



## GUILSBOROUGH ACADEMY

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Name	Attendance
Committee	Curriculum and Student Welfare
Owner	Vice Principal (Pastoral)
Statutory	No

Date Ratified	Review Date
Due 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	July 2017
September 2017	July 2018

#### Introduction

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. Attending school on a regular basis and being punctual is crucial for success. The best place for your child/children to be is in the Academy learning; any absence results in lost learning time.

Missing days of learning in succession (over a period of time) makes catching-up more of a challenge for the student, and often they can find themselves falling behind.

Attendance during one school year	Equals this amount days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent
90%	19 days	4 weeks
80%	38 days	8 weeks
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks

In 2015 – 2016 students at Guilsborough Academy on 95%+ attendance achieved on average 8 A\*-C grades, 90%+ attendance achieved on average 6 A\*-C grades, 85%+ attendance achieved on average 4 A\*-C grades, below 85%+ attendance achieved on average 2 A\*-C grades. Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and is essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. In recognition of this, the law makes it an offence for a parent or carer to fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a school at which the child is a registered pupil, without good reason or the agreement of the school.

Guilsborough Academy will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from



attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

We have a duty in law to refer any continual absence of 10 days or more where we have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Education Inclusion and Partnership Team (EIPT)

We are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from school has to be classified, as either authorised or unauthorised. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents/carers. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason including illnesses or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which Guilsborough Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

### **Holidays/Absences in Term Time**

From September 2016 the criteria for issuing Penalty notices for unauthorised term time absence changed, so it will now be 10 sessions (equivalent to **5 school days** in a 6 week period). This means that if you book an unauthorised holiday for 5 or more days during term time the Local Authority is asking schools to refer this to the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team for consideration of further action. This may result in the team issuing you with a fixed penalty notice. The initial Fixed Penalty Notice of £60.00 is issued to each parent for each child (In a two-parent family with two children this amounts to £240.00).

### **Parental requests for time off in term time**

Parents/carers may write to the Principal and request time off for their child(ren) from school which may be granted by the Principal. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and this will not include holidays in term time.

Parents/carers should always try to arrange medical/dental appointments out of school hours and where this is not possible for the afternoon session where less of a time impact will occur. If this is not possible and the appointment is in the morning, parents/carers should ensure that the appointment is as early as possible to allow the child to return to school quickly.

### **Expectations:**

We expect that our **pupils** will:

- Regularly attend Guilsborough Academy according to the published session times – ensuring that they arrive at the Academy in time to be registered at the beginning of the morning session at 8:45 am
- if they arrive late to the Academy but before the end of the registration period, go to their form room where their Form Tutor will record them as late. If they arrive after the end of the form period/assembly session they should go to their first lesson where they will be registered by their class teacher using lesson monitor



- if absent for a valid reason, they must remind their parent(s)/carer(s) of their responsibility to inform the Academy on the first day of absence and to provide a written note explaining the absence upon their child's return to the Academy. The student planner can be used for this purpose. If absent, students should make every effort to access and complete any work they have missed.

We expect that our **parents/carers** will:

- uphold the Home-School Agreement to ensure regular attendance;
- ensure their child attends the Academy according to the published dates and session times, and that they are equipped for all lessons;
- If your child is unable to attend the Academy, you must contact the Academy through the student absence line at the earliest opportunity to explain the reason why. When your child returns to the academy, provide a written explanation for the period of absence. If proof is not shown your child will be given an unauthorised absent mark on their attendance record;
- avoid any absence from school for routine medical appointments during term time. Students having medical or dental appointments must bring an appointment card or note from their parents/carers, which should be authorised by the Form Tutor. Where possible, every effort should be made to arrange appointments outside of our Academy hours, especially for ongoing treatment;
- not arrange holidays or leave of absence in term time. If there is a need for a student to take time off during term time then the student's parents/carers should write to the Principal to Request the leave of absence. The Academy will only grant leave during term time in exceptional circumstances, in line with statutory regulations.

**Note:** Parents/carers who remove their child during term time without authorisation from the Principal risk incurring a financial penalty.

The **Academy** will:

- send out a text message if your child is absent and we have not heard from you, asking that you please contact the academy to explain the absence.
- Phone home on the first day of absence for vulnerable children and looked after children. We ensure that any absence of two days without satisfactory explanation is referred to the EIPT and/or Social Worker.
- accurately record the attendance and any absence of a student; through a system of registering students in teaching groups and regular spot checks, identify any post registration truancy - informing parents/carers immediately should that occur;
- in the case of known long term absence: where appropriate, provide work for the student at home; take action to achieve the successful reintegration of the student on their return.

**When problems of attendance arise:**

- Parents/carers will receive a series of letters if their child's attendance falls near or below the 90% threshold. Meetings will be organised with the pastoral support, Head of Year and subsequently with the Vice Principal (Pastoral) and the Governors.
- If attendance levels do not improve, or continue to fall further, parents/carers will be asked to provide medical evidence and appointment cards.
- The academy will contact JOGO behaviour support or EIPT for further support
- Referral to the EIPT for prosecution may be necessary if attendance falls below 90% and is not improving.
- All pupils with a good attendance are rewarded in line with the Academy Rewards Policy.
- Attendance above 96% is expected by all our pupils



Parents/carers whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to a member of the Education Inclusion Partnership Team (EIPT) from Northamptonshire County Council. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed.

EIPT are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting Northamptonshire County Council.

- Student and also parent contracts are considered in developing an improved attendance percentage for students

## References

Further information regarding attendance is published on the Academy website.

Departmental advice on School Attendance, DfE, November 2016, can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/564599/school\\_attendance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564599/school_attendance.pdf)

## Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Vice Principal– Pastoral  
Attendance Officer  
Heads of Year  
Pastoral Support  
Tutors

## Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents/carers as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.