

Children's Services**John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School****SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Promoting attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The Home/School agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

Leave of absence in term time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorise the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

John of Gaunt School uses the model leave of absence form which is provided by the Behaviour and Safety/School Attendance section of the Norfolk schools website.

Under new LA procedures introduced September 2013, the Headteacher is obliged to inform the LA of any pupils who have 10 or more consecutive unauthorised absences (5days) or any pupils who attendance falls below 85% in any 6 week period. Parents can potentially be fined if their child falls within either of these categories. Fines will be £60 per child per parent. The school is not involved in the fines process, neither does it benefit from the fines process.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Registers and Lateness

The school will use manual paper registers and a computerised system for the keeping the school attendance records. The class teacher is responsible for completing the register on time and returning to the school office for transfer to SIMS database by the School Secretary. In her absence, a cover member of staff will maintain paper record and follow up any late/non-attendance issued by phone call in line with school procedure. The paper records will be kept in the weekly attendance folder in accordance with procedure.

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9.00 am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00 pm
The registers will close at 1.05 pm.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late (present) before registers close.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to telephone the school office by 8.30 am if their child is not attending school that day. An answer machine is available. After Registration closes, the Secretary will telephone the parents of any absent child who has not made contact with the school, to ascertain the reason for their absence. The Secretary will record the reason for absence on the 'Absence Record' form. This will be placed in the Register to alert the teacher and obtain their signature.

Second Day Absence

If no reply is received from the parent that day, a record will be written in the 'Reasons for Absence' follow up Log book which is kept in the Office.

Third Day Absence

A further attempt will be made to contact the parents.

Continuing Absence

A standard letter for any unexplained absences will be sent home at the end of each school week requesting a specific reason.

A further letter will be issued if no contact has been forthcoming from the parents. If no reply is received, the absence will be marked as 'un-authorised' in the pupil's records.

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Staff for the local area. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility of the class teacher and office manager to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with parent/s soon as possible. If this is unsuccessful, the school will refer to the School Health Adviser if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).

Persistent Absence [PA]

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% will be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will work closely with the parents and involve a Parent Support Adviser (PSA) as necessary. School will arrange a reminder call at 8.30 am to encourage parents to come to school. School will identify a parent buddy who could arrange to walk to school together. Family learning is a key feature of the school and parents are frequently encouraged to attend parenting classes. School will work closely with the Attendance Officer.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

A half termly 'John Bear Certificate for excellent term attendance'. This recognises attendance as very good.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

The registration system

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-	Not counted in possible

	compulsory school-age pupils	attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Record preservation

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

Computer registers will be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes and preserved as electronic back-ups by County approved back-up software.

Register Security

Registers or attendance marking sheets if used must be safely stored. They are kept in the School Office and collected and returned twice daily after Registration is taken. They are then available for emergency evacuation procedures.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work. The school will make use of the attendance data available on the "RAISEONLINE" system, when setting its target. Targets will relate to national averages.

Our schools targets are:

Absence rate of 4% or below

2013/2014 4%

2014/2015 4%

Our PA targets will be nil

2013/2014 0%

2014/2015 0%

The school's attendance governor is Mike Downes.

Action Plan

The school will produce an action plan to show how the school will set about achieving its attendance targets.

The Headteacher will work closely with the parents and involve a Parent Support Adviser (PSA) as necessary. School will arrange a reminder call at 8.30 am to encourage parents to come to school. School will identify a parent buddy who could arrange to walk to school together. Family learning is a key feature of the school and parents are frequently encouraged to attend parenting classes.

Reviewed and agreed at Full Governing Body meeting

Signed:..... Mike Downes, Chair of Governors

Date:

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education (School Attendance Targets)(England) Regulations 2007

Guidance documents on attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.

