

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Absence Procedures

We monitor and review all pupils' absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

If a child is absent from school the parent must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 8:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office. They may do this via telephone on **01992 624099 (Hurst Drive) 01992 760779 (Greenfield)**, leaving a voicemail that states their child's name and the reason for their absence, or they may share the same information via e-mail to admin@greenfield.herts.sch.uk or admin@hurstdrive.herts.sch.uk
- Please be aware that, if you leave a voicemail to report your child's absence, you may receive a call from the school so that we may discuss the absence before making a decision as to whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 08:30am.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence.



The Greenfield &
Hurst Drive Federation

www.GreenfieldandHurstdrive.co.uk



Attendance Information

The Greenfield and Hurst Drive Federation recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.



Staff Information

Attendance Lead

Elle Savage (Assistant Headteacher)



Family & Pastoral Support Worker

Nicky Chanter



Pastoral Support Coordinator

Nicole Jackson



Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. **Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents, and the child.**

If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can consider a Families First Assessment, use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Family Support Worker, or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. **High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils; however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced.** We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, where appropriate.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence).

A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child.

If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent/carer may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.