



**GLENMERE COMMUNITY
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



At Glenmere we are GREAT! Because
we:
Grow, Respect, Enjoy, Achieve
Together

Primary Attendance and Truancy Policy

Last updated: September 2021

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Statement of intent

Glenmere Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

(a) to age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.

Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.

Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

Rewarding regular attendance.

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher

Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors

Date: _____

Review date: September 2022

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

Education Act 1996

Equality Act 2010

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)

Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations

2014 Children and Young Persons Act 1963

DfE (2018) 'School attendance'

DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'

DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'

DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

- 1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

Complaints Procedures Policy

Behavioural Policy

Safe guarding policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for:

The implementation of the Primary Attendance and Truancy Policy and procedures of Glenmere Primary School.

Ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Ensuring there is a Safe guarding policy that includes children missing in education section in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

- 2.2. The head teacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Primary Attendance and Truancy Policy and procedures of the school, and distributing these to parents.
- 2.3. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for:
- Following the Primary Attendance and Truancy Policy and ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- 2.4. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- 2.5. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.
- 2.6. Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

An **“authorised absence”** as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.
- An absence due to an examination out of school, (a letter from the organisation would need to be seen)
- An absence due to selection for a sporting, musical event (a letter would need to be seen detailing their selection).

An **“unauthorised absence”** as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

“Persistent absenteeism” as:

- Missing 10-15 percent or more of schooling across the year.
The reason for the absence would be looked at and considered.

A termly meeting will be held with the attendance officer and children falling below 90% will be looked at and contact may be made with these parents by the attendance officer.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction.
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

5. Pupil expectations

- 5.1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day and will sign an agreement at the beginning of each school year, to agree to keep their attendance at, or above, 95 percent throughout the year.

6. Absence procedures

- 6.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence.
- 6.2. A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school or a letter may be sent to find out the absence reason.
- 6.3. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer.
- 6.4. If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting may be arranged with the parents.
- 6.5. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if

the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.

7. Contact information

7.1. Parents are responsible for:

Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.

Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number. Updating the school if their details change.

8. Attendance register

The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

Present.

Absent.

Attending an approved educational visit.

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

/ = Present in the morning
\ = Present in the afternoon

L = Late arrival before the register has closed
C = Authorised absence

E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
H = Authorised holiday

I = Illness

M = Medical or dental appointments

R = Religious observance

B = Off-site education activity

G = Unauthorised holiday

O = Unauthorised absence

U = Arrived after registration closed

N = Reason not yet provided

X = Not required to be in school

T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

V = Education visit or trip

P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity

D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
Y = Exceptional circumstances

Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

On a snow day if the school stays open the school may give the parents the option for their children to attend if they can get them to school in a safe manner. Children that can't make it due to the weather on this occasion will be given authorised absence.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

9. Attendance officer

9.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation through a parent agreement.

9.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the attendance officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents.

10. Lateness

10.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.

10.2. The school day starts at **8:55**. Pupils should be in the playground at this time.

10.3. Registers are marked by **9:20**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

10.4. The register closes at **9:30**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.

10.5. Parents will be a First Call after 9.30 if a child is away and we haven't received a reason for their absence.

10.6. After lunch, registers are marked by **13:10**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

10.7. The register closes at **13:20**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

10.8. Pupils attending after **9:20** will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.

11. Term-time leave

- 11.1. At Glenmere, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 11.2. The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances or a religious reason.
- 11.3. The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave.
- 11.4. The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school during term time. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher.
- 11.5. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 11.6. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
 - Immediately before and during assessment periods
 - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
 - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason
- 11.7. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

12. Leave during lunch times

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents are required to submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher.

The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent in to the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises.

The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the parent or guardian will need to collect the child.

13. Truancy

- 13.1. Truancy means any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 13.2. All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning.
- 13.3. All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 9:00am and 13:10, where the teacher will record the attendance.
- 13.4. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day, must be accompanied by a parent and must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.
- 13.5. Copies of medical appointments, where possible will be taken.
- 13.6. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.

14. Missing children

- 14.1. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the head teacher for an appointment accompanied by their parent/guardian.
- 14.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.

The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.

A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.

The following areas will be systematically searched:

- All classrooms
- All toilets
- Changing rooms
- The library
- Any outbuildings
- The school grounds

Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.

If the pupil has not been found after **10** minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified and police will be called.

The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.

If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.

The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.

- 14.3. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- 14.4. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 14.5. The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 14.6. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- 14.7. The headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 14.8. Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behavioural Policy.

15. Religious observances

- 15.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals.
- 15.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

16. Appointments

- 16.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 16.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office.

- 16.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent.
- 16.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

17. Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities

- 17.1. Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s).
- 17.2. Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity/performance is required to request a licence from the LA.
- 17.3. The organiser is required to allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away.
- 17.4. The LA will only approve a licence application once it is satisfied that:
 - The pupil's education, health and wellbeing will not suffer;
 - and The conditions of the licence will be observed.
- 17.5. The LA will impose any conditions it considers necessary to ensure that the pupil is fit to take part in the performance/activity, that there will be proper provision for the pupil's wellbeing, and that the pupil's education will not suffer.
- 17.6. The school will make additional arrangements for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.
- 17.7. The organiser of the performance/activity is responsible for ensuring these arrangements are carried out.
- 17.8. The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence.
- 17.9. The above requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:
 - For not less than six hours a week; and
 - During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and

On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and

For not more than five hours on any such day.

- 17.10. Where the applicant is unable to specify the dates of the performance/activity, and the LA decides to grant the application, the LA will specify that the pupil can only take part in the activity for a specified number of days within a six-month period.
- 17.11. Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the school.
- 17.12. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day..
- 17.13. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.
- 17.14. The LA will be satisfied that arrangements for chaperones, accommodation, place of performance and rehearsal, and travel are suitable before it grants the application.
- 17.15. The LA may decide to place restrictions on any performance or activity – this can include maximum hours and breaks.
- 17.16. The maximum number of consecutive days that a child can perform is six – this applies to performances only.
- 17.17. Pupils who perform are entitled to a break of at least 14 days following the last performance where the pupil has been performing on the maximum number of consecutive days over a period of eight weeks, unless the period to which the licence applies is less than 60 days.
- 17.18. A licence is also required where a pupil will be absent from school and conducting a performance or activity abroad.
- 17.19. The LA is responsible for enforcing all licence requirements; they may carry out inspections of the premises:
 - Where rehearsals during the performance period are taking place; Where performances or activities are taking place; or
 - Where the pupil is receiving their education, in order to check that licensing conditions are being met.
- 17.20. The LA has the power to amend or revoke existing licences at any time.
- 17.21. If the LA refuses to grant a licence, it will provide reasons for this decision in writing to the individual/organisation applying for the licence.

17.22. The organiser of the performance/activity has the right to appeal the decision to a magistrates' court, including its refusal, revocation or variation, and against any condition under which a licence is granted or an approval is given.

18. Young carers

18.1. The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.

18.2. The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.

18.3. The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

19. Rewarding good attendance

The school acknowledges 100 percent attendance in the following ways:

Certificates at the end of each half term.

School trips and events are a privilege. Where attendance drops below 90 percent, these privileges may be taken away.

20. Monitoring and review

20.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

20.2. Glenmere's attendance target is 96 percent.

20.3. Details of our absence levels can be found on our website.

20.4. At the end of each half term attendance letters are sent out to children below 90%

20.5. The severity of the letter increases depending on how many letters they have received.

20.6 This policy is reviewed every annually by the headteacher; the next scheduled review date for this policy is June 2021

20.7 Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

Attendance Changes During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Please note, this annex has been created in line with the current government guidance. Schools need to ensure that this template reflects any local guidance and the specific needs of their school. We understand that reopening schools to more pupils will be very challenging, and we will update any guidance in line with government advice.

1. Taking attendance during partial school closure

During the partial school closure period, the school will adhere to the current government guidance by implementing the following measures:

- Attendance is non-compulsory during partial school closure and parents will not be fined for not bringing their child to school in line with the Coronavirus Act 2020 Disapplication of section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996 (England) Notice 2020.
- The school remains open for all vulnerable pupils and children of keyworkers who cannot receive sufficient care at home.
- The school's attendance register will not be taken during partial school closure and the attendance code '#' will be used to denote planned full or partial school closure.
- The school will complete the ['Educational setting status'](#) form by midday each day of partial school closure to provide the DfE with accurate information on whether the school is open to eligible pupils and how many pupils it is caring for during this time.
- If a child that is expected to be in school does not attend, the school will contact the child's parents or primary carers to ensure the safety and security of the child.
- Under no circumstance will an individual enter the school grounds if they are displaying symptoms of coronavirus.
- Parents will inform the school if their child (who is expected to attend school) is ill, and/or displaying symptoms of coronavirus, and is unable to attend school as a result.
- If a pupil lives with an extremely clinically vulnerable person, they will only be able to attend school if they adhere to strict social distancing measures.

2. Taking attendance during phased reopening

- 2.1. When schools are advised to begin reopening to more pupils, the school will adhere to the current government guidance by implementing the following measures:

- Attendance is non-compulsory during phased reopening and parents will not be fined for not bringing their child to school in line with the Coronavirus Act 2020 Disapplication of section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996 (England) Notice 2020.
- The school will resume its attendance register once phased reopening commences – the attendance register will be open for longer to account for staggered starts.
- In addition to the attendance register, the school will continue to submit the 'Educational setting status' form to the DfE.
- The school will devise a recovery plan which will enable it to reopen safely and adhere to strict social distancing and hygiene rules – this plan will be made in collaboration with parents, governors, staff and any other relevant party.
- The school respects the concerns of parents and will not pressure them into bringing their child to school if they feel the setting is unsafe, and will the school's plan to keep pupils safe in line with Public Health England's (PHE's) advice, offering reassurance where required.
- The school will work with the LA to ensure those who are expected to attend school are doing so, and any unexplained absences are dealt with using the correct channels.
- **Under no circumstance will an individual enter the school grounds if they are displaying symptoms of coronavirus.**
- Parents will inform the school if their child (who is expected to attend school) is ill, and/or displaying symptoms of coronavirus, and is unable to attend school as a result.
- If a pupil lives with an extremely clinically vulnerable person, they will only be able to attend school if they adhere to strict social distancing measures.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Name of school has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. A spreadsheet is sent to the SLT and attendance officer detailing weekly and annual attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers and pupils record their attendance in their planners. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the SLT.
3. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance officer daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls to 96 percent, the attendance officer speaks to the pupil in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. The attendance officer also makes a phone call home to discuss this with parents, if necessary.
6. If a pupil's attendance falls below 96 percent, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. The letter also has an attached leaflet outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to improve attendance.
7. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the attendance officer contacts the parents to discuss this.
8. The pupil's attendance is monitored for two weeks and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the classroom teacher and set targets for their child. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education welfare officer (EWO), who will then conduct a home visit.
9. After the two-week monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to 96 percent.
10. If targets are not met, the classroom teacher makes a referral to the EWO. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A four-week monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents if there is no improvement after an additional four weeks, a fixed-penalty notice is issued.

