

ATTENDANCE: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN FROM F2 TO YEAR 6

The following information applies to parents of all children at The Glapton Academy in F2 to Y6.

The staff member responsible for attendance is the Attendance Champion supported by the office team who are the first point of contact in the school for parents reporting absences.

We have a very successful whole school strategy of improving attendance through working in partnership with parents and children. Attendance at Glapton aims to be consistently above 96% and we need you and your child's contribution to ensure that we attain this. We are aware that there will be occasional exceptional circumstances that will require individual support or alternative arrangements.

As a staff team we are available and we encourage parents to discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing. Good attendance and punctuality ensures that children develop good social skills, have full access to education and achieve their full potential.

Please note that parents are not entitled to take their child out of school for holidays and such absences will be subject to a fine from the Local Authority referred to as a Fixed Penalty Notice (see FAQs).

Statistics show that a child who is absent for one day per fortnight will have missed one year of school (190 days) by the time they leave secondary education.

Recognition for excellent attendance

The school celebrates excellent class and individual children's attendance in assemblies.

- Class Weekly award and EXTRA PLAYTIME.
- Certificates and small prizes for 100% attendance are awarded to children: half termly for 100% attendance for the half term, termly for 100% for the whole term
- 100% attendance for the whole academic year means an opportunity to receive tickets for a family day out if your child's name is picked out of our lucky dip.

Absences prior to or after a school holiday

Please note that we require a medical document for all absences either prior to or after a school holiday. The Attendance Champion may also visit your home to check that your child is ill.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

1) When does my child need to be in school?

Your child should be in school in good time for morning registration. All pupils must also be on time for afternoon registration or they will be marked as late or absent.

The school will be open in the morning from 8:45am (KS2 & Y2), 8.50am (KS1) or at 7.30 am for children attending the breakfast club.

Your child should be in class by 8:50am (KS2 & Y2) and 8.55am (Y1 and F2) for prompt Registration at 8.50 am and 8.55am.

Children must not be left in school before 8:40 am unless they are with a parent/carer or their parent/carer has requested permission for them to arrive unaccompanied as they will be unsupervised, staff cannot accept responsibility for children arriving before 8:40 am (unless registered for Breakfast Club).

2) What happens if my child is late?

Registers close at 9:20/25am. If your child arrives after 8.50am but before the time the register closes, they will be marked as late. If your child arrives after that, they will be marked as absent. If your child is late, they or their adult must sign in at reception with the reason.

If your child arrives after the bell you should bring your child to the School Office. If your child arrives after 9:20/25am they will receive an unauthorised absence mark for the morning session instead of a late mark.

Where children arrive after 9:20/25 am parents are expected to provide an acceptable reason for lateness. Until such information has been received, and the explanation for lateness accepted by the School, your child's mark will remain as an unauthorised absence. This counts as an absence for the morning session and it will be shown on your child's end of year report.

Your child may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer for action after he/she has received 3 unauthorised late marks.

3) Does the school need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We expect a parent/carer to telephone the school on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will contact you. However, we need a written explanation on your child's return to school. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

4) What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Genuine illness. Please show a doctor's appointment card or medical evidence to the office staff when your child returns to school.
- emergency dental/medical appointments. All routine appointments should take place after school or in school holidays
- one day of religious observance if approved by the head teacher and in line with LA guidelines.
- family bereavement
- attending an interview for secondary school
- Other exceptional circumstance approved by the Head teacher.

We require a medical document for all absences either prior to or after a school holiday. The Attendance Champion may also visit your home to check that your child is ill.

In cases of recurring absences or attendance below 96% you will need to bring in either an appointment card to show that your child's illness has been assessed by your GP or any medication that has been prescribed for your child. Please note that unless medical evidence is provided recurring/frequent absences are treated as unauthorised. In cases of urgent medical/dental appointments parents are expected to produce an appointment card and children are expected to attend school prior to and after the appointment. Where the appointment is at the beginning of the day you should bring your child to school afterwards. For appointments later in the day your child should be collected early from school.

5) Can my child attend school when he/she is on medication?

Yes, your child can come back to school as soon as he/she is feeling better. You will need to bring the medication to school office and complete a form allowing a member of staff to administer.

6) What is an unacceptable reason for absence?

The school will not authorise absences for:

- A child being tired
- Day trips
- Holidays
- Birthdays
- Visiting relatives
- Collecting relatives from an airport

- Shopping
- Parent has to look after siblings who are ill. We ask that you make alternative arrangements for someone to look after the sibling whilst you bring your child to school
- Parent illness. We ask that if you are ill and unable to bring your child to school you make arrangements for a friend or relative to bring your child to school
- Parent unable to bring their child to school as they are away and their child is staying with a friend or relative who is unable to bring your child to school. We ask that you ensure that your friend or relative can bring your child to school prior to making arrangements to go away.
- Parent unable to collect their child on time. We ask that you make alternative arrangements.
- Non urgent medical or dental appointments
- Unexceptional special occasions, e.g. birthdays
- Exceptional leave of absence longer than the duration originally authorised by the Headteacher
- Exceptional leave of absence where prior permission was not sought/refused.

7) Will the school contact me if my child is absent?

The school operates a first-day response for absences: we will contact you if we have not heard from you. This is because it is our responsibility to ensure pupils' safety as well as their regular school attendance. If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward. However, it should be noted that you are expected to contact the school yourself on the first day of your child's absence by calling **0115 915 2936**. **You can press option 1 for 'student absence' and leave a message.**

8) Will the school monitor my child's attendance?

The school monitors attendance for all children closely and the name of any child whose attendance is below 96% is entered on a monitoring list. Parents receive a courtesy letter notifying them that their child's attendance is below 96%.

9) Can we take family holidays during term-time?

NO. Family holidays must be taken during school holidays and NOT during term time. If you take your child out of school to go on holiday you will receive a Fixed Penalty Notice. If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to accompany you on a family holiday during term-time, you should in the first instance, arrange an appointment with the Head Teacher. You should then complete an application form, at least three weeks in advance, stating the reason why the holidays must be taken in term-time. The Head Teacher has the right to refuse permission, having given consideration to:

- your child's age
- the time of year
- overall pattern of your child's attendance.
- The circumstance

The Head Teacher is unable to approve your child's absence if the timing of the holiday coincides with SATs.

10) What are exceptional circumstances?

An example of an exceptional circumstance is the death of a close family member or a parent's wedding. Please note that permission can only be granted for a very short period of time and you are required to request leave of absence PRIOR to booking any tickets or you will receive a Fixed Penalty Notice. You also need to provide evidence when your child returns to school.

11) What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

A Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine issued by the Local Authority to parents who take their child on holiday, or out of school, during term time without the express consent of the school. Such absences are referred to the Education Welfare Team who may impose a fixed penalty fine of £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 per parent for each child if paid within 28 days (Anti-social Behaviour Act 2006/2013).

If the notice remains unpaid after the 28th day, the Local Authority prosecutes the parent in the Magistrates' Court for the original non-attendance offence under The Education Act 1996, section 444, and not for non-payment of the penalty notice. If found guilty, parents will have a criminal record, possibly receive a fine of up to £1,000, for a first offence, and be required to pay costs to the Local Authority. There is no right of appeal against a Fixed-Penalty Notice.

12) What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning to have breakfast before coming to school. Ensure that they leave home in school uniform and with any items they need for the day e.g. homework, PE kit, swimming kit. Look in their school bags and partnership books and communicate with your child's teachers. Show your child, by your interest, that you value their education.

13) My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact Mrs Hurst or Mrs Oliver immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with schoolwork, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with our Attendance Champion. The school may refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance continue.

14) What will happen if I am late in picking up my child?

Glapton Academy closes at 3:15pm every day (clubs may operate after this time). If you know you are going to be late to collect your child contact the school immediately. Upon arrival you will be asked to sign the after-school late book and explain why you were late collecting your child.

If your child is not collected at the end of the day, and you have not contacted the school to advise us, the office will endeavour to contact you and your other contacts at home and at work. If this is unsuccessful, a senior member of staff will be informed of the situation. To comply with legal regulations, a decision may then be taken to contact either Social Services or the Police.

Please remember that children worry about their parents' welfare and can become quite distressed when they realise that no one has come to collect them.