

**Gateway Federation**  
**Gorsley Goffs Primary, Lea Church of**  
**England Primary, Gateway Lodge Nursery**



## Attendance Policy

Written by:	SLT in consultation with staff, pupils and parents.
Date	August 2024
Date for review	August 2027
Signed Chair of Governors	M Dunning
Signed Head Teacher.	S Manning
Updated	5/9/2025

This policy has been considered by a member of the SLT, in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality

## **Information for Parents** **“Attendance matters”**

*This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. (Working together to improve school attendance, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024)*

### **As a school we aim to:**

- Maintain a high level of good attendance.
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

### **Good attendance is important because:**

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attendance helps make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attendance makes school routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Regular attendance helps to make a more positive transfer to secondary school.

### **As a parent you can help us by:**

- Contacting your child's school on the first morning of all absences with the reason and indicating when the child may return by **9:30 am at the latest**. Absences can also be emailed to: [admin@gorsleygoffs.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:admin@gorsleygoffs.hereford.sch.uk) or [parents@lea-primary.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:parents@lea-primary.hereford.sch.uk)
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks.
- Avoid taking your child on holiday during term time.
- Keep your child's school updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.
- Keep the school updated of any changes of address or telephone number.

### **We shall:**

- Make a call by 9:30 a.m. to establish absence on the first day, if no reason is received.
- We may make a home visit if we have not had a response within a reasonable time.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns we may request for the police to carry out a home safety visit.
- If we are not satisfied with a reason of absence given we will contact parents to provide more detailed information.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school prospectus and the Home-School agreement.
- Publish our attendance rates in the school newsletter.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance in school newsletters.

- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his termly school report.
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance.
- If we continue to have concerns we will make a referral to Social Services.
- Monitor school attendance data to help the school support parents on improving attendance.

### **Changes in effect from September 2016, quoted from Children Missing Education Department for Education.**

- All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations 1 (Annex A). This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.
- When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).
- Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii) (see Annex A).
- All schools must also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.
- When adding a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.

### **Authorised Absence**

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences”. For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery.
- Parents or other siblings illness.
- Vehicle break down.
- Going shopping or for a haircut.
- Going for a family day out.
- Because it is your child's birthday.

- Sleeping in after a late night.
- Absence to take cheaper holidays.
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority.

### **Punctuality**

- Morning registration is at **8.45.am**. This is the time your child must be in the line in the playground so you need to ensure your child is at school by **8.40am**.
- **Registration closes at 8:45**, your child will be marked late if they arrive after this time.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected.
- Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DFE guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of the school day will be registered at your child's after school club and parents/carers charged accordingly.

### **Supporting Persistent Absence**

- The school aims to communicate and support parents to improve attendance.
- Additional internal support can be provided such as; ELSA, meetings with parents, Early Help Referrals, Play Therapy, CAMHS referrals.
- Support from our SENDCo can be provided if relevant.

### **Term Time Leave of Absence**

**As from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 the government have made changes to the Education Regulations with regards to schools being able to grant leave of absence. The amendments clearly state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence for family holidays for any child during term time. If there are exceptional circumstances this will be dealt with by the Governing Body/Executive Head/Head of School.**

### **PENALTY NOTICES**

#### **IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE LAW REGARDING PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, is being introduced following changes to the law. These new Government regulations will come into effect from 19 August 2024

In the case of an unauthorised leave of absence the Headteacher may make a referral to Herefordshire Council who may issue a penalty notice or initiate legal proceedings against you under the Education Ave 1996/Section 444.

- **Per parent, per child**
  - Penalty notice fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for unauthorised absences, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.
- **10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period**
  - Penalty notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period. These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks).
- **First offence**
  - The first time a penalty notice is issued the amount will be:
    - £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days
    - Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days
- **Second offence (within 3 years)**
  - The second time a penalty notice is issued the amount will be:
    - £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days
    - There will be no offer of a reduction in rate
- **Third offence and any further offences (within 3 years)**
  - The third time an offence is committed for unauthorised absences a penalty notice will not be issued. The local authority will instead consider other legal options to improve attendance and this could include prosecution. If prosecution in the Magistrates Court is deemed appropriate, fines can be up to £2500.
- **New two penalty notice limit in a three-year period**
  - The three-year rolling period starts for parents when the first penalty notice is issued to them after the 19 August 2024.

Further information can be found at: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) or

Herefordshire County Council Penalty Notice Local Code of Conduct

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/26980/penalty-notice-local-code-of-conduct-2024>

## **Leavers**

If your child is leaving the school other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parents are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving (a form is available at the school office).
- Confirm the school has your current mobile phone number.
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred.
- Let the school know when you move.

## **Children Missing Education**

If parents/carers fail to provide the school with the following information then a child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Social Services, the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

**Appendix 1:**



**THE GATEWAY FEDERATION**  
**Gorsley Goffs Primary School**  
**Lea Church of England Primary School and Gateway Lodge Nursery**

**Request for a leave of absence during term time**

Dear Parent/Carer

When children are taken out of school in term time, it can seriously affect their education. Absence disrupts the continuity of a child's learning. Children miss the teaching that takes place on the days that they are away and they may find it difficult to understand lessons when they return. Children need to attend school regularly in order to make good progress and achieve all that they can.

The attached form is a request to take your child out of school during term time. Please read the following guidance points before completing the form.

**No holidays taken in term time can be authorised** unless there are exceptional circumstances. This ruling has not been made by our governing body or Herefordshire County Council but applies, by law, to all schools in England.

If holidays are taken in circumstances that do not meet these criteria they will not be authorised and parents or carers may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or other legal action. This is where 10 or more sessions have been unauthorised. A session is a morning or afternoon e.g. 5 days equals 10 sessions. Where a fine is issued it is to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of **£160 per child/per parent** if paid within the 28 days which reduces to £80 per child/per parent if paid within 21 days.

Yours sincerely

Simon Manning, Executive Head Teacher

**Please note:**

When children do not attend lessons we cannot send the work home, as they will have missed the teaching that is needed for them to complete it with understanding. You will need to consider how you will ensure that your child does not fall behind with their learning and have gaps in their education due to this absence

# Exceptional leave of absence request

Leave request details			
<b>Childs Name :</b>			
<b>DOB:</b>		<b>Year group/Class:</b>	
<b>Date From/To :</b>		<b>Total Days :</b>	
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Total Sessions (2 per day):</b>	
<b>Please detail below your <span style="color: red;">EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES</span> for this request:</b>			
<b>BOTH PARENTS MUST SIGN AND COMPLETE BELOW</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>			<b>Date:</b>
<b>Signature:</b>			<b>Date:</b>

	Parent/carer	Parent/carer
<b>Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss)</b>		
<b>Surname</b>		
<b>Forename</b>		
<b>Date of Birth</b>		
<b>Relationship to pupil</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Telephone number:</b>		
<b>Email address:</b>		
<b>Pupil resides with:</b>		

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Dear Parent/Carer

Further to your recent request for absence during term time:

Leave of absence authorised between ..... and .....

I am unable to authorise this absence, therefore this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Signed by.....Headteacher                      Date .....