

Grendon CE Primary School
Attendance Policy

1. Background

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance.

We expect all school staff to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school.

Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

The threshold for persistent absence is <90% as defined by the DfE.

2. Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

3. Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- delegate powers and responsibilities to the Head Teacher to ensure all school staff are aware of and comply with this policy;
- nominate a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Head Teacher and to report back to the Governing Body;
- ensure that the attendance policy is carried out;
- ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders;
- monitor termly progress;
- take responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- take responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;

Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will:

- ensure all school staff, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- undertake the daily monitoring of school attendance by using an appropriate and effective registration system;
- monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals and special educational needs;
- target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders;
- have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence;
- report the attendance figures and progress to the Governing Body;
- remind parents of their commitment to this policy;
- publicise good attendance during assemblies, newsletters and the termly report to the Governing Body;
- introduce rewards and incentives to encourage punctuality;
- organise training for school staff on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance;
- work closely with the link governor and First Day Contact Supervisor;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Role of the School Office Staff

The office staff are responsible for:

- implementing the policy with the Head Teacher;
- monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis;
- keeping the Head Teacher informed of attendance figures and trends;
- contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance;
- compiling attendance data for the Head Teacher, the Governing Body and the EWO;
- ensuring registers are distributed to the teaching staff and are kept up to date
- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 9.30am;
- inform the Head Teacher of any children who are missing from education **See section 10**
- informing the Head Teacher of trends in absence

Role of School Staff

School staff will:

- comply with and implement this policy
- set an example of punctuality and good attendance;
- ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times and are accurate and up to date;
- monitor class and individual attendance patterns;
- inform the school office of any concerns about attendance;
- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance;
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations

Role of the Nominated Governor

The Nominated Governor will:

- work closely with the Head Teacher and the coordinator;
- ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
- report to the Governing Body every term;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Role of Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance;
- informing the school on the first day of absence;
- informing the school of any changes to their contact details;
- collecting their children on time
- supporting the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school

Role of Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- arriving at school on time;
- knowing the value of good attendance;
- taking part in questionnaires and surveys

4. Dealing with Trends in Attendance

When there is a pattern of poor attendance then the following procedure will take place:

- Parents are contacted by the school via a letter highlighting their child's persistent absence, reminding parents of their responsibility to ensure their child attends school and offering support from school to promote increased attendance (Appendix 1 & 2)
- Support will be offered if there are underlying reasons for the absence.
- If there is no improvement then the case will be referred to the Education and Inclusion Partnership Team (EIPT)
- A link will also be provided to parents with information on the EIPT's Fixed Penalty Notice [Code of Conduct](#)

Dealing with Lateness

The office staff monitor lateness and inform:

- the Head Teacher of patterns of lateness;
- parents of the school's concerns;

Absence

Holidays during term time – only in exceptional circumstances will the school agree to a leave of absence in term-time.

Religious Observance – a maximum of three days absence is allowed for religious observance.

Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the child's education.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Absences can be authorised if they are for certain reasons e.g. sickness, religious observance, approved holiday, absence following the death of a close member of the family and other exceptional family circumstances.

The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rests with the Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence may be categorised as unauthorised.

An absence will be classified as unauthorised when:

- A child is kept off school because a parent is ill
- A child is absent because a sibling is ill
- The parent cannot get the child to school
- The child is taken on a shopping trip
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat
- A child is absent due to family work patterns
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home
- A child arrives at school after the register has closed

Each child's unauthorised absences (including unauthorised holiday absences) will be noted and recorded on termly Pupil Profiles which are shared with parents.

On advice from NCC's Education and Inclusion Partnership (EIP) team, the school will report to them any incidences where a child has accumulated a minimum of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any 6 week period, whether that is 10 consecutive unauthorised absences or irregular attendance over a six week period totalling 10 unauthorised sessions. The EIP will then apply their Fixed Penalty Code of Conduct, a copy of which is available on the school website in their Policies section.

Consistent with NNC's Attendance and Enforcement Policy, where a child has had 2 periods of unauthorised leave for which the parent has been issued with a Penalty Notice, on the third occasion, no PN will be issued and that parent will be prosecuted under S444(1) as long as parent was warned that this would happen.

It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences to parents.

Parents have a responsibility to telephone the school if their child is ill. If a child needs to be absent for a medical appointment the class teacher must be informed before the appointment.

If a parent has failed to contact the school by 9:30am on the first day of absence the school will telephone the child's home to find out why the child is not in school. If contact has not been made after the second day of absence the Head Teacher will inform the Education and Inclusion Partnership team and write to the parent.

6. Holidays

Holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

School work will not be set for children who are absent due to a term-time holiday.

Parents of children in Years 2 and 6 are particularly requested to avoid taking any holiday in the first half of the Summer Term when the end of KS1 and 2 statutory tests take place.

All other requests for absences due to other circumstances must be made in writing to the Head Teacher in advance.

7. Punctuality

The school day begins at 8.55 a.m. Children arriving after this time should report directly to the school office.

Parents of children who persistently arrive late for school will be reminded of these times and their obligation to comply. It will be explained that the lateness not only interrupts their child's education but also that of others in the class.

If a child arrives after the morning session has begun, with no reason given by their parent, this will constitute an unauthorised absence.

If parents know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know.

If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, a note will be sent home asking for the parent to explain the lateness and to ensure that punctuality is maintained. Repeated, unexplained lateness or persistent lateness without an acceptable reason will be referred to the Education and Inclusion Partnership (EIP) team.

8. Medical appointments

Parents must report directly to the school office, or front door if office is unmanned, when collecting a child for, and returning them from, a medical appointment during the school day.

If a child is in hospital for a long period of time arrangements will be made with the hospital teaching staff and the parents to provide planned work for the children to complete.

9. Off site activities

Occasionally children are taught off site (eg; swimming lessons). These activities are part of the curriculum and attendance is required. If a child is unable to take part in these activities alternative teaching arrangements will be made for them in school.

10. Children Missing Education

If it becomes apparent that a child is missing from education with no obvious reason, then the school will follow the procedures outlined in the NSCP document on Children Missing Education.

11. Monitoring

A print out of each child's record of attendance will be sent home with each termly Pupil Profile.

The Head Teacher will keep the stakeholders informed about attendance matters via the Head Teacher's Report, e-newsletters and the school website.

All staff will be expected to comply with the policy and any issues will be discussed at staff meetings.

The Head Teacher will write to parents if child's attendance falls below the DfE's persistent absence threshold of 90%. The Head Teacher will contact the Education and Inclusion Partnership (EIP) team if concerns about a child's attendance have not been resolved.

Appendix 1

Tel: 01933 663208

Email: head@grendon.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Website: www.grendonprimary.net

Head Teacher: Mr John Wayland NPQH PGCE BSc (Hons)

Dear

The school is responsible for monitoring and reporting on attendance of all pupils within our care, particularly where attendance drops below 90% for individual pupils (the government terms this threshold as 'persistent absence') or where a child is persistently late for school.

Your child's attendance for the Autumn Term is ___ % and this figure includes absences due to lateness. The school would like your support with addressing this trend in attendance – if there is anything that the school can do to help then please let us know.

For your information, the school Attendance Policy can be found on the school website and the paragraph relating specifically to punctuality is copied below.

Punctuality

The school day begins at 8.55 am. Children arriving after 9.00 a.m. should report directly to the school office. Parents of children who persistently arrive late for school will be reminded of these times and their obligation to comply. It will be explained that the lateness not only interrupts their child's education but also that of others in the class.

If a child arrives after the morning session has begun, with no reason given by their parent, this will constitute an unauthorised absence. If parents know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know. If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, a letter will be sent home reminding parents of their duty to ensure that their child regularly attends school. Repeated, unexplained lateness or persistent lateness without an acceptable reason will be referred to the Education and Inclusion Partnership (EIP) team.

Many thanks in anticipation of your support with this.

Best wishes

John Wayland

Appendix 2

Tel: 01933 663208

Email: head@grendon.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Website: www.grendonprimary.net

Head Teacher: Mr John Wayland NPQH PGCE BSc (Hons)

Dear

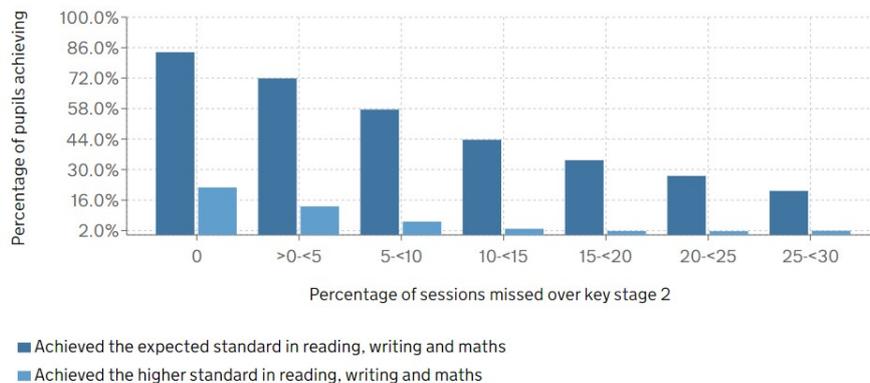
The school is responsible for monitoring and reporting on attendance of all pupils within our care, particularly where attendance drops below 90% for individual pupils (the government terms this threshold as 'persistent absence'). Your child's attendance for the Autumn Term is ___ %. The school would like your support with addressing this trend in attendance – if there is anything that the school can do to help then please let us know.

I have included information (in italics) below from the Department for Education (DfE) on the link between attendance and academic achievement.

Persistent absence

Pupils who are persistently absent (<90% attendance) have lower levels of attainment at the end of Year 6 than other pupils. Of those who were persistently absent, 40% achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to 84% of pupils with no missed sessions and 72% who missed between 0 and 5% of sessions.

Figure 2: Overall attainment in reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2 by percentage of sessions missed over KS2



For your information, the school Attendance Policy can be found on the school website.

Many thanks in anticipation of your support with this.

Best wishes

John Wayland