



Ghyll Royd School
A foundation for life

Attendance and Registration Policy

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This policy is also applicable to the Early Years Department and Before and After School Care.

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Aims

Good attendance begins with the school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, the school works in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing and effective use of resources. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the governing body, the local authority and other local partners.

This document is supported by school policies on safeguarding, anti-bullying and positive behaviour.

Legal framework

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

In developing and implementing this policy, the school has considered its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. In line with the guidance, we will:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

This policy is written with regard to *Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities. DfE (2024, updated Aug 2024)*

Expectations

The School has a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across its school community. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school. This starts with the Attendance Leader but includes all school staff. The Attendance Leader at Ghyll Royd School is **Mr Richard Laycock**.

To manage and improve attendance effectively, Ghyll Royd School will:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.

- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support.
- Keep admission and attendance registers and preserve all entries in these registers for 6 years.

Procedures and responsibilities

The School aims to have a clear school attendance policy which all leaders, staff, pupils and parents understand. An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities, as below.

- The attendance and punctuality expectations of pupils and parents, including start and close of the day, register closing times and the processes for requesting leaves of absence and informing the school of the reason for an unexpected absence.
- The name and contact details of the school's Attendance Leader.
- Information and contact details of the school staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis and for more detailed support on attendance.
- The school's day-to-day processes for managing attendance, including first day calling and processes to follow up on unexplained absence.
- How the School is promoting and incentivising good attendance.
- The School's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- The School's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.
- It is to be noted that penalty notices are not used by independent schools (National framework for penalty notices).

The policy will be easily accessible to leaders, staff, pupils and parents, including being published on the school's website. Parents will be sent it with any initial information when pupils join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated.

Granting leaves of absence

The school can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. The school is expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are: -

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval.
- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution, where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.

The School can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at its discretion. The School is expected to consider each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the School to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. Generally, the need or desire for a holiday or other absence is not considered for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Education off site

As well as the above leaves of absence, the School can also allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings:

- To attend an offsite approved educational activity. (Code B)
- To attend another school at which the pupil is registered (dual-registration). (Code D)
 - To attend provision arranged by the local authority. e.g. alternative provision or as part of an education, health and care plan. (Code K)
- To participate in an approved sporting activity. (Code P)
- To attend an educational visit or trip arranged by the school. (Code V)

Day-to-day processes

Alongside accurate recording of attendance and absence, the School has robust day-to-day processes to track and follow up absence and poor punctuality which are rigorously applied across the school. These arrangements include the following:

- Proactively manage lateness and set out the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This will be the same for every session and will be 30 minutes, during which time the pupil is registered as late, and after which, even if they arrive, they are counted as absent for statistical purposes
- Expect parents to contact the school when their child is absent to explain the reason and to ensure that parents are contacted on the first day of absence where a reason has not been provided. If absence continues without explanation, further contact will be made to ensure safeguarding.
- Identify any absences that are not explained for each session and contact parents to understand why and when the pupil will return. Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code will be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Where reasonably possible hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This is good practice to give the School additional options to make contact with a responsible adult.
- Regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. The School will aim to make this understandable for parents i.e. the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning e.g. explaining that 10% absence means the equivalent of one day or more per fortnight across a full school year. The expected attendance is at least 92.9% (national average).
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. Where attendance is as low as 90%, the school will put additional targeted support in place, working with the local authority, if necessary.
- Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

Analysis of attendance and absence data

The School will regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place. As poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early intervention is crucial. The key to this is regular data analysis to both identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils or pupil

cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them.

To achieve this the School will:

- Monitor and analyse regular attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This will go beyond headline attendance percentages and should look at individual pupils, cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) across the school.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance updates to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding lead).
- Undertake frequent individual level analysis to identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases. This will not just focus on persistent and severe absence but look at all severities of absence to identify pupils who can be supported earlier before patterns become entrenched.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This will include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance.
- Benchmark attendance data (at whole school and year group) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data. This may, for example, include pupils in a year group with higher-than-average absence.
- Monitor the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings should then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.
- Provide data and feedback to support the work of the governing body. The School will decide which cohorts of pupils should be included in their data analysis based on their context and school population. This may include boys and girls, year groups, pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, pupils with a social worker or who are looked-after by the local authority.

Sharing information

The School will share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe. The School will work jointly with local authorities and other local partners and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the pupil. Further, to facilitate timely collaborative working across partners, the School is legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- New Pupil and Deletion returns: notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.
- Attendance returns: providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U).
- Sickness returns: providing the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

The School will provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State.

Pupils with a social worker

To facilitate effective working across the local authority area, the School will inform a pupil's social worker if there are unexplained absences from school.

Absence due to mental or physical ill health or their SEND

In developing support for children whose absence is due to mental or physical ill health or their SEND, the following processes relevant to any attendance case apply:

- Understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family
- Working in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place and working with other the local authority and other agencies where external support is needed and available.
- Regularly reviewing and updating the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions, but they are expected to work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil. They will:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section

20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with, the pupil and their parents.

- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time- limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

For pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, the School will:

- Work in partnership parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including, where applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.
- Work in partnership families to help support routines and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time- limited phased return to school would be appropriate.

The School will support a pupil with the appropriate assistance of a range of other relevant agencies.

The School will ensure data is regularly monitored for pupils with long term illnesses and or special educational needs or disabilities including at governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.

Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff.
- Annually review the school's attendance rules and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents, and children to implement the rules effectively.
- Nominate or identify a member of the Board of Governors who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance. (Safeguarding Governor).
- Ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children, and members of staff.
- Work out appropriate and accurate annual attendance numbers and future attendance targets.
- Take time at Governors' meetings to regularly review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year.
- Ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children off-site.
- Ensure that they are clear on how to analyse attendance data and how to communicate the findings effectively to parents and staff.
- Ensure that senior leaders make the necessary referrals to the local authority and other relevant agencies in individual cases of non-attendance.
- Use any data gathered to devise solutions to problems, make the proper adjustments to attendance coordination and target set for the future.

Senior Leadership Team

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families.
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.

- Coordinate with the Governing Body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full review.
- Ensure that all members of staff are up to date with the school's attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Ensure that legislation and government guidance on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislative changes and how to implement them.
- Nominate or appoint a senior leader to take the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to this job.
- Report to the governors each term and the lead governor for attendance termly on attendance records, data, and provision.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively,
- Develop and engage with multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend.
- Document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.

Teachers and support staff

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers

and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families.
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement.
- Ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance process, legislation, and government guidance, and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue.
- Ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily.
- Contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed.
- Work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.

Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Encourage and support their children's aspirations.
- Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment.
- Follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school and include an expected date for return.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours.
- Use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises.
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance.
- Encourage a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance.
- Do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the Head.

Pupils

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- Be aware of the school's attendance rules, and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents, and the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.

- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable.
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late.

Appendix 2 Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.

Staff should make it clear on the school register when taking attendance whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Where staff have concerns regarding absences, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents should make contact the first day of absence and let School know the reason for the absence and what date they expect the child to return. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents.

Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make contact to alert the school on each day of absence.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card, or a prescription paper. If these are not provided on request, it may result in the absence continuing to be classed as unauthorised.

Medical or dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible.

Authorised absences

There may be some exceptional instances where the school will authorise absence, such as for a family bereavement.

Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence.

Family holidays and extended leave

Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents may request a leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave of this type must be made in writing to the Head in advance of the leave being taken. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement that requires the child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration. The Head may only grant such requests in

exceptional circumstances and the Head's decision is final on whether the request is approved and the length of absence approved.

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing and will outline the details of when the child is expected to return to school. Parents should contact the school immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

It remains the Head's decision whether to authorise any request for absence during term time.

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised.

Religious observance

Ghyll Royd School recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends and will allow authorised absence for these times.

Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

Late arrival

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon. In the morning, registration begins at 8.40am and ends at 8.45am. Pupils who arrive after 8.45am will be marked as late.

Pupils who arrive after the registration period has ended should go straight to the school office to sign in and give a reason for their lateness. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised. It is vital that pupils sign in at the School Office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that the school can account for all pupils.

In the afternoon, registration begins at 1.30pm in Reception and KS1, and ends at 1.35pm. In KS2, the afternoon registration begins at 2.00pm and ends at 2.05pm. Pupils who arrive after 1.35pm (Reception and KS1) or 2.05pm (KS2) will be marked as late.

School action: following up absences

Where there are unexplained or unauthorised absences, the school will contact the parents on the first day of absence. If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, the DSL will contact the parent to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.

The office staff will ask parents for an explanation for their child's absence. Where pupils have been away for either short or long term, the school will support that child when they re- enter school to help them catch up on any work that they have missed.

Where a child has been absent from school for a period of more than 20 consecutive school days, and where the absence was unauthorised and both the school and the local authority have been unable to contact the parents, the school may remove the child from the school roll. The school will notify the local authority when such action is taken.

Appendix 3 The School Day – Registration and Dismissal

Department	Registration	Dismissal Mon – Fri
EYFS	08:40-08:50	15:45
Reception	08:40-08:45	15:40
KS1 (Form 1-2)	8:40-8:45	15:40
KS2 (Form 3-6)	8:40-8:45	15:40

Appendix 4 National Codes for Absence (Pupil Registration England Regulations 2024)

/ \ - present for morning and afternoon sessions.

The following are classified as authorised absence:

- I – Illness.
- M – Attending medical/dental appointment.
- C – Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
- R – Religious observance.
- E – Suspended or permanently excluded.
- T – Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
- S – Study leave.
- C1 – Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
- J1 – Attending an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
- C2 – Pupil is absent from school for part of the week (on a part-time timetable) – then also use the code for the reason why absent.

The following are NOT classified as absences:

- B – An offsite educational activity.
- D – Dual registration, so attending another school where registered.
- K – Alternative provision arranged by the LA.
- L – Late arrival before the register is closed (during the 30 mins ‘grace’ period).
- P – Approved sporting activity.
- V – Attending an educational visit or trip.
- W – Work experience.

The following are classified as unauthorised absence:

- G – Holiday not granted by the school.
- N – Reason for absence not yet established.
- O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances.
- U – Arrived in school after the register closed (after 30 mins ‘grace’ period).

The following are classified as ‘not a possible attendance’:

- X – Pupils of non-compulsory school age absent, when they are not timetabled to attend (e.g. EYFS).
- Q – Lack of access arrangements by LA.
- Y – Transport normally provided not being available. Y2 – Widespread disruption to travel.
- Y3 – Part of school premises being closed.
- Y4 – Whole school site being unexpectedly closed.
- Y5 – Pupil is in criminal justice detention.
- Y6 – Public health guidance or law not to attend. Y7 – Any other unavoidable cause.

The following codes are not collected for statistical purposes:

Z – Prospective pupil not on admission register.

-- Planned whole school closure (holidays).

Appendix 5 Contact Details

Post	Name and Contact Details
School Attendance Leader (for support on attendance)	Richard Laycock 01943 865575 (via School Office) - or via information@ghyllroydschool.co.uk
Governor (with responsibility for attendance)	Jenny Johnson Jenny.johnson@ghyllroydschool.co.uk
Form teachers (for information about day-to-day attendance issues)	01943 865575 (via School Office) – or via information@ghyllroydschool.co.uk
The Head (for permission for leave of absence)	Hadley Nicholson Hadley.nicholson@ghyllroydschool.co.uk
The Office (to report the first morning of absence)	01943 865575 information@ghyllroydschool.co.uk