Gusford Primary School

***“Together we believe, learn and achieve”***

Sheldrake Drive Ipswich IP2 9LQ

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### Executive Headteacher: Mrs H Madsen

Co Heads Of School: Mrs Garner and Mrs Hopkins

Dear Parent/Carer

I am asking for your support in improving whole school attendance and punctuality. Attendance is a key factor in supporting children to reach their full potential and it has a direct impact on attainment. This has a direct impact on their academic success and children are at risk of falling behind with their learning. Here at Gusford Primary school we expect each child to attend school every day, on time and endeavour to achieve excellent attendance for the academic year.

We know that the majority of our parents ensure that their children’s punctuality and attendance is good and we thank you for your support with this. Of course, we all want children to learn and thrive but poor attendance and punctuality can be considered a safeguarding concern.

Gusford Primary School have a whole school attendance target which is 96%. We work on a Red, Amber, Green attendance progress system where termly, we inform parents/carers where their child/children are sitting. The following colours/figures are how this is recorded:

* RED – Below 0-90%
* AMBER – 91% - 95.99%
* GREEN – 96% - 100%

It is considered that attendance of 90% or below is**persistent absence** which will be closely monitored by school staff.  Failing to improve on this 90% can lead to prosecution, which we want to help families to avoid.

Where there is an emerging pattern of absence *with or without* explanation, or if attendance is below 96%, the attendance leads will advise the Headteacher. Where there are concerns about attendance, both authorised and unauthorised, a letter will be sent home advising parents/carers of any concerns and a meeting will be arranged to discuss any barriers affecting the child attending school and what support we can offer around this.

Our Parent Liaison Officer may work with children either individually or as part of a group to help improve attendance. During these sessions, potential barriers, ways to improve and responsibilities will be discussed. There may also be an attendance agreement signed by the pupil and the team. This includes mini targets being set with a visual reward chart.

Should your child’s attendance and punctuality continue to be a cause of concern we will refer the case to Suffolk County Council for a Penalty Notice Fine or intervention from the Educational Welfare Service.

Should you feel there are any barriers that affect your child’s attendance, please contact us on 01473 682148 Option 2.

**PARENTS’ AND CARERS RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents and Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children who are of school age are in full time education (Education Act 1996).

There are things you can do to improve your child’s attendance and avoid falling into the persistent absence category:

* Ensure your child/children attend school every day on time
* **Avoid taking any holidays during term times**. Support you child’s/children’s attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and only when completely necessary.
* Notify school each morning your child is absent from school due to illness, unless it is a pre-arranged absence. You can leave a message on the answering machine at any time using the school number.
* Engage with any support offered by school which we believe will help the child/children improve their attendance.
* Arrange to speak to the school’s attendance officers or Parent Liaison Officer.
* Talk to your child about the importance of them being in school and let them know how important **you** feel it is.
* Keep up to date with what % attendance your child has so that you know if they are at risk of persistent absence. The office staff will be happy to share this information with you and this will be shared during parent evening consultation.

If a child has recurrent medical appointments or should need to be absent from school for a prolonged period, we would require supporting documentation regarding this which can be photocopied at the office (i.e. GP/dentist appointment card, Hospital letter, prescription packaging).

**The table below provides an example of the impact of lost learning through pupil absence:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| attendance % over a school year | Equal to number of days absent | Converted to approximate weeks of absence | Approximate number of lessons missed | School Concern Level |
| 95-96% | **9.5 days** | 2 | 47.5 | Pupil can catch up and still succeed. A meeting with the school will be held and letter of poor attendance sent. |
| 90% | **19 days** | 4 | 95 | Poor attendance – we are concerned. A weeting with the school and Educational Welfare Officer will take place and potential prosecution if no improvements. |
| 80% | **38 days** | 8  | 190 | Serious concerns. A meeting with the school and Educational Welfare Officer will take place and potential prosecution if no improvements |
| 70% | **57 days**  | 12 | 285 |

**Punctuality** is also highly important. Pupils who arrive late to school are not only losing learning but also disrupting the learning of others as they arrive part way through lessons.  Pupils do not like being late into school and we witness how upsetting it can be for them.  We want to prevent this.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of minutes late *per day* over a school year | Approximate equivalent number of days lost learning |
| 5 minutes | 3 |
| 10 minutes | 6.5 |
| 15 minutes | 10 |
| 20 minutes | 13 |

* Have everything you/your child needs for school prepared the night before
* Ensure that your child goes to bed at a suitable time so they are not too tired and are able to get up in the morning.
* Ensure your child has a good night’s sleep by minimising their use of devices at bed time.
* Have a consistent bedtime routine for your child.
* Set an alarm to allow plenty of time for your morning routine in getting to school on time
* Bring your child to breakfast club (7:45am – 8.40am).

Thank you for your support.  I look forward to seeing improvements to attendance and punctuality at Gusford Primary School so that **ALL** of our children can reach their full potential.

Yours sincerely

Mr. S. Tapley

Head of School.