

Attendance Policy

Audience	Parents/carers, staff, children
Co-ordinated by	Greswold Attendance Team
Date written / reviewed	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2026
To be reviewed by	Greswold Attendance Team & GB Curriculum & Inclusion committee
Associated Governing Body Committee	Curriculum & Inclusion Committee

School vision statement

To provide an inclusive learning community where every child really does matter.

Aims and Expectations

Our school aims to embed the principles of BRICKS:

- Belonging
- Respect
- Independence
- Curiosity
- Kindness
- Success

School aims

- *To provide a high standard of education in a stimulating, varied environment in which children can learn effectively;*
- *To create a caring atmosphere in which children are taught good citizenship, are happy and encouraged to act independently and foster self discipline;*
- *To encourage the children to co-operate with, understand and care for others from all backgrounds and abilities, thus children are guided into responsibility not only for their own development but also that of the whole school family;*
- *To ensure that every child, whatever their ability, has the right and opportunity to attend our school with appropriate resources and support wherever possible, and to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;*
- *To create, maintain and develop a physical and emotional atmosphere where children are stimulated to develop powers of observation and lively enquiring minds;*
- *To develop an understanding of decision-making and the need for rules, maintaining a continuous effort to improve standards for the general good and success of all.*

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This policy was written and agreed in consultation with key partners – governors, staff, parents/carers and pupils.

This policy applies to all parents/carers/carers and pupils who attend this school. Even though nursery children are below statutory school age, having accepted a place, we expect parents/carers to ensure that their child attends regularly and on time. Consequently all aspects of this policy apply.

What we believe (supported by research studies)

- Poor attendance and persistent lateness can disadvantage a child's development and wellbeing;
- Good attendance enables children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available;
- In the early stages of education, pupils' attitudes are strongly influenced by those of parents/carers/carers. It is therefore essential that parents/carers set a good example to children by actively valuing good attendance and punctuality.

Parents/carers of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (sec 444) to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents/carers may be reported to the Local Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement. Good attendance is directly linked to a child's success in school and Ofsted use attendance as a key indicator of a school's success.

The school fulfils its obligations following the DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' statutory guidance (August 2024). We believe that improving attendance is a priority to ensure that children get the most from their education.

Aims of the Policy

- To effectively safeguard all our children.
- To maintain attendance levels at least above the national average (2024-2594.05%).
- To improve children's achievement through good attendance.
- To encourage parents/carers to ensure that children arrive at school on time and are collected promptly.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school including parents/carers, pupils, staff and governors.

Responsibility for attendance issues in school

- The Senior Attendance Champion (Co-head/Deputy Head/Inclusion Lead) has responsibility for attendance issues;

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- A named group of staff (including DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and SIMS (School Information Management System) Secretary) support the Senior Attendance Champion
- All members of school staff (both teaching and support) have responsibility for attendance issues in school;
- Attendance matters are reviewed by the Attendance team;
- Attendance is regularly discussed at SLT (Senior Leadership Team) meetings and SLT have an attendance caseload
- Attendance leads meet on a termly basis with the Outcomes Officer (Solihull Inclusion Team) to discuss trends;
- Attendance issues are reported at least termly to the Governing Body.

Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Absence:

- If a child is absent from school, parents/carers should contact the school by 9.00 am, at the latest, on the 1st day of absence via a phone call to the office. Leave a voicemail if necessary and maintain contact with the school throughout the absence. Please note, communicating a pupil absence by email is not suitable as we cannot guarantee the message will be read before 9.00 am;
- If school does not receive a message then parents/carers will be telephoned;
- For cases of illness, further evidence may be requested;
- We request that medical and dental appointments are made outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, e.g. hospital appointments, parents/carers are required to provide evidence of the planned appointment in advance. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on each occasion. Notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reason;

With regards to types of illness and its effects on the length of a pupil's absence, school refers to the Department for Health's Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings for guidance. For a simplified version, see Appendix 5. We also refer to the DfE's letter, issued September 2023 (see below), for guidance on mild illness and attendance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-to-school-leaders-on-mild-illness-and-school-attendance/letter-to-school-leaders-on-mild-illness-and-school-attendance>

The school will follow DfE guidance and, for example, not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays, child minding, holidays and other similar activities. Parents/carers are expected to make appointments for dentist, doctor or optician outside of school hours. In the case of a medical emergency proof will be required to enable the absence to be authorised.

School Attendance, Safeguarding and Child Missing Education (CME)

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff in education provision should follow the provision's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future. It is essential that schools encourage high rates of attendance

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and review all attendance records regularly. The Child Protection Policy provides further local advice and guidance on CME.

Children with health needs who cannot attend school

If a pupil cannot attend school due to significant health needs, a school-led team will meet to determine the length of absence. If the length is less than 15 days, school will liaise with the parents/carers of the child to provide appropriate learning. If the absence is likely to be more than 15 days, and the child has been discharged from hospital, a referral will be made to Medical Alternative Provision (MAP), a service for pupils who temporarily are unable to attend school due to significant health needs. A link to the statutory guidance (Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs DfE December 2023) is below.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/941900/health_needs_guidance_accessible.pdf

Parents/carers are expected to support regular school attendance by:

- Ensuring their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- Only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around the school day where possible.

Taken from 'Working together to improve school attendance August 2024'

In addition, school requests that parents support by:

- Signing and adhering to the Home School Agreement (see appendix 4);
- Making sure their child leaves home early enough in order to arrive on time at school;
- Supporting and encouraging their child by attending parent consultations and other events;
- Contacting the school to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance;
- Working in partnership with the school to resolve any issues that are impacting on their child's attendance.

Lateness:

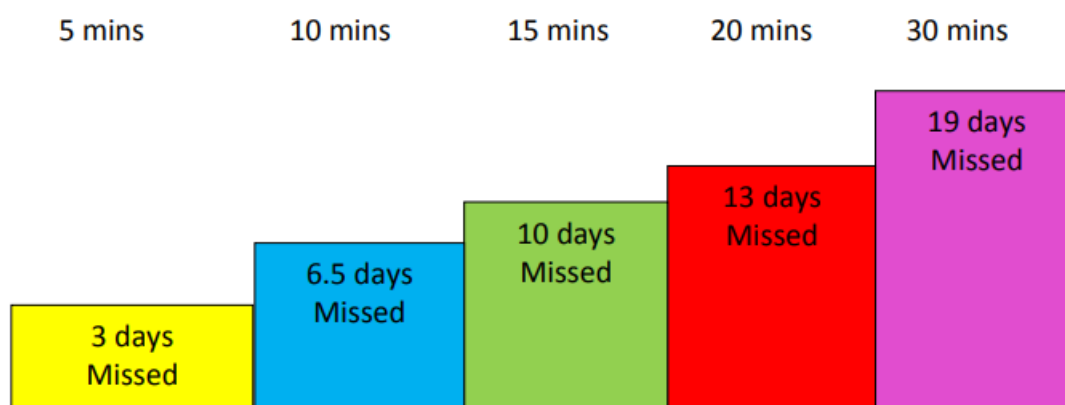
- Children must attend school on time and be within the KS2 access gate by 8:40am (gates open at 8.30), the KS1 and Reception access gate by 8:50am (gates open at 8.40) and inside the Nursery entrance doors by 8:30am or 12:30pm to avoid being late. The gates are closed promptly at 8.40 (KS2) and 8.50 (KS1 and Reception). If children arrive after this time, parents/carers will need to sign them at the school office in the main entrance, where a member of staff will escort them to their classroom. Parents/carers of Nursery children will need to sign them in at the school office and then walk them back round to the Nursery doors where a member of staff will then let them in.

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- The children should be in the classroom when the register is being taken to be given a 'present' mark for the session.
- Children arriving within 20 minutes of being late will have an 'L' code recorded (*late*).
- Where a pupil arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence. School registers close at 9:30am, a 'U' (*unauthorised*) code is recorded after this time. In terms of NPM, the register closes at 1:00pm.
- Regular late arrivals will trigger communication, close monitoring from school and, if necessary, an action plan and formal meeting to explore the reasons for lateness.

Punctuality: Every minute counts! Arriving late by just a few minutes each day can have a big impact on achievement. It also causes disruption for the child, the teacher and the other children in the class. If a child is late for just 5 minutes each day this would equate to 3 days missed over a year.

Number of minutes late each day:



Number of days this equates to over the year:

Poor Attendance:

- Those children whose attendance falls below 95% will be monitored and further action considered and recorded. School will, where necessary, challenge the attitude of families who deem to give lesser priority to attendance.
- All registers will be checked and absences monitored on a daily basis.
- Schools must proactively analyse individual pupil data to quickly identify any patterns of absence which cause concern and parents/carers will be informed by the school when that is the case.
- Pupils with **persistent absence** (pupils with 90% or less attendance) and **severe absence** (pupils with 50% or less attendance) will be identified and actions will be taken to address the underlying reasons for the absence level. The table below derived from census guidance gives an indication of the minimum number of sessions a pupil would miss by each half term to be classed as PA. Each day counts as 2 sessions: a morning session and an afternoon session.

Half-term	10%
Half-term 1	7 or more sessions
Half-term 1-2 (autumn term)	14 or more sessions
Half-term 1-3	20 or more sessions
Half-term 1-4 (autumn term and	25 or more sessions

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spring term combined)	
Half-term 1-5	31 or more sessions
Half-term 1-6 (full academic year)	38 or more sessions

- At this point, parents/carers of pupils whose attendance gives major cause for concern may be invited to attend a formal meeting to identify barriers to regular school attendance and agree an action plan to support and improve school attendance.
- After school has attempted to address attendance issues with parents/carers, if there is no improvement, the SMBC Inclusion Service, will be informed where the child's attendance remains a concern.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, school will work with the local authority on legal intervention.

How Greswold supports good attendance

- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance
- Providing parents/carers with clear expectations around attendance, punctuality and the processes for requesting leave of absence from school
- Half termly updates on children's attendance
- Regular monitoring of attendance by Senior Attendance Champion and SLT
- Maintaining the same ambition for attendance for pupils with medical conditions and/or SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Where attendance is at risk of becoming, or becomes problematic:

- Support to remove barriers to child's attendance
- Signposting to voluntary support services and a multi-agency response to out of school barriers
- A formal attendance contract or early help plan with a lead practitioner across services for cases where it is needed
- Formalised support (including through legal intervention) where support does not work, is not engaged with or is not appropriate

See Attendance Support Escalation Plan for more details.

Reasons for requesting medical evidence

- Attendance is 90% or less.
- There are frequent odd days' absences due to reported illness.
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated.
- Where there is a particular medical problem and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support.

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Procedure for requesting a planned absence

- Greswold Primary School strives to have a whole school attendance of 97% or above. It is a parents/carers' legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that ***if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence.*** This means that children are expected to attend school every day unless the reason for their absence is unavoidable, such as illness. Absences can only be authorised by the Head Teacher.
- If a Parent/Carer considers they require their child to have a Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstances, they should complete a Leave of Absence Request Form, at least 4 weeks prior to the date required. These can be obtained from the School Office and is also available in the appendices of this document (Appendix 1). There is a requirement that the Parent/Carer provides evidence of the exceptional circumstances. If we doubt the reason given for absence and we believe your child is absent due to holiday, this will then be recorded as unauthorised.
- A letter confirming that the request has been authorised / unauthorised will be sent to the parent/carer. *(Please see Appendices 2 and 3 for model pro-forma).* If unauthorised, school will write to the parents/carers advising them that the absence **will not** be authorised as the reasons for the absence are **not** unavoidable and that they are likely to face legal action. These letters will be sent individually to each parent and contain one parent's name and address in full. The letters will be sent via the external postal service.
- DFE guidelines make clear that leave of absence during term-time should be regarded as **exceptional**. The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 state that where a pupil has been granted extended leave of absence and subsequently fails to return to school within 10 school days of the expiry of the agreed period of absence, and the failure is not due to sickness or any other unavoidable cause, his/her name may, following consultation with the Local Authority, be deleted from the admission register.

Unauthorised Absences

- An unauthorised absence is issued if no reason is given for a pupil being absent from school.
- If the school has reason not to accept an explanation for a child's absence (this includes occasions where a leave of absence form has not been submitted)
- Where a pupil arrives after the register closes, this will be classed as an unauthorised absence. School registers close at 9:30am, a 'U' (*unauthorised*) code is recorded after 9:30am unless a valid explanation is given.

All leave of absence requests will be unauthorised unless the circumstances are exceptional.

It is a requirement that when a Leave of Absence is unauthorised by the Headteacher, that letters must be sent individually to each parent via external post.

We would like to make you aware that schools are required to consider a penalty notice if a pupil misses 10 sessions (5 days in total) of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 school week cycle (this can span different terms and school years). Please be aware that this includes non-consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence.

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It is important to note that each Parent/Carer can be fined up to £80 per parent per child or £160 if not paid within 21 days. Only two fines can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period. The second notice will automatically be charged at £160. If families don't engage with voluntary support, the Local Authority may consider legal intervention.

Below is detailed breakdown of **Solihull Local Authority's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct**:

When may a penalty notice for absence be appropriate?

The national threshold has been met when a pupil has been recorded as absent for 10 sessions within 10 school weeks, with one of, or a combination of, the following codes:

- code G (the pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday),
- code O (unauthorised absence)
- code U (the pupil attended after the taking of the register ended but before the end of the session)

If, in an individual case, the local authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met.

If a child meets the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and measures have been put into place to try and secure regular attendance but have not been successful

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met, and support is appropriate, but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent, or have not worked, a Notice to Improve may be sent.

Schools can choose not to use a Notice to Improve in any individual case, including cases where support is not appropriate or where they expect that it would have no impact on a parent's behaviour (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

If there is no improvement in attendance following the Notice to Improve the school may refer to Solihull MBC for a penalty notice to be issued, even if the improvement period has not ended.

National Framework for issuing Penalty Notices

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and are not working to change behaviour, they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, from Autumn Term 24, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent

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in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first.

In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, Solihull MBC may consider prosecution under Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk) For the purpose of the escalation process, previous penalty notices include those not paid (including where prosecution was taken forward if the parent pleaded or was found guilty) but not those which were withdrawn.

Key considerations prior to the issue of a Penalty Notice for school absence

Solihull MBC will assess any referrals or requests for the issuing of a penalty notice received from schools, police or other local authorities. The issue of penalty notices will only be administered by Solihull MBC in order to fully comply with current legislation and ensure a fair and consistent approach and to also ensure that a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour. In cases where support is not appropriate (for example, for holidays in term time), these will be considered upon referral from the school on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will be given to whether it is in the public interest to issue a penalty notice in each case given the local authority would be accepting responsibility for any resulting prosecution for the original offence in cases of non-payment. 5 Where pupils move between local authority areas, Solihull MBC can be contacted on email address cross.border@solihull.gov.uk to find out if penalty notices have been issued previously. Where pupils attend school in Solihull MBC but live in a different Local Authority, contact will be made to the pupil's previous local authorities to establish if any previous penalty notices have been issued in the previous 3 years. The Local Authority will inform the school about whether penalty notices are paid, withdrawn or prosecuted for non-payment.

For more information please see:

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Schools-and-learning/school-attendance>

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Appendix 1

GRESWOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Form to be returned to the school office with a minimum of two weeks notice

Please note that there is no automatic right for pupils to be granted authorised leave of absence and requests will only be considered where there are exceptional circumstances.

Name of Pupil	Class
Date of birth	
Please detail below the exceptional circumstance why you are requesting to take your child out of school. You may be invited into school to discuss your request with the Headteacher.	
Address.....	
Leave of absence from date:..... to date	
Number of schools days that your child will be absent from school	
Signature	Date
Name of Parent/Carer	

Leave of absence which has not been agreed will be marked as unauthorised. These may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer for consideration which could result in a Penalty Notice.

For School Use:

Previous requests for leave of absence	Yes / No	Attendance %
Evidence provided for exceptional circumstance	Yes / No	
Arrange to meet with Parent/Carer	Yes / No	Date & time

Authorised

☐

Unauthorised

☐

By Headteacher

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Appendix 2

Authorised Exceptional Leave of Absence Standard Letter

TO THE PARENTS/CARERS OF:-

Dear Parents/carers

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request form.

I write to confirm that on this occasion I am able to authorise your child's leave of absence from *(date)* to *(date)*.

Requests for leave of absence are never taken lightly and in making this decision I have accepted your reason for the exceptional circumstance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs K Scott and Mrs A Woodcock
Headteachers

cc Class Teacher/File

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Appendix 3

Unauthorised Leave of Absence Request Standard Letter

Dear Parents/Carers

Child: DOB: Class:

Dates applied for: _____ **to** _____

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request form in respect of the above Pupil.

On this occasion, we are unable to authorise your child's leave of absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that: If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence.

This means that children are expected to attend school every day unless the reason for their absence is unavoidable, such as illness. For further information on our attendance policy please visit our website.

We have carefully considered your request and do not accept that the absence is unavoidable.

...’s absence of sessions (days) will be marked in the register as unauthorised. These unauthorised absences will be referred to Solihull Council and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to each parent. The Penalty Notice is a fine of up to £160 for failure to comply with the law on school attendance. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may lead to prosecution and a criminal record.

Please note, if you have already received 2 penalty notices within a 3 year period, for the same child, a further penalty notice will not be issued and will be directed straight to court for prosecution.

Yours sincerely

Mrs K Scott and Mrs A Woodcock
Headteachers

Appendix 4



Home School Agreement for Parent

As a parent/carer I will:

- Make sure my child attends school regularly and arrives on time, wearing school uniform (or PE kit on the appropriate day)
- Let the school know of any concerns or worries that may be affecting my child's learning, behaviour or ability to do homework, in a timely manner
- Reinforce Greswold's Values (BRICKS) by encouraging my child to develop a positive attitude towards every member of our school community
- Attend meetings with my child's teacher and other staff, aiming to be respectful, positive and productive, working towards moving my child on in their learning
- Support and work with the school to ensure that the behaviour policy is adhered to
- Regularly read information on the website, Tapestry and other means of communication to ensure I am up to date with important dates and events relating to my child
- Share with school any concerns around health, SEMH and Safeguarding
- Work with school in a restorative way to support inclusivity and equity

Signed: _____ Parent / carer of: _____

Please print name: _____ Date: _____



Home School Agreement for Child

As a pupil I will:

- Come to school regularly and on time
- Wear the correct uniform/PE Kit and be tidy in appearance
- Demonstrate our BRICKS values and accept responsibility for what I do
- Be responsible for my school learning and homework
- Use the Internet safely as I have been taught in class
- Take care of the buildings, equipment and school grounds
- Tell a member of staff if I am worried or unhappy.
- Respect others as individuals

Signed by child: _____

Please write your name neatly here: _____



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Home School Agreement for School

As a school we will:

- Provide a safe and happy environment where all children are valued, respected and listened to
- Provide excellent teaching and an engaging curriculum to meet the needs of all children
- Provide as much support as we can to help your child meet their full potential
- Regularly share the progress of your child through online reporting and parent consultation meetings
- Provide regular homework opportunities which are realistic, achievable and related to work in school
- Support your child to develop a moral and ethical compass for life enabling them to grow up to be the best person they can be through our Values (BRICKS)
- Achieve high standards of behaviour by providing opportunities for children to develop positive social relationships, self-esteem and a sense of responsibility
- Teach children the importance of an inclusive and equitable learning environment
- Teach your child to develop a positive attitude to others regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity
- Respect the confidentiality of information regarding each child
- Allow children to feel safe and secure when using the Internet through a combination of site filtering, supervision and by fostering a responsible attitude in all children.
- Deal with parental concerns promptly and inform you of how they have been resolved
- Provide information to you about our school including relevant policies, meetings, workshops and events by keeping our website up-to-date, App notifications and Parentpay

Signed: _____

Name of staff member: _____

Role: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5

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Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings

Infection or complaint	Recommended period to be kept away from school, nursery or childminders
Athlete's foot	None
Chickenpox	Until all vesicles have crusted over
Cold sores, (Herpes simplex)	None
German measles (rubella)*	Four days from onset of rash (as per "Green Book")
Hand, foot and mouth	None
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed, or 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment
Measles*	Four days from onset of rash
Molluscum contagiosum	None
Ringworm	Exclusion not usually required
Scarlet fever*	Child can return 24 hours after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment
Slapped cheek/fifth disease. Parvovirus B19	None (once rash has developed)
Shingles	Exclude only if rash is weeping and cannot be covered
Warts and verrucae	None
Diarrhoea and/or vomiting	48 hours from last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting
<i>E. coli</i> O157 VTEC Typhoid* [and paratyphoid*] (enteric fever)	Should be excluded for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea. Further exclusion may be required for some children until they are no longer excreting
Shigella (dysentery)	
Flu (influenza)	Until recovered
Whooping cough* (pertussis)	Five days from starting antibiotic treatment, or 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment
Conjunctivitis	None
Glandular fever	None
Head lice	None
Meningococcal meningitis*/septicaemia*	Until recovered
Meningitis* due to other bacteria	Until recovered
Meningitis viral*	None
Mumps*	Exclude child for five days after onset of swelling
Threadworms	None
Tonsillitis	None
Respiratory infections including coronavirus (COVID-19)	Children and young people should not attend if they have a high temperature and are unwell
Diphtheria*	Exclusion is essential.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until 7 days after onset of jaundice (or 7 days after symptom onset if no jaundice)
Hepatitis B, C, HIV	None
MRSA	None
Scabies	Can return after first treatment
Tuberculosis* (TB)	Until at least 2 weeks after the start of effective antibiotic treatment (if pulmonary TB Exclusion not required for non-pulmonary or latent TB infection