



Grangefield School
Flying high. Spreading our wings.

Grangefield Primary School

Attendance Policy

2024-25

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| Last Review Date: | March 24 |
| Next Review Date: | March 25 |

Date of Policy: March 2024

Date of Next Review: March 25

Responsibility of: The Governing Body of Grangefield Primary School

The policy was reviewed by: Mrs Lewis (Headteacher) in consultation with members of the Governing Body and the Attendance Team.

The policy was approved by the Governing Body on: 4 March 2024

Aims and objectives

At Grangefield School we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, Gloucestershire County Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:

- attainment in school
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- confidence to attempt new work and work alongside each other.

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

At Grangefield Primary School, we have the expectation of 100% attendance from every pupil.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding which intervention strategy to apply.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

The governing body are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance and its improvement
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The class teacher/form tutor is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information to the school office as soon as possible after the register is completed.

School administration/office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents
- Providing regular attendance reports to the Attendance Team and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher (DSL) and CFSW
- Working with school staff eg CFSW/SENCo to tackle persistent absence

The attendance team is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The head teacher, Mrs Lewis, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, the children and families support worker, Mrs Lack and the school administrator, Ms Burges, form the Attendance Team.

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

At Grangefield School:

- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day. Children are entitled to enter the school gate from 8.35am.
- The register for the morning session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 8.50am.
- The register for the afternoon session will be taken at:
 - **EYFS/KS1:** 12.45pm and will be kept open until 12.50pm
 - **KS2:** 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.05pm
- If a child arrives after the morning registration period, he/she must report to the school office and will be marked as 'Late'.
- Arrival after 9.00 am is recorded as an unauthorised late mark.

Absence

Unplanned absence

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day by 8.50 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school.

Please call the school office on 01242 671003.

Where no communication is received with regards to an unplanned absence it will be marked as unauthorised.

- We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

- A pupil who arrives late:
 - Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
 - After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- The attendance team will monitor ongoing punctuality issues and where appropriate, communicate with parents as to how they can be supported to enable better punctuality.
Persistent lates, after the register has closed, may result in a request for a penalty notice to be issued.

Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, every effort should be made by parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. An appointment card or verification document by the doctors/dentist/hospital may be required.

Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Please call the school office on 01242 671003 or email Ms Burges at admin@grangefield.gloucs.sch.uk to notify the school of the appointment.

- The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and where possible, at least *four weeks* before the absence, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form, please contact the school office to request a leave of absence request form. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

When an application is made for authorised absence during term time the Headteacher will give consideration to the following:

- Nature of the proposed absence/is this an exceptional circumstance

- The age of the child
- The timing of the absence
- The attendance pattern in the present and previous academic years. Absence will not be authorised where attendance is lower than 95% or where the absence would take attendance below 95%.
- The child's progress

Please note to have a week or mores winter or summer holiday in school time, because the cost is cheaper during term time, does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Examples of what may constitute exceptional circumstances:

1. To have a short absence to attend a family wedding, funeral or an exceptional family celebration; or to attend a special family reunion. Birthdays will not normally be authorised as an exceptional circumstance.

2. If a parent, due to nature of the work, cannot possibly take time off during any of the regular school holidays. This would need to be evidenced by a letter from the employer stating the reasons why annual leave cannot be taken during regular school holidays. Factors indicated above will still be taken in to account.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Procedures following unexplained absence

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may visit the home address or contact outside agencies such as social services or the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will follow the missing from education protocol and contact social services

Strategies for promoting attendance

- The prime benefit derived from regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured.
- We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

- Good attendance is promoted as part of PHSE, in assemblies and by class teachers.
- Where a child has poor attendance the school will work with the parents / carers to see how the barriers to good attendance can be removed.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels if there is cause for concern, this could include letters and meetings in school. Attendance is reported to all parents annually in the end of year school report.
- Monitor attendance and absence data each school term (6 terms per year) across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board as part of the Head Teachers Report.

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Provide regular attendance reports for school leaders (HT, SENCO), CFSW & School Administrator to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Inform parents by letter if attendance is at risk of being persistent. (90-93%)
- Following attendance team meetings (each short term) inform parents where attendance has fallen below 90% and, where appropriate, invite to a meeting to discuss.
- Where attendance does not improve, to use the graduated pathway to identify targets and support.
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Legal sanctions

The school can request Gloucestershire County Council to issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct [Attendance - Schoolsnet \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](#)

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £60 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £120 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) ‘parent’ means:

All natural parents, whether they are married or not

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil

Any person who has care of a child or pupil ie lives with and looks after the child

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Policies and monitoring arrangements

Linked policies:

Safeguarding and Child Protection

SEN Policy

Behaviour Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Public Sector Equality Duty

All linked policies are published on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is update, and as a minimum annually. At every review the policy will be approved by the full governing body.