



# Garlinge Primary School and Nursery

## Attendance Information for Parents

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery we believe attendance and punctuality is crucial to our pupils learning. It is important for children to attend school regularly so they not only learn, but also improve their social skills and raise their self-esteem.

We will do all we can to encourage each child to attend regularly and on time. We will identify any problems and act upon them and endeavour to support parents and carers in their role.

### **Our Expectations**

#### **For our pupils:**

- To attend school regularly
- Pupils are encouraged to arrive at school by 8.45am
- Registration is 8.55am – the school gates are shut promptly
- All pupil's that arrive late must report, with their parent to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded

#### **For our parents:**

- To ensure that their child attends school regularly
- To ensure that their child is punctual
- To inform the school if their child is absent, and why, on the first day of illness
- To send a letter into school on their return confirming the reason for the absence
- To let the school know if there is a problem with their child attending school, so we can offer support and endeavour to find a solution
- To support the school in its aim to raise its achievements through good attendance and punctuality

#### **Promoting Good Attendance:**

As a school we encourage and reward good attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Class certificates awarded daily
- Attendance Bear and Punctuality Puppy are awarded weekly
- Attendance certificates are presented to children with 100% attendance over a term
- An attendance certificate and an award for children with 100% attendance over the whole academic year

Our rewards are reviewed regularly to introduce new ideas if necessary and to ensure their effectiveness.

#### **Communication**

We will communicate to our parents the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Parents are given information on illness and absence in the school brochure, this highlights the importance of being at school on time and notifying us if their child is absent for any reason.

Parents are asked to share any worries their child might have in school. Sometimes little things upset a child which means that they become unhappy and may not want to come to school. We hope that by working together we will be able to solve such problems.

At school we are required to keep register, which is a legal document and we must record the reason for any child's absence. All parents are asked to contact the school if their child is absent. This can be done by telephoning or by leaving a message on the school answerphone (01843 221877 option 1).

A letter also needs to be sent to school when your child returns, explaining the absence. If no notification is received about an absence on the first day, the parent/carer will be contacted.

### **Concerns**

If a child is regularly late for school, or is often absent, then the parent/carer will be contacted by the school either by text, telephone or letter. If there is an urgent concern, then the Headteacher will be informed immediately and she will discuss this with the parents/carers before taking the appropriate action.

Although it is an extremely rare occurrence for a child to truant, if there is a concern that a child may be truanting we will take action immediately.

Attendance is monitored weekly to ascertain patterns of absence. The school has a designated Educational Welfare Officer, who liaises with the school on a regular basis to discuss attendance issues, and offer advice and support.

In **exceptional circumstances only** the Headteacher may authorise leave of absences on behalf of the Governors.

### **Leave of Absence/Holidays**

Garlinge Primary School is part of the Kent Challenge Scheme this means holidays/leave of absence cannot be approved in term time except for exceptional circumstances.

- If parents/carers are considering holiday/leave of absence they must seek permission from the Headteacher **BEFORE** taking their child out of school. We ask for at least 4 weeks' notice.
- Parents are asked to complete a "leave of absence form" available from the school office and attach a letter outlining the reason for the request.
- The school will confirm in writing within a 10 day period the outcome of the absence request.

### **If "LEAVE OF ABSENCE IS DENIED"**

Where a child's leave of absence/holiday request is denied it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the school will apply the penalty notice procedure – please read below:

### **Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence**

As from April 2005 Kent Local Authority (LA) introduced penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) in a current term (12 weeks).

A separate penalty notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

On receipt of the Notice, the penalty will be £60 if paid within 28 days, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 42 day period may result in prosecution by the LA.

### **The following circumstances will be considered as appropriate reasons for the issuing of penalty notices:**

- Truancy including truancy sweeps
- Parentally condoned absence
- Holidays in term time
- Delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed
- Where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours during the first five days of exclusion