

# Attendance information

## 1. Aim

The aim of Giggleswick's attendance policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Regular attendance at school is key to steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to as much as is possible.

Giggleswick takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

This document is supported by our policies:

**Safeguarding Policy and Procedures,**

**Anti-bullying,**

**Behaviour & Exclusions**

## 2. Legal framework

### **The *Education Act 1996* states that:**

**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 educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

**A person begins to be of compulsory school age —**

- (a) when he attains the age of five, if he attains that age on a prescribed day, and
- (b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following his attaining that age.

Prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March

**A person ceases to be of compulsory school age** at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year (the last Friday in June) —

- (a) if he attains the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
- (b) if he attains that age on that day, or
- (c) (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following his attaining that age.

Giggleswick is dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this document accordingly.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **Governing body**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff
- annually review the school's attendance rules and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents and children to implement the rules effectively
- nominate or identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance
- ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children and staff
- work out appropriate and accurate annual attendance numbers and future attendance targets
- take time at governors' meetings to regularly review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year
- ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off-site
- ensure that they are clear on how to analyse attendance data and how to communicate the findings effectively to parents and staff
- ensure that senior leaders make the necessary referrals to the local authority and other relevant agencies in individual cases of non-attendance
- use any data gathered to devise solutions to problems, make the proper adjustments to attendance coordination and target set for the future.

#### **School leadership team**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement
- coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full review
- ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues
- ensure that legislation and government guidance on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislative changes and how to implement them
- nominate or appoint a senior leader to take the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to this job - the Deputy Head in the Senior School and the Head of the Junior School



- report to the governing body each term and the lead governor for attendance half-termly on attendance records, data and provision
- ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively
- develop and engage with multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend
- document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.

## Teachers and support staff

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement
- ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue
- ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily
- contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed
- work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.

## Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- encourage and support their children's aspirations
- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment
- follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school (**see section 4**), and include an expected date for return
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance

- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the Senior Master or the Head of the Junior School (as appropriate) **(see section 4.5)**

## Pupils

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- be aware of the school's attendance rules, and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents and the school timetable
- speak to their Housemaster/mistress/the Headmaster of GJS/form teachers/Junior School Pastoral Assistant Head or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable
- bring a note of explanation from their parents or carers to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen
- follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late **(see section 4.8)**. Pupils are held responsible for this and it is made clear to all pupils what this procedure is by their form tutors. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance, and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation

## 4. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.

Staff should make it clear on the school register when taking attendance whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Where staff have concerns regarding absences, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return. For a prolonged absence, this should be followed up with a written note from the parent/carer of the child.

### 4.1 Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make a phone call to alert the school on the first day/each day of absence. The Housemaster/mistress/Head of Junior School's PA will make on a note on the student records.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper. If these are not provided on request it may result in the absence continuing to be classed as unauthorised.

### 4.2 Medical or dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible.

### **4.3 Authorised absences**

There may be some exceptional instances where the school will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement.

### **4.4 Exclusion**

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The head teacher/ form tutor/ subject teacher will arrange for work to be sent home.

### **4.5 Family holidays and extended leave**

Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents may request a leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave of this type must be made in writing to the Senior Master or the Head of the Junior School at least one week in advance of the leave being taken. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement that requires the child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration.

Retrospective applications will not be considered and this time taken will be processed as unauthorised absence. The Headmaster or the Head of the Junior School may only grant such requests in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher's decision is final on whether the request is approved and the length of absence approved.

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing, and will outline the details of when the child is expected to return to school. Parents should contact the school immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

It remains the Headmaster's or the Head of the Junior School's decision whether to authorise any request for absence during term time. If we have a concern regarding the attendance of the pupil, we will take this into consideration when reviewing the request.

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents may be subject to further action by the school or prosecution by the local authority.

### **4.6 Religious observance**

Giggleswick recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends, and will allow authorised absence for these times.

Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

### **4.7 Study leave**

The school has a period of study leave leading up to GCSE and A Level examinations where pupils are granted authorised absence to revise at home. The school operates study sessions at school within this time to help with revision and to reduce the amount of time spent out of school.

### **4.8 Late arrival**

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon. In the morning **registration begins at 0820**. Pupils who arrive after this time but within the registration period will be marked as late. **The morning registration period ends at 0835.**

Pupils who arrive after the registration period has ended should go straight to the Senior or Junior School reception to sign in and give a reason for their lateness. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised. It is vital that pupils sign in at the office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.

**In the afternoon registration begins at 1805, and at 1310 in the Junior School.** If a pupil is not present at the time that the afternoon registration takes place they will be marked absent. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised.

In the Senior School a register is also taken at the start of all subject lessons by the subject teacher, and any unexplained absences reported back to the school office. If a student is late to the lesson this will be recorded on the register.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action being taken against the pupil and/or criminal action being taken against the parents.

## **5. School action: following up absences**

Where there are unexplained or unauthorised absences, the school will contact the parents or carers. If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, the Housemaster/mistress/the Headmaster of GJS will contact the parent or carer to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.

Our thresholds for attendance are as follows:

- Patterns with absence – missing the same days, late on certain days, early finishes or late start to the term (international students).
- Below 95% attendance: Housemaster/mistress/the Headmaster of GJS will make the Senior Leadership Team aware and will monitor the attendance more closely. Contact may be made with home regarding any concerns or worrying patterns.
- Below 90% attendance: The Housemaster/mistress/the Headmaster of GJS will make contact with all legal guardians to discuss support and a plan of action to improve the attendance of the child. If the attendance continues to decline the SLT will consider contacting the Local Authority and the Education Welfare Officers for external intervention.

Parents/carers will be contacted if a pupil gives a reason for an unauthorised absence and there is doubt about the truth of the excuse.

Where pupils have been away for either short or long term, the school will support that child when they re-enter school to help them catch up on any work that they have missed.

Where a child has been absent from school for a period of more than 20 school days, and where the absence was unauthorised and both the school and LA have been unable to contact the parents, the school may remove the child from the school roll. The school will notify the local authority when such action is taken. If there is a period of absence of more than 10 days with no explanation then the LEA will be informed.

The parent/carers who is liaised with regarding attendance will be the one who is regarded as the primary carer for the purposes of the day-to-day administration. All parents/carers will be informed once the attendance starts to present concerns.

The school may take disciplinary action against any pupils who are discovered to be persistently truanting and parents or carers will be contacted to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help. The school may take further action against the parents, including referral to the local authority to begin criminal proceedings against the parents.

Reviewed by: JR Mundell, Head of the Junior School  
A Simpson, Deputy Head

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Approved by: Governors' Boarding & Pastoral Committee, March 2020

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## APPENDIX A: Senior School Staff Handbook Guidance

### REGISTRATION and PUPIL ABSENCE

The keeping of a register of pupils is a legal requirement and the register is a legal document. Senior House Staff are responsible for ensuring that the daily register for each House is completed in accordance with these guidelines and for keeping and monitoring clear records of pupils' absences.

Registration for all pupils **must** be taken by the member of staff on House duty at:

0820	morning session
1725	evening session (Y7 & 8)
1805	evening session (Y9 & above: begin with pupils travelling on bus)

The member of staff on duty taking registration must complete the register on iSAMS.

Where a pupil is absent and the reason not known, "N" should be used. Later, the appropriate code can be entered either by House Staff or the Receptionist if the pupil is late or when the reason is known. Please be aware that "L" does appear as 'Late' on the pupil's absence data which is visible to parents on the Parent Portal.

Morning registration is also used to record departure times, evening activities and boarding/bus arrangements. It must be completed in full each day.

Following morning registration the Receptionist will:

- Print a daily list of absentees that will be posted on the Today Noticeboard.
- Contact SHS first to double check because they don't always do registration and they might have had email or call from parents of which the resident tutors are not aware.
- Telephone parents of day pupils or flexi boarders who are absent without prior notification during periods 1 & 2. Email SHS to keep them informed of the reason and amend the absent code on the register.
- Supervise completion of the Late Book by pupils.

Pupils who are late for registration must sign the Late Book held at the School Reception desk. They should do this **immediately** on arrival. Any pupils who are persistently late

should initially receive a warning from Senior House Staff, which will then be followed up in writing by the Deputy Head (AS) or Headmaster.

The SHS must monitor the evening registers and ensure that they are complete at the end of each day in iSAMS.

The register must be kept neatly and the codes outlined below must be used:

/	Present in the morning session
\	Present for the afternoon session
O	Absent (unauthorized/reason not known)
L	Late (arrived after registration)
N	No reason yet provided/known for absence
M	Medical/dental appointment (e.g. day pupil at dentist's or doctor's appt)
I	Ill at home (day pupil). Ill in Medical Centre (boarder).
V	Educational Trip or University visit
G	Games/Sporting Fixture
H	Authorized family holiday/Late Return/Early Departure/Extra Exeat
C	Other authorised absence (not covered by other codes) – give details
S	Study Leave
W	Work Experience
J	Interview
D	Day pupil at home (use for early evening departure/at Sat pm to denote day pupil at home etc)
Z	Left (Pupil no longer on roll e.g. U6 leaver at end of course)
E	Excluded
R	Religious Observance

## PUPIL ABSENCE

- It is the responsibility of staff to check that all pupils are present at the start of each lesson, activity or Games session.
- A register should be kept on the iSAMS database or on Games registers.
- Staff should not take the word of other pupils but should follow up and check details.
- A list of pupils on a school trip or in the Medical Centre is posted on the 'Today Board' in the Common Room. This must be checked and any absentees not accounted for should be reported to Senior House Staff immediately via email.
- The Senior House Staff will discuss the absence with the pupil. If there is no valid reason for the absence, the SHS will reply to the teacher who initiated it. The teacher should then place the pupil in detention.
- Repeated or cumulative absence from a particular activity or activities should be dealt with promptly. The Assistant Head (Academic) (lessons) or the Senior Master (NAG) (games or extra-curricular commitments) monitor the absence data recorded on iSAMS.
- Senior House Staff or individual members of staff should inform them if a particular individual begins to give cause for concern.
- Pupils are asked to excuse themselves from lessons in advance if they are to be away from school, e.g. representing the school in a team, or to attend a music lesson.



- It is expected that pupils will leave the end of a lesson promptly and arrive to a lesson on time. Staff need to encourage this efficient approach.
- If there is any reason for concern of a pupil's absence then this should be reported immediately to Senior House Staff, the Deputy Head, or the Headmaster. Concerns would follow the following criteria:
  - Patterns with absence – missing the same days, late on certain days, early finishes or late start to the term (international students)
  - Attendance drops below 95% - the pupil is now a cause for concern and contact with home to discuss attendance via SHS
  - Attendance drops below 90% - the pupil is now classified as persistent absentee and meeting arranged with the Deputy Head – discussions regarding the EWO.
  - Senior House Staff should be able to account for a pupil at any time. To accommodate this, pupils are expected to sign out of House when out of school or out of House after 1900. In addition, Registration and 'Line' are taken during the day in accordance with the daily routine.

## DAILY ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

- (i) These are completed in House or Form Groups and on iSAMS. The Receptionists contact by telephone the parents of pupils who are absent with no reason yet known.
- (ii) The registers are monitored by the Deputy Head who follows up any emerging patterns of absence in conjunction with the Senior House Staff.

## APPENDIX B – Junior School Staff Handbook Guidance

Term dates for the current and the following two academic terms (at least) are published on the school's web site and are sent to all school families every term.

During term time, the Junior School is open from 8 am, Monday to Friday. Pupils should not enter the building before this time.

Electronic Attendance registers are taken by form teachers at the start of each session (morning and afternoon; a full day counts as two sessions). Attendance is recorded electronically for morning and afternoon sessions 8:20am and 1:10pm using iSAMS/GTAS.

### **Reception – Year 6:**

Morning registration begins at 0820; registers remain open (i.e. with the form teacher) until the start of Period 1 at 0840; registers are then "closed" and sent electronically through 3Sys.

Afternoon registration begins at 1305; registers remain open until the start of Period 4 (1315).

### **Pre-school:**

A manual register is used and remains open for half an hour at the start of each session which it is kept in the Pre-school.

- AM: The session begins at 8.00 am and ends at 1pm.
- PM: The session begins at 1pm and ends at 6pm.

Unless authorised by the Head, pupils in Reception-Y6 are expected to attend school each day of term and to arrive at school in time for morning registration, remaining in school until the published end of the school day, normally as follows:

Reception, Years 1 & 2:	1530
Years 3, 4, 5 and 6:	1715

Children may also access after-school provision as follows:

Nursery, Reception, Years 1 & 2:	1530 – 1730
Years 3, 4, 5 and 6:	1730 - 1900

Registers are checked by the Head's PA during Period 1 each weekday morning and pupil absence is logged. A fire list is produced following a generated report via the MIS. The report is also emailed to Junior School staff.

Where no message regarding absence has been received, a physical check is first made to ensure the child has not arrived late and forgotten to sign in. If the child is still unaccounted for, parents are contacted by the secretary to confirm the whereabouts of the child and the reason for non-attendance. If the parents cannot be contacted, the Head is advised and an appropriate course of action determined.

In cases of persistent lateness or absence, the Head will raise the matter with the child's parents in an attempt to resolve any difficulties. Where there are causes for concern, the Head may refer the matter to the Designated Safeguard Lead (Gail Sismey) who may contact the School's nominated Child Protection Officer.

Parents who wish to take their children out of school during term time for personal reasons may only do so with the Head's prior consent. Failure to request such absence will result in an unauthorised absence for the pupil.

Registers are marked as follows:

- \ Present when name called
- O Unauthorised absence
- C Other Authorised Circumstances



I. Late (Arrived after named called but while the register was still 'open') G Pupil  
attending a games fixture

I Illness

N No reason yet provided for absence

II. Medical/Dental appointments

H Family holiday (agreed)

V Educational visit or trip

E Excluded