



## **Gartree High School ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**(As agreed by the Oadby Learning Partnership)**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Regular attendance at Gartree is essential if pupils are to achieve their full potential.

1.2 Gartree believes that regular attendance at School is the key to enabling pupils to maximise the learning opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential, **belong, achieve** and make a positive contribution to their community.

1.3 Gartree **values** all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families and other agencies to identify the reasons for poor attendance and attempt to resolve any difficulties.

1.4 Gartree recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole School community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement.

1.5 The procedures for monitoring attendance are outlined in the policy. The Pastoral team work in partnership with all stakeholders, pupils, parents/carers, all staff, outside agencies to maintain high levels of attendance and support pupils who may be having difficulties in school which may lead to absences.

### **2. Legal Framework**

2.1 Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

2.2 A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 17.

2.3 Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

2.4 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

2.5 The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

### **3. Categorising absence**

3.1 Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. For a full list of absence codes please see appendix A

3.2 Absence can only be authorised by Gartree and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

3.3 Parents/Carers should advise Gartree by telephone on the first day of absence and provide Gartree with an expected date of return. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers or parents/carers with hearing impairments.

3.4 Term Time holidays and extended leave: Parents/carers are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to remove their child from School during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year. **Requests during term time will not be authorised, time lost from education has a negative impact on pupil progress and achievement.**

In exceptional circumstances written requests for extended leave should be made in advance to the Headteacher. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter should state:

- The expected date of return
- That parents/carers must contact School should any delays occur
- That the pupil's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected.

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents/carers has not been made or received, School may remove the pupil from the School roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the pupil will lose their School place.

If the permission to take leave is not granted the absence will be **unauthorised** (G), e.g. this may lead to a referral to the Attendance Improvement Service and a Penalty Notice being issued.

3.5 Religious Observance (R) Gartree acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British Society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

It is reasonable for a parent/carer to allow their children not to attend School on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's/carers religious body.

Parents are requested to give advance notice to the School if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the School and limiting the authorised absence rate of the School, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absences will be categorised as unauthorised.

3.6 Traveller Absence (T) The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend School as regularly and as frequently as possible. For specific guidelines see appendix B

3.7 Late Arrival (L): Morning Registration begins at 8.30 am and afternoon school starts at 1.15 pm. Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at 9.00 am and 1.30 pm respectively, pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late, this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that School session (U).

On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to the main office where the register will be amended to indicate the pupil is in School. This ensures that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in School.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided. Where possible all medical and dental appointments should be arranged for outside school hours.

3.8 Pupil Absence from School

When a pupil is absent from School and parents/carers have not given a reason for the absence, contact will be made on the first day of absence, requesting the reason for absence and expected date of return.

Where no contact has been made a letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting a reason for absence. (Appendix C).

#### **4. Deletions from the Register**

4.1 In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The School is replaced by another School on a School Attendance Order.
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the Local Authority.

- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed.
- Death of a pupil.
- Transfer between schools.
- Pupil is withdrawn to be educated outside the School system.
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the School and Local Authority have tried to locate the pupil.
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the School before ending compulsory school-age.
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with The Youth Offending Team).
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and School have tried to locate the pupil.
- Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the School and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.

4.2 Gartree School will follow Leicestershire County Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts in unknown.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

5.1 Gartree believes that improved attendance at School can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the School staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils and the wider School community. As such, the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Annually review the School's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Agree School attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority within the agreed timescale each year.
- Monitor the School's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department of Children, Schools and Families as required and on time.
- Ensure that there is a named member of the School leadership team to lead on attendance.
- Ensure that the School has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

5.2 The School Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupil and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole School approach which reinforces good School attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named member of the School leadership team to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resources.
- Return School attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Children, Schools and Families as required and on time.
- Report the School's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

### 5.3 Gartree School will request that Parents/Carers will:

- Contact the School if their child is absent, before the close of morning registers (9.00am ) to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Inform the School of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists, etc. outside of School hours.
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Talk to their child about School and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Instil the value of education and regular attendance at School within the home environment.
- Ask the School for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Support the School; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with School and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both Gartree and home.

- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work and preparing school bag the evening before.

## **6. Using Attendance Data**

6.1 Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

6.2 On a regular basis the Attendance Coordinator with responsibility for attendance will provide the following data:

<b>Data</b>	<b>Regularity</b>	<b>Provided to</b>
Daily registers	Daily	Form Tutors
Weekly registers	Weekly (Mon)	Form Tutors / Pastoral Leader/Pastoral Manager
Individual pupil % attendance data	Weekly (Mon)	Pastoral Leader /Attendance Coordinator
Less than 93% attendance lists	Weekly (Fri)	Pastoral Manager / Pastoral Leader/Attendance Coordinator
Persistent Absence pupils identified from 'sessions missed' data	Fortnightly	Subject Leaders / Attendance Coordinator/Pastoral leader & Manager
Reasons for absence	Half termly	Attendance Coordinator / Pastoral Leader

6.3 On a weekly basis the Attendance Coordinator, in consultation with appropriate agencies, identify whether a pupil's attendance has improved, deteriorated or stayed the same.

6.4 The pupil data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (Appendix D and E)

6.5 Attendance data is also used to identify emerging patterns or trends of absence to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and therefore attainment.

6.6 Gartree will share attendance data with the DFE and the Local Authority as required. All information shared will be done in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **7. Support Systems**

7.1 Gartree also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and Children In Care.

7.2 The School will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance.

7.3 Support offered to families will be centred around the pupil and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents/carers and pupils.

7.4 Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Gartree will consider a referral to the Attendance Improvement Service and the use of legal sanctions.

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Absence Codes (2006)

Appendix B – Traveller absence

Appendix C - Recording, monitoring and chasing pupil absence from Gartree

Appendix D – Monitoring absences

Appendix E – rewards for 100% attendance

**Appendix A**

### **ABSENCE CODES**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence

D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Education visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendance
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendance
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendance

## **Appendix B**

### **TRAVELLER ABSENCE**

To protect Traveller parents/carers from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent/carer is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending School as regularly as that trade permits.

It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable nor does it relieve parents/carers of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at School.

When in or around Leicestershire, if a family can reasonably travel back to Gartree then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

Gartree will be regarded as the base School if it is the School where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base School, in such cases, the pupil's School place at Gartree will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their School of usual attendance.

Gartree can only effectively operate as the child's base School if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents/carers must:

- Advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and □ Inform the School regarding proposed return dates.

Gartree will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited School
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service
- The child is undertaking computer based distance learning that is time evidenced.

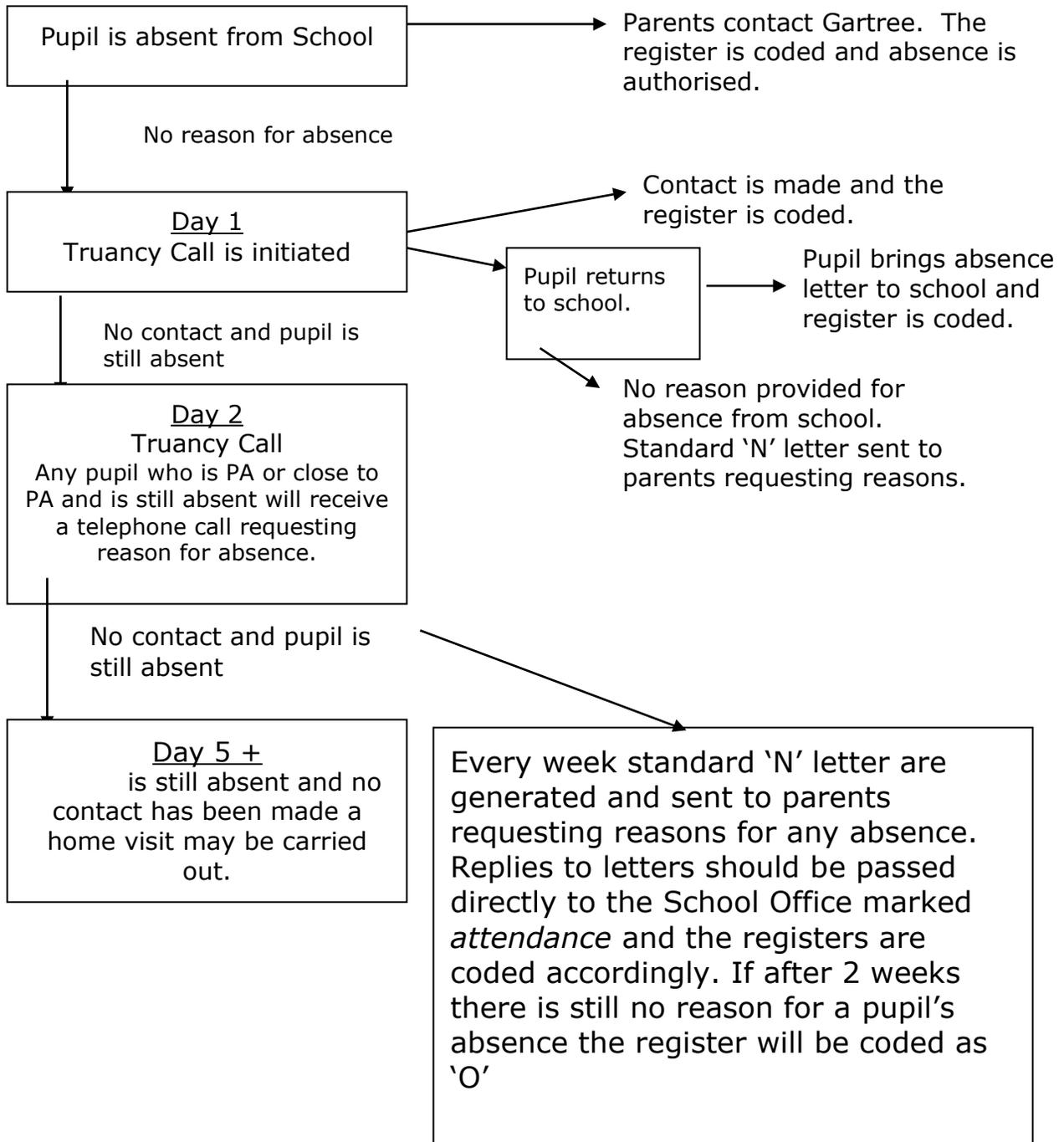
Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a School and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending School, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

## **Appendix C**

### **RECORDING, MONITORING AND CHASING PUPIL ABSENCE FROM GARTREE**

#### Recording, monitoring and chasing pupil

## absence from Gartree



If

pupil

**MONITORING ABSENCE**

**"Attendance Matters"**

The pupil below has been identified as a concern

Name:		Tutor Group:	
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Attendance falls to 92% - tutor notified and action plan written	Date:	
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Letter 1 sent to parents	Date:		% attendance	
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Letter 2 sent to parents	Date:		% attendance	
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Medical letter sent	Date:		Comment:
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Attendance surgery	Date:		% atten.		Comment
	Date:		% atten.		Comment
	Date:		% atten.		Comment
	Date:		% atten.		Comment

Referral to EWO	Date:		% attendance	
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Identified as PA (session absent)	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5

Action Plan	Date:		Review Date:	
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Additional comments:
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## **Appendix E**

### **Attendance Matters**

#### **Rewarding Good Attendance**

- Half Termly – Certificates for all pupils with 100% attendance
- Termly – Certificates for all pupils with 100% and voucher draw
- Yearly – All pupils with 100% attendance receive certificates
- End of KS3 – any pupil who has achieved 100% for 3 years to receive voucher and a certificate
- End of KS4 – any pupil who has achieved 100% for the 2 years to receive a voucher and a certificate