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Gloucester Academy

Attendance Procedure

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Review: September 2022

Oversight by: DH Pastoral

At Gloucester Academy we firmly believe that all pupils benefit from outstanding school attendance. This is based on solid, academic research, in which it is clear that educational attainment is heavily influenced by school attendance. On average 91.7% of students who have between 0% and 5% of absences achieve 5+ GCSEs at Grade 4 and above. We are unapologetically ambitious about every child's potential, and are aware that they must be in school to climb their own personal mountain to the very best universities and professions. To this end, we will do all we can to ensure that our pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon promptly. In order for a pupil's attendance record to be deemed very good, it must be 96% or above:

100% - Outstanding Attendance

96% - Very Good Attendance

94% - Good Attendance

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We will establish systems and practices which will:

- Create an ethos in which excellent attendance is the norm.
- Maintain a safe, secure environment where pupils feel valued and welcome, thereby positively encouraging attendance.
- Raise pupil awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance, and encourage in pupils a sense of responsibility.
- Celebrate excellent school attendance.
- Support pupils and families who experience difficulties maintaining good school attendance.
- Use all available support from the local authority and **other outside agencies** to improve attendance.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school every day.
- Attend school punctually.

- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day.

We expect that all parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- Contact the school before 8:35am on the morning of each day of the pupil's absence by calling 01452 428800 or emailing GAattendance@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

In the event of an absence:

- All absences should be followed up by a letter explaining the reason and date of absence or a medical appointment card. Any absence which remains unexplained will be unauthorised;
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

Gloucester Academy has a responsibility to ensure that all teachers:

- Complete registers accurately and punctually during every registration period and lesson;
- Assist the Attendance Team in following up any unexplained absences upon the pupil's return to school;
- Inform the Senior Leadership Team/Safeguarding Team of concerns;
- Be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the attendance team.

The legal framework

Regular school attendance of children of compulsory school age is the responsibility of the parent / guardian and is a legal requirement in accordance with section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Parents / Guardians are committing an offence if they fail to comply with this legislation and legal action can be instigated.

Responding to Non-Attendance

Pupil attendance is continually monitored by the Attendance Team and Senior Leadership Team.

When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond in the following manner:

- If no telephone call is received from the parent/carer, the Attendance Team will activate the 'First Day Absence' contact. The Attendance Team will text/email the parent/carer contact numbers.
- In the event of no response being received for the absence, a letter will be sent home. If no response is received within ten days of the date of the letter, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- For periods of absence from school of 4 days or more we may ask for medical evidence to be provided. There will be instances where it is not appropriate or

necessary to ask for medical evidence (death of a parent, sibling, hospitalisation, protective custody etc)

- A letter will be sent to the parent/carer of any pupil whose attendance falls below 95%. If there is no marked improvement parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting with the Attendance improvement team where an attendance support plan may be agreed. Please refer to Appendix A in which our attendance interventions are detailed.
- Failure to improve attendance after the initial meeting will result in a further meeting where parents/carers will be informed that they are required to provide medical evidence to support any further absences.
- Continued failure to contact the school to report a child's absence may result in a referral to the appropriate body within the local authority. If a child's attendance continues to decline, we will always refer to the local authority.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by Gloucester Academy/**or the local authority** may result in further action, by either a referral to appear before the Governor's Attendance Panel, issue of a Penalty Notice, an application for an Education Supervision Order or court prosecution, or other appropriate agency. It is clear, and enshrined in law, that it is the responsibility of the parent for their child to attend school.

Lateness

AM Registration. Registers are closed at 9:30am

- If a pupil arrives late to the school site this will be recorded, as will the number of minutes late. The school gates close at 8.35am.
- If a pupil arrives late to site a 60 minute detention will be issued for that day. Where appropriate, reasons for lateness are investigated and responded to in the appropriate manner. If a pupil persistently fails to arrive on time parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting to discuss reasons for lateness, and parental responsibility in improving punctuality.
- The school will request fixed penalty notices for persistent poor punctuality after registers have closed. We can only apply for PNs for lateness after the close of registers, this reads that you will apply for a PN for general lateness, which we cannot do.

Absences that the school is unable to authorise include:

- Holidays during term time.
- Arrival after the registers close at 9:30am without prior notification.
- Shopping trips, even if this is for school uniform.
- Birthday celebrations.
- Looking after a relative/pets.
- Acting as a translator for a parent.
- Tiredness due to extra-curricular activities.
- All unexplained absences.

All of the above is at the discretion of the headteacher.

Medical Appointments

Parents/carers are encouraged to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours but where this is not possible the school should be notified in advance by emailing GAattendance@gloucesteracademy.co.uk or sending a letter to the Deputy Headteacher. Where it is not possible to arrange appointments outside of school hours, pupils are encouraged to attend school either side of their appointment where possible.

Religious Holidays

We will authorise absence for major religious holidays. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform us in advance of their intention to keep their child at home. If parents/carers do not inform the school any days missed will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Requests for extended absence for religious observances should be made in writing to the Deputy Headteacher

Holidays

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and it is essential that parents/carers take their family holidays during the school holidays. It is the school's policy not to authorise absence during term time for holidays and any absence of this nature will be recorded as unauthorised. Should parents/carers choose to remove their child from school for a holiday during term, they will be required to attend a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher to discuss this absence.

We recognise that there may be occasions where parents feel there are extenuating reasons for requesting leave during term time. In such circumstances we advise parents to write to the Deputy Headteacher outlining the reason for the request and the dates the pupil will be absent from school. The Deputy Headteacher will inform you of his/her decision in writing or via email.

Requests for long periods of absence will not be authorised and a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher will be required. Prolonged unauthorised absences may put your child's place at Gloucester Academy at risk.

If parents take their children on holiday during term time without authorisation the School will apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1966 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006. The fine from September 2013 will be £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, increasing to £120 if paid after this date, but within 28 days. Failure to pay can result in a referral to court.

Please note that a Penalty Notice is issued to each parent in respect of each child not attending school. "Parents" includes partners who are not married to, but who live with, one of the parents who has main care responsibilities for the child. Other family members with parental responsibility including grandparents and siblings may also be liable for a

penalty notice.

Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court, but which seeks to improve a pupil's attendance.

A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with the Attendance Team. We will always write to parents, and arrange meetings with parents, prior to taking any legal action regarding attendance. However, we reserve the right to issue fixed penalty notices without writing to parents. This policy serves as warning of this. We will request fixed penalty notices from the local authority for repeated unauthorised absences.

Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term without the authority of the Headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child.

Where attendance has fallen below 85% or there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during a sixth month period.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

The Law

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996; which may lead to prosecution. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000). In February 2004, section 23 of the Anti- Social Behaviour Act gave powers to designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is considered capable but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's attendance at school. Since September 2015 the Persistence Absence percentage has changed from 15% to 10%.

Reference Documents

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/412638/The_link_between_absence_and_attainment_at_KS2_and_KS4.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf

[https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/18446/pdf-attendance-guidance-for-schools-updated-311017.](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/18446/pdf-attendance-guidance-for-schools-updated-311017)

Appendix A

Gloucester Academy Attendance Triggers

<p>96%+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attendance Officer call on Day 1 for any absent student. Start with PP and Y11.- AO will send daily absence list to SLT/SG/SKY/RfL by 11:30.- Nudge text messages sent as per schedule to whole school
<p>96%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- RfL team choose 5 students at random each week to call and recognise positive attendance. Directed by CSN.
<p>95% - 93%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- First stage attendance letter.- Followed by phone call from attendance team, using microscript.- Attendance monitored carefully.
<p>93% - 91%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Second Stage attendance letter- Parents contacted and given review date.- Attendance report card in place with Achievement lead.- Attendance support plan (ASP) put in place and parents invited in for meeting.- 2 week monitoring period, if targets are not met, medical evidence required for all absence for specific period.
<p>91%- 90%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Third Stage letter.- Attendance improvement meeting.- Attendance improvement plan.- All absences unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided.- Weekly email to parents.- Weekly review phone call.- Return to school monitoring plan where all absences are carefully monitored, including medical evidence- Referred to local authority as a concern, and investigated Early Help agencies.
<p>Below 90%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Persistent Absence Letter.- Attendance Action Plan- Twice Daily phone call.- Directed home visits and home visit form completed.- Meetings booked and any non - attendance confirmed.- Refer to local authority as serious concern.- Two week monitoring.- Referred to two week school minibuss transport. This will be carried out one year group at a time.

Failure to Attend AAP or Targets not Met.

- Final warning letter.
- List of interventions and actions taken drawn up.
- Referred to GCC for legal action.

Additional

- CME referrals should be completed as per threshold, if they bounce back, they should be re-sent.
- All letters should be sent asap when a student drops below a threshold, add comment to cell on tracker name/letter sent/date. Letters must be sent as per weekly data review
- All meetings must be recorded on meeting proforma.
- All non - attendance at meetings must be recorded.