



Attendance Policy

At Griffe Field Primary School we aim to develop successful, fulfilled young people, well skilled, with enquiring minds and positive, responsible attitudes. Our pupils tell us that they want their school to be friendly, fair, interesting, safe, polite, caring & hardworking.

Rationale

Poor attendance disadvantages children, we aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all of our pupils. Children whose attendance is good will be rewarded regularly, improved attendance and time keeping will be recognised.

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (section 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 may be reported to the education authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

Attendance has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of students and the standards thereby achieved by the school.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational need. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Aims

- To maintain and improve the overall attendance of children at school.
- To improve pupil attainment through good attendance.
- To encourage parents to ensure that children arrive at school on time.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school including parents, pupils, staff and governors.

Who is responsible for attendance issues in school?

- The school has a named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues (Headteacher-Mrs E. Mitchell)
- Members of school staff both teaching and non-teaching have responsibility for attendance issues in school. See appendix 1 for the detailed breakdown of these roles and responsibilities.
- Attendance matters are reviewed by the Head and members of the senior leadership team.
- Attendance issues are reported termly to the Governing Body.

School Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff should follow the Local Authority 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 risk of their going missing in the future.

Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any child who has been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days. (Education Regulations 2006 regulation 12.)

The local authority provides further information and guidance on children missing from education. See Derby City Council Children Missing from Education Operational Framework January 2019, which is located in the main school office on the notice board.

The Attendance Lead, Designated Safeguarding Lead and school staff should work closely to identify and manage risks. The senior leadership team should ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

Procedures

REGISTERS

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions. The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, Working together to improve school attendance 2022, local authority guidelines and school regulations.

Griffe Field Primary School procedure for maintaining registers including procedures for marking registers.

Procedure	Person responsible
1. Registers MUST be taken at the start of the morning and afternoon session.	Adult responsible for the class
2. On each occasion a school must record whether a child was present, absent or present at an approved educational activity.	Adult responsible for the class
3. Pupils should only be marked present if they are in the room when the register is called.	Adult responsible for the class
4. Additional requirement about times, school procedures 9.00am registration-register sent to the office when completed 9.05-9.30am pupil marked late and recorded in the late diary by office staff 9.30am registers closed	Adult responsible for the class and office staff
5. Red card placed at the front of the register if a vulnerable child is absent.	Adult responsible for the class
6. Complete 'First Day' calls for any absent pupils whose parents have not contacted school.	Office staff
7. Inform the Headteacher and Learning Mentor if any vulnerable pupils are absent.	Office staff/Class teacher
8. Investigate further absent vulnerable pupils and inform relevant professionals eg. social worker.	Headteacher/Learning Mentor
9. Registers to be locked in a secure place at the end of each day.	Office staff

Every half day of absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the Headteacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be unauthorised. Where an absence is recorded as unexplained in the register the correct code will be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 working days after the session.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the Headteacher. [see The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 (SI No. 2006/1751)-Reg 7 (1)]
School complies with and uses DFE compulsory national attendance codes, see appendix 2.

Working in partnership with parents

Absence:

If a child is absent from school parents must contact the school on the first day of absence and maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

Illness:

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parents' note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern. In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness may be requested. Schools can challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

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

Requests for leave a absence (exceptional circumstances)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Procedure for requesting a planned absence

- All leave of absence requests will be unauthorised unless the circumstances are exceptional. A parent/carer should place a request in writing to the Headteacher. School will respond to the request within two weeks.
- DFE guidelines make clear that leaves of absence during term time should be regarded as exceptional. Each application will be judged on its individual circumstances, the Chair of Governors will be consulted if and when required.
- If the Headteacher deems the reasons for the request are exceptional and authorises the absence a reply confirming that the request has been authorised will be sent to the parent/carer.
- If the Headteacher deems the reasons are not exceptional the leave of absence will not be authorised, a reply informing the parents of this decision including a warning of the legal implications of the absence being taken will be sent to the parent/carer.
- If the absence is taken it will be recorded as unauthorised and will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). This could result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice.

Other reasons for absence

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time, notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays or child minding issues. Examples of authorised absence may include, days of religious observance, illness and medical appointments. Parents are advised to make appointments for dentist/doctors or opticians outside of school hours where possible.

Parents can support regular school attendance by:

- Making sure their child arrives at school, on the playground, by 8.50am.
- Supporting and encouraging their child by attending parents' evenings, workshops and other events.
- Contacting the school on the first day of absence and to discuss any concerns regarding attendance.
- Working in partnership with the school to resolve any issues that are impacting attendance.

The school will work in partnership to support pupils and parents to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control other agencies will be contacted and parents are expected to engage with the support offered. Where voluntary support has not been engaged with, the school will work with the local authority to implement formal support in the form of a parenting contract or an education supervision order.

If all avenues of support facilitated by the school, local authority and other partners are not successful and parents do not engage to significantly improve pupil attendance it is likely to constitute neglect. Safeguarding procedures in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education will be implemented.

Lateness

Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session. Where a pupil arrives after 9.00am they are recorded as late in the 'late book'. Where a pupil arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence. School registers closes at 9.30am.

Poor attendance

Those children whose attendance falls below national average will be closely monitored and further action considered. School will analyse individual pupil data to identify patterns of absence which cause concern and parents will be informed by the school when attendance is causing concern. After school has attempted to address attendance issues with parents, and if there is no improvement, the case will be escalated with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and then the Governing Body.

Attendance Panels

Parents of pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern may be invited to attend an attendance panel. An attendance panel is a formal meeting to discuss the child's school attendance, identify barriers to regular school attendance and agree a target and action plan to improve school attendance. An attendance panel is chaired by the EWO, school representatives will be present this will include the Headteacher and may include anyone in school who is involved with the child.

Good and excellent attendance

The school will reward good attendance termly through a reward scheme and praise.

Headteacher	Emma Mitchell	Chair of Governors	Mrs H Hicks Mr A Wilde
Policy Approved/Written		November 2017	
Review every 3 years			
Policy Reviewed		Review Jan 2019 re DCC Children Missing Education update.	
Policy Reviewed		March 2021	
Policy Reviewed		October 2021 –changed register time to 9.00am. COVID codes added.	
Policy Reviewed		September 2022- re Working together to improve school attendance DfE 2022	

Appendix 1

Names	Role	Responsibilities
Mrs H Hicks and Mr A Wilde	Chair of Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ensure compliance with relevant legislation *Reviewing school attendance *Agreeing and reviewing school policy
Emma Mitchell	Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Compliance with relevant legislation *Putting into practice school policy *Setting attendance targets *Authorising/unauthorising absences *Reviewing leave of absence requests *Contact with parents *Overseeing escalating interventions *Contact with Education Welfare Officer *Attendance at panel meetings *Data analysis *Promoting school attendance *Managing the rewards system
Janet Slaney	Learning Mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Investigate absent vulnerable children *Communicating concerns to Headteacher/SLT/other agencies *Positive relationship with vulnerable children with attendance concerns
All teachers	Class teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Marking registers *Promoting importance of regular school attendance *Providing early warning of attendance concerns *Positive role modelling *Contacting parents *Day to day responsibility for escalating attendance concerns *Following policy and procedures
All support staff	TAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Marking registers if and when required *Providing early warning of attendance concerns *Positive role modelling *Supervising/recording late children at the end of the day

		*Following policy and procedures
Admin staff	School Office	*Maintaining registers *Recording late children at the beginning of the day Complete first day phone call for all absent children. *Recording/managing telephone messages from parents regarding pupil illness *Liaising with the EWO regarding registers and attendance *General attendance reports *Securing registers at the end of the day

Appendix 2

Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present am	Present
\	Present pm	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved education activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration	Approved education activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed)	Unauthorised
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved education activity
L	Late (before register closed)	Present
M	Medical/dental appointment	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised
O	No reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied with the given reason	Unauthorised
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved education activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after register closed)	Unauthorised
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved education activity
W	Work experience	Approved education activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstance.	School must record the nature of circumstances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 3 [Working together to improve school attendance DfE September 2022](#)