



**The Sercombe Federation**  
**Cledford Primary School**  
 &  
**Gainsborough Primary & Nursery School**  
 A Federation of Cheshire East Primary Schools



**Cledford Primary School**

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Local Authority Code: 895  
 Establishment Number: 3821

Local Authority Code: 895  
 Establishment Number: 3810

School Principal: Mr C Adlington

Federation Headteacher: Mrs A J Booth

School Principal: Mrs J Nurse

# Gainsborough Primary & Nursery School

## Attendance Policy

**Reviewed: July 2024**

**Signed:**

**Mrs J Sercombe** (Chair of Governing Board) .....

**Mrs AJ Booth** (Federation Headteacher) .....

**Mrs J Nurse** (School Principal GPNS) .....

**Mr C Adlington** (School Principal CPS) .....

Next Review Date: July 2025

## **RATIONALE**

**Absence impacts on learning. Research shows that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard.**

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills that will equip them for life.

Gainsborough Primary and Nursery School aims to achieve good attendance and punctuality by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents/carers, the local community and the local authority Attendance and Children Out of Schools Team can work in partnership. The schools will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the schools.

The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

## **AIMS**

- To aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school
- To demonstrate to pupils, parents and staff that the school will be rigorous in pursuit of attendance and punctuality
- To proactively manage and improve attendance across the school community
- Implementation both in terms of rewards and sanctions in pursuit of 100% attendance with a minimum of 96%
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To encourage pupil involvement on attendance and punctuality issues
- To improve communication and build strong relationships with parents/carers in relation to excellent attendance and punctuality
- We view good attendance to be the responsibility of all school staff and expect staff to rigorously apply the policy
- To ensure time and organisation within the schools to enable the AIMS and OBJECTIVES to be achieved
- To work alongside the local authority Attendance and Children Out of Schools Team and seek advice and guidance when needed.
- To rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them

## **TARGETS**

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information
- To discuss the setting of targets for the school with the School Improvement Partner and the Governing Board
- To ensure that data is available and used effectively to identify and improve attendance less than 96%.
- The target for all individuals, groups, years and a whole school is 100% with a minimum of 96%
- To keep parents/carers, staff, pupils and governors informed of policy and practice
- To ensure that the schools are aware of current government targets which may have been set for some vulnerable groups, such as Cared for Children

## PROCESS/POINTS - Procedure

- Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence
- There are two types of absence:
  - Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
  - Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)
- It is expected that parents/carers will provide an appropriate explanation every day their child is absent. This can be by telephone, or personally at the office and must be before 9:00am. Parents/carers are respectfully requested not to keep their children at home with lesser illnesses (i.e. cough, cold, headache etc.). Caring for children is of paramount importance to us and we will always quickly contact a parent if we feel that a pupil is not well enough to remain in school.
- In the event that we are not contacted about an absence then the school will contact the home, usually by telephone, email or text, on the first day. If we are unable to make contact, we will carry out a home visit within 48 hours as unexplained absences are a safeguarding concern. All contact to discuss non attendance will be recorded.
- Home visits by the attendance team may also be carried out for instances of repeated illness.
- Children with less than 96% attendance will be supported and may be referred to the local authority Attendance and Children Out Of School team.
- If a child has accumulated 10 sessions (5 days) absence, then the attendance team will make contact to ensure a pattern does not develop. A Penalty Notice warning letter can be issued when unauthorised absence persists.

## Incentives and Rewards

- Every classroom will display a weekly attendance board with class based incentives.
- Key stage weekly assembly – class with the best attendance receive extra play time.
- Half termly certificates for pupils with 100% attendance.
- Termly rewards for pupils with accumulative 100% attendance.

## Identification & Referral (see Flowchart/Appendix 1)

Attendance is monitored daily by our attendance team. Where there is concern, the following will be actioned:

- Initially school will contact parents/carers with letter 1.
- Following the letter, there will be two weeks monitoring of the child's attendance. 100% attendance is expected and medical evidence may be requested to authorise any absences.
- If 100% attendance is not achieved, the appropriate attendance letter 2 will be sent and parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting with a member of the attendance team. At the meeting the expectation of two weeks with 100% attendance will be agreed. An attendance contract will be drawn up and a review meeting will be scheduled.
- If 100% attendance is still not achieved following this meeting, a three week warning letter will be sent stating that a fixed penalty notice will be issued by the local authority (Cheshire East).

**A fixed penalty notice (FPN) is a fine of up to £160 per pupil. If this fine remains unpaid, an appearance before a magistrate may ultimately lead to a prison sentence.**

## Completing the Register

- The twice-daily requirement to register pupils should be perceived as an opportunity for the school to receive children formally into the classroom and serves as an introduction to the teaching session
- Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents that may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school
- Registers must only be completed by teachers or teaching assistants
- The register should be marked using the symbols advised by DfE
- The school currently uses electronic registers. The Governing Body is responsible for registering this data in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998
- Data from the electronic registers is kept securely on the server

## Punctuality

Children must be in school on time. Registers are taken at 8:45am. If a child arrives after 8.50am, they must enter via the front of school. Latecomers must sign in at the school office. Punctuality is monitored weekly by the attendance team and contact is made with parents/ carers if there is a pattern of lateness. Latecomers arriving more than 30mins late will be marked as an unauthorised absence (U code) for that session; these will be monitored and may result in a referral for a fixed penalty notice (FPN).

## Exceptional Circumstance Leave of Absence During Term Time

Holidays or absence due to travel abroad during term time will not be authorised.

A '*Leave of Absence Request Form*' will need to be completed and submitted to the attendance team for authorisation for any requests for leave of absence. Current government guidelines on holidays during term time are very clear – schools are not permitted to authorise except under very exceptional circumstances.

Parents need to be aware that The Attendance and Children Out of School team will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice should there be an unauthorised absence of more than 10 sessions (5 days).

### **Penalty Notices will be issued for**

**Term time leave:** Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days.

**10 Sessions of Unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period:** A Penalty Notices may be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a 10 week period.

However, we retain the discretion to issue a Penalty Notice before the threshold is met. For example, where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below the above thresholds.

### Per Parent/Per Child

Penalty Notice fines will be issued per parent per child. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

#### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular school attendance the fine will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days of the issue, reducing to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

(Unpaid penalty notices may result in a parental prosecution)

#### Second Offence

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first penalty notice, for either term time leave or irregular attendance, the second penalty notice will be charged at:

£160 if paid within 28 days.

(Unpaid penalty notices may result in a parental prosecution)

#### Third Offence

On the third time that an offence is committed within 3 years of the first penalty notice for either a term time leave or irregular attendance a penalty notice will not be issued. The case may proceed to Parental Prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure. If found guilty of the offence of 'Failure to send a child to school' the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1000 or legal proceedings under Section 444 (1a) can include a fine of up to £2500.

#### What can parents/carers do to help?

- Let the school know as soon as possible why your child is absent. In any case this notification should be before 9:00am on the first day of absence
- Try to make all appointments, e.g. doctors and dentists, outside school time
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is absolutely necessary

#### If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?

- Talk to our attendance team at school; they can be contacted via the School office.
- Talk to your child's class teacher or the school Principal

You may contact the attendance team, who will work with you and the school to resolve the situation. We are keen to work with parents and pupils to provide the support necessary to ensure good attendance.

#### Absence:

Parents should inform the school if their child will not be attending. This notice should be given to the school before 9:00am on every day of absence. In the case of dental or hospital appointments the school should be informed in

advance with written confirmation of each appointment; however, parents should endeavour for these appointments to be made outside of school hours.

The school aims to have ALL children attending 100% of the time. Parents/carers need to know that should their child fall below 96% they may be asked to discuss this with our attendance team.

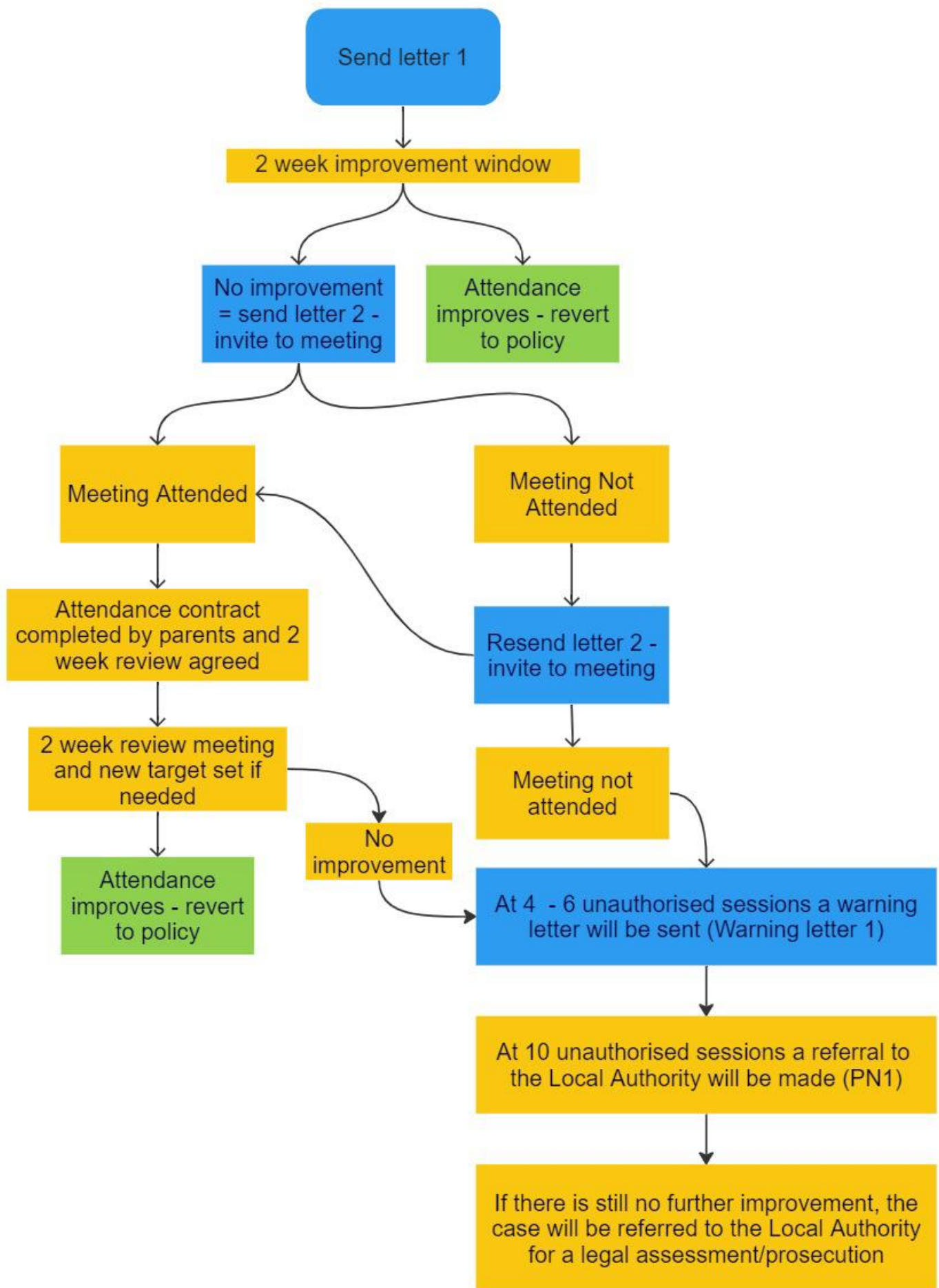
Parents/carers need to be aware that the local authority (Cheshire East), in conjunction with the school, is operating Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance.

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire East is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practice which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. Our approach to children's absence has due regard to our Equality Policy.

Gainsborough Primary and Nursery School understands the need for on-going communication with parents/carers and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.

We recognise the support of the vast majority of parents in helping to ensure that attendance is as close as possible to our target of 100%.

## Appendix 1: Flowchart



## Appendix 2



### Parenting contract for attendance.

Child's name and DOB:	
Current attendance:	
School/Year group:	
Parent(s) name (s):	

Senior staff member with overall responsibility:
Member of staff responsible day-to-day:
Local Authority Officer (if applicable):

The specific targets of our plan. What we aim to do:
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## Appendix 3: Letter 1



### Cledford Primary School

George VI Avenue, Middlewich, Cheshire, CW10 0DD

Telephone: 01606 663667

E mail: [admin@cledford.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:admin@cledford.cheshire.sch.uk)

School Principal: Mr C Adlington

**Date:**

**Dear**

We noticed that xxxxx's attendance is currently xxxx%. This is below the school's expectations.

Cheshire East Council are working with schools to try and improve school attendance because we know that school attendance makes such a big difference to children's futures. The Department for Education tell us 'school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing and wider development. Evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results.' (DFE 2023).

We also want to remind you that the Education Act 1996 section 444, requires you to make sure that your child attends school, on time, every time the school is open.

If there are any issues that may be impacting on your child's attendance, please contact the school to discuss further.

Further information can be found on the websites below:

Attendance information

[School attendance and absence: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Attendance and children out of education \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://cheshireeast.gov.uk)

Early help support

[Early Help Assessment \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://cheshireeast.gov.uk)

Mental health support

[Emotionally Healthy Children and Young People \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://cheshireeast.gov.uk)

[Anna Freud on my mind](#)

We will continue to monitor xxxxx's attendance and if there are further absences you will be invited into school to discuss this further with our attendance team and provide medical evidence.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Nurse

School Principal

Deborah Woodcock

Executive Director of Children's Services



## Appendix 4: Letter 2



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School Principal: Mrs J Nurse

Chair Governors: Mrs J M Sercombe

Federation Headteacher: Mrs A J Booth

Pupil name:

Dear

We consider attendance to be of utmost importance and are currently working in partnership with Cheshire East Local Authority to strengthen student attendance. I am therefore bringing the following information to your attention.

Unfortunately, since we last wrote to you, your child's attendance has not improved. As a result of continued absences and lack of noticeable improvement I would like to invite you into school on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_. This meeting will be useful to discuss how we can work together to improve your child's attendance. It is your legal duty to ensure your child attends school regularly, and failure to do this may result in legal action being taken against you.

There is specific guidance regarding illness and absence for school age children on the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Please find attached a copy of your child's registration certificate.

If you are experiencing any difficulty getting your child to school, please contact us as we may be able to help.

Kind regards

Mrs Nurse

School Principal