

# GREENWICH STEINER SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Introduction

This policy is to enable the Greenwich Steiner School to work positively and clearly with parents in matters relating to attendance. We hope that with this clarity we will be able to support the children's education and fulfil the legal responsibilities lying with the parents and School.

Please write or talk to the school before arranging any activity that may get in the way of your child's attendance.

### **At Greenwich Steiner School we:**

- **Regard any unnecessary absence as undermining the education. Our teaching methods make it almost impossible to catch up with learning and work missed or for it to be done at home.**
- **Regard punctuality as healthy and appropriate and consider avoidable lateness as hampering the pupil's development.**
- **We regard the children's health as paramount and encourage parents of sick children to keep them home until they are fully better and in a fit state to learn (and have had 24 hours clear of fever) before coming back to school.**

### The legal requirements:

The law requires that parents ensure that:

- **All children of compulsory school age receive "an effective education, suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude".**
- **All children of compulsory school age receive full-time education - 5 days per week during term time.**
- **All children attend regularly.**
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**If parents do not do this they are liable to prosecution.**

The law requires that the School:

- **Has an enrolment register in which all children are entered on joining the School**
- **All children listed as enrolled will have their names entered in the appropriate attendance register**
- **Takes an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent.**  
**Gives all the requested statistics to the DCSF and Ofsted.**

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- **We regard the children's health as paramount and encourage parents of sick children to keep them home until they are fully better and in a fit state to learn (and have had 24 hours clear of fever) before coming back to school.**
  - **and makes all the above available to OfSTED inspectors**
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## 1. Registration

In accordance with legislation the teacher taking the first lesson of the day and the first lesson of the afternoon marks the attendance register using the marks as indicated inside the register. The register will show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised. Attendance registers will be returned to the office ASAP and checked by the Administrator. The teacher will keep the notes from parents relative to absences for the whole of the school year. All class and kindergarten teachers will keep the totals in their registers on a daily and weekly basis in the spaces provided. The Administrator will use these to complete the Attendance and Truancy statistics form for the DCSF. Attendance records are regularly checked by the DCSF and OfSTED

## 2. Absence

Parents are required to communicate with /telephone the school by 9am if their child will be absent, giving reasons for their absence. Unless prior notice has been given in writing.

If a pupil is absent without parental communication the administrator will telephone the parents to ensure a) that the pupil is safe and b) to establish the reason for their absence and then complete the register accordingly. Please note this process is a back up system. Parents need to take their responsibilities to communicate seriously.

### 2.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. This includes all medical reasons of sickness, hospital visits, etc but the school does not support a full day's absence for a dentist or other short medical appointment. Family emergencies such as funerals of close family members may also be appropriate.

Parents may not authorise absence, only the Education Manager can do this on behalf of the school.

The absence of pupils taking part in supervised educational activities outside the school is recorded as 'approved educational activity'. The following activities are examples of approved educational activity category: field trips and educational visits organised or agreed by the school, in this country and overseas; participation in or attendance at approved sporting or artistic/musical activities; pre-arranged visits to other schools, examinations at another school or establishment.

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## 2.2 Unauthorised Absence

All other absences must be regarded as unauthorised. (In schools that are open for instruction for 38 weeks per year, it is possible, though not advisable, for authorised absence to be given for brief term-time family holidays.)

**At Greenwich Steiner School the academic year is only around 35 weeks, also the curriculum and approach to teaching is such that it makes the option of authorising such an absence not available and pupils will therefore be recorded as unauthorised if taken on holiday, shopping or other such activities.**

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**Schools, including independent schools, must notify the Local Education Authority if a pupil attends irregularly or is absent continuously without authorisation for ten or more school days.**

## 3. Punctuality

Parents of children are required to ensure that their children arrive on time. The doors open at 8.30am for the Lower School and 8.45am for the Kindergarten. The Lower School pupils are expected to be in their places, ready to learn at 08.50

Avoidable lateness after registration constitutes unauthorised absence and can be undermining to the child's participation in school educationally and socially as well as her/his feeling of self-worth.

### **NOTE: Compulsory School Age**

- If a child's 5th birthday falls between 1 April and 31 August s/he will become of compulsory school age on 1 September.
- If a child's 5th birthday falls between 1 September and 31 December s/he will become of compulsory school age on 1 January.
- If a child's 5th birthday falls between 1 January and 31 March s/he will become of compulsory school age on 1 April.

### **PROCEDURES; further points to the above:**

1. All absences should be communicated in writing either in advance or when the child returns in the case of sickness or emergency.
2. The school should always be notified on the day by 9am if no prior notice has been given.

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3. If a pupil misses days frequently parents are asked to make an appointment with the child's teacher stating the subject of the meeting, to discuss how best to help improve matters or how to support the child's education.
4. If the teacher has concerns regarding a pupil's attendance and the parents have not made contact the teacher will arrange a meeting – this concern and outcome will be reported to the SMT.
5. The School will inform the Education Welfare Officer at the LEA when it is appropriate (as above).
6. If a pupil attends less than 80%, not due to a one-off illness absence, the School (SMT) will send a letter of concern regarding its ability to provide effective education and seek to improve matters with the parents.
7. If a pupil continues to have low attendance and this cannot be resolved with the parents the school reserves the right to inform the parents that it can no longer provide effective education due to lack of attendance and can terminate the contract with the parents to provide education with effect at the end of the term in progress giving at least one month's notice; subject to the previous steps having been taken.

**END**

**September 2008.**