

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Green Lane Primary and Nursery School



## Attendance Policy

## Attendance

### Rationale

Parents and carers choosing to send their children to Green Lane Primary and Nursery school (GLPNS) are expected to share our commitment to ensuring children attend school every day and leave our school having achieved positive life chances.

### Aims and Objectives

- In addition to legal obligations our attendance policy touches all aspects of a school's life, and relates directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- Responsibility for promoting school attendance is shared by everyone in the school including all staff and outside agencies
- Rigorous collection and analysis of data about attendance enables schools to check its progress against measurable outcomes.

### Working Together and shared responsibility

#### Parental Responsibility:

Under the Education Act 1996, "the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education" either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

- "Parent" is defined as any person with parental responsibility and any person who has the day to day care of the child.
- The school prospectus, Home-School Agreement and regular communications with parents and parents' evenings will remind parents of school policies on attendance and parents' own responsibilities
- Through regular contacts with the families, class teachers will also advise the parents of their legal responsibility in ensuring their children's regular school attendance.
- Key points which should be addressed to the parents include:

That the parents/guardians of children of compulsory school age must by law send their children to school regularly, and risk prosecution if they do not do so.

Parents must follow school policy about notifying absence and the importance of continuity of learning at school, particularly in relation to family holidays in term time.

#### School's Responsibility:

To ensure consistency and efficient joint-work between schools and the supporting agencies e.g. Education Welfare, Police and Social Services, to allocate a senior member of staff with specific responsibility for attendance issues within the school.

The designated senior teacher will ensure that school registers are kept and marked in accordance with legal requirements. Reasons for all absences will be sought and recorded, this data will be used to inform all those involved in a child's attendance who will work together to improve attendance where possible. (See appendix A)

Punctuality and attendance are valued and positively encouraged.

### **School Governing Body's Responsibility:**

- The school governing body will review the attendance policy at regular intervals.
- The school governing body will work with staff and the LA and to ensure the target for school attendance rate set by Ofsted is met.

### **PROCEDURE AND GOOD PRACTICE**

#### **Early Intervention:**

The importance of regular and punctual attendance will be emphasised to parent and pupil from day one of a child's school career and reinforced at regular intervals.

Parents should contact the school by 8.8.45am on the first day of absence via a message on the schools absence line. If no reason has been provided then the school will endeavour to make contact with the parents of a child on the first day of absence, and every day after that

#### **Punctuality:**

Registers are taken in classes by 9.00 am, therefore any child arriving after this time will be marked as late. Children arriving after 9.30am receive a different late mark which indicates they have missed a significant amount of learning.

At Green Lane persistent lateness is defined as more than 11 late marks per term. If this was to occur a letter would be sent home inviting parents in to discuss ways this could be improved. Continued lateness would result in the school's allocated Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) being notified.

#### **Authorised and unauthorised:**

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, all schools are required to indicate in their attendance register whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence means that the school has either given approval in advance for the pupils to be away or that an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification. Consistent and accurate use of registration codes is required.

The law requires absences not agreed in advance to be recorded as unauthorised unless until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming.

Only the Headteacher can approve an absence, not parents. School staff need not accept a parental explanation for a pupil's absence, whether written, telephoned or given in person, if they doubt the explanation. It is for the school to judge whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence.

At Green Lane, we believe that frequent absence and lateness from school are detrimental to a child's education – irrespective of the authorisation of the absence. Excessive amounts of authorised absence can also seriously disrupt continuity of learning and encourage disaffection.

#### **Children missing education:**

Children missing education could be an indicator of other issues for example abuse, child sexual exploitation or neglect. As stated in the Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance (Sept 2016) 'schools have a safeguarding duty, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about school's safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance'. Where there are concerns the correct safeguarding procedures will be followed (Child Protection Policy 4:4)

### **Illness:**

Parents are required to report any absence including illness by email or by ringing the school office **before** 8:45a.m. and every morning after that.

Medical evidence maybe requested if absence due to illness drops below 90% this can take the form of :

- Medical appointment letter or card
- Copy of prescription
- Medication with name of pupil and start and end date

Pupils who are suffering with diarrhoea and/or vomiting are to be kept away from school for 48 hours from the last episode as stated in the Government Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings pg 6.

### **Family holidays during term time:**

The Headteacher has the discretionary power to grant limited leave for holidays during term time. **Such permission is granted in accordance with the Governing Body's policy.** Where leave is granted in exceptional circumstances the amount of leave would not exceed more than 10 school days in any academic year.

At Green Lane Primary and Nursery School the Governors have decided that holidays during term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. By exceptional circumstances the Governors have decided that this means unavoidable. This will normally cover the following eventualities:

A family Holiday to the parent's/child's country of origin will be once during each Key Stage, where it can be shown the holiday could not possibly have taken place during the normal school holiday period, i.e. to attend a celebration, family or religious event.

The need for children to accompany adults to attend a funeral, or visit a close relative suffering a recent serious illness.

A family holiday outside school holidays will not be granted if the reasons are "financial", i.e. the cost of the holiday is less expensive taken during term time. Similarly, permission will not be granted for 'long weekends' outside normal school holidays.

Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and, in law, have to apply for permission in advance. Parents wishing to withdraw their child from school during term time should complete the Request for Leave of Absence Form (**see appendix B**) and submit it to the school office 5 days before the first day of intended absence. The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and parents will be notified of the decision.

The Governing Body will define how far in advance parents should request permission to withdraw children from school for a family holiday. The Governors have agreed that permission should be sought prior to the booking of the holiday, apart from exceptional circumstances concerning illness or death in the family.

### **LIAISON BETWEEN SCHOOL AND THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE**

Green Lane has an allocated EWO who visits regularly to discuss the attendance issues with the relevant staff members.

The procedure in appendix A is followed with all children with attendance below 90% being discussed with the educational welfare officer every half-term.

Systems of communications within the school between the Head, teachers and EWO will identify patterns of irregular attendance, and subsequent support offered to children and parents.

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Referring a case to the EWO:

Before referring a case to the Education Welfare Service, the school will ensure that they have made the initial intervention after a child's poor attendance record is identified. This will include writing a letter home, inviting parents to meet the senior staff and holding an SEN or attendance review.

Should the school's intervention fail to improve a child's attendance, then the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Service by completing a standard referral form.

Formal referral will take place when initial intervention and one or more of the following applies:

A pattern of irregular attendance if either continuing or worsening (sporadic days or block of absence);

Parents do not accept their responsibilities for ensuring the child attends school and are refusing to discuss ways of improving attendance with the school and/or

Condoned unjustified absence is increasingly a problem, or the parents ask for excessive amounts of authorised absence.

This policy should be read alongside the Child Protection Policy

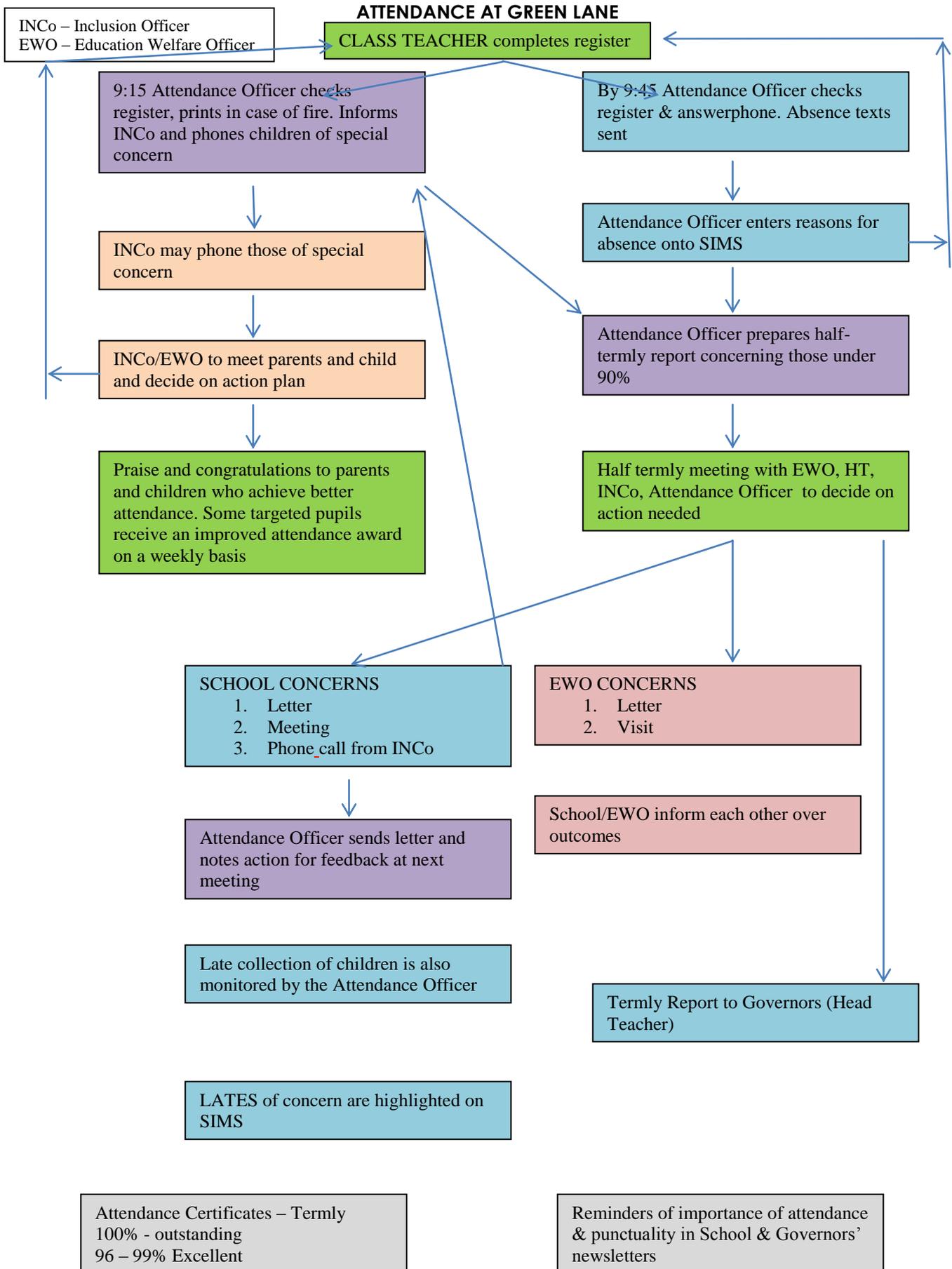
Government Statutory Guidance : Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2016 , Children Missing Education Sept 2016

**Guidance on Infection Control In Schools and other Childcare Settings**

**Appendix B Request for Leave of Absence**

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APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

<p><b>Green Lane Primary and Nursery School</b> <b>Request for Leave of Absence</b></p>
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Please read the following information before completing the form.

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During an academic year pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

Please be aware that amendments to the 2006 Education Regulations, which become law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please note that the default position will be to refuse absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Please complete and submit this form for the attention of the Attendance Officer. All requests should be submitted to the School Office **at least 5 days** before the first day of intended absence.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision. For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Class:</b>
I would like to request leave of absence for my child.	
From: _____ to: _____	
Number of <b>school</b> days missed:	
Please state clearly the reason for your request:	
Please note that if your child does not return to school on the given date, you must notify the school in advance. If notice is not received then this raises safeguarding concerns and the school will be required to make a referral to Children's Services and report your child as 'A Child Missing in Education'.	
Parent/Carer Signature:	Date:
For admin use only:	Current Attendance: _____%
Other requests for leave of absence in this school year:	Authorised: <input type="checkbox"/> Please use the following code:
	Unauthorised: <input type="checkbox"/>