



Grendon Primary School Attendance Policy 2022

Approved by the Full Governing Board: September 2022

Review date: Nov 2023

Person Responsible: Sarah Jones

1. Aim

We aim to uphold every child's right to education, (Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) by:

- promoting excellent attendance
- reducing absence, including persistent absence
- ensuring children are at school on time and ready to learn

and in doing so, ensure our schools aims can be met, our vision achieved and our ethos realised.

We will do this by:

- setting the culture for and expecting high standards of attendance and communicating these clearly.
- implementing strategies to promote excellent attendance and punctuality and reduce absence.
- rigorously monitoring attendance data in order to spot trends and identify patterns.
- building strong relationships with families, listening, understanding and empathising with identified barriers to attendance, but never tolerating them.
- facilitating support either from within school, from our team of professionals or by making referrals to outside agencies.
- enforcing attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution where all other avenues have been exhausted.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and the Working Together to Improve School Attendance document, (September 2022) 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.

3. Equalities Statement

In line with our equalities statement, policy and objectives, we ensure that this policy is applied equally, irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual identify and orientation, age, or socio-economic background. However, we also understand that all people have different needs and that treating people equally, does not always been treating them the same.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Key Staff are:

- Headteacher - Helen Ridley
- Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) - Andrew Darby
- SENDCo - Paige Prendeville
- Senior Leader Responsible for the strategic direction of attendance - Sarah Jones (Pastoral Manager)
- Pastoral Teaching Assistant - Tracey Caro
- Senior Office Manager - Angela Rainford
- Senior Secretary - Steph Lewis
- Pastoral Link Governor - Clare Symons
- Chair of Governing Board - Jo Baker

4.2 The Governing Board will:

- discuss and approve the Attendance Policy annually.
- appoint a Link Governor for attendance to meet with the Pastoral Manager each term, report directly to the Provision and Performance Committee and in summary to the Full Governing Board.
- monitor attendance figures for the whole school on a termly basis.
- hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy and monitor and evaluate its impact.

4.3 The Headteacher will:

- set the culture and ethos to promote excellent attendance.
- implementing policy and practice.
- promote whole school attendance messages.
- communicate clearly with all stakeholders.
- monitor and evaluate school-level absence data at timely intervals.
- support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- ensure compliance in required returns, e.g. reduced timetables.
- implement Birmingham City Council guidance and school policy for emergency closures.
- inform parents of starting times of the school day and the importance of being on time.
- inform parents of the school dates and any additional dates when a pupil is not expected to attend.

4.4 The Leadership Team will:

- know and understand key messages from whole school attendance data.
- support members of staff in having initial with parents about attendance.
- model high expectations and standards.
- support the Headteacher to set school culture and ethos.
- share concerns with key staff above.
- ensure safeguarding logs are made in a timely manner making offers of support explicit.

4.5 The Pastoral Manager will:

- monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- support and monitor effectiveness of Pastoral Teaching Assistant.
- report concerns about attendance to the Headteacher.
- plan and implement Early Help wherever needed.
- work with outside professionals to tackle persistent absence.
- arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- advise the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- communicate key attendance messages to staff and children.
- implement strategies to promote excellent attendance.
- liaise with the Court Advisor for our school.
- conduct home visits where attendance is a concern.
- implement Birmingham City Council procedures for leave during term time.
- use FastTrack policy and practice to ensure children's right to an education is met.

4.6 Pastoral Teaching Assistant will:

- support the Pastoral Manager as directed.
- make 'first day phone calls' to parents/carers of children who are not in school and where we have no notification regarding the absence.
- Provide data to office staff for coding registers.
- share relevant information with class teacher via cpoms.
- meet and greet children and families each morning and share positive messages when children are collected.
- discuss punctuality and reasons for lateness with families as they arrive.
- build relationships, support families and remove barriers to attendance.
- provide weekly data for Leaders and staff.
- produce half termly attendance print outs for all children.
- group children according to attendance rates and produce appropriate tiered letters.
- track progress towards HERO badges.
- analyse data half termly and re-group children accordingly.

4.7 Class teachers and teaching assistants will:

- record attendance on a daily basis, using the present or absent codes, and submit this information to the school office.
- actively promote the benefits of excellent attendance with their class.
- plan and teach exciting and engaging lessons that children want to be involved in.
- notice patterns in attendance and liaise with the Pastoral Manager about these.
- communicate individual attendance messages during parents evening.
- know their class attendance each week and communicating this to their class.
- implement whole school attendance strategies and give rewards in accordance with this.

4.8 Senior Office Manager and Senior Secretary will:

- take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.
- give advice about length of absences in line with public health advice or school policy.
- ensure required data returns are completed and submitted.
- ensure school holds more than 1 emergency contact for each child on roll.
- liaise with Pastoral Teacher Assistant to update register codes and send follow up group call texts as necessary.
- update the attendance registers using DfE codes for absence and guidance regarding attendance.

4.9 Parents will:

- ensure children are in school from 8.40am and by 8.50am at the latest.
- accompany children to the school office if they are late.
- notify the school by phone call (0121 474 2460) or email (enquiry@grendon.bham.sch.uk) of unexpected absence, and give the reason for this.
- ensure that they do not take leave during term time, except in the most exceptional of circumstances, where requests to school are made in the correct way.
- attend meetings relating to their child's attendance or request for term time leave and access support made available to them.
- provide medical evidence of absences when requested by school.
- work with school to access recommended Early Help strategies.
- check that children have everything that they need for school.

4.10 Children will:

- come to school every day that they can.
- bring everything with them that they need for the day.
- come into school ready to learn.
- ask for help if they need support to do this.

5. Recording Attendance

5.1 Registers (Pupil Registration Forms)

We will keep an attendance register that lists all pupils on the school roll. A pupil's name will only be deleted for a valid reason. We understand that removing a pupil's name for any other reason would constitute off-rolling. We follow all advice from Birmingham City Council, our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Pupils can arrive in school from 8.40am, and must be in school by 8.50am at the latest, on each school day. We will take our attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day, (8.50am) and again at the start of the afternoon session, (1.05pm Reception & KS1 and 1.10pm KS2). It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

There will never be any blanks left on an attendance register.

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

The register for the morning session will be kept open until 9.20am. For the afternoon session, registers will be kept open until 1.15pm for Reception and KS1 or 1.20pm for KS2.

5.2 Lateness

Children who arrive between 9.00am and 9.20am will collect a late slip from the office and be marked as late (L) in the register.

Children arriving after the register has closed at 9.20am will be marked with the U code.

5.3 Authorised Absence

There are three main categories of authorised absence:

- When a pupil is prevented from attending by sickness or any unavoidable cause agreed by school.
- If a day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.
- On the grounds that suitable transport has not been provided by the LA and the school is not within walking distance

Other categories of absence which are specifically authorised by legislation are:

- The child is taking part in approved work experience where the head teacher is satisfied that attendances are properly monitored.
- The child is taking part in a public performance approved and licensed by the LA.
- Leave has been granted for an annual holiday in term time, though only in exceptional circumstances. This can be done only by the Chair of Governors or the Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher, acting for the Governing Body, might wish to exercise their discretion to authorise absence on the grounds of:

- Domestic circumstances which would include the death of a close member of the child's family, a house fire or other exceptional traumatic event.
- Attendance for an interview for another educational establishment or an approved sporting activity.
- Medical or dental appointments if such appointments must unavoidably be made during school hours.
- Fixed term exclusions.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised after discussions with parents/carers, who will be notified of this.

5.4 Unauthorised Absence

A note from parents does not automatically authorise a pupil's absence. Only the Head Teacher except in cases where the pupil is sick, can authorise any absence. Reasons given by parents should be considered carefully and need not be accepted as authorising the pupil's non attendance e.g. day off for birthday, shopping, overslept.

5.5 Persistent Absence and Severe Absence

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Children with severe absence, are out of school more than they are in - their attendance is 50% or less.

In both cases, but always for severe absence, all partners should work together to remove barriers quickly and efficiently, including by consideration of an EHCP or securing alternative provision where barriers cannot be removed.

5.6 Leave During Term Time

Any requests for leave during term time must be made in writing to Sarah Jones, Pastoral Manager before any leave is booked. The request must clearly detail the purpose and the dates for leave requested.

A meeting will be arranged to discuss the request further.

While always considering each individual request, it is only in the most exceptional circumstances that leave will be granted. For example, it is unlikely that leave would be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

For any leave, whether authorised or not, once the booking is made school must have evidence of holiday details, showing children's names clearly.

If parents choose to continue with despite it being unauthorised by school, they risk being fine under the Birmingham City Council Leave During Term Time procedure.

5.7 Reduced Time Tables

Although all children are entitled to full time provision, there may be a need to introduce a part time timetable to meet individual need. Part time timetable returns are made every half term to Birmingham City Council. We understand that reduced timetables should:

- be used for the shortest time possible.
- not be used to manage behaviour.
- be agreed with parents and have a formal review date.
- be time limited, with the pupil returning to full time provision in school or at alternative provision.

6. Children with Medical Conditions or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We understand that treating everybody equally, does not always mean treating everybody the same. Everybody has differing needs. Although children have the same right to education and our ambition is to achieve this, we know that their significant needs and identified barriers to learning will mean additional support will be needed to realise this. Please see details of separate policies for further information.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation of Attendance

Each day we:

- know who isn't in school and why.
- code absence properly in order to ensure compliance and aid monitoring and evaluation.
- monitor attendance of identified children.
- involve and engage pupils in their own attendance through the HEROs process.

Each week we:

- share print outs and main messages with Leaders and class teachers.
- monitor attendance of children in tiered groups.
- identify trends for further discussion and action.
- use display and assemblies to share and discuss main messages with children.

Each half term we:

- group all children according to attendance percentage and respond accordingly in line with our tiered system.
- produce and update an action plan for all persistent and severe absentees.
- send attendance print outs to parents for all children, along with a correct tiered letter.
- produce detailed group analysis of attendance trends, e.g. SEND, PP, Boys girls, ethnic groups.
- evaluate and share main messages with all staff.

Each term we:

- use census data to evaluate.
- evaluate the action plan for persistent and severe absentees and produce a new one.
- produce a written report to the attendance Link Governor and meet to discuss challenges and mitigating actions.
- bench mark school data against national data published by the DfE as part of its national statistics.

8. Legal Sanctions

At Grendon, we implement Birmingham City Council's:

- FAST-track to Attendance process. This is a legal process which is designed to tackle on-going unauthorised attendance.
- Leave in Term Time process. This is a legal process for cases of leave during term time.

Please see Appendix 2 for further details.

9. Strategies for Promoting Excellent Attendance

Setting the Culture - it's good to attend

- Increase pupil voice and their engagement and involvement in school life and their learning.
- Ensure attendance is high profile around school by making effective use of displays and assemblies.
- Set high expectations - children are expected to be in school, on time with the right equipment every day and we will challenge every time they are not.
- Prioritise workload and wellbeing of staff by adding a Pastoral Teaching Assistant to the Pastoral Team.

Curriculum

- Use our enrichment programme and curriculum to raise aspirations of children. Regularly discuss the importance of education.
- Ensure there is a purpose for each day - teachers discuss what's coming next, why children need to attend and reference prior learning in every lesson.
- Use our chocolate chips and enrichment programme to ensure children are excited by their learning.

Community

- Maximise opportunities for parent drop ins or coffee mornings.
- Increase parental engagement by organising classroom share sessions, welcome meetings, parent workshops.
- Increase community assemblies, for all to attend.
- Ensure opportunities for parental engagement in whole school days and events.

Communication

- Improve use of social media to connect all stakeholders to school life.
- Ensure attendance is part of every whole school letter and that the format is consistent.
- Continue to publicise attendance on the website.
- Develop a positive and proactive whole school language around attendance
- Provide a structure for parents evening to share attendance messages with parents.

Analysis of data through our tiered approach

At the end of each half term we will group all children according to their attendance for that half term, send attendance print outs to parents and take action as follows:

- 100% attendance - children receive a 100% attendance certificate. The Pastoral Teacher Assistant will monitor the attendance of this group during the following half term.
- 97.0% - 99.99% - parents receive Letter 1, congratulating them on achieving expected or above attendance. The Pastoral Teacher Assistant will monitor the attendance of this group during the following half term.
- 94% - 96.99% - parents receive Letter 2, warning them that attendance has fallen just below what is expected and asking them to work with us to ensure this improves over the next half term. The Deputy Headteacher will monitor the attendance of this group and meet parents where this is not improving.
- 90.01% - 93.99% - parents receive Letter 3, warning them that attendance is significantly below expected and that improvement is needed in order to prevent children becoming persistently absent. The Headteacher will monitor the attendance of this group and meet parents where this is not improving.

- 90% or below - parents receive Letter 4, warning them that children are currently identified as persistently absent and inviting them to a meeting to discuss this. The Pastoral Manager will monitor the attendance of this group and take further action where this is not improving.

We are mindful that for all tiers, genuine illness cannot be helped and understand that during short timescales, the significance of this increases. We will consider each case as an individual during this process.

Early Help

We recognise the importance of identifying need and taking appropriate action at an early point in order to reduce or remove barriers to attendance. At all stages in the process above, we will:

- work with families to understand barriers.
- listen to and empathise with challenges identified.
- provide support either from our in-house professionals or make referrals to outside agencies where required.

Implement the 'Here Every day, Ready and On time' system, (Heros)

- Children have access to a stamp and stamp individual attendance cards to record attendance and punctuality between 8.40am -8.50am daily.
- The stamp is put away at 8.50am.
- At the end of the week, children will 5 attendance stamps choose a reward from the Heros box.
- At the end of half term, children achieving 100% attendance receive a certificate in line with the tiered process above.
- At the end of a term, children with 100% attendance receive a bronze, silver or gold pin badge.
- At the end of the year, children with 100% attendance, (who have bronze, silver and gold pin badges), win a prize.

10. Strategies for Reducing Persistent Absence and Severe Absence

In order to identify, monitor and reduce persistent and severe absence, we will:

- operate our tiered system, (see above).
- produce an action plan for all persistent and severe absentees each half term.
- conduct home visits where this is identified as an appropriate strategy.
- build relationships and offer Early Help throughout, (see above).
- improve data analysis.
- introduce parent contracts where needed.
- Work together with all agencies, including making referrals where appropriate.
- Implement Fast-track and leave during term time legal processes, (see above).

11. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Leadership Team led by Sarah Jones, the Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school. It will be approved by the Full Governing Board.

12. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equalities Policy, Statement and Objectives
- Children with medical conditions who cannot access school

Appendix 1: Register Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2

The new Penalty Notice Code of Conduct will be implemented from 1st September 2022 and brings Birmingham's thresholds into line with other local authorities and with the proposed national framework. The thresholds will be:

1. Attendance: When:

- a pupil has had a minimum of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in the previous 12 calendar months and;
- a school or place of alternative educational provision has commenced the relevant local authority legal intervention process and;
- despite that process being followed by the school, there has been little improvement in the pupil's attendance.

2. Unauthorised Leave in Term Time: When:

- a pupil has been taken on an unauthorised "leave of absence" from school or a place of alternative educational provision for minimum of 10 continuous sessions (five days) and;
- the school or place of alternative educational provision have followed the relevant local authority legal intervention process, a penalty notice may be issued.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/9013/fast-track_guidance

Appendix 3

Letter 1: Congratulations - T Caro

Date :

Attendance Monitoring

Dear

We are writing to **congratulate** you for your child's attendance this half term. I have attached an attendance print out for you.

Keep it up! We know that children who attend school regularly are more likely to succeed academically. Very well done.

As part of our commitment to the children at our school we are keen to ensure that **every child receives their legal educational entitlement to attend school regularly and on time.**

We do understand children get poorly and this means sometimes they may not be able to attend school.

We ask that you continue to:

- Ensure your child attends school every day it is open, on time, escorting them into school if necessary and handing them over to a member of staff. (Please be aware your child may get an unauthorised absence mark when they arrive after registration closes).
- Contact school on the first day of every absence by 9.30am stating the reason for absence and the likely return date.

As a school **we aim to uphold every child's right to education, (Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) by:**

- promoting excellent attendance
- reducing absence, including persistent absence
- ensuring children are at school on time and ready to learn

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerley

Miss T Caro

Pastoral Teaching Assistant.

Letter 2: Just below expected – A Darby

Date :

Attendance Monitoring

Dear

I am writing to make you aware that your child's attendance this half term has fallen just below what is expected. Your child's attendance is currently . Both our and the Local authority expectation is 97% . I have attached an attendance print out for you.

As part of our commitment to the children at our school we are keen to ensure that **every child receives their legal educational entitlement to attend school regularly and on time.**

We are proactive and want to work with you using our own initiatives and support to raise the importance of good attendance. If you are experiencing difficulties preventing your child's regular attendance at school, please talk to us. However, we do understand that children get poorly and sometimes this prevents children from attending. If this has been the case, we know that attendance will improve over the next half term.

We ask that you:

- Ensure your child attends school every day it is open, on time, escorting them into school if necessary and handing them over to a member of staff. (Please be aware your child may get an unauthorised absence mark when they arrive after registration closes).
- Contact school on the first day of every absence by 9.30am stating the reason for absence and the likely return date.

We remind you that **we aim to uphold every child's right to education, (Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) by:**

- promoting excellent attendance
- reducing absence, including persistent absence
- ensuring children are at school on time and ready to learn

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Darby

Deputy Head Teacher and Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

Letter 3: Risk of persistent absence

Date :

Attendance Monitoring

Dear

I am writing to let you know that your child's attendance this half term has fallen significantly below what is expected. Your child's attendance is currently . Both our and the Local authority expectation is 97% . When attendance falls to 90% or below, children are labelled as persistent absentees. I have attached an attendance print out for you.

As part of our commitment to the children at our school we are keen to ensure that **every child receives their legal educational entitlement to attend school regularly and on time.**

We are proactive and want to work with you using our own initiatives and support to raise the importance of good attendance. If you are experiencing difficulties preventing your child's regular attendance at school, please talk to us. However, we do understand children get poorly and this means sometimes they may not be able to attend school. We know that if this is the case, attendance will improve over the next half term.

We are also a Local Authority **Fast Track school**. In cases where attendance **does not improve despite support given families can be prosecuted under this process.**

We ask that you:

- Ensure your child attends school every day it is open, on time, escorting them into school if necessary and handing them over to a member of staff. (Please be aware your child may get an unauthorised absence mark when they arrive after registration closes).
- Contact school on the first day of every absence by 9.30am stating the reason for absence and the likely return date.

We remind you that **we aim to uphold every child's right to education, (Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) by:**

- promoting excellent attendance
- reducing absence, including persistent absence
- ensuring children are at school on time and ready to learn

We will continue to monitor your child's attendance, we look forward to seeing it improve.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Ridley

Head Teacher

Letter 4: Persistent absence - S Jones

Date:

RE: Attendance Monitoring and Reviews

Dear

As part of our commitment to the children at our school we are keen to ensure that every child receives their legal educational entitlement to attend school regularly and on time.

We are proactive and want to work with you using our own initiatives and support to raise the importance of good attendance.

We are also a Local Authority Fast Track school. In cases where attendance does not improve despite support given families can be prosecuted under this process.

Your child's attendance is currently..... This is too low. Both our and the Local authority expectation is 97% .I have attached an attendance print out for you.

A meeting has been arranged to discuss your child's attendance and for you to be able to share any difficulties you are having that are preventing your child's regular attendance at school. Our School Nurse will also be at the meeting to offer advice and support where appropriate.

This meeting is on

It is very important that you make every effort to attend this meeting. We are here to help you.

If there is a reason you cannot attend the meeting on the date above, please contact school and we will make alternative arrangements with you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Proudlock Miss S Jones

Clinical Team Leader, School Nursing Pastoral Manager Deputy Safeguarding Lead.