



Attendance, Punctuality and Leave of Absence Information

A Handbook for Parents

At Gatehouse Primary Academy we constantly strive and look for ways to improve the education for all our children. This booklet tells you:

- Our vision and aims for attendance and punctuality
- What to do if you would like to request leave of absence
- How we support pupils and parents
- What to do and who to talk to if you have concerns

Every Day at School Counts

As parents you are legally responsible for ensuring your children of school age receive a suitable full time education.

The school must keep an attendance register or a computerised registration system in which students' attendance details are marked at the beginning of each morning session and during the afternoon session of every day the school is open.

The table below shows you how important it is that all children have good attendance to make sure they don't miss any vital learning. The information below has been provided by the Local Authority.

Every School Day Counts!					
175 Non-School Days a Year – i.e. Weekends and School Holidays					
190 school days in each year					
190 school days in each year	10 days absence 180 days of education	19 days absence 171 days of education	28 days absence 161 days of education	38 days absence 152 days of education	47 days absence 143 days of education
100% attendance	95% attendance	90% attendance	85% attendance	80% attendance	75% attendance
GOOD Best chance of success – gets your child off to a flying start.		SERIOUS CONCERN Absence will affect your child's progress Action will be taken			

But what if my child is ill?

Of course children are ill on occasions and when this is the case we readily accept that being at home is the best place to be.

Children can't help being ill and as a school we want all our children to be well and healthy to be able to learn happily and confidently when they are here. However, this traffic light system is a really useful guide to help you to decide when to send your child to school and when to keep them at home. ***This advice has been taken from www.nhs.uk.***

**RED
STAY AT HOME**

Raised temperature

Rashes can be the first sign of many infectious illnesses such as chickenpox and measles. If your child has a rash, check with your GP before sending them to school.

Vomiting and diarrhoea.

Children can return to school after 48 hours.

**AMBER
TAKE ADVICE**

Headaches. A child with a minor headache does not usually need to be kept off school. If the headache is more severe or is accompanied by other symptoms such as raised temperature or drowsiness, then keep your child at home and consult your GP.

**GREEN
COME TO SCHOOL***

Mild cough

Mild cold

Sore throat (unless accompanied by a raised temperature)

Feeling tired

*We will contact you if your child deteriorates during the school day.

If your child is too unwell to attend school...

1. On the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, please phone the school absence line on 01626 862605 as soon as possible, but before 9.05am, to leave a message stating your child's name, class and the reason of absence. Or, you can email us at admin@gatehouse.devon.sch.uk, or contact can be made through the My Ed app, prior to that morning's registration.
2. If a child fails to get a registration mark at the beginning of the day and no explanation has been received, the school will attempt to make contact that morning by telephone or via our text / app messaging system.
3. Following an absence please write a note or letter explaining the reason for the absence. Where possible please provide medical evidence.
4. If your child is repeatedly unwell, as a supportive strategy the family support officer may invite you into school for an informal chat to discuss the matter.

Every Minute at School Counts

The information below and overleaf shows how important it is that all children arrive at school on time and are ready to learn by 8.50am every day.



Remember... Gates at 8.40am.
School starts at 8.50am (including learning activities during registration time)
Please don't be late! Did you know...?

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 whole school days lost each year.
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent from school for 2 weeks a year.
- Starting the day rushed and arriving late makes it hard for children to settle in the classroom.
- Children who arrive late will miss vital information given at the start of the day by their class teachers.
- Arriving late in the classroom can make children feel anxious or embarrassed.
- Children who arrive late also disrupt the other children in the classroom who are ready to start learning.
- Please support the school in our aim to help your children achieve their full potential by bringing your child to school on time every day.



We have a Late Register at the Office

If your child arrives after the children have gone into class, then this means they are late after the register has closed. If this is the case, they will need to come straight to the office to register.

We monitor lateness. *Please be aware that children arriving after 9.05am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.* As punctuality is important you will be contacted by our Parent Support Adviser to follow up persistent lateness.

Request for Leave of Absence

Only the Head of School can authorise an absence.

Taking holidays and other unnecessary absence in term time means that your child is missing out on their education.

If you need to request leave of absence, please complete an absence request form, available from Office. This should be returned at **least 14 days** before the proposed absence. The Head of School will then make the decision whether the absence is considered to be under an exceptional circumstance. If it is considered not to be an exceptional circumstance, it will be unauthorised and you will be advised.

No leave of absence will be authorised during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. bereavement of a close family member, parents who work for the services and have their leave dates restricted.

Requests for holidays during term time can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances (please see our Pupil Attendance Policy at www.firstfederation.org) and should be submitted before the intended absence. We have to report any unauthorised absence of 5 days or more to Devon County Council, who may issue a penalty notice (i.e. a fine) per parent per child.

The school and the Education Welfare Officer will conduct attendance checks throughout each term. Children with poor attendance records and lateness will be monitored and followed up by the school and Education Welfare Officer. In extreme cases absence could lead to official warnings or even prosecution and fines.

What you can do to help your child....

- Make sure your child comes to school regularly and punctually.
- If your child starts missing school, work with the school to put things right. Communication is very important.
- If your child is absent you must phone the school as soon as possible on the first morning of absence **and on each subsequent day of absence.** After registration, if we have not had contact from you, the school will attempt to contact you. Staff will be concerned if there is no response.
- If you feel it is essential for your child to miss school, for example a religious festival or other special occasion, please complete an absence request form, 14 days prior to the event.
- Please support us in our efforts to encourage good attendance.

How will we achieve good attendance and punctuality....

- We would like you to help us to achieve our target of 96.5% attendance rate each year for Gatehouse Primary Academy.
- Members of our attendance team are always happy to provide advice and guidance.
- We are happy to meet with parent/carers to discuss support strategies where appropriate.
- We work closely with the Devon County Council Behaviour and Attendance Service.

