



*To be greater and to aspire further*

## **GFM Secondary Phase Attendance Policy**

Approved by:	TBC	Date:	Sep 2022
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### **Section 1 Statement of Intent**

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all students/pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all students/pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents/carers and students/pupils play a part in making their School successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled.

Parents and schools share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve high attendance for all students/pupils. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students/ pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality.

For our students/ pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

## Section 2 Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's [Guide to absence statistics](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## Section 3 School procedures

### 3.1 Attendance register

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. Morning registration at the start of the school day begins at 08.45 am (the start of Ready to Learn) and will be open until 9.15am. Afternoon registration is taken at 13.10pm (the start of period 4) and will be open until 13.30pm.

The attendance register will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent reason as yet unknown
- Absent and code to indicate reason

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups.

### 3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/ carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.15 a.m. or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Absence can be reported via the website links <https://bayhouse.gfmat.org/email-absence/>

<https://brunepark.gfmat.org/parents-and-carers/email-absence/>

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Please telephone or email the school with details of your child's appointment in advance of the appointment. Emails can be sent to [attendanceteam@bayhouse.gfmat.org](mailto:attendanceteam@bayhouse.gfmat.org) or [attendance@brunepark.gfmat.org](mailto:attendance@brunepark.gfmat.org)

The school will ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### **3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

It is imperative that students/ pupils arrive at school and lessons on time and ready to learn. A child who is 30 minutes late to school each day would miss the equivalent of 4 weeks of school across the course of a year.

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

- The school day begins with the first bell at 08.40 am and all students/ pupils are expected to be in their ready to learn session by 08.45 am. Arrival after this time (but before 09.15 am) will be recorded as late. Morning registration is at 08.45am and closes at 09.15am, meaning students/ pupils arriving after this time will be classed as absent – unauthorised for the morning session

Lesson times are published on the school website and made clear to students. They are expected to be on time for every lesson. If a student/pupil arrives after this time, they are considered late to their lesson which will result in a late mark being recorded on the register.

If a student/pupil then receives another late mark to a subsequent lesson or tutor time during the same day, this will result in the student/pupil receiving a Same Day Detention (SDDT).

Students/pupils accruing more than one late to period 1 in a week will receive a SDDT; then SDDT for every subsequent P1 late that week (regardless of how late).

All lateness is recorded. This information will be required by the Courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary. Students/ pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. On-going and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action (see section 4.2 for further detail).

Parents or carers of students/pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists they will be invited to a meeting in school to discuss the problem and offer further support if needed. If the support is declined, or not acted upon, and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, the school working in conjunction with Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a penalty notice. This is in accordance with Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices for non-attendance (See Section 4.2 of this policy for further detail).

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

In the event of an absence not being notified to the school, the attendance team will attempt to contact parents/carers by telephone/text/email on the same day. If unauthorised absence continues for more than three days without contact from the family, families can expect a visit to the student at home without notice.

### **3.6 Continued absence**

**First Day Absence:** a child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If your child is absent you must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

If your child is absent we will text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you, as detailed above; this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

**Third Day Absence:** If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you or any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school is required to start a child missing in education procedure as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquiries to known friends, wider family. Representatives of our Attendance team may call at a student/ pupil's address to ascertain if they are at home and to ensure that they are safe and free from harm. This is

so that the school complies with its legal obligations and County guidance, see: Hampshire County Guidance 'Children on roll but at risk of Missing in Education'.

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/education/GuidanceforchildrenatriskofmissingineducationrevisedSept2014.pdf>

Ten Day's Absence: we have a legal duty to report the absence of any student/pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date contact number.

If your child misses 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as Persistent Absentees (PA), and will take high priority. All our PA students/pupils and their parents will be monitored and contacted by the year and/or Attendance Team.

A variety of interventions may be used to improve their attendance and/or punctuality. If there is no significant improvement resulting from these interventions, then the parent or carer may be invited to attend an in school Attendance Panel meeting where attendance strategies to help them improve their attendance in school will be set.

The GFM also operates an internal panel for cases being considered for legal action.

#### **Section 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

Students/ Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- Authorised Absence - when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
- Unauthorised Absence - when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request.

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

#### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Taking leave of absence in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to support us by not taking children out during school time. Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time

unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that Headteachers (or their representatives) can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is however, no legal entitlement for time off in term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases, holiday will not be authorised.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available on our website, from reception and year offices) in advance and before making any travel arrangements. If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be recorded unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire's Code of Conduct, parent/carers may be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action in accordance the code (see section 4.2 for detail).

#### **4.2 Legal sanctions**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

In law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness: Hampshire Schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels where:

1. The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in the last 100 sessions (10 weeks) and parents are complicit in the child's absence

The following legal measures are for students of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution - where a child has unauthorised absence the school must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other legal measures for non-attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

The code of conduct states that Schools or Hampshire County Council will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the student has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive
- persistently late (coded U) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded L), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code O), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance
- absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

If a child's unauthorised absence meets any of the above criteria and the family or child do not require any agency support to improve the attendance then a Penalty Notice is issued for either:

1. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 10 week school period.
2. one or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal school assessment or testing where dates are published in advance.

Parents/carers will be warned of the likelihood of a Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absence either via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the school's attendance policy and website. The Penalty Notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued to one or more parent/carer for each child. NB This



could mean four penalty notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for a holiday i.e. one PN for each child to each parent. The fine is £60 if paid within 21 days of the Penalty Notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the Penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid the Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the nonattendance.

Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing Penalty Notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay. Please note: If you pay the Penalty Notice and your child has further unauthorised absences additional legal action will be taken. For example, in the event that a Penalty Notice has previously been served to you due to unauthorised holiday, should your child have any future unauthorised leave this will result in further legal action for you, such as prosecution or an Education Supervision Order. For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from their school and should visit Hampshire County Council's website at: [www.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-forparents/possible-penalties](http://www.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-forparents/possible-penalties).

#### **4.3 Leavers**

If your child is leaving our school (other than when leaving at the end of Year 11) parents are asked to give the Attendance Team comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing. If students leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. This requires schools and Local Authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

#### **4.4 Gypsy Roma Traveller Showman and Showman families**

Absence of a child from a traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code. Distance Learning packs for traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.

#### **4.5 Absence through child participation in Public Performances, including film or TV work & modelling.**

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the

employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as 'C', an authorised absence.

#### **4.6 Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for Sport.**

Parents/carers of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is however, down to the Headteacher's (or representative) discretion whether to authorise this and they may wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Headteacher and are not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association are providing an education tutor as part of their coaching. If participation is approved the Headteacher will review this decision if child's progress at school is not maintained thereafter.

#### **4.7 Study Leave**

We do not ordinarily operate a period of study leave in GFM secondary schools. Year 11 students/pupils have an amended taught timetable until they sit their final examination and are expected to attend school throughout this period.

#### **4.8 Teenage Pregnancy**

Support will be directed to keeping a student/pupil in school and wherever possible her return to full time education as soon as possible after the birth. A student/pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

### **Section 5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Quick Guide to GFM Secondary Attendance leaflet will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

*Research shows a direct link between under-achievement and attendance below 95%.*

*Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.*

*Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.*

*Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.*

*Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.*

To help us all to focus on promoting good attendance, we will:

1. provide information on all matters related to attendance on a regular basis;
2. report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
3. celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements/award additional positive points;
4. reward good or improving attendance through certificates, activities, and additional positive points;
5. Tutors will discuss attendance with their tutees, promoting the benefits of good attendance and punctuality as well as individually discussing barriers to attendance
6. Where appropriate, set individual attendance targets for students/pupils to help them focus on improving their attendance.
7. Refer students to other supportive measures such as attendance clinics, period clinics, young carers, ELSA, service team, community engagement officer, and any other provision appropriate to their needs.
8. liaise with partner support agencies to ensure additional needs are met which may impact on attendance.

### **Section 6. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance team, Tutors and year offices monitor student attendance on a daily basis.

Parents/carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

Parents/carers are expected to contact the school on each day of absence unless a period of absence has been granted in exceptional circumstances.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The academy monitors all students' attendance on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, and regularly analyses data which is presented using a staged process, to ensure appropriate support is offered in a timely fashion for those students and families struggling with attendance.

### **Section 7. Roles and responsibilities**

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and

that support is put in place when appropriate. The Attendance team will support the Senior Leader in this work. The Attendance team will ensure that they consistently monitor students/pupils' attendance and punctuality and will liaise with the relevant Year Offices within the school in order to support the student/pupil and their family to improve attendance.

Where attendance falls below the expected levels, a variety of interventions will be used as the Pastoral Teams deem appropriate, such as: in class visits to the student/pupil; home visits; reflective activities; in school attendance panel and legal interventions.

#### Responsibilities of Classroom Staff

- Ensure that all students/ pupils are registered accurately using the schools electronic MIS
- Promote & recognise good and improving attendance at all appropriate opportunities
- Liaise with subject leadership/ tutors/ attendance Team on matters of attendance and punctuality
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a student/pupil's absence

#### Responsibilities of tutors

- Ensure that all students/ pupils are registered accurately using the schools electronic MIS
- Promote & recognise good and improving attendance at all appropriate opportunities
- Explain the benefits of good attendance for the rest of the student's life and work
- Find out if a student is worried about something and, as a result, reluctant to attend
- Recognise a regular pattern of non-attendance;
- Discuss absences with tutees
- Liaise with the year office/ teachers/ attendance Team on matters of attendance and punctuality
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a student/pupil's absence

#### Responsibilities of Pupils/Students

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Arrive in school on time
- Attend all their registrations and lessons on time
- Take responsibility for registering at the attendance office/ reception if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours

#### Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (section of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

#### Parents will :

- Inform the school by phone, text or email, on the first and subsequent days of absence, if their child is not in school and provide a reason for the absence.
- Discuss with the school any planned absences in advance.
- Support the school and their child to aim for 100% attendance each year.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request for leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance (Hampshires guidance is

found here <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents#step-6>

### Section 9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection, safeguarding policy and admissions policy.

#### Appendix 1

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody

<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2

<b><i>Attendance during one school year is 190 school days. If attendance is:</i></b>	<b><i>Missed days</i></b>	<b><i>Missed lessons</i></b>	<b><i>Missed weeks</i></b>
95%	9 days	45	2 weeks
90%	19 days	95 sessions	4 weeks
85%	29 days	145 sessions	6 weeks
80%	38 days	190 sessions	8 weeks
75%	48 days	240 sessions	10 weeks
70%	57 days	285 sessions	11.5 weeks
65%	67 days	335 sessions	13.5 weeks