



# Mulgrave Primary School

*Learn | Believe | Succeed*

Name of Policy	Attendance Policy
Frequency of review	Biennial
Agreed Date	September 2025
Review Date	September 2027

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## Introduction

At Mulgrave Primary School, we aim for an environment that enables and encourages all members of the community to strive for excellence. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

### Why Regular Attendance is so Important:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling, and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility, and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### Attendance and Punctuality in Nursery and Reception:

Establishing good habits from the start will help your child to settle more quickly and build good habits for later life. Coming to school on time, every day, helps to develop confidence.

Research has shown that, even at the earliest age, children with poor attendance and punctuality are at a disadvantage later in life. They generally find it harder to make and maintain friendships, they achieve less, and they often suffer from poor self-esteem. Even if your child only has a part-time Nursery place, regular attendance is vitally important.

The School keeps a register of attendance for every child. This is a legal document and record that classifies every half-day attendance and/or absence. Absences are classified as either authorised or unauthorised. For this reason, the school will ask parents/carers for the reason for each absence.

### Authorised Absence

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1993, only the school and not the parents can authorise absence.

A pupil is deemed to have an authorised absence when he/she is unable to attend either because: -

- he/she is ill (see separate arrangements for The Attendance Scheme below); or
- of some unavoidable cause; or
- of a religious observance; or
- he/she is receiving treatment at a medical, dental, or similar appointment; or
- of a bereavement; or
- of some exceptional circumstances negotiated with the Head teacher;

### Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are absences that do not fit the description of authorised absence given above, whether or not explained, and all absences that are not explained. They would include: -

- shopping trips
- looking after the house
- looking after brothers and/or sisters
- holidays in term time
- extended trips
- photographic modelling sessions.

It is also important that all children are collected on time at the end of the school day. The main school and nursery finish at 3.30 pm. If you are regularly late in collecting your child, you will be expected to attend a meeting with the Headteacher in the first instance to discuss the reason why you are late. If you are late more than twice in one week, you may be issued with a fine.

Persistent failure to arrange for their child to be collected at a reasonable time may result in the child being taken to a place of safekeeping by the police or into temporary care by social services.

## Penalty Notice Fines

### for School Absence Have Changed

A National Framework for Penalty Notices, has been introduced by the Department for Education and came into effect on the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

#### There is Now a National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence, within a rolling 10 school week period. For example:

- a 5-day holiday in term time (term time leave), would meet the national threshold.
- 5 days of unauthorised absence due to irregular school attendance, would meet the national threshold of the 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

#### Who May Be Issued with a Penalty Notice?

Penalty Notices are Issued Per \*Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school. For example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent who allowed the absence receiving 3 separate fines.</li> </ul>		
<p>First Offence</p> <p>The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term-time leave or irregular school attendance, the fine amount will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days.</li> <li>• Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.</li> </ul>		<p>Second Offence</p> <p>(within 3 years)</p> <p>The Second time a Penalty Notice is considered and issued for term time leave or irregular school attendance, the fine amount will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.</li> </ul>
<p>Third Offence and Any Further Offences</p> <p>(within 3 years)</p> <p>The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular school Attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The case will be referred to the Magistrate's Court for consideration. o Upon Prosecution a parent can receive a criminal record and a fine of up to £2,500.</li> </ul>		

If you are experiencing difficulties in ensuring your child's regular school attendance, you are advised to speak with the Attendance Lead in your child's school, to address any support needs.

\*Parent is defined as the natural parent, the person with whom the child lives and/or has day to day care of the child

Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

## Lateness

Your child will be classified as late if they enter the school premises after the bell has gone. The school will monitor lateness.

## Promoting Regular attendance

Effective partnership between the school and home is essential to ensuring good attendance and punctuality. It is vital that any difficulties are discussed with the Head teacher so that these can be resolved through working together.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through individual and class certificates

## Absence Procedures

If your child is absent, you must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence by reporting their absence via the studybugs on your mobile phone, or you can call into school and report to the School Office.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you

- Invite you in to discuss the situation with a senior member of staff and the Home School Liaison Officer
- Refer the matter to the Attendance Advisory Service Officer (AAO) at Greenwich Council if attendance moves below 90%

### Attendance Advisory Service (AAS)

The main function of the AAS is to help parents and the Local Authority meet their statutory obligations with regard to school attendance. The AAO will write letters to parents and undertake home visits. In very serious cases, a School Attendance Panel (SAP) will be held and the parent could be prosecuted.

### Working together to improve Attendance/ Prosecution:

Mulgrave is committed to the LA Scheme, working together to improve Attendance. Children are chosen on The Attendance Scheme when their attendance is a continued cause for concern and parents fail to engage with the school. Regular meetings are held with a member of Leadership, Home School Liaison Officer, Attendance Advisory Officer and parents to monitor the attendance of those children on The Attendance Scheme. When a child is absent through illness, the parent must provide documentary evidence from the GP, either appointment by letter/card, a copy of the prescription or bringing the named medication to the school office as evidence of their child's absence, we also accept a screenshot of your call log to the GP (as long as it is over 5 minutes). Failure to follow this action will result in the absence being recorded unauthorised. Please not, we do not ask you to provide a sick certificate or letter from your GP as we know how busy they are.

If there is no improvement in attendance over a period of time, the Attendance Advisory Officer will take steps to bring about court action.

Experience has shown us that this scheme usually makes a marked difference in children's attendance

### Child Missing from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures, and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to the signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. *(Please see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)*

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers.

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g., home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;

- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor they/their parent/carer has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The local authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify

### Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff and governors are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

### GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

- Registers must be completed electronically.
- Registration Period

9.00 -9.15 All registers should be filled in at this time. Mark the child present, or if absent, leave blank unless they have come in late.

9.15 If a child comes in late during this period, mark with L (the time must also be noted).

- Ensure you save your registers by no later than 9.15, HSLO will then enter any other codes or information.
- If a child returns from an absence with no explanation received (or an inadequate explanation), the HSLO will contact the family by telephone/letter, and they may also be placed on The Attendance Scheme.