

Attendance Information for Parents & Carers



Updated February 2022

At Green Ridge Primary Academy, we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling, and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best.

Although we aim for 100% attendance, each year we set a target for attendance & this is used to compare us to other schools nationally.

Our current target is 97% attendance. Attending school every day will help give your child the best possible start in life.

Going to school every day means:

- learning new skills
- making friends
- having lots of fun
- building lasting relationships
- taking part in exciting activities

You can help us to help your child by encouraging regular school attendance.

Did you know?

- 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 100-hour long lessons.
- If you take your child on a two-week holiday in term time, attendance for the year immediately drops to 95%.
- A two-week holiday in term time means your child has approximately 50 hours of missed work to catch up on.
- 90% attendance is equivalent to half a day's absence each week: four weeks over the year and half a year's absence over five years.
- 90% attendance is equivalent to a full month off school in a year.
- Missing just 10 minutes of school a day is the same as missing two weeks over the year.
- You can be fined up to £2,500 or given a three-month prison sentence if your child misses too much school.



The Facts

Under education law, parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their registered children of compulsory school age (five to 16 years old) attend school regularly. If your child does not go to school the Children, Young People & Families Directorate can and will take legal action against you. This could lead to:

- School Attendance Panels
- Fines including Fixed Penalty Notices
- Parenting Orders
- Prosecution

How can I help my child attend school regularly?

- Talk to your child about school
- Take a positive interest in your child's work including home learning activities
- Keep in touch with school staff
- Make sure everything is ready for them the evening before of first thing in the morning so there is no worry about missing uniform, home learning and being late.
- Aim for 10 hours sleep a night for your child. This will make the following day at school easier for them to cope with.
- Make sure your child eats breakfast, it helps them stay alert at school.
- Help your child develop routines.
- Develop a nighttime routine that involves checking their homework, reading & bed.
- Try and make sure that any medical appointments are booked for outside of school hours where possible.

**There are 190 days in the school year,
which leaves 175 days to spend on
family time, shopping, appointments,
and other things.**

Reducing Illness Days

If your child is saying they do not feel well and you are unsure about whether it warrants a day off, please send them to school. If they are truly ill, we will contact you if they become too ill to remain in school.

Use common sense when deciding whether your child is too ill to attend school. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my child well enough to do the activities during the school day?
- Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or staff?
- Would I take a day off work if I had this condition?

Children can attend school with minor ailments (toothache, headache, stomach-ache, cold etc), and medication can be given in school if required but you will need to complete the necessary forms in advance which can be obtained from the school office.

If you are unsure how long your child should be absent with an illness speak to your child's doctor, a pharmacist or Mrs. Cavanagh our Education, Welfare and Pastoral Lead for further advice.

Medical Appointments

Where possible, please avoid medical appointments during school hours. If this is unavoidable, please remember that:

- We require a copy of your child's medical appointment, whether that be an appointment card, screenshot of a text or an email in which can be forwarded on. Failure to provide this may result in your child's absence not being authorised on the register.
- If same day emergency medical appointments occur, please obtain proof whilst at the appointment in order for us to file accordingly upon your child's return to school.
- Please try to make the appointment as late in the day as possible so your child can obtain both registration marks in the morning and the afternoon.
- If you are only able to get a morning appointment for your child, please try to bring them to school first to get their morning registration mark and then return them to school afterwards. If the appointment is early and you are unable to bring them into school prior, please communicate with the school office accordingly and ensure that their lunch has been ordered via SchoolGrid before 8.55am if they require a meal.

Reporting Absence (due to illness)

So that we can be more efficient in dealing with pupil absences, we ask that if your child is going to be absent from nursery or school, that you call the school on 01296 326320, and press option 1 to report an absence before 8.40am every day that your child is absent. This will give you the opportunity to leave a voicemail. If you are unable to call the school, then please email the school using the email addresses below.

Nursery (Little Berries/Acorns)	Mrs. Bowden Early Years Administrator	nursery@greenridgeacademy.co.uk
Main School (Reception-Year Six)	Mrs. Upfold School Administrator	absence@greenridgeacademy.co.uk

Lateness

We kindly ask that you try to let us know in advance if your child will be late to school. A brief voicemail or email will suffice, but it is beneficial if we know that your child is going to be late before the start of the school day. Please note that if your child arrives after 8.50am then they will be classed as 'late', but if they arrive after 9.00am then they will be classed as missing the whole morning session and this will be an unauthorised absence for which you can be fined by the local authority if this persistently occurs.

Holidays during Term Time

Green Ridge are committed to ensuring that all children receive the best education possible. It is important that every child attends school for as many days of the school year as possible. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child does not take unnecessary time off school. Taking holidays during term time destroys the continuity of your child's education and may reduce their chance of success. Parents/carers are expected to take their children on holiday when school is closed.

Requesting Leave of Absence (for holidays and exceptional circumstances)

In law you must ask for permission for your children to miss school. Leave during term time will only be agreed where the Headteacher feels there are exceptional circumstances. Also, it is possible that leave will not be agreed when attendance already includes unauthorised absence and/or attendance is already causing concern.

The Headteacher can, in exceptional circumstances only, authorise a leave of absence for a child during the academic year. This is not an entitlement and requests can be, and are often, refused. Each request will be considered individually based on your child's attendance, the exceptional circumstance, and the impact on your child's attainment.

You must inform the school if you are planning to take your child out of school during term time and we should be notified at least four weeks prior to the absence commencing although we appreciate that there may be times when this is not possible. We kindly ask that you complete a Leave of Absence form by following this [link](#) in which your request will then be considered, and a letter will follow detailing the Headteacher's decision.

Please note that parents/carers who take a child of compulsory school age on holiday without permission from the school may be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

Please also be aware that if we suspect that a child is on holiday (and we have not had prior notification), a home visit may be carried out and a fine may be issued. Similarly, if you report your child as ill, and we have evidence to suggest that you are on holiday, further action will be taken.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness (where a child is too ill to attend school) medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Your Legal Responsibility

If your child does not attend school regularly (over 90%) the Local Authority can take action against you. This can be through a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) or a summons to appear at a Magistrates Court.

What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced legislation that made provision for a Local Authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices. These notices require a fine to be paid by parents/carers of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. Recent changes in the law have meant

an increase in the use of Fixed Penalty Notices from September 2013 with a key focus on improving attendance at school.

On what circumstances will Fixed Penalty Notices be issued?

A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued in two situations:

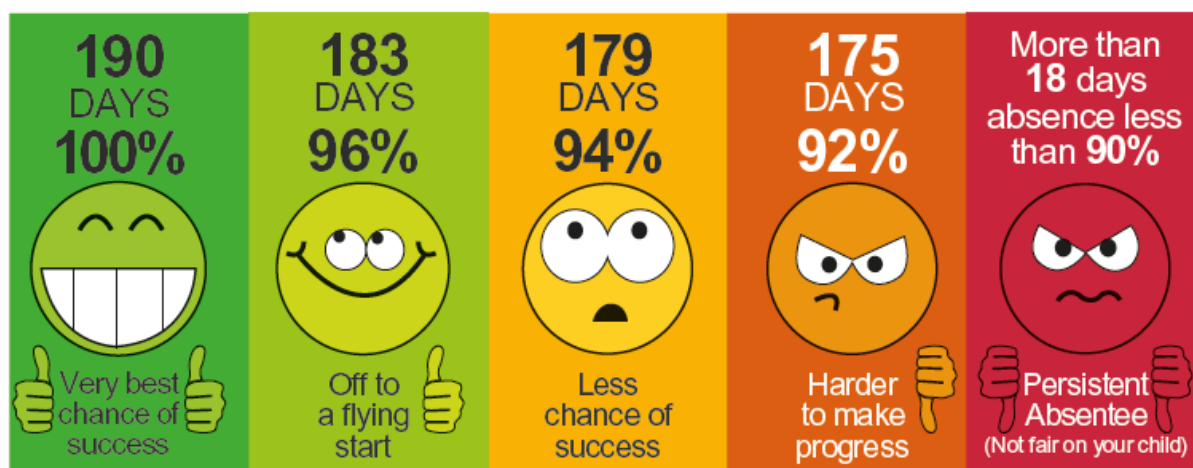
1. If a holiday is taken during term time without the Headteacher's permission; or
2. If a pupil has unauthorised absence from school and their parent/carer fails to co-operate with school staff and the Education Welfare Service to improve the situation.

What are the penalties?

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is £60 per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days. After 21 days it will increase to £120 per parent/carer. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's attendance at school.

To help your child do well in school, you should:

- Arrange family holidays to coincide with school holidays
- Never take your child out of school when there are important examinations or tests
- Be aware of the potential impact on your child's education
- Avoid taking your child out of school when they are just starting. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.



Further information can also be found within our Attendance Policy.