



St. Giles' School Attendance Policy

January 2024

Document control

SGS staff lead on policy : SH		Date of next review: Autumn 2024
No.	Updates/Changes made in 2023 include:	Page
1	Where a pupil is unable to attend school parents must inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence indicating when the pupil will return <u>by 8.00am.</u>	5



Attendance Policy

Aim

At St. Giles we provide a safe learning environment which encourages all pupils to attend and be punctual whatever their level of ability or specific needs.

Rationale

We believe a positive educational experience helps to give pupils the best possible opportunities to achieve their potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are important for all pupils to maximise their academic, social and personal development. All our pupils have a legal entitlement to education. Particular health needs may increase the numbers of absences or reduce the length of day a pupil can attend so attendance when possible should be prioritised

We believe pupils should be enabled to attend regularly in order to:

- Establish their own voice through bespoke communication pathways
- Experience a broad and balanced creative curriculum which engages their interests
- Benefit from the educational opportunities provided to stimulate their learning
- Build on their learning experiences to achieve their full potential
- Develop social and emotional skills to support them in establishing positive relationships
- Increase their confidence and independence
- Access the necessary therapeutic and medical support and supervision to maintain their health and well being.

Our objectives are:

1. To make school an irresistible offer to encourage maximum attendance.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To use a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and encourages consistency when carrying out designated tasks.
4. To share attendance related data with Senior Leaders and teachers to identify individuals who need additional support and input to attend.
5. To use attendance data to inform the school community and governors about barriers which impact on pupils attending and being punctual and identify school priorities to remove these barriers.
6. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils to achieve minimal disruption to education.
7. To minimise pupil absences in order to improve the overall percentage of pupils attending school.

8. To work with parents and other professionals including hospital schools to support pupils to receive education support as quickly as possible and return to school as soon as appropriate following illness or medical interventions.
9. To provide support for pupils who have extended absence including planned reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Procedures

CLASS TEACHER

General Responsibilities

- Accurate completion of registers and prompt return to the school office
- Recording of information about pupil's absence or punctuality
- Sending home correspondence about attendance/punctuality
- Ensuring written notes and appointment information is sent to the school office
- Reminding pupils where appropriate and parents/carers about responsibilities related to attendance and punctuality
- Working with Heads of Department to identify pupils who require additional support to improve attendance and punctuality
- Maintaining contact with pupils and families to support learning and links with school where absence is extended including liaising with hospital schools / home tutors
- Providing positive school links with pupils who are recuperating at home to aid transition back to school.

Punctuality

The school day starts at 9:10 am and ends at 3:30pm. Morning registers close at 9:30 am. In the afternoon pupils are registered at 1:45 pm.

If a pupil arrives in class after the close of registration they receive a late mark and the time of arrival is recorded on the register sheet. The school office should be informed of all late arrivals.

Class teachers are responsible for monitoring the punctuality of pupils and alerting the Head of department and parents of concerns

Absences

It is the class teachers' responsibility to ensure that an accurate mark is entered in the register for both the morning and afternoon session each day. In the case of known reasons for absence, they should be recorded on the register sheet by the class teacher. If the class teacher has cause for concern regarding the attendance of a pupil, it should be reported to Head of Department.

The class teacher will promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality with parents and carers.

When there is an unexplained absence by a child where there are safeguarding concerns the class teacher will refer the absence to the DSL (Head Teacher).

Class teachers should ensure that all notes and written information from parents about attendance/punctuality is sent to the school office including any appointment letters.

SCHOOL OFFICE

Punctuality

Any pupil arriving after 9:30 am should report to the school office. The office should record time of arrival on the register sheet and enter a 'late' mark. Pupils arriving after this time are marked as U; late after registers have closed. When a pupil has a specific arrangement linked to their health or

medical needs which means they arrive after the close of registration a note explaining this should be placed in the register.

Absence

On the first day of absence if the school has not been notified why a pupil is absent the school reception will contact parents by phone to inform them their child is absent and remind them of their need to inform the school about absence. This will be followed by a text if no contact is made on the first day.

If a child is on a CP plan or there are ongoing attendance concerns the allocated DSL will be informed (Family Liaison – Lower, DH – Middle, HT – Upper).

In addition, emergency contacts will be called and further investigation of absence, e.g. checking with medical will be done, to ascertain why the child is absent. A standard letter is sent out if no contact has been made after persistent investigation within 5 working days.

If no contact has been made after 5 working days, the Croydon Missing Mondays team will be informed via e-mail. Once notified of absence reason, the Admin team will enter details on the register on the day of notification.

The office staff will ensure that current contact details are held on central file (SIMS.net) and updated as required.

When written confirmation of absence or appointments has been received the absence will be authorised unless there are attendance concerns which require further confirmation. The office will send a form to parents/carers requesting written reasons for absence if pupils return to school without written confirmation.

MEDICAL/THERAPIES/OTHER AGENCIES

In order to maintain good communication and support safeguarding of pupils the school will seek further information about known absence and work with these groups to support pupils in attending school. During weekly PCT meetings absence and attendance issues related to specific pupils will be shared and information passed to the relevant member of the SLT and DSL.

TRANSPORT

Punctuality

Transport companies are asked to ensure that buses and taxis arrive at school in time to bring their children into school between 9:10am and 9:30am. Children begin going down to class from 9:10am and are supervised by transport staff until handed over to school staff.

If transport is running late guides should inform the school office with an estimated time of arrival. Upon arrival after 9:30 am, guides must report to the office with names of pupils who are late to class.

HEAD TEACHER

The Head Teacher will promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality throughout the school and in communication with parents and carers as appropriate.

Where other methods of contact have been unsuccessful, the Head Teacher will act as a referral point for persistent non-attendance.

When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 90% in any term without good reason or there are specific safeguarding concerns related to attendance/punctuality, the school will discuss concerns with the safeguarding committee and agree referrals. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

The Head Teacher will evaluate requests from parents and carers for holiday leave and absence during term time, and give permission provided she is satisfied that the request is potentially beneficial to the pupil. The school follows the Statutory Guidance given in the following document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Heads of Department

The Heads of Department will follow the example of the Headteacher in promoting good attendance and punctuality throughout the school. They will review the attendance and timekeeping of pupils in their department and discuss concerns with the class teacher. They will support teachers to make weekly phone calls to learners whose attendance is causing concern and to meet with parents where appropriate to discuss attendance further. They will liaise regularly with the office staff who are responsible for keeping the registers updated and contacting parents/carers about attendance and timekeeping.

The Heads of Department will meet to discuss attendance concerns with the Safeguarding Team fortnightly, analysing attendance data and identifying attendance and punctuality concerns. The safeguarding team will agree a course of action to address the attendance/punctuality concerns.

Class Teacher

The first point of contact for issues regarding attendance and punctuality is the class teacher who will monitor patterns of non-attendance or lateness and report concerns to the Head of Department. Class teachers, with the support of the Department Leader, will make weekly phone calls to learners whose attendance is causing concern and meet with parents where appropriate to discuss attendance further.

Croydon Attendance Support

The school will refer to Croydon's statutory Attendance Service and make referrals to Missing in Education or the Missing Mondays Teams when attendance concerns fall within their remit and communication with parents/carers is not effective. Many pupils have allocated social workers or are part of Early Help support. Where on-going concerns are identified regarding attendance/punctuality then individual plans may be drawn up between the school/authority and the parent/carer and pupil to promote improvements with the additional support of Croydon Social Care. Where the school continues to hold current contact information of children missing in education, the Head of Department will make weekly phone calls to update information.

Parental/carer Responsibilities

Parents have responsibility to ensure that their child has full attendance at school and is punctual. Where a pupil is unable to attend school parents must inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence indicating when the pupil will return by 8.00am. Upon the pupil's return parents will give written confirmation of the reason for absence. Where medical or other appointments are necessary parents must make every effort to arrange these out of school time. If appointments must be made in school time appointment letters/cards are expected to be sent to the school, in advance. If no reason is given for a pupil's absence parents will be issued with a form to complete and return to school as soon as possible. After 10 school days if no reason has been received, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised but the school will persist in seeking clarification for the absence. Persistent unauthorised absence will lead to the parent/carer meeting with the allocated member of the safeguarding team and a plan to improve attendance/punctuality. Failure to improve will lead to statutory measures being initiated and may result in safeguarding referrals. Parents must request holiday leave in writing to the Head Teacher who will consider the request and may grant permission if appropriate. Parents are kept up to date with attendance issues and expectations through the school newsletter and individual letters and texts. They must not assume that requests for absence will be approved all requests are considered individually.

Returning to school after hospital admission

Before pupils return to school after surgery or illness in hospital parents or carers need to ensure that any care plans are updated and all professionals are informed of any changes required to the pupil's programmes or equipment. Medical and therapies involved with the pupil's care work with the school to aid the pupils return to school as quickly as possible. A leaflet detailing what is required is sent to families as necessary. Return to school meetings are organised to ensure that pupils are ready to return to school and that all parties are updated on the pupils needs.

Recording

Pupil attendance is recorded in the daily class register and the information transferred by the office staff into SIMS.net. Attendance concerns and plans are recorded on CPOMs.

Reporting

Percentage attendance figures are reported to parents in the annual review/EHCP Meeting and to governors through the termly Head Teacher's report.

More regular reports will be made to parents where there are concerns about attendance.

Monitoring

Attendance is routinely monitored with concerns investigated as they arise.

All pupils whose attendance falls below 90% are monitored. The Heads of Department share attendance issues with the safeguarding team and monitor specific pupils.

Additional DfE Guidance to be considered with this Policy

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf

This Policy has been approved by the Governing Body of St Giles School at the meeting on

Signed: Paul Thirkettle

Chair of Governors

Signed: Stephen Hehir

Headteacher

Date for next Review: Autumn 2024

ATTENDANCE KEY POINTS FOR CLASS TEACHERS

We expect parents/carers to send in appointment letters/cards to confirm medical/dental/therapy appointments. Initially we will accept verbal explanations from parents/carers for absence but we expect them to confirm this in writing (home school books). If they do not give us written confirmation, we send home a form which must be returned promptly. Without written confirmation we cannot authorise absences.

CLASS TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Registers are legal documents that **MUST** be completed accurately; O for absence, O with L inserted and the arrival time for lates; / for morning attendance and \ for afternoon attendance
- Information should be written on the register sheet
- Registers should be sent to the school office by 9:30am and by 2pm
- Class teachers must monitor attendance and time keeping and encourage good attendance/punctuality
- Class teachers should maintain communication with home and pass relevant information to the Office staff responsible for registers and their Head of Department
- Notes, letters, appointment cards and forms about attendance/punctuality should be sent to the office
- Letters and forms about attendance should be sent home promptly
- Class teachers who have concerns about attendance/punctuality should inform their Head of Department. If they have safeguarding concerns they should inform the relevant DSL.
- Class teachers should maintain contact with pupils and families to support learning and links with school where absence is extended including liaising with hospital schools/home tutors and sending home school work
- When there is an unexplained absence by a child where there are safeguarding concerns the class teacher will refer the absence to the DSL.