



Attendance Policy 2015

Written by: Bay House Cluster Schools

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At Gomer Junior School we believe that pupils can only take full advantage of their education if their attendance at school is punctual and regular. Optimum levels of attendance can only be achieved when responsibility is accepted and shared by all stakeholders – pupils, parents/carers, school staff, governors and the Local Authority. Gomer Junior School is responsible for supporting and monitoring the attendance of our pupils and for dealing with difficulties which may lead to non-attendance.

To this end we:

- Promote a welcoming atmosphere that makes pupils feel safe and valued
- Encourage good relationships between the school and parents/carers
- Stress the importance of good attendance
- Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and absence followed up quickly
- Are sensitive to the needs of individual families

Registers

Gomer Junior School will ensure that all legal requirements are met in recording attendance and punctuality, giving high priority to the safeguarding of each individual.

1. An attendance register is called at the beginning of each session 8.50am and again at 1pm.
2. All absences and the reasons for them are recorded using a code to identify the nature of the absence and kept on record.
3. Registers close at 9.15am, late arrivals will be recorded as (L) authorised. Lateness 30 minutes after registers opening will be recorded as (U) unauthorised.
4. Our attendance registers are checked daily. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to contact the school to report an absence. However, if an absence is found that cannot be accounted for the school will make every effort to contact the family.

Reporting Absences

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform the school as soon as possible why a child is absent and to provide any further information that the school needs. Parents/carers are asked to contact the school by 9am giving the appropriate information. Should the office team receive a verbal message/call/email messages are recorded and kept on file.

Authorised Absences

Only the school can authorise an absence. An absence should not automatically be classed as authorised because it is covered by a note/verbal message from the parents/carers. **(Appendix 1)**

Unauthorised Absences

An absence will be marked as unauthorised if:

- It cannot be accounted for

- If the reason given is unacceptable within school guidelines. Where possible, this will be made clear to parents/carers.

Leave of Absence

An application for Approved Special and Exceptional Leave of Absence form should be completed for any absence other than medical or sickness (**Appendix 2**).

Holidays should not be taken during school term times.

Absence can cause considerable disruption to learning and pupils may not regain the educational ground they lose by taking time out of school.

Amendments to the 2006 attendance regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Applications for Approved Special and Exceptional Leave of Absence should be obtained from school well in advance of the intended absence. Service Personnel are required to provide a letter from their attached regiment to support any leave of absence request.

Absences including medical/ dental appointments must be requested in advance using the application for Approved Special and Exceptional Leave of Absence.

Practices for dealing with absence:

- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to contact the school before 09.00 on the first day of absence to inform why the child is not in school.
- If an explanation for absence is not satisfactory, or if the absence continues, we will invite the parents/carers into school to discuss any difficulties that are preventing the child from attending. This will be done as soon as possible so that the problem is tackled early.
- If a child is absent without explanation, school will make every effort to contact the parents/carers.
- If a child has any unexplained absence, a letter of enquiry may be sent to the parents/carers asking why the child was absent. If a reply is not received or the reply is unsatisfactory the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If a child is persistently late, we will contact the parents/carers. Repeated lateness can affect a child's education as much as poor attendance.
- We monitor our absence records daily to detect any absences.

- When a child's attendance falls below 90% this is brought to the attention of the Head Teacher (Child Protection Liaison Officer) and in some cases the LAPS Team (Learning and Pastoral Support) and/or Inclusion Leader to discuss strategies to tackle the attendance issues. If there is no improvement, it may be necessary to offer a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or refer the poor attendance to the Education Welfare Officer, School Nurse or Social Care. Parents may be informed of this referral.
- The importance of attending school is promoted at induction and transition meetings.
- A copy of the Gomer Junior 'Attendance Matters' document, shared with Gomer Infant, is given to all new pupils starting school (**Appendix 3**).

Recording and Monitoring Attendance

By recording and monitoring attendance effectively we are able to:

- Further safeguard our pupils
- Follow up on absence quickly
- Consider ways to improve attendance
- Report to parents/carers
- Work closely with parents/carers to improve attendance if necessary
- Report to governors
- Provide the Local Education Authority with the information it needs
- Provide information required by the D of E

The Fareham and Gosport Locality Team

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the Locality Team works with school to monitor attendance. A Contact Level Agreement is agreed between school and the EWO at the start of each academic year. The frequency of meetings and targets are agreed at this meeting.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Table of Universal Codes (short meanings)

Appendix 2 Application for Approved Special and Exceptional Leave of Absence

Appendix 3 Attendance Matters Document

Appendix 1

Attendance and Absence Registration codes, their descriptions and meanings

Code	Description	Meaning
/	present (morning session)	present
\	present (afternoon session)	present
B	educated off site (not dual registered)	(present at an) approved educational activity
C	other authorised circumstance (not covered by any other code)	authorised absence
D	dual registration i.e. pupil is registered at more than one school and is attending another establishment	(present at an) approved educational activity
E	excluded (no alternative provision)	authorised absence
F	extended family holiday (agreed)	authorised absence
G	family holiday (not agreed or days in excess of agreement)	unauthorised absence
H	family holiday (agreed)	authorised absence
I	illness (not medical or dental appt.)	authorised absence
J	interview	(present at an) approved educational activity
L	late (before register closes)	present
M	medical /dental appointment	authorised absence
N	no reason yet provided for absence	unauthorised absence
O	unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code)	unauthorised absence
P	approved sporting activity	(present at an) approved educational activity
R	religious observance	authorised absence

S	study leave	authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	authorised absence
U	late (after register closes)	unauthorised absence
V	education visit or trip	(present at an) approved educational activity
W	work experience	(present at an) approved educational activity
X	non-compulsory school age absence	not counted in possible attendances
Y	enforced enclosure	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