



Gawber Primary School



Attendance Policy

September 2024

Review date September 2025

Person responsible for the Policy	Dawn Bradshaw / Jo Hebden
Date Agreed by Governors	14 th October 2024
Review Date	September 2025
Is this Policy to appear on the school website	Yes

Headteacher's Signature	D Bradshaw
Date	14.10.24
Chair of Governor's Signature	E Casimir
Date	14.10.24

At Gawber we seek to ensure that all our children receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach their full potential. Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Children who regularly attend school make much better progress both socially and academically. Regular attendance enables children to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups. Therefore, those children will have a positive experience of learning and a more successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond to further education and training. Gawber School aims to work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to strive towards every child reaching 97% attendance or above to ensure that each child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided. By working in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies, we can ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance, for all students at Gawber.

School Staff to Support Attendance

Gawber's strategic leader for attendance is **Dawn Bradshaw**.

Our attendance officer/manager is **Jo Hebden**

Please contact the attendance officer (01226 289728) on a day-to-day basis when your child is absent or for any queries regarding attendance.

Procedure for Reporting Absence

- Parents/Carers will contact the school office on their child's first day of absence, preferably before 9:00am to explain the reason for absence.
- If school does not receive a call from parents, the school office will contact them via a phone call to find out the reason for absence.
- If parents/ carers do not respond to contact from school a home visit will be carried out within 24- 48 hours.
- If your child is still going to be absent on the third day then you should notify school again either by leaving a message on our absence line or by emailing office@gawberschool.co.uk
- Persistent failure to make contact with school regarding absences may result in the school contacting the Education Welfare Officer.
- School will not authorise non urgent medical appointments and routine check-ups and parents/carers will be advised to arrange these out of school hours. Where this is not possible, then parents/carers will be advised to make appointments as near to the beginning or end of a school day for the least possible disruption.
- The school office should be notified in advance and all appointment cards or letters made available as evidence for a child's attendance record.
- Although parents are expected to inform school of the reason for absences, it is school who make the decision whether to authorise the absence. School will make the decision based on the information available to them. Parents are encouraged to provide as much information as possible and information such as appointment

cards, medication or application for leave of absence will assist school in making this important decision.

To manage and promote regular attendance

Gawber will:

- Keep parents updated on our overall attendance and individual child's attendance via letters home, newsletters, social media and school website.
- Report to parents how their child is achieving in school and how their child's attendance is impacting on this via regular parent evenings.
- Build positive relationships between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. The link between attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing will be discussed with parents.
- Utilise attendance data, analysing patterns and trends to target attendance and punctuality improvement across pupil cohorts or individual children, to reduce persistent or severe absence from school.
- Review the attendance policy annually and publish on our website.
- Account for and consider the specific needs of children and their families where there may be other barriers to attendance (medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities) and provide support to overcome these barriers. (e.g. Early Help or other wider partners)
- Support children back into school following a length or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Monitor individual children's attendance to: a) Celebrate good and improved school attendance and reward this through competitions, certificates, and events. b) Notify parents when we are worried about their child's attendance by following the procedure below.

What is our graduated approach to attendance?

- Attendance of 97% or above - attendance is good or excellent, no action is required.
- Attendance of 95% or below – parents/ carers will be contacted by school and or the education welfare officer (EWO) and offered support with attendance.
- Attendance of 90 % or below – a visit to the family home by the school's EWO and/ or a conversation with the headteacher.
- If the poor attendance is due to holidays being taken in term time then fixed term penalty notices may be issued by the Local Authority.

To manage and promote attendance Gawber School will:

Hold assemblies where the head teacher talks to children about attendance and the importance of being in school and punctual.

Incentives

- Certificates and rewards are presented to those children with full attendance every half term during the year.
- Class with highest attendance for week are recognised on a weekly basis and they keep the attendance trophy for a week.

Registration and Punctuality

Being on time and ready to learn is just as important as regular attendance and schools are duty bound to monitor and record how much time is lost to learning through late arrival at school.

All children that are late must report to the office and minutes late will be recorded.

Children who arrive more than 15 minutes late will need to be accompanied by a parent to explain the reason for their lateness and to sign them in.

Attendance records and late arrivals will be reported to parents on the child's annual report and if they are concerning parents will be asked to come in and explain their child's persistent late arrivals to school and if there is anything school can do to support. This will also be reported to the Education Welfare Officer.

The school office is responsible for collating attendance records in school and notifies the head teacher if there is any reason for concern. At the end of the year each child's attendance is analysed and a copy given to parents with their child's school report.

Any child who is late more than 3 times per half term may be referred to the EWO for support with punctuality.

To Support the regular attendance of their children, parents will:

- Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.
- Understand their responsibility to keep Gawber School up to date with at least 2 emergency contact details as required by the Children Missing Education requirements and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2023.
- Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend.
- Impress to their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too unwell to attend.

- Establish effective communication with the school office and swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school, so that we can work together to resolve this.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence to inform school of reason for absence and when the child is expected to return keeping school informed if the absence is likely to continue so that school and partner agencies can ensure that amendments or alternatives can be made to provision if required.
- Provide school with any medical appointment cards, and where ever possible make appointments out of school hours, where this is not possible parents will ensure that children attend prior to or following their appointment.
- Attend any meetings called by school and partner agencies to discuss attendance.
- Ensure that their children are arriving at school ready to learn.

Absence through ongoing illness.

Gawber monitors attendance of those children that are absent from school because of short term or chronic illness, and close links are maintained with parents. Children are not expected to do school work if they are off school ill. Teachers should not be asked to provide work for a child who is ill.

If a child's illness means they are off for an extended period of time, we will work with parents/ carers to provide as much education as the child's medical condition allows in order to keep up the momentum of their learning.

Educational support including the provision of work and materials is provided for those children who are absent from school, with medical conditions for more than ten days. The teaching staff liaise with medical advisors and home tuition providers, so that, during prolonged absence, children receive suitable work for their age and ability.

The reintegration of children in to school after a long absence, through ill health is considered a high priority. The school consults parents about general concerns, medical issues and the timing and pace of return. Staff, including the class teacher, teaching assistants and home or hospital tutor meets to discuss the return to school. Friends and other children are encouraged to help the child settle back in school. Extra support is provided subject to available recourses after an analysis of the child's needs.

Attendance Concerns

The attendance record is examined regularly by the Headteacher and Education Welfare Officer. If there is frequent pattern of absence from school, the head teacher will telephone or write to the parents to ascertain the reason for persistent absence. If there are concerns about a child's non-attendance or punctuality, the class teacher consults the head teacher immediately.

All parents whose child's attendance is below 97% will be notified termly. This will include both authorised and unauthorised days off. This letter is intended to be a reminder and for information purposes.

The Education Welfare Officer meets the head teacher on a regular basis to discuss attendance issues offering action, advice and support.

- The Education Welfare Officer will visit each half term to monitor registers and identify children with attendance levels that cause concern.
- The EWO will attend meetings called by school to address with parents any worries the school and Education Welfare Service may have about a child's attendance.
- The EWO will support the school in promoting attendance by attending parent evenings and events.
- Receive referrals from school to address matters of poor school attendance by:

a) Visiting parent's homes to undertake assessment of need, challenge and resolve matters of poor school attendance.

b) Involving other agencies where appropriate, such as the school nurses.

In situations where all other strategies have failed to improve school attendance, Education Welfare Service will enforce the law; this may result in fines up to £2,500, a custodial sentence and or a Parenting Order.

Request for leave of absence in term time

Gawber Primary School have adopted the Local Authority code of conduct (September 2024) in respect of leave of absence in term time. The Barnsley Code of Conduct can be found on our website under Parents- Attendance – Important documents.

<https://gawber-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/attendance-lateabsence-procedures/>

Further information on the National Framework can be found in Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

All parents who wish to take their child out of school for any reason (other than medical reasons) should complete a leave of absence request form. If parents proceed with the leave of absence in term time, they may receive a fixed penalty notice. Penalty notices may be issued, if due to the deliberate taking of leave of absence in term time without or against school permission, (where it can be demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not or would not be given), and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions (5 school days).

Education Welfare Service

Incidents of re-occurring unauthorised absence and parents who condone absences and keep their children off school unnecessarily may be referred to the Education Welfare Service and this may result in a fixed penalty notice and a fine being issued by the Local Authority.

The Department for Education states that when a child's attendance falls below 90% they are classed as 'Persistent Absentees' and identified as a key priority for Local Authority intervention.

Unauthorised absences and fixed penalty notices

If due to sporadic absences, then, other than in specific circumstances, the liable parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement. If there are further absences within the 15-day monitoring period, then a penalty notice may be issued.

Absence for participation in a performance

In these instances, Gawber Primary School will follow Local Authorities guidance and by-laws, working in partnership with Education Welfare Service to ensure that any performance absence is within the parameters of the law.

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and for this reason school works in partnership with all agencies to keep children safe in education. The following policies are linked to our Safeguarding Policy: -

Attendance and Punctuality

Behaviour

Anti-Bullying

Health and Safety

We have also adopted the following Local Authority policies:

Children Missing Education

Elective Home Education

Leave of Absence during term time

All these policies have been endorsed by our governing body in support of our school's attempts to improve both attendance and punctuality in addition to keeping children safe in education.

Contact details School

Dawn Bradshaw (Headteacher)
(Education Welfare Officer)

Local Authority

Jane Allen Service Manager, Pupil Inclusion, attendance, and Education Welfare Mobile: 07817624306 Email: janeallen@barnsley.gov.uk

Jake Miller Area Manager Education Welfare Service Mobile: 07786525749 Email: jakemiller@barnsley.gov.uk

Derek Vint Area Manager, Education Welfare Service Mobile: 07875308111 Email: Derekvint@barnsley.gov.uk

Rosie Smith Area Manager Education Welfare Service Mobile: 07702338498 Email: rosiesmith@barnsley.gov.uk