



# Gosfield School

## **Attendance Policy**

(includes Children Missing from Education and adjustments for Covid19)

Changes have been made to regulations governing school attendance registers in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) from 24 August 2020 for use in the 2020 to 2021 academic year. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the DFE guidance Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year, Updated 1 September 2020.

At Gosfield School, we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your son/daughter, and we look to you to support this objective. All pupils are required to be in school by 8.30am, ready for registration at 8.35am.

The school day ends at 3.50pm for Years Reception to Year 13. Optional activities run from 4pm until 4.45pm from Monday to Thursday and buses depart the school at 5pm on these days. Buses depart at 4pm on a Friday.

Wraparound care is provided for pupils until 6pm if parents book it in advance; there is a charge for this service. If wraparound is not running then any late pupils will be supervised by a senior member of staff until they can be collected, for which there will also be a charge unless there are mitigating circumstances.

Pupils in Years R to Year 11 are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip or visit or a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to parents in advance. Sixth form students are allowed to leave the school grounds if they have free periods, but they are expected to sign in and out at the front office.

Requests for absence must be made in writing and should reach the school preferably 5 days in advance of the planned absence (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 8.30am). Requests for exceptional absence (absence for days other than medical or dental appointments) should be sent to the child's tutor or class teacher at least two weeks in advance, and will usually be referred to the Principal or Head of Prep for approval.

If your child is ill, please e-mail the school on [absence@gosfieldschool.org.uk](mailto:absence@gosfieldschool.org.uk) or telephone the School before 8.30am on the first day of absence. The School will make contact every day to check on the child's recovery. A letter or email should then be sent by a parent on the return of their child to school, giving a reason for the absence. We will always telephone home on the first day of any unexplained absence in order to make sure that your child is safe.

Covid19 updates:

From the beginning of the new academic year, we will return to using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak (*set out on page 9 of the [attendance guidance](#)*), in addition to the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)':

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X
- As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of School during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine
- If in future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) from that area, and that area only, may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period where rates remain high. Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again that parents will be able to share with the school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC should be recorded as code X.
- If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), we expect to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. We will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

Term dates are always sent to parents more than a year in advance in order for you to arrange your holidays without disrupting your child's education. **Please note that it is the School's policy, in line with Government regulations and supported by the School's Governors, not to authorise holidays to be taken during term time.**

Regular daily attendance at school is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally, school participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. We promote regular attendance supporting children to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community, we believe this helps them to make the most of life opportunities and maximise their educational achievement

#### **CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, fulltime education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

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As outlined under Regulation 5 within the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016, all schools (including independent schools) must make returns to the local authority each time a pupil is **added** to the school admissions register or **deleted** from the school's register.

All schools (including independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from their school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed under Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. This does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the register at standard transition points, and at Gosfield this is at the end of Year 6 and the end of Year 11. Likewise, all schools must notify the local education authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point.

Gosfield School must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of a child jointly with the local authority before deleting a pupil's name from their register.

### **School Responsibilities**

Schools are required to enter pupils on their admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. Where reasonably possible, we will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. Where pupils leave our School the DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible.

We monitor pupils' attendance through the daily register. We will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed **10 school days** or more without permission. We monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance by working with parents and carers. In extreme cases a pupil's poor attendance will be referred to the local authority. If a pupil is missing from school and the child is subject to a child protection plan and/or is a looked after child, the school will notify the key worker within the first 24 hours of the unauthorised absence if no home contact can be made.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for **10 days** after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for **20 consecutive school days** the pupil can be removed from our admission register when the School and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if we do not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

Where a parent notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, we are required to record the following in the admission register:

- the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live.
- the new address.
- the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, we are required to record in the admission register:

- the name of the new school;
- the date on which the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school

Pupils at risk of harm/neglect – Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected Gosfield School will follow local child protection procedures. However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children's social care (and the police if appropriate). Local authority officers

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responsible for CME should check that a referral has been made and, if not, they should alert children's social care.

As an independent school we have a safeguarding duty (Part 3 of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2019) in respect of our pupils, and as part of this we will investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the *Keeping children safe in education 2020* statutory guidance.

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### **Ratified by the Governing Council of Gosfield School**

Signed  (Chair of Governors)

Date 7/12/2020

**Date of next review: September 2021**