

Review Date: December 2023

Attendance is everyone’s responsibility.

Attendance Team

Attendance is everyone’s responsibility, but key staff in school managing this crucial area are:

Mrs Nêst Llewelyn-Cook	Headteacher & DSL	office@twogates.staffs.sch.uk
Mrs Sophie Smart	Assistant Headteacher & DDSL	As above
Mrs H Pugh	Early Help Lead & DDSL	As above
Mrs N Johnson	Administrative Assistant	office2@twogates.staffs.sch.uk
Mrs M Render	Office Manager	office@twogates.staffs.sch.uk

Attendance Matters

We ask pupils to aim to achieve at least 95% attendance. We recognise that for some this may be challenging, therefore we will provide additional support to pupils and their families to encourage excellent attendance.

Our School’s Attendance Target this year is set at:

95%

The Main Principles

There is a direct link between academic attainment and attendance at school. Two Gates Primary School is therefore committed to working with parents and carers to ensure all pupils achieve as high a level of attendance as possible. Pupils are set a target of achieving at least 95% attendance.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure children of compulsory school age attend school regularly. Pupils should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

Attendance during one school year	Equals the number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent (100% equals 39 weeks)	Which means this number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Schools have a duty of law to refer any absence of 5 days or more where they have been unable to contact the parent/carer/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Local Support Team.

Schools are required to take a register twice a day (a.m. and p.m.), and this shows whether a student is present, engaged in an approved off-site education activity, or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent, every half day absence from school must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. The decision lies with the school as to whether the absence will be authorised. For this reason, information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Absence

Absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher, within the boundaries set by The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Headteachers may authorise leave during term time where the circumstances are exceptional.

Please do remember that parental/carer illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve issues), family holidays **are not** acceptable reasons for absence. **All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence.**

Arriving after registration has closed will also result in an unauthorised absence being recorded.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the child's best interests to miss school for such emergencies which are being dealt with by adults. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with a **safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.**

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence.

Reporting Absence

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that the school is made aware.

Reporting Same Day Illness/Absence- *our process/parents' responsibility*

If your child is going to be absent from school, we ask that **parents telephone school on the first day of absence** 01827 213855 and leave a message (option 1) by **8.45 a.m.** giving a reason for the absence and an indication of how long the absence is likely to last. There is an expectation that parents contact school on **each day of absence**; this can be by telephone or by e mail to office@twogates.staffs.sch.uk

Reporting Future Absence for Appointments

All appointments, such as dentist and doctors, should be made for **outside of school hours where possible.**

Where it is necessary to attend an appointment during the school day parents/carers should contact the school on 01827 213855 giving as much notice as possible.

Pupils are expected to attend on the day of an appointment for as much of the day as possible.

For the absence to be authorised, evidence of the appointment must be given to school by way of an appointment card or letter.

Requesting Leave in Term Time

Parents/carers should make every effort to avoid taking pupils out of education for holidays or other extended leave during term time. This leave will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Any request needs to be made in writing, giving as much notice as possible, 4 weeks as a minimum. **You should request a leave of absence form from the school office.**

Parents may receive a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave (holiday) in term time.

Religious Observance

We recognise that pupils of certain faiths may need to participate in religious observance when the day falls in term time. The school will issue a day authorised absence in these cases.

We ask that parents/carers notify the school in writing in advance where a day's religious observance is required. This can be emailed to office@twogates.staffs.sch.uk

Children Missing in Education (CME)

As a school, we are concerned about any child who may be missing education because, in addition to their educational development, their safety and wellbeing may be at risk.

The Staffordshire Children CME team works with schools in support of children who are absent from school and their whereabouts unknown, this might be

- A child who is not at their last known address and
- Has 5 or more days of continuous absence without explanation, or
- Has left school suddenly and their destination is unknown. The policy does not cover those children not receiving education due to a family not taking up an offer of a school place from the Schools Admissions Service.

Home Education – Parents/Carers Role

Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children of school age are receiving efficient full-time education. Some parents/carers may elect to home educate their children and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so. This is unless they are subject to an attendance order. Where a parent/carer notifies the school in writing of their intention to home educate, the school will ensure parents/carers are fully aware of their legal responsibilities in educating their child. School will then inform the local authority following their procedures, before the deleting the child from its admission register.

Registration and Punctuality

For safeguarding purposes, a register is taken at the start of the school day and at the start of the afternoon session. These two registers make up a pupil's overall attendance percentage.

Morning Registration:

Children may arrive at school between 8.30 and 8.45 a.m. (8.50 a.m. for nursery)

We ask that you aim for 8.30 a.m.

Perimeter gates are locked at 8.45. Any *non-nursery pupils* arriving later than 8.45 **must enter school down the main school drive and front office.**

Morning registration takes place at 8.50 a.m.

Pupils arriving after 8.45 a.m. will be recorded as late (L) **'you're late if you miss the gate'**

From 9.10 a.m. pupils will be marked as unauthorised (U).

Lateness to school may incur sanctions where applicable.

Afternoon Registration:

Afternoon registration takes place promptly at the start of the afternoon session.

Monitoring Attendance

Pupils' attendance is robustly monitored.

The school will, in the first instance, try to support children and families who are facing significant personal circumstances which may affect regular attendance and/or punctuality in the following ways:

- Supporting pupils through additional agreed methods within school e.g. attending an early morning nurture group, having a named member of staff to speak with
- Arranging for parents/carers to meet with the school's Early Help Lead, Mrs H Pugh
- Signposting parents to seek support from other agencies
- Referring families for tier 2/3 support

At all stages we want to ***work with parents/carers to support their child's attendance.*** The stages of support work as a guide only and different methods of support may be more suitable for some pupils.

Early Concern- from the outset, if we notice **inconsistent attendance** you will be alerted to our concerns via text.

**Where attendance is 90% or below it is classed as PERSISTENT
and is a high priority concern.**

*Parents will be sent a **stage 1 concern letter** inviting them to discuss any issues or support needed to improve attendance as a matter of urgency. At this stage, illness absence will need to be **accompanied by medical evidence** to be authorised.*

If there is no improvement in attendance over the following two weeks, parents will be notified of this and asked to attend **a stage 2 meeting at school with Mrs Llewelyn-Cook.** Referrals to 'Early Help' agencies may be an appropriate course of action at this stage.

Attendance will continue to be monitored weekly to ensure improvements.

Improvements in attendance will be celebrated.

Where absence patterns raise safeguarding concerns, a referral to Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support Services will also be made at any stage of monitoring.

Local Authority (LA) / Agency Referral

If a student has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in total and all actions have been followed, the school will seek advice from the LA regarding improving attendance. The school commissions support from Staffordshire Local Authority for this purpose. This gives school access to an **Education Welfare Worker** who will work with school and parents to improve attendance before any formal action. If a student is persistently absent due to 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance' reasons, please refer to the section below.

Formal Warning Notice

Parents/Carers will receive a formal warning notice advising them of their responsibility to ensure their child is in school under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The formal notice will advise that the LA may consider issuing a penalty notice and taking legal action against you should there be further unauthorised absences.

Education Legal Team Referral (ELIT)

Following the formal warning notice, if a student has a further 10 sessions of unauthorised absence then the school will complete a referral which may result in a penalty notice being issued. In some cases, if there have been two penalty notices issued, court proceedings could be initiated via the 'Single Justice' procedure.

[Staffordshire Code on Issuing Penalty Notices](#)

Emotionally Based School Avoidance

Where parents/carers are working with school to improve a student's attendance, but there are barriers related to anxiety, challenging emotions and thoughts and self-care, the school will refer to appropriate agencies to gain wider support where appropriate.

The school will only progress through the stages where parents/carers are not engaging and making every effort to improve their child's attendance.

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