



The Grange Trust

Attendance Policy

The Grange Trust is committed to maximising the achievement of all pupils. Good attendance and punctuality are vital if children are to attain their full potential as learners.

As children start school their patterns and routines of school attendance quickly become habits. Poor routines are hard to disestablish further up the school system. A prevention and early intervention programme that helps to establish good habits can underpin the whole of a child's school career and potentially their life opportunities.

Young children however are dependent upon the adults in their life to get them to school regularly and on time. Therefore the focus from the moment a child starts school is to establish good habits and work closely with parents to improve attendance.

As children progress through school, whilst the work continues with parents, we begin work to develop a 'self' responsibility in the children.

The Trust operates within a framework of local schools, within the Wickersley learning community and is fully committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parents/carers.

Aims

- To establish clear procedures encouraging pupils to attend school regularly.
- To ensure that all parents and pupils are informed about the procedures relating to attendance.
- To ensure all staff receive information about attendance and understand, the procedures.
- To undertake a commitment to allocate time and resources to support the policy.
- To address attendance and inclusion issues within the curriculum and during assemblies where appropriate.

The Law

The legal requirements placed on parents, schools, academies and Local Authorities by the 1996 Education Act and related legislation are as follows:

- Parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Failure by parents to ensure regular attendance at school is an offence punishable by law.
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and beginning of the afternoon session.
- The school must report to the Education Welfare Service pupils who fail to attend Regularly are persistently late without good reason
- The school must report to the EWO pupils who fail to start reception in September and who cannot be accounted for to the EWO as a child missing in Education
- The school must report to the EWO pupils who are absent without explanation.

Partnership

What the school expects of children:

- To attend regularly.
- To arrive on time and be prepared for the day (PE kit, homework etc.)
- To sign in at the school office should they arrive late.
- To inform the school of any problem that will prevent them from attending school.

What the school expects of parents:

- To fulfil their legal responsibility by encouraging their children to attend school.
- To ensure they inform the school of the reason for absence when their child is unable to attend school and expected day of return.
- To ensure they inform the school office if it is anticipated that their child will be late for school.
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day.
- To contact the class teacher whenever any problem (other than illness of the child), occurs that may keep the child away from school.
- To inform the school and seek authorisation for any forthcoming appointments through providing proof of an appointment. Where possible arranging appointments outside of the school day or during the school holidays.
- To apply for leave of absence should they wish to take children out of school for a holiday/short break/religious festival/parents wedding/participation in a non-

school sporting event providing proof that the leave of absence cannot be taken during the school holidays.

What parents and children can expect of the school:

- A broad and balanced curriculum that is dependent upon regular attendance at school.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Regular monitoring of attendance.
- An attendance certificate showing child's current attendance levels at progress review sessions.
- A phone call/Email from the school office when school has not been notified of an absence to ensure children are safe.
- Correspondence when attendance is cause for concern.
- A response notifying parents of authorised/unauthorised/referral for a fixed penalty notice when a request for leave of absence is made.
- Close liaison to assist and support for parents and children where difficulties exist in ensuring attendance and punctuality. Each case dealt with on a case by case basis and adjustments made where necessary in order to improve attendance.

Attendance Procedures

- School gates open at 8.40am, teacher's open classroom doors at 8.50am. School begins at 9.00am. Gates will be locked at 9.00am except for the main gate at the front of school.
- Registers are taken by the class teacher on SIMS at 9.00am prompt to ensure a speedy start to learning. Where access to SIMS is unavailable the school admin officer will provide a paper register.
- When parents contact school to inform them of absence, this will be entered on the register by the admin officer.
- Children arriving after this time will be signed in at school reception by the presenting adult. The school admin officer will then take the child to class.
- Registers will be checked daily at 9.10am by the admin officer. Where vulnerable children are absent from school, the admin officer will notify the head teacher and pastoral support assistant who will follow this up via the appropriate channels.
- Any children who are unaccounted for i.e. who are absent without reason given, parents will be contacted by the admin officer on the same day to ensure the child is safe.
- Where contact cannot be made advice will be sought from the Education Welfare Officer who may visit the home address to ensure the child is safe and well. Should

contact via this route not be made further advice will be sought from the child missing in education team as well as Social Care.

- Attendance is checked weekly by the pastoral support assistant. Where children's attendance falls below 95% warning letters will be sent to parents notifying them that their child's attendance is causing a concern. If this does not improve a second letter will be sent informing parents that evidence of illness will need to be provided for future absences to be authorised. If issues remain, parents will be notified that absences will no longer be authorised. Finally if poor attendance persists a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Office. Where children are persistently late, the same procedure applies. Where there are patterns to children's absence this same procedure applies.
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure children attend regularly and punctually. Fines can be implemented for poor attendance. Referrals will also be made to Social Care where parents fail to bring their child to school as this can be defined as 'Neglect' or 'Social and Emotional abuse'
- The pastoral support assistant will submit a weekly report/plan with regard to attendance to the head teacher. Actions will be agreed and monitored through weekly attendance and discussions with class teachers. Where appropriate, contact may be made with parents.

Punctuality

- A child is late if they arrive after the start of the registration time (i.e. after 9.00am) and will be marked as late on the register.
- Where a child is late the adult dropping them at school must sign the child in at the school office, where the admin officer will then escort the child to class.
- If a child is frequently late, a letter will be sent home by the school to inform parents and urging them to ensure that their child arrives at school on time. If the problem persists the Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer will be informed.
- Punctuality in collecting children at the end of the school day is also important. Children often become distressed when they are not collected on time.
- If parents are unavoidably held up (i.e. in traffic etc.) if possible they must inform the school office they are going to be late to collect their child. In this case, children will be brought to the school office where they will be supervised by the admin officer until they are collected.
- The school office will make every attempt to contact parents where children are late to be collected. A senior member of staff must always be informed when this occurs.
- Where no contact is made with parents and children remain uncollected beyond 4.00pm the school will contact Social Care and South Yorkshire police for further

advice. This may initiate child protection procedures depending on the circumstances.

- Remember, we would always prefer lateness to absence and no child will be punished in school for arriving late or for being collected late. We also always prefer to know if parents are to be late collecting children so as to minimise distress to the child.

Absence

- Parents are asked to contact the school either verbally or in writing on the first day that their child is unable to attend school, giving the reason for the absence and anticipated length of absence.
- If the absence lasts longer than one week, parents are asked to contact the school at the beginning of the second week to inform school how their child is progressing and the expected date of return to school.
- If a child has been absent from school and on return, no explanation has been received a letter will be sent home to parents asking for clarification around the absence. If children have been taken out of school for a family holiday without following the correct procedure (see leave of absence below) attendance will be unauthorised and parents will be reminded of the need to follow the correct procedure.

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a letter or other explanation (telephone call, email or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, in itself, oblige the school to accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation, doubt remains about the explanation offered, or when no explanation is forthcoming at all, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Absence should be authorised if:

- The pupil is absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body').
- The pupil is genuinely ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs.
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and school has given leave of absence.
- The pupil is attending another school in connection with an application for a place there.
- The child is representing their country in a sporting event
- The child is not of statutory school age

- There are occasionally genuine exceptional reasons why a child cannot attend. These should be discussed with the head teacher, admin officer or pastoral support assistant.

Medical Appointments

Wherever possible, medical appointments must be made outside of school hours. Should you need to take your child for a medical appointment evidence of this must be given to the school office in order for the absence to be authorised.

Leave of Absence in term time

Leave of absence may be granted, in response to a completed leave of absence request form by the school. Parents should be reminded that they cannot expect, as of right, that the school will agree to leave of absence during term time this is at the head teacher's discretion and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Procedure For Applying for Leave of Absence

Parents need to submit a leave of absence request to the school at least 14 days prior to the leave of absence. Parents will be informed by letter as to whether their request has been granted. Where parents take children on holiday without submitting a request for leave of absence, the school will initially write to parents asking them to complete a leave of absence request. Where this request is not completed, attendance during the leave period will be unauthorised. The school reserves the right to refer to the educational welfare service for a fixed penalty notice where parents continually take leave of absence despite this not being previously authorised or where children have leave of absence longer than ten days or fail to return on the date stated.

The 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 per child per adult if they pay within 21 days; or £120 if they pay within 28 days.

Fixed penalty notices can also be served for:

- Non school attendance
- Truancy

No parent/carer will receive more than three separate fixed penalty notices resulting from an authorised absence of an individual child in a 12 month period, however there is no restriction on the number of times a parent/carer may receive an official formal warning

of a possible fixed penalty notice. Once a fixed penalty notice has been issued, there will be no right of appeal.

Roles and Responsibilities

Class Teacher	Mark register promptly and accurately at the beginning of each school session. Collect absence notes and Send to office immediately. Discuss any concerns re attendance with Head Teacher/Pastoral Support assistant and Parents.
Office Staff	Check registers for children who are absent without any reason given. Enter absences received by telephone on SIMS. Enter reasons for absence on SIMS. Amend registers if children arrive late by entering the 'L' or '@' code. Print registers after register close both in the morning and afternoon. Take the paper registers out to assembly point and distribute to staff during fire drill/alarm.
Pastoral Support Assistant	Monitor attendance on a weekly basis. Formulate action plans around attendance. Discuss and agree these with Head teacher. Send letters to parents with regard to poor attendance/lateness.
Head Teacher	Oversee the implementation of the Attendance Policy. Regularly monitor and evaluate data and provide information for governors, LEA and DFE. Liaise with Education Welfare and Inclusion Service on strategic development.
Education Welfare Officer	To respond promptly to referrals from school and provide written feedback of action taken.
Senior Education Welfare Officer	Advise the school on strategic developments. Monitor school performance on attendance.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy and attendance practices will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer.

