monitor overall attendance. Regular attendance and absence figures are discussed by the Governing Board. The Governors work closely with the school to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as possible.

The school keeps accurate attendance records on file. Parents receive a copy of their child's annual attendance alongside the written annual report in July.

Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. If they are aware of any unexpected absence during the school day, they will alert the school office and/or Headteacher as soon as possible.

POLICY AGREEMENT AND REVIEW

This policy was agreed by staff in Autumn 2023.

The policy was agreed by the Governing Body in Autumn 2023 Implementation of the policy was in the Autumn term 2023

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner, should there be changes to the DfE legislation and guidance.