

# Attendance policy

Glade Academy



Approved by:	Academy Committee	Date: 17.01.24.
Last reviewed on:	17.01.24.	
Next review due by:	17.01.25.	

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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Tracey McCarthy and can be contacted via 01842 811580 / [office@gla.eastern-mat.co.uk](mailto:office@gla.eastern-mat.co.uk)

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Judith George and can be contacted via 01842 811580 or [office@gla.eastern-mat.co.uk](mailto:office@gla.eastern-mat.co.uk).

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9am each day.

### 3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the DSL or class teacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### 3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence if necessary, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 up-to-date emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8.50am** on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until **9am**. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.35pm for EYFS and KS1 and will be kept open until 12.40pm. The register for second session will be taken at 1.05pm for KS2 and will be kept open until 1.10pm.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff, or by leaving a message on Class Dojo (see also section 7).

The school office number is 01842 811580, an answering machine is in operation between the hours of 4.30pm and 8am, and over each weekend, and messages left are picked up and logged at 8am each working day.

Messages can be sent directly to the school office using Class Dojo.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents and carers can request a form from the school office to fill in with relevant details and send back to the school office.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The designated senior lead for attendance and attendance officer meet on a fortnightly basis to interrogate data and information around punctuality and attendance. Any concerns raised within these meetings will be followed up by:

- an appropriately worded letter being sent home to the child/ren's family;
- an invitation to the school's Breakfast Club to support children being on time for school (this will be funded by the school if the child is in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding;
- a conversation / meeting between the child's class teacher and the parent / carer to ascertain whether anything is happening at home which the school is unaware of, and whether the school can provide any support with the situation.

## 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may try all emergency contact details, send a message on Class Dojo and on the email address logged on Pupil Asset, carry out a home visit, inform the social worker if appropriate, contact the police on the non-emergency number to request a welfare check.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

## 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through:

- individual interim school reports in the Autumn and Spring Terms;
- individual summative school year report in the Summer Term;
- updating on absence for specific children where a social worker or Family Support Worker has been assigned to the family;
- updating on absence during Keeping in Touch Meetings (KIT meetings) and Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs) whenever absence is a concern.

# 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

## 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Parents are armed forces personnel on leave from an overseas posting;
- A family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis. Applications will be considered individually.

Glade Academy will not authorize a non-medical absence during periods of national tests, i.e. SaTS.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least three weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- We set half-termly class targets from October half-term onwards, which are based on the whole school target and on the national average...we handicap these based on the class' previous attendance. The class which gets nearest to or most exceeds their target will be awarded a Class Party, on the afternoon of their choice – COGs (our PTA) will donate £25.00 to the class to pay for party food etc. Class attendance percentages will be shared with the children on a weekly basis during the Celebration Assemblies...these will also be displayed on a prominent notice board;
- The names of all children who have achieved 100% attendance each week will go into weekly draws for a £5.00 giftcard;
- The names of all children who have achieved 100% attendance for each whole half-term will go into half-termly draws for a £10.00 giftcard;
- The children who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole year will each be awarded a certificate in an end of year celebration assembly, and one name will be drawn and will receive a £20.00 giftcard.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Lead and Attendance Officer meet on a fortnightly basis to scrutinise all attendance data. They initially discuss the needs of all children across the school with an attendance percentage of less than 90% for that school year. They then discuss all children with an attendance percentage of less than 95% for that school year.

Possible outcomes of these meetings:

- one of a range of letters will be sent to the parents / carers, this will include information flagging up concerns around the level of current attendance, flagging up the reasons why good attendance is important, and offering support with any issues affecting the child and / or their family;
- our PSA, the class teacher or a senior lead could contact the family to organize a meeting in order to explore the reasons for the attendance, to talk about the reasons why good attendance is important, and to offer appropriate support;
- relevant staff might work intensively with the child/ren to encourage improved attendance;
- the school might offer a place at our Breakfast Club...this would be funded for children in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding;
- the school could invite the parents / carers into school for a meeting to discuss setting up an attendance contract.

## 7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, the SENCo and Student and Family Support Team (SaFS Team) to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

## 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Refer families to our Student and Family Support Team for support with improving attendance
- Offer School Nurse Referrals
- Draw up Attendance Contracts with appropriate families to support improved attendance
- Send out an appropriately worded letter to share attendance concerns with families, which also offers support and contact details for accessing this

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Tracey McCarthy. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

### Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>/</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations

<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day