

Attendance Policy

Reviewer: JCR September 2024
Education Committee: March 2025

Next review by: July 2025



1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Godolphin and Latymer aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of the opportunities available to them in school,
- 1.2. This policy sets out the school's aspiration to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the school.
- 1.3. This policy has been developed in line with government publications, including: Working together to improve school attendance (2024) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) to address the required specific statutory obligations.

2. Principles

- 2.1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day. Parents have a duty to ensure that their daughters attend school and the School is committed to working with parents (and the local authority where required,) to achieve as high a level of attendance and punctuality as possible.
- 2.2. A pupil should only be absent if the reason is 'unavoidable'. Allowing a child to be absent without good reason is unlawful, and ultimately parents could be fined by the courts.
- 2.3. Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, not the parents, as either authorised or unauthorised. Hence information about the cause of each absence is always required.
- 2.4. Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school with good reason; for illness or other unavoidable cause.
- 2.5. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes keeping a pupil off for reasons such as holidays, as well as truancy, absences or late arrivals which have never been properly explained.
- 2.6. On very rare occasions where a pupil needs encouragement to attend school, any problems are best sorted out between the school, parents and the pupil. However, the School is obliged to notify the local authority if a pupil fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 consecutive school days.
- 2.7. The School recognises that some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.
- 2.8. If a pupil does not arrive at school, or is found to be missing during the school day, the procedures set out in Section 5 of this Policy will be followed.

3. Procedures

The Godolphin and Latymer School applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with absences:

3.1. Illness or Other Legitimate Absence

- 3.1.1. For all absences, parents are asked to email the absence email address absence@godolphinandlatymer.com, specifying the reason and dates, and times if applicable, for each period of absence. Notes addressed to the pupil's Form Tutor and both written and signed by the parent can be accepted as an alternative to email. Absence cannot be authorised without this procedure.
 - 3.1.2. If pupils are ill and unable to attend school, parents are requested to contact the school before 9.30am on the first, and each subsequent, morning of absence. This should be done using the email address absence@godolphinandlatymer.com. A phone call to the switchboard number (020 8741 1936) **will need to be followed by email or written confirmation**. The school has an answering machine until 8.25am; thereafter Reception will take your call.
 - 3.1.3. If no contact is made, an automatic alert will be sent via SMS to parents' mobile phones.
 - 3.1.4. Wherever possible routine appointments with the doctor, dentist, etc. should be arranged for outside school hours. If this is not possible parents should email the absence email address or give a note to their form teacher at least three days in advance. In these circumstances it is not necessary to telephone the school on the day of absence.
 - 3.1.5. If a pupil is absent from school for reasons other than ill health, this must be discussed with the school on each separate occasion. Leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances, provided a written explanation is received.
 - 3.1.6. During absences from school due to occasional or acute illness, work will not generally be provided for the pupil to complete at home. If a pupil is not well enough to attend school then she should rest at home until she is recovered. In the event of a longer period of absence, due to illness or an ongoing medical condition, parents should contact the pupil's Head of Year to discuss how she can best be supported in her studies.
- 3.2. In accordance with the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (2024), the School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded as absent due to illness and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness, or if the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

3.3. Holidays

- 3.3.1. Please note that we ask parents **not** to make holiday arrangements that require their daughters to miss days during term-time. Holiday leave in term time will not be granted unless circumstances are exceptional.
- 3.3.2. If your daughter needs to be away from school in exceptional circumstances, a letter requesting permission should be sent to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) **at least three days in advance**. With the issue of school attendance and the safeguarding of your daughter being of such importance, phone requests of this nature are not considered appropriate by the school. In every case, a letter signed by a

parent/guardian, or an email from the parent/guardian's email address, will be required to authenticate the request.

3.4. **Monitoring and promoting attendance**

- 3.4.1. The role of 'School Attendance Champion' is fulfilled by the Deputy Head (Pastoral), as required by the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (2024). The Deputy Head (Pastoral) is Dr Jamie Carter (jcarter@godolphinandlatymer.com).
- 3.4.2. The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it. The school provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.4.3. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of the opportunities available to them in school, and this principle is promoted and reinforced throughout both the academic and personal development curriculum, including assemblies and form time activities.
- 3.4.4. Heads of Year and Heads of Section undertake a half-termly analysis of attendance across each year group in order to: identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts who need it; to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school; and, with the Deputy Head (Pastoral), to develop strategies to address them. Further targeted support will be directed to individual pupils or cohorts as appropriate to improve attendance.
- 3.4.5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead includes updates on attendance in termly reports to the Governing Body. This includes specific strategies being implemented to promote punctuality and attendance where required.
- 3.4.6. The School will always strive to support individual families to promote good attendance and reduce persistent or severe absence. This may include signposting wider support services or formulating formal support plans in conjunction with the local authority. For more detailed support on attendance, parents should contact their daughter's Head of Year or Head of Section in the first instance, or the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

4. **Registration**

- 4.1. **Morning Registration:** It is important that all pupils are in school by 8.25am, and in their form rooms by 8.30am each day. All pupils must attend a brief registration meeting with their form tutor to start the day from 8.30am - 8.35am and important notices are often given out during this time. If a pupil arrives after 8.35am she should enter via Reception and thumb in. Failure to do so may cause unnecessary concern. Any pupil arriving into school after 8.35am will be counted as late. Arriving more than 30 minutes after the end of the registration session (i.e. 9.05am or later) without good reason is counted as unauthorised absence.
- 4.2. **Afternoon Registration:** All pupils in the Lower and Middle School are expected to thumb in if present and attend registration with their form tutors at 2.05pm. In the event that a pupil has a speech and drama lesson, or a musical extra-curricular activity which prevents her from attending afternoon registration, she should thumb in before 2.05pm and explain her absence to her tutor in advance. Sixth-formers do not have an afternoon

registration meeting but must thumb in before their first lesson of the afternoon if they are due to be in School.

- 4.3. **Lesson Registration:** In addition to morning and afternoon registration, pupils are registered by classroom teachers at the beginning of every lesson. Teachers will record any late arrivals to lessons as well as attendance or non-attendance. Sanctions will be imposed when a pupil is persistently late to lessons, or when a pupil is known to be in school and fails to attend a lesson without good reason.
- 4.4. **Lateness:** Pupils must attend registration on time. Parents are expected to ensure that their daughters are present at morning registration. Sanctions are imposed for persistent lateness at registration and may vary depending on whether the pupil is in the Lower School, Middle School or Sixth Form.

5. Missing Pupil Procedures

- 5.1. **Non-arrival at School:** If a pupil has not attended morning registration or thumbed in, and is recorded as absent from their first lesson, an automatic alert will be sent via SMS to parents' mobile phones if no explanatory message has been received by Reception by 9.30am. If a parent believes the pupil should be in School, the Receptionist will check whether the pupil is where she is timetabled to be at that time and, if she is not, will inform the relevant Head of Section immediately. If the Head of Section cannot explain the absence, he or she will inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who will decide on the next steps (see 4.4 below).
- 5.2. **Missing during the School Day:** If a pupil fails to attend lessons or afternoon registration and has not thumbed in or if she is noted to be absent during a lesson without explanation, the Head of Section should be informed immediately. If the Head of Section cannot explain the absence, he or she will inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who will decide on the next steps (see 4.4 below).
- 5.3. **Missing on an educational visit/sports fixture:** If a pupil is found to be missing while on an educational visit or at a sports fixture, an immediate head count should be carried out to ensure other pupils are all present. An accompanying member of staff should alert the manager of the venue and/or search the immediate area as appropriate. If the pupil cannot be located then, depending on the age of the pupil and the circumstances in which she is found to be missing, the Group Leader may need to contact the police immediately. Otherwise, the Group Leader should inform the School Office. The School Office should notify the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who will decide on the next steps (see below). If the visit is outside school hours, the Group Leader should inform their emergency contact.
- 5.4. **Action by the Deputy Head (Pastoral):** The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform the Head, Security and School Office as appropriate. Security may be asked to organise a search of the school site. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Head will contact the pupil's parents and then ultimately the Police if deemed necessary.
- 5.5. **Records:** The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will ensure that a record is made of any incident, the action taken and, if applicable, the reason given by the pupil for being missing.

6. Children Missing Education/Absent from Education

- 6.1. Children missing or being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation. The School's Safeguarding (Child

Protection) Policy contains specific procedures for children absent from, or missing, education.

7. Publication of Attendance Information

- 7.1. Parents can access information concerning their daughter's attendance via the Parent Portal.
- 7.2. The School is usually asked to disclose information on attendance and punctuality when writing references for pupils.

8. Information Sharing And Confidentiality

- 8.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations as outlined in the government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing in education. This includes information legally required to be shared with the local authority and Secretary of State.
- 8.2 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in line with the Schools policies regarding the retention and destruction of records
- 8.3 Any use of Personal data will be in accordance with the School's privacy policies and current data protection law, (The Data Protection Act 2018).

Appendix 1 Admission register

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the school will:
 - 1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the school (also known as the school roll); and
 - 1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the school's admission register at non-standard transition points.
- 1.2 The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.3 The school must ensure that every entry in the school's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.
- 1.4 The admission register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the school, including their date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school they last attended
- 1.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.
- 1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide it with the following information:
 - 1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;
 - 1.6.2 the address of the pupil;
 - 1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
 - 1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;
 - 1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
 - 1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
 - 1.6.7 the grounds (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 2 Attendance register

1 Attendance register

- 1.1 The school records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024
- 1.2 The school uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.
- 1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.4 The school will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.
- 1.5 The school is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:
 - 1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
 - 1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or
 - 1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or
 - 1.6.4 absent.
- 1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:
 - 1.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
 - 1.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
 - 1.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
 - 1.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
 - 1.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording absence

- 2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:
 - 2.1.1 leaves of absence;
 - 2.1.2 other authorised reasons;

2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;

2.1.4 unauthorised absence.

3 Unauthorised absence

3.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

3.1.1 holiday that has not been authorised by the School

3.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;

3.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;

3.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.