



Gayton Primary School

Attendance information for parents.



Why is good attendance important?

Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school and establish positive life habits that are necessary for future success.

Through regular attendance, pupils can:

- Build friendships
- Develop their social groups and interaction with other pupils
- Engage in essential learning and other school social events
- Achieve their full potential
- Develop life skills for the future
- Minimise the risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour and becoming victims or perpetrators of crime.

All parents should promote good attendance and work in partnership with school to provide a cohesive approach.

Every day in school
makes a difference
to your child's future.

Speak to your school to access support and advice
on how best to improve your child's attendance.

 **WIRRAL**

#EVERYDAYCOUNTS

What do we do at Gayton to support your child in wanting to come to school every day?

Gayton is a happy and welcoming school. We promote a family atmosphere, where each person is actively encouraged to show care and interest in the welfare of others. Our mission is to nurture **'positive minds'** so as to create **'positive futures'** for all of our pupils. We offer a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

We work hard with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and work together with other agencies to put the right support in place for any pupil who may be finding it harder than others to attend school.

These are some of the ways that we will support your child to feel part of our Gayton community:

- Members of staff will greet your child on the gate every morning on their way into school. This is usually our Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Early years teacher.
- Staff will be available on the gate to pass over messages to class teachers or for any parents to share any concerns or worries first thing in the morning.
- Class teachers will welcome children into class when they arrive in the morning.
- As part of our conscious discipline behaviour approach, every classroom has a display showing each child's photograph so that the children recognise they are part of a class team.
- Each class has a 'miss you' board and we will acknowledge children who are not in school so that children understand that they play a valuable part in their class community and are missed when they are not in school.
- Our curriculum is well planned and progressive.
- We have a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing in school called 'Rest Easy'. Mental health is constantly discussed as part of our curriculum.
- On a Friday, all classes will end the day with 'acknowledgements and apologies time'. A special time for children to positively recognise other children in their class and a chance for children to recognise when they may have done something wrong. This builds the concept of team across the class and supports all pupils with their social interactions and relationships.

Responsibilities and Expectations of parents:

- To ensure that your child attends school every day that the school is open, unless there is a genuine and unavoidable reason that prevents them from doing so.
- Ensure that your child arrives at school on time (8:50am).
- To inform school as soon as possible, by phone or in person, if your child is unable to attend on any day, together with the reason for absence (0151 342 3772)
- To trust that school staff will contact you during the school day if your child is ill in school and needs to go home.
- To ensure that school has at least two sets of full contact details and that these are kept updated.
- To make all medical appointments outside school hours wherever possible and to inform school in advance of any medical appointments that cannot be scheduled out of school time. For absence to be authorised as a medical absence, schools do require evidence, such as an appointment card or letter.
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and to be aware that there is no entitlement to withdraw children for authorised leave of absence during term time.

- Any requests for leave of absence during term time should be made in writing and in advance to the head teacher. (Form is available on our school website or paper copies can be collected from the school office.)
- To talk to school staff as soon as possible should your child be reluctant to come to school for any reason, or if there are any other issues impacting on school attendance.

Absences from school:

When a pupil is absent from school, this will be classified as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. The Headteacher decides which absences are granted as authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absences are only permitted for valid reasons, e.g:

- Medical or dental appointments
- Religious observances
- Family bereavement.

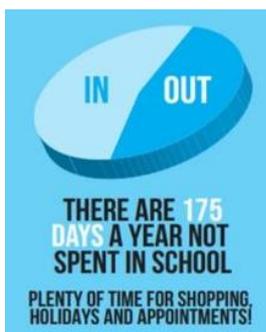
Unauthorised absences:

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider essential or reasonable.

Unauthorised absences can include:

- Forgetting school term dates
- Any absence which has not been explained
- Arriving at school after registration
- Keeping pupils off school unnecessarily or without explanation
- Day trips or family outings
- Birthdays
- Holidays in term time

Holidays in term time:



There is no entitlement for parents to withdraw their children for authorised leave of absence in term time. Headteachers can only grant leave of absence during term-time if there are '**exceptional circumstances**' surrounding the request and parents have made an application in advance. If a Headteacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher will then determine the number of school days a child can be away from school. The principles for defining exceptional are '**rare, significant, unavoidable and short.**' Taking leave of absence in term time does affect children's educational progress and parents are strongly discouraged from withdrawing their child from school during term time.

Parents need to complete a leave of absence form when requesting leave during school time. This form can be downloaded from the school website or alternatively you can pick up a form from the school office area.

From September 2023, in line with DFE recommendations, we will be introducing fines for holidays taken during term time.

The Local Authority retains any revenue from the Education Penalty Notices to cover enforcement costs. The money does not come to school.

A minimum of ten (10) school sessions lost to unauthorised absence by any pupil in any one term, or across two half terms, is required to trigger the Penalty Notice process. A session is half a day so 10 school sessions is equivalent to 5 days of absence from school. These do not need to be consecutive days.

Each case is considered on an individual basis, but the circumstances in which a Penalty Notice for non-attendance may be issued by the Local Authority include:

- Unauthorised absence from school
- Unauthorised leave of absence during term time.
Unwarranted delayed return from authorised leave of absence, e.g. in excess of the agreed number of days.
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed.

Where the Local Authority is of the opinion that a pupil's level of attendance is so low that initiating prosecution proceedings in the Magistrates' Court would be more appropriate, the Authority reserves the right not to issue a penalty notice.

Education Penalty Notices for holidays and punctuality:

The Authority issues Education Penalty Notices by post. Payment of an Education Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid after this time, but within 28 days. Education Penalty Notices are issued separately to each parent in respect of each child. A possible exception to this would be where parents are separated, and one parent has taken a child on unauthorised leave of absence without the knowledge / consent of the other parent.

Non-payment of an Education Penalty Notice will result in the withdrawal of the Notice, and would normally trigger prosecution proceedings at Magistrates Court under Section 444 Education Act 1996. There is no right of appeal by parents/carers against an Education Penalty Notice.

Further information regarding this can be found in our attendance policy on our school website.

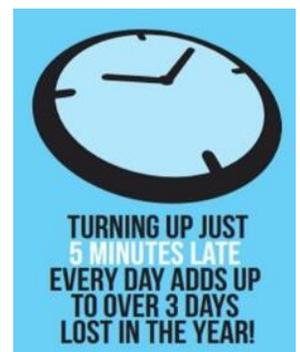
Medical appointments:

Where possible, all medical appointments should be made outside of school hours. When this is not possible, parents should notify the school office and provide evidence. For absence to be authorised as a medical absence, we do require evidence, such as an appointment card or letter.

Punctuality:

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement. When children arrive late and miss the start of the school day, they can miss work and vital information for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons and this can be embarrassing and upsetting for the child. Lateness can also encourage absence, as some pupils would rather not attend school at all, than arrive late.

- Registers are taken between 8:50am-8:55am. If children arrive in class after this time, they will receive a late mark in the register.
- In line with recommendations from the Department for Education (DfE), registers will close at 9:20am. If children, arrive after this time, they will be



recorded as having arrived after closure of registers (code U). This counts as an unauthorised absence for that session and will significantly impact on your child's attendance record.

- Any pupil arriving late should enter the school through the main entrance and be signed in.
- If lateness becomes a regular occurrence, it will be treated in the same way as unauthorised absence, with parents/carers being contacted and invited into school to discuss the situation and you can also receive a fixed penalty notice.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

Pupils are classified as '***persistently absent***' if they miss 10% or more of school due to authorised or/and unauthorised absence. This equates to missing at least 19 days of their schooling across the full school year. Absence at this level is of significant concern. We have a monitoring system in place to identify children who are at risk of falling into this category. We will involve parents / carers in formulating specific plans to prevent deterioration and to build-back attendance levels.

How can parent/carers help?

You can help in many ways:

- Encourage good attendance by making sure your child goes to school regularly.
- Take an interest in your child's schoolwork.
- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of absence from school.
- Inform us on the first day of your child's absence and keep us updated throughout the absence period.
- Cooperate with school to make sure your child overcomes any attendance problems.
- Discuss planned absences with the Headteacher and complete a leave of absence form well in advance of any planned absence.



Please help us promote good attendance throughout our school as you play a vital role in supporting school.

If you would like further information regarding attendance at our school, please download our Attendance Policy from the school website.