



Race Leys
Junior School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date: September 2018
Review Due: September 2019

Reviewed Annually

Ethos and Aims

At Race Leys Junior School 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 school aims at 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, carers 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 requires parents to contact the school office by 9.30am on each day of the absence, giving us the name of your child, their class, the reason for the absence and the likely duration of the absence. This can be done by telephoning the school, by personal contact, email or by written note. Parents must also contact the school *in writing* in advance if a child is required to leave school during the day or earlier than usual due to a planned medical appointment.

Pupils are expected to arrive at school punctually. The doors are opened at 8.40am and closed at 8.55am. Any late arriving pupils will need to enter via the front reception after 8.55am and will be marked as late. The school will follow up with families any concerns arising due to extended or frequent patterns of lateness.

Under 2018 GDPR regulations the school is required to have at least **three** points of contact for a child. This is to ensure that should an emergency arise the school can always make contact with a named adult for every pupil. In order to ensure we can contact you in the event of any emergency, families are required to notify the school of any changes to contact details as soon as these arise.

We would also ask parents and carers to contact the school promptly in the event of any a change in home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.

If families decide to send their child to a different school they must inform Race Leys Junior School as soon as possible in writing, using the appropriate form. This is available from the school office. This information is then shared with the local authority's admissions team. Any request for a change in school should be discussed with the head before the submission of the form.

In order to maximize pupil engagement and attendance, the school will:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere
- provide a safe learning environment
- provide a sympathetic response to any concerns relating to the child
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual children'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 percentage attendance of their child/children at parents' evenings and in the child's annual report
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly
- liaise with outside agencies when necessary to support families
- meet regularly with Local Authority Attendance Officers (ACE) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the ACE team. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by ACE officer may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order
- notify the Local Authority (LA) after 5 (10 sessions) days sickness
- notify the ACE team after 5 (10 sessions) days unexplained absence.

Leave of Absence

Only the school can approve pupil 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)
- Exclusion (Excluded pupils are treated as authorised absence. They will remain on the school's register unless permanently excluded when the situation has to be reviewed)

N.B. Race Leys Junior School does not authorise a leave of absence for extended periods during term times e.g. extended holidays or visiting family abroad.

Medical Evidence

On the third day of any unexplained absence a letter will be sent to families of absent children requesting medical evidence and a return to school date. If medical evidence is not provided, the school or ACE officer may arrange a home visit. If a child's attendance becomes a cause for concern, the parents/carers will be invited to attend an attendance review meeting at the school to discuss any issues with school leaders and/or the school's ACE officer.

Term Time Absence for family holiday

Race Leys Junior School has adopted the DfE requirement of a 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.

The school will refer children with unauthorised extended holiday absence to the local authority who will review the case and may issue a fixed penalty fine.

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.

Under DfE guidelines, holiday absence may be authorised by the school but only in exceptional circumstances. The DfE (Department for Education) defines these exceptional circumstances as follows:

- Aa
- Bb
- Cc
- dd

Any unauthorised absence referral will be made to the ACE team if, in any 6 weeks, 10 unauthorised sessions have been recorded.

Breakfast Club

Race Leys Junior School runs an established Breakfast Club. 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 staff and is open from 7.30 am.

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 to the class with the highest attendance.

100% attendance certificates are issued termly and at the end of the year. A prize draw takes place at the end of each term for all pupils who have achieved 100% attendance.

The Department for Education expects a child to have an annual school attendance of not less than 96.4%. By working together we hope that every child achieves that goal.

Head of School:

Deputy Head / Pastoral Leda: Y5 and 6

Assistant Head and Pastoral Lead: Y3 and 4

Suzanne Edwards

Patrick Luke

Matt Bevan