



Attendance Policy

Date: September 2023
Review Due: September 2024

Reviewed Annually

Ethos and Aims

At Lordswood we believe that punctuality and good attendance are essential for all pupils, to ensure they can benefit fully from the Proud Traditions, Wide Horizons and High Achievement that Griffin Schools offer. We aim to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any barriers to this are identified and acted upon as soon as possible. The attendance expectation is 96%, however the school aims for 100% attendance for pupils and promotes good punctuality now and for the future.

Parent and carers should be aware that if they fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually they may be prosecuted under section 444 Education Act 1996 by the Local Authority.

Regular and punctual attendance provides the means for children to take advantage of all educational opportunities. It ensures continuity, promotes responsibility and a purpose which can be carried into adult life. A pupil who is late or absent, misses the introduction to a lesson or a new concept, causes disruption to others and is likely to have missed the instructions to the lesson, thus putting themselves at a disadvantage.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents, Guardians and Pupils

Parents/carers of children of compulsory school age are legally required to ensure that they receive fulltime education. Parents/carers are also responsible for informing the school of any absence as soon as possible; the school expects to be contacted on each day of the absence. This can be done by telephoning the school, by personal contact, emailing the office (office@lordswood-gst.org) or by written note. The reason for absence and when the child is expected to return to school should be stated. Pupils are expected to arrive at school punctually:

All children in Years R-6 are expected to be in school 8.45am to 3.15pm.

Nursery children are expected between 8.30am and 11.30am / 12.15pm and 3.15pm

Morning Registration is taken in class between:

Nursery - 8.30am – 8.40am
Year R - 8.45am – 8.55am
KS1 - 8.45am – 8.55am
KS2 - 8.45 am – 8.55am

Afternoon Registration:

Nursery - 12.15pm – 12.20pm
Year R - 12.45pm – 12.50pm
Year 1 - 12.50pm – 12.55pm
Year 2 - 1.00pm – 1.05pm
KS2 - 1.20pm – 1.25pm

Lordswood Lane and Courtfield gates will open at 8.35am and 3.05pm.

Should a child arrive after 9.25am they will be given an unauthorised absence mark (U Code).

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Parents are expected to notify the school of changes to contact details and if there is a change in home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.

Persistent lateness can be seen as an unauthorised absence and is managed in the same way as poor attendance by the school. School starts 8.45am for all pupils in Years R-6. Pupils should arrive at school 5 minutes before so they can enter the school calmly with their class. If families decide to send their child to a different school they must inform Lordswood School as soon as possible in writing.

Breakfast Club

Lordswood runs an established Breakfast Club for Years R to 6. The aim of the club is to promote punctuality and good attendance. Breakfast Club may be a useful option for families where there are barriers to punctual attendance. Breakfast Club is run by trained school staff and is open from 7.30 am.

The School will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere;
- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's/carer's concerns;
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality;
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of absence when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain absence;
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. **Although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body will be required.**
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition;
- Inform parents/carers of the % attendance of their child/children at parents evening and in their annual report;
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly;
- Liaise with outside agencies when necessary to support families.
- Meet regularly with the Attendance Advisory Practitioners (AAPs) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality;
- Invite parents/carers in for Attendance Clinics to discuss reasons for absence and to offer support to improve attendance.
- Invite parents to a school attendance concern meeting to discuss unauthorised absences prior to a referral being made.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the AAPs. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by AAPs may result in further actions, eg a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order;
- Notify AAPs after 5 (10 sessions) days unexplained absence.
- Request medical evidence after 3 days of unexplained absences.
- Request medical evidence from persistent absentees following a medical evidence letter being sent.

The attendance lead is Jayne Lusinski.

Leave of Absence

The school can approve absence. The school does not have to accept the parent/carers offered explanation as a valid cause for absence. There are certain circumstances outlined in the DfE guidelines that the school categorises as authorised absence. The guidelines are based on the needs of the community and the kinds of reasons parent/carers may wish their children to take leave of absence. The school follows the guidelines for authorising absence as listed below:

- Illness, emergency medical, dental and hospital appointments. It is expected that routine check-ups, including hospital review appointments should, as far as possible, be made during holiday periods or after school hours.
- Family bereavements
- Attending a religious observance
- Off-site activities (These fall into two categories; educational visits or individual activities e.g. an examination)
- Suspensions (Suspended pupils are treated as authorised absence. They will remain on the school's register unless permanently excluded when the situation has to be reviewed)

Medical Evidence

From the third day of absence, medical evidence will be required and a return to school date.

If a child's attendance becomes a cause for concern, the parents/carers will be invited to attend an Attendance Clinic to discuss any issues with the school and the school's AAP.

Unauthorised Absences

The 1996 Education Act clearly states, "if any child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, the parents/cares of the child shall be guilty of an offence". The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 also introduced the use of penalty notices as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. Failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school may result in prosecution in the courts or a penalty notice being issued.

In the event of 10 unauthorised sessions recorded, a referral may be made to AASA. If your child incurs 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a six-week period, a penalty notice may be issued. The amount payable is £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice, within 28 days, will result in a court prosecution for your child's irregular school attendance.

Holidays during Term Time

Lordswood does not authorise a leave of absence for extended periods during term times e.g. extended holidays or visiting family abroad.

If parents are requesting a leave of absence they need to:

- Complete a leave of absence form and submit to the school office at least 2 weeks prior to requested date.
- A letter will be sent from the office with a response.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

- If the holiday is taken, a further letter is sent from the office informing that a penalty notice referral will be made to the Attendance Advisory Service.
- The Attendance Advisory Service will issue a holiday penalty notice.

From September, the school, in conjunction with Medway Council Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA) will be monitoring your child's attendance. In the event of 10 unauthorised sessions recorded, a referral will be made to AASSA. Prior to this you will be invited to a School attendance concern meeting at the school.

The 1996 Education Act clearly states, "if any child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, the parents/cares of the child shall be guilty of an offence". The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 also introduced the use of penalty notices as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. Failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school may result in prosecution in the courts or a penalty notice being issued.

We operate the DfE zero tolerance approach to extended holidays and we notify parents/carers of this so that they can make an informed decision about removing children from school for this reason. We refer children with unauthorised extended holiday absence to the local authority who arranges for fixed penalty fines to be issued. The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the fine may result in the Local Authority prosecuting.

Late Collection of Children

Persistent late collections are monitored and the school attempts to support parents/carers with this by helping to develop strategies to improve their punctuality in collecting their children.

School Procedure

The school monitors attendance and lateness weekly. Issues relating to pupil attendance are followed up during regular review periods. Attendance is a high priority and is celebrated weekly in assembly with the presentation of a trophy. 100% attendance certificates are issued termly and at the end of the year. The class with the highest attendance chooses a reward at the end of the year.

The Department for Education expects a child to have an annual school attendance of not less than 96%. By working together, we aim that every child achieves that goal.

Head:	Jayne Lusinski
Pastoral Manager:	Rachel Andrews
Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP):	Bernice Behan



Learning Without Limits

LORDSWOOD SCHOOL

Lordswood Lane, Chatham, Kent ME5 8NN

T. 01634 336767 | office@lordswood-gst.org | www.lordswood-gst.org

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Dear

Excellent attendance means fulfilling potential

Lordswood School is committed to ensuring all children achieve their full academic potential and believes that good attendance means good learning.

The positive impact that regular attendance has on a child reaching their full academic potential and the benefits this brings to their emotional and social well-being. The school's expectation for pupil's attendance is at least 96%.

From September, the school, in conjunction with Medway Council Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA) will be monitoring your child's attendance. In the event of 10 unauthorised sessions recorded, a referral will be made to AASSA.

The 1996 Education Act clearly states, "if any child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, the parents/cares of the child shall be guilty of an offence". The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 also introduced the use of penalty notices as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. Failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school may result in prosecution in the courts or a penalty notice being issued.

In the event of 10 unauthorised sessions recorded, a referral may be made to AASSA. If your child incurs 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a six-week period, a penalty notice may be issued resulting in a £60 per parent per child, penalty notice, increasing to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice, within 28 days, will result in a court prosecution for your child's irregular school attendance.

I do hope that you will work with us to continue to improve attendance for the benefit of your child's education. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Lusinski
Head

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T. 01634 336767 | office@lordswood-gst.org | www.lordswood-gst.org

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Declining Leave of Absence

Name of Child:

Date of Birth:

Dates of Absence:

Further to your request for your child to be absent from school during term time.

I am sure you will agree that it is important that your child's education is consistent and uninterrupted. We will not authorise term time holidays during the 190 days each year designated for school and expect parents/carers to use the thirteen weeks school holidays available during the year.

The Government and Local Authority states that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless exceptional circumstances. Although we sympathise with your situation, unfortunately it is not exceptional. It is your decision to take your child out of school and therefore if the leave of absence is taken it will be recorded as unauthorised and will be subject to a fine. I realise this may be disappointing news to you.

From September 2013, the DfE has amended the Education (penalty notices) (England) Regulations 2007, so that each parent/carers who receives a Penalty Notice for taking their child out of school during term time will have to pay £60 per parent, per child, within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. Please be aware non-payment of these fines will result in court proceedings. The Attendance Advisory Service for School and Academies (AASSA) issue penalty notices which are issued after the holiday is taken to each parent/carers per child; in line with our school attendance policy.

No further absences will be authorised during this academic year. Should your child be absent due to illness then medical evidence will be requested in order for absence to be authorised. Should your child's attendance fall below the expected attendance level of 96% then our Attendance Advisory Practitioner will be informed and further action may be taken.

If you wish to appeal the decision and you feel that the reason for leave of absence fulfils the exceptional circumstances criteria, then you should write to me upon receipt of this letter.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Lusinski
Head



A member of the Griffin Schools Trust

Head Jayne Lusinski

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Dear Parent/Carer

Application for Holiday During Term Time

Name of Child:

Date of Birth:

Dates of Absence:

You applied for leave of absence for your child between _____ to _____ which as we informed you, was not authorised by the Head.

Consequently, the leave of absence has now been taken it has been recorded as unauthorised absence and your child/ren has returned to school, the details have been passed to the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) for the issue of a Penalty Notice.

The Department for Education (2007 regulations) state that parent/carers who receive a penalty notice for taking their child out of school during term time are required to pay this fine (£60) per parent per child within 21 days or the amount will increase (£120) and is expected to be settled within 28 days. Please be aware non-payment of these penalty notices will result in Court proceedings.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Lusinski
Head



A member of the Griffin Schools Trust

Head Jayne Lusinski