

Why is good attendance & punctuality so important?

The Facts

- Taking 10 days absence for family holidays in an academic year means that the maximum attendance your child can achieve is 94.7%.
- Girnhill Infant School expects that ALL children will achieve a minimum of 97% attendance regardless of their year group. Every stage of a child's education is of equal importance.
- Regular attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is vital if your child is to benefit fully from their education.
- Any absence can disrupt your child's education, whether through illness or holidays in term time.
- Everyday your child is absent they miss important lessons (summer born children already have 2 full terms less than autumn born children)
- It is very easy to fall behind with work, but very difficult to catch up.
- Having an education will give your child the best possible start in life.
- Two weeks absence means that your child loses 60 hours of learning which they can never get back. Your child could miss a whole topic which will not be revisited.
- A two week holiday during term time every year of your child's life equals almost two full terms of education missed over their whole school career.
- Friendships suffer – during two weeks absence social groups change – your child may not fit back into the same friendship group on his/her return.

Parents Responsibilities

As a parent, you have a legal responsibility to ensure that your child:

- Attends regularly
- Arrives at school on time

Please make sure that your child leaves home on time, if travelling any distance please allow ample time for traffic or other delays.

Nursery doors open at 8:45am and 12:15pm.

The classroom doors open at 8:45am, morning registration begins at 8.50am and closes at 9.00am, and children who are not registered in class by 9.00am will be marked as late in the register. The school allows for 10 late marks over the academic year. Any more will result in a penalty notice being issued.

If a child arrives after 9.10am, the child will receive a U mark, this means your child arrived after the registers closed. This equates to a single session of unauthorised absence.

Any children who are dropped off by parents at school late must be brought into school by a parent so they can be signed in. This is to ensure that accurate reasons for lateness are recorded, and also to ensure that children arrive safely in school.

School Responsibilities

To work with parents to encourage regular attendance and punctuality of their child.

A record of attendance must be kept giving the exact reason for the child's absence

If no reason is provided by parents (by telephone, in person, in writing) the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (DfES class this as truancy) and will remain on the child's record.

If your child is absent, it may be that school will contact you to establish the reason for absence.

The school will promote and encourage good attendance via its reward system.

The school and Education Welfare Officer will conduct attendance checks throughout each half term.

Children with poor attendance records and lateness will be monitored and followed up by the academy and/or Education Welfare Officer. In extreme cases absence could lead to official warnings or even prosecution and fines. This information can be transferred to the high schools.

Term time Holidays

The Head teacher will not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Exceptional circumstances being defined as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance in writing and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.

The policy is in line with Wakefield Council Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices and falls under section 44 of the Education Act 1996. The Education (penalty Notices) Regulations 2007 set the framework for the operation of the Penalty Notice scheme. The Code of Conduct states that a Penalty Notice will be issued where there are at least 10 sessions (half days) recorded as unauthorised absence.

Payment of a Penalty Notice is £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. If a parent fails to make payment, the matter will be progressed to court by the Education Welfare Service. This could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court and fines of up to £2,500.00 and/or a range of other measures such as Parenting Orders or Community Sentences depending on the circumstances.

Who to contact in case of absence:

If your child is absent please contact school either in person or by telephone as soon as possible on the first day of absence. If you have not made contact by 9 am, you should receive a phone call from either our Learning Mentor, Attendance Officer or member of the administration team to find out the reason for your child's absence.

Please try to arrange doctors/dental/hospital appointments out of school hours. You should provide the administration office with a copy of your child's appointment letter where this cannot be fulfilled.

The Local Authority's policy not to authorise holidays during term time has been adopted by the Academy. Government advises that you should not take your child out of school for family holidays during term time. The regulations make it clear that parents have no right or entitlement to take their children out of school for family holidays.

School holiday and term dates are available on the Academy website:

www.girnhill.wakefield.sch.uk



**Below 97% At risk of
severe underachievement**

**97% You are on target or
above**

**100% Attendance
WELL DONE!**

Girnhill Infant School



Coming to school every day is vital to ensure you child reaches their full potential. The School may refer your child to the Education Welfare Officer if their attendance or punctuality is causing concern.

We will then contact you either by phone, letter or with a home visit to discuss our concerns and how to improve attendance and punctuality.

Headteacher – Jane Littlewood

Learning Mentor – Paula Hughes

Education Welfare Officer – Emma Johnson