



31 March 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Pupil Attendance

At Greenway one of our school aims is to ensure that every child's potential is reached. With this in mind we aim for all pupils to attain the highest level of achievement and to foster their development so that they fully benefit from all the opportunities and responsibilities presented to them.

Inevitably it follows from this that all children need to be at school on time every day that the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable – we remind you of this regularly and try to ensure that holiday dates are published well in advance so that you may plan your family breaks away in a timely fashion.

As parents/carers you have a legal duty to ensure amongst other things that your child(ren) attends school regularly and on time. The school investigates all lateness and absenteeism and the Governing Body monitors pupil attendance and pupil late arrivals (at the start of the school day) each term. We are delighted to report that attendance is very good. We are in the top 10% of schools in the country for good attendance. Attendance at Greenway was 97.2% last year (14/15).

At their last meeting on 23 March the Governing Body ratified a revised Attendance Policy following recent changes in the law.

You may be aware that every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either Authorised or Unauthorised and we thought it would be helpful to remind you of these instances as set out within the Policy

“**Authorised** absences are sessions away from school for a legitimate reason including, but not limited to:

- Sickness
- Medical appointments which are unavoidable
- Days of religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parents belong
- Exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement
- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been granted. This includes:

- No explanation for absence has been forthcoming
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- The pupil stays at home to help look after parents or younger siblings (other than in exceptional circumstances)

- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday without an authorisation from the school
- Any pupil arriving too late to be entered into the Register”

We would urge you to read the Attendance Policy as supplied on this email. This is also available on the school website. In particular we are pointing you to the fact that the number of sessions of unauthorised absences has been reduced following which a fixed penalty notice may now be issued by the Local Authority (15 sessions - 7.5 days) of unauthorised absence in the previous and/or current term). This amounts to £60 per parent per child provided it is paid within 60 days or £120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. If a notice remains unpaid then the Local Authority will prosecute for the offence.

We very much hope that this will not be necessary but feel that you need to be aware of the change in the regulations. The Governing Body have agreed to implement this policy **with effect from 1 September 2016.**

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Katharine Ellwood
Headteacher

Elizabeth O'Reilly
Chair of Governors

