



Griffin Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Reviewed By	Approved By	Date of Approval	Version Approved
Louise Pitts	LGB	13.10.21	2.0

Aims and Objectives

Introduction

Regular school attendance and punctuality are important if teaching and learning time is to be maximised and a child is to receive a full curriculum entitlement. At Griffin Primary School we aim to achieve good attendance and punctuality by operating a policy within which staff, pupils, parents and the Educational Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school monitors attendance and lateness and addresses identified problems efficiently. It is important that there are clear procedures with regard to these two issues. It is essential the impact is minimised on individual children and on the school's progress.

Children under legal school age

All parents/carers are informed of the expected level of attendance and this will be monitored by the school. The Head of School has the authority to withdraw an FS1 (nursery) place from a child who has a poor attendance record.

Statement of Intent

We aim to improve school attendance and punctuality by:

- Promoting the value and importance of regular school attendance
- Working in partnership with parents/carers
- Reducing all forms of unauthorised and unnecessary absence
- Dramatically reducing the amount of learning time lost due holidays in term time

Pupils New to the School

Pupils and their families are visited prior to Foundation Stage entry. Opportunities for parents and children to visit the school are given.

Information packs are given to all new starters. The child's previous school is contacted and asked for information over the telephone, including their current attendance. Prior to admission parents will be invited in to meet with the head of school. Pupils are given classroom buddies by their class teacher to help them settle in.

General Attendance Procedures

Although it is the parents/carers legal responsibility to ensure their child/children attend school regularly, unless they are ill, the school has a responsibility to make sure this happens. It is therefore our collective responsibility to impress on the children and parents/carers that regular attendance is important.

The following actions will be applied when any child fails to attend school without their parents/carers providing a reason for absence.

- If no contact has been made by the time the registers close at 9:35am then this will be recorded on SIMs as an absence.
- The school will then endeavour to contact the parents/carer or any named contact on record by telephone, texts may be sent to parents if no response.
- Reasons for absence will be recorded on SIMS by the attendance officer.
- A home visit will be made by the attendance officer on the day of absence if no contact is made. If no one answers the door a card will be left. Absence not reasonably explained by parents/carers is recorded as unauthorised.
- Any child who is absent for 3 or more days will be visited by the attendance officer regardless of the reason for the absence. The child must be seen and medical evidence provided as proof of illness.
- If no contact has been made with parents/carers; and the child hasn't been seen by the 3rd day of absence, we may report it to the police as the child will then be classed as a 'missing child'.
- Any notes must be dated; records of verbal communication from parents/carers about absences must be kept and sent with the dinner money for filing. These notes should be added to CPOMs by the staff receiving them on the same day.
- Any absence for appointments within school time will be unauthorised unless medical proof is provided.

Attendance is discussed with pupils at the end of each week during the Celebration Assembly. Good attendance is promoted and rewarded by class certificates. There are boards around the school highlighting each class's attendance, these are updated weekly. A newsletter is also sent out at the end of each week, with a focus on attendance, informing parents of the number of sessions missed and the reasoning for these, as well as showing the attendance for each class. The class with the highest attendance in both KS1 and KS2 are rewarded with a certificate during the weekly Celebration Assembly.

Individual attendance is shared with Teachers, and SLT review attendance levels weekly. Members of the SLT will meet with parents/carers of pupils with low attendance or those pupils whom are persistently late or absent.

Persistent Absences below 90%

A child whose attendance drops below 90% is classed as a persistent absentee. Every fortnight the Administration Officer reviews every child's attendance which is below 90%. They are then placed into one of three categories:

- 1) Where there are good and known reasons for the low attendance no further action will be taken at that time.

- 2) Where there are significant concerns about a child's attendance they will be placed on the monitoring list. From then on all contacts with the parents/carers and any relevant information relating to their child's attendance will be recorded and documented.
- 3) Where there are serious concerns about a child's attendance the Head of School, or member of SLT, will then invite the parents/carers in for a meeting regarding attendance.

In cases of persistent low-attendance a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Service who may then issue a Penalty Notice. If low/poor attendance still persists a further referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Service which may lead the case to be placed before the Magistrates Court under section 444(1)A of the Education Act (1996).

A Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days increased to £120 if paid within the 28th day. This will be issued to each parent for each child who is not at school on the dates when the holiday is taken.

A Penalty Notice request will be issued if the school is informed or suspect that a family has been on holiday whilst suggesting to the school another reason of absence. It will be up to the family to prove that they have not taken a family vacation.

Family Holidays during Term Time

In normal circumstances, holidays during term time for pupils will not be authorised. If parents/carers wish to take their child on holiday during term time they must put it in writing at least 14 days before the start of the holiday, with the dates and reasons for the holiday. A nominated governor will decide whether to authorise or not, and whether they will be fined. When the decision is made parents will be informed by letter what the outcome is.

Due to the recommendations in the Working Together to Safeguard Children documentation if a child is absent before a holiday and/or does not return to school at the end of the recorded holiday date; they will be referred to the Education Welfare Service and a home visit will be made.

Leave during the School Day

Wherever possible, routine appointments e.g. opticians, dentist, GP should be made out of school hours or during the holidays. If this is not possible then we ask for the child to be brought into school before the appointment for registration and return to school after the appointment. The school will require proof of all medical appointments for them to be authorised.

Dealing with Punctuality Issues

NURSERY TIMES

Morning Session	8:45am-11.45am
Afternoon Session	12.30pm-3:30pm

SCHOOL TIMES

8.55am-3.30pm

On a Thursday school closes at 1.45pm for all children from Reception to Year 6. Nursery remains open on a Thursday afternoon.

It is the parents/carers legal responsibility to ensure that their child/children arrive at school on time. It is our collective responsibility to inform parent/carers that punctuality is important.

Doors close at 8.55am. Registration periods last for 10 minutes, after which time the register will close. Any pupil arriving after the registration period will be recorded as an 'L' code which signifies late. Children who arrive late before close of registers are monitored.

Any pupil arriving after 9.35am/1.35pm will be recorded as 'U' code which signifies that they arrived after the official close of the register and will therefore denote an unauthorised absence for that session.

Pupils who arrive after 9.15 a.m. or 1:15 p.m. more than 6 times a term will not be eligible to receive attendance certificates. Late arrivals with prior notification i.e. medical appointment will not be excluded from receiving attendance certificates.

For any child that is frequently late during a half-term period, the Administration Officer will raise concern over this with parents/carers, either at drop off or by phone.

Dealing with Common Ailments

The web link below has been provided by NHS colleagues. It contains the most up to date information with regard to incubation and exclusion periods.

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Yourchildatschool/Pages/Illness.aspx>

In addition, please see the web link below issued by the Health Protection Agency (HPA).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-control-in-schools-poster>

Religious Observance

There are many religions celebrated in our school and it is important that we recognise the diversity of the school population. We consistently promote community cohesion by recognising the diverse needs of all sections of our school community.

The Local Authority has agreed with Religious Leaders and SACRE that one day for each religious festival (no more than three days in any one academic year), should be counted as authorised absence. The Pupil Regulations 2006 state that absence for religious observance should be treated as authorised absence 'on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs'. Additional days off for shopping or for extended celebrations should be treated as unauthorised absence.

In respect of pilgrimages, we will ask to see copies of visas and dates of return prior to the request for leave.

Responsibilities

Promoting and maximising school attendance is everybody's business. Good attendance, including punctuality, is essential to raising the educational attainment of pupils and affording them the best possible life chances following statutory education. In order to achieve this, children need to attend school regularly and be equipped to learn. Children cannot learn if they are absent from school.

Parents/carers

Before a pupil is admitted on to the school roll, parents/carers are informed of the importance of high attendance and punctuality at all times. They are requested to notify the school as soon as possible by telephone or letter if their child is unable to attend.

Teachers/Teaching Assistants

Teachers/Teaching Assistants in class are required to:-

- Complete and save their attendance registers promptly at 8.55am and at the end of lunchtime each day.
- The class register is a legal document and the responsibility for ensuring that it is marked correctly lies with the class teacher.
- Record and pass on any information regarding absence
- Complete the laminated registers marking in absences (for fire purposes)
- Provide the office with reasons for absence (wherever possible)
- Dispatch absence letters that have been delivered to class
- Express concerns to their Phase Leader or Head of school to discuss at SLT.

The Administration Officer and Team will:-

- Ensure that the registers are properly maintained and any information is readily available to view
- Keep a log of all late arrivals
- Ensure that all absences are accounted for by note, messages taken, or by Letter and that these are filed correctly
- update attendance data electronically
- Prepare certificates and identify winners of class attendance each week, month, half term etc.
- Carry out regular home visits and address any problems identified in relation to Poor attendance and/or punctuality
- Meet with parents and inform them of the required level of attendance and work with families to improve this
- Keep a record of the attendance of each class
- maintain a supply of standard letters
- Keep a record of all correspondence made with parents, carers and children in relation to attendance and punctuality
- Meet with the Head of School at least once a week to discuss any children/families that are presenting as persistent absentees and discuss the correct pathway for moving forward.

It is necessary that these notes are kept safely in school and available in case they need to be used as evidence in a court of law.

The Head of School

The Head of School will: -

- Monitor the procedures and make regular reports to the Governing Body about attendance and punctuality
- Meet with parents/carers of children with poor attendance whom are making very little or no improvement
- Review attendance and children with persistent absence with the attendance officer at least once a week
- Present certificates for 100% attendance in celebration and reward assemblies.

Governors

The named governor for Attendance will:

- visit the school regularly
- Produce regular reports to the Governing Body about attendance and punctuality

Target Setting

Target for Punctuality – to reduce lateness to nil

Target for Attendance – to improve to 96% with less than 10% Persistent Absence

Children and parents are reminded of this target regularly.

N.B. It is worth noting the following facts:

- **A pupil who takes 10 days Leave of Absence (whether authorised or not) in an academic year can only achieve a maximum of 94.7% attendance.**
- **Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year.**
- **A persistently absent child is one who misses school for at least 10% of the time.**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.