



GOSDEN HOUSE SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Gosden House School recognises and values the contributions that parents, carers, governors and other members of the community can make. We will endeavour to encourage the wider community to understand the aims and vision of the school and to involve them wherever possible.

Provision of information in other formats - We will endeavour, wherever possible, to provide information in alternative formats when required or requested. Examples of this are by using email, royal mail, enlarged print versions, audio tapes, translations, symbolised text. Adequate prior notice would be required through the school office.

Accessibility to premises - To continue to ensure that the school building and grounds are accessible to the extended school community, pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members as far as reasonably possible.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of original policy	June 2017
Original school author	Cindy O'Sullivan
Review date and SLT initial	November 2023
Next review date	November 2026
Date approved and signed in governing body meeting	n/a

The staff of Gosden House School are committed, in partnership with the parents, pupils, governors and the Local Education Authority, to building a school which serves the community commendably, and of which the community is proud.

The school staff firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly. We also refer to the guidance on attendance set out at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>.

Expectations

Attendance %	Level of Concern	Action by the School
96% and above	None – on track attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of recognition
90% to 96%	Concern as below school target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of concern
Below 90%	Persistent absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with school • Medical evidence required for all absences
Below 90%	Continued persistent absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Inclusion Service

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly;
- Attend school punctually;
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day; and
- Discuss promptly with their form tutor/class teacher any problems that discourage them from attending school.

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day-to-day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that any child in their care arrives at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- Ensure that they contact the school whenever the child is unable to attend school;
- Contact the school each day their child is absent;
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.
- Provide two emergency contacts so that the school can follow up absence quickly and ascertain the location and safety of every child.

We would encourage discussion where there are any issues arising that the school could support to avoid absenteeism e.g. management of an on-going health issue. We can be flexible on daily arrangements to facilitate this.

We expect that school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- monitor every child's attendance using SIMS;
- contact parents/ carers as soon as possible when unexplained and/or prolonged absence occurs and obtain notes authorising the absence.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- provide a welcoming and safe learning environment for children;
- meet with the school's Inclusion Officer regularly to discuss any new concerns and report on the progress of existing cases;
- meet with the parents of children whose attendance causes concern;
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Service.

Exceptional circumstances

It is Gosden House School's policy not to authorise holidays in term time. However, in exceptional circumstances (this means being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time) the school may consider a request, providing the child has an attendance level of 96% or above, but the normality will be that requests will be refused. Requests need to be submitted to the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors (Appendix 1).

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school, we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9-30 am the school will endeavour to contact them that day. If the family is not reachable by telephone, emergency contacts will be called.
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer and the Head teacher will make a decision as to whether a home visit needs to be made.
- If by the end of the second day there has still been no contact, the Local Authority and/ or Police will be contacted. This is to ensure the safety of the child and family.
- In the case of non-authorised absence (absence which the Head teacher has not authorised), the head teacher will contact parents/ carers and may invite them to meet and discuss concerns.
- In the case of continued persistent absence the head teacher will refer to the Surrey Inclusion Service.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set out by the Inclusion Service may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, a penalty notice or court prosecution.
- While it is understood that a child may have specific medical needs, school reserves the right to see evidence to support such absences. The school will always ask for medical evidence where a child's attendance falls below 90%

- It is appreciated that there can be difficulties obtaining appointments with specialists, such as paediatricians, but we do request that you endeavour to arrange these for out-of-school hours.
- Please note that morning registers close at 9.30. Any pupil arriving after that time will be recorded as "late". We recognise that children who arrive by Local Authority Transport are subject to factors beyond the control of parents. In case of frequent late arrival, families and the school will liaise with the transport provider.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send a child in their care to a different school they will inform Gosden House School staff and their SEND Case Officer as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until all are satisfied that the child is accepted on the roll of an alternative, appropriate school. Pupils are expected to attend the school until a suitable placement has been agreed.

School Organisation

In order for the School's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

In addition to this, the School has the following responsibilities:

Head Teacher, Governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- Adopt the whole policy;
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided;
- Maintain a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence;
- Ensure that key staff have timetabled periods for liaison and follow-up work with the Inclusion Service, and appropriate access to attendance data;
- Consult and liaise closely with the Inclusion Service on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay;
- Work in close collaboration with the Inclusion Service during the half termly register analysis;
- Institute an attendance award scheme with assemblies, certificates and rewards; and
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with Inclusion Service.

Class teachers/form tutors to:

- Complete registers accurately and punctually twice daily;

- Follow up any unexplained non-attendance. Inform the school office of all reasons for absences so they can be recorded in School Information Management System (SIMS);
- Inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance of concerns. Be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and report these concerns as soon as possible to the Senior Leadership team.

Penalty Notices

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

- The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.
- Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.
- The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 6 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

APPENDIX A



Gosden House School

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully.

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the Head teacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to validate your request.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice
Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice is £60, per child per parent/carer, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

The Head teacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision.

For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

Name of child:	Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for	
from:	to:
Number of school days:	
The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested:	
Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year? YES / NO	
If YES, please give dates and details:	

I also have children at... (insert name of school/centre attended)		
Signed: (Parent/Carer)		Date:
To be completed by the Head teacher		
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:		
Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
Explanatory notes:		
Signed:		Date:
(Head teacher)		
Signed		Date:
(Chair of Governors)		