

Attendance & Punctuality Policy June 2024

Grange Primary School



Review/Updated:

June 2024

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

IT IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT THAT CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF FIVE AND SIXTEEN MUST RECEIVE FULL TIME EDUCATION.

CHILDREN MUST ATTEND SCHOOL EVERY DAY AND ON TIME IN ORDER TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROVISION THAT IS OFFERED TO THEM.

AIMS

Grange Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all of our pupils, so they can achieve, aspire and be the best they can be. We believe that all pupils benefit from learning opportunities through regular and punctual attendance at school. To these ends, we will do all we can to ensure that all pupils attend to their fullest and that any problems which impede this are identified and acted upon as soon as possible.

Our aims:

- To inform the whole school community of the attendance and punctuality procedures carried out within the school.
- To maximise attendance rates.
- To promote regular punctuality.
- To encourage children to recognise the value of good attendance.

EXPECTATIONS

We expect that all pupils will:

- ◆ attend school regularly
- ◆ arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the school day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- ◆ make sure their children attend school every day and on time;
- ◆ ensure that they contact the school before the start of the school day whenever their child is unable to attend school;
- ◆ ensure that their children arrive at school fully prepared for the school day, including homework completed within the deadline;
- ◆ provide the school with up-to-date home, work and emergency contact details and telephone numbers;
- ◆ never arrange family holidays to take place during the school term;
- ◆ inform the school, in confidence, about any problem that might affect their child's attendance.

Parents/carers can expect that the school will:

- ◆ provide a good quality education;
- ◆ record their children's attendance regularly, accurately and efficiently;
- ◆ make every reasonable effort to contact the parent when their child is absent and we have not heard from the parent/carer;
- ◆ deal discreetly and properly with any problem notified to the school by a parent/carer;
- ◆ make all efforts to encourage good attendance and behaviour;
- ◆ instigate proper enquiries before removing the child from the school roll.

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

We will encourage good attendance by:

- ◆ accurately completing attendance registers at the beginning of each session and within 30 minutes of the start of the sessions;
- ◆ following up absence on the first day;
- ◆ undertaking attendance checks at appropriate times;
- ◆ recording good attendance on pupil reports and by certificates at the end of each term;
- ◆ publicly rewarding 100% attendance and improved attendance for individual pupils each term and over the course of the whole year;
- ◆ awarding certificates to the classes with the best attendance each week.

ORGANISATION

In order for this policy to be successful every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils the importance of the education being provided. For this reason, it is essential that pupils see that staff are arriving to lessons on time and well prepared. In addition, the following staff have specific responsibilities:

Headteacher

- to oversee the whole policy;
- to have particular regard to the equalities aspects of the policy;
- to regularly report to governors on attendance and punctuality.

Administrative Team & Children's Support & Wellbeing Officer (CSWO)

- to liaise with class teachers;
- to produce an attendance profile for the whole school;
- to report to the Headteacher on attendance matters and trends;
- in conjunction with the Headteacher, ensure liaison with Southwark's Early Help;
- to collate attendance data;
- to organise resources (certificates/awards) for attendance celebration assemblies with the leadership team;
- to initiate contact with parents/carers in the case of unexplained absence.

Class Teachers

- to complete registers accurately and on time;
- to inform the administrative team and the CSWO and/or Headteacher of concerns;
- to be aware of the importance of good attendance and excellent punctuality in school;
- to reinforce good practice at meetings with parents/carers.

PRACTICE

All adults will promote very high standards by their own example. For example, staff will be in the playground at 8.50am ready to move into school at the 8:55am when the bell sounds with the children.

Upon admission to Grange, and through regular reminders, for example in newsletters, all parents/carers are informed of the importance of attending school every day and on time.

Pupil Management Information System (MIS)

The pupil administrative database contains a common basic dataset for every pupil enrolled at the school. Pupil administrative data is linked to an electronic registration database for the purpose of recording and reporting pupil attendance and punctuality data.

Teachers complete the class electronic register for every morning and afternoon session, recording attendance and punctuality information for each pupil on the school roll.

Individual pupil attendance rates, including authorised and un-authorised absences, are recorded on every child's end of year report.

PUNCTUALITY

The school practice on recording lateness is as follows:

- a) The register is called as close to 09:00 as possible. Office staff receive the attendance data as soon as it is saved on the school system.
- b) Any child entering the school after 09:00 will be marked as late until 09:30. Arrival at school after 09:30 will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- c) Children arriving late are recorded on the school system by staff at the main entrance and office staff. Registers are amended accordingly and the time of arrival is registered on the system.
- d) The Headteacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team will be involved in seeing parents informally and formally regarding unsatisfactory punctuality. If necessary referrals will be made with Southwark's Early Help.
- e) Lateness is recorded on every child's end of year report.

ATTENDANCE

The school practice on promoting good attendance is as follows:

- a) Parents must inform the school on the first day of absence either in person, telephone call, ParentMail/Arbor portal app or email giving reasons for any absence. Advance notification where possible is very helpful. The school operates an automated telephone pupil absence facility for families to report their child's absence 24 hours a day.
- b) If the reason for absence can be authorised, i.e. genuine sickness, medical appointment, religious observance, etc., then the appropriate absent symbol will be entered on to the pupil attendance database.
- c) Absences not notified to the school are followed up by a text and/or telephone call from the administrative team on the first day of absence. Reasons for absence are subsequently recorded on the pupils' attendance database,
- d) Only the school can authorise pupil absence, not parents, therefore information about the cause of each absence is always required. The school will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts, etc. Leave (for a limited number of days) may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for urgent medical appointments if it is absolutely necessary to attend during school time.
- e) When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 90% in any term without good reason, a meeting with the Headteacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team to explain reasons for absence. A referral may also be made to

Southwark's Early Help who, if there is continued poor attendance, may result in the parent receiving a fine, court warning, or ultimately, prosecution.

- f) Any referral to Southwark's Early Help will be carried out by the Headteacher. Until advised otherwise the absence will remain unauthorised.
- g) All absences both authorised and unauthorised will be recorded on every child's end of year report.
- h) Telephone messages and text (voicemail) messages are recorded in the pupil absence diary as a record of how school was informed of a child's absence.
- i) Daily attendance totals compiled by the pupil attendance database are available to staff if required.
- j) Attendance is recorded in the child's end of year report.
- k) Parents will be asked to produce a medical certificate if their child is away for more than five school days.

PROMOTING HIGH STANDARDS OF ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

We aim to promote high standards in attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- ◆ On a weekly basis the class with the best attendance and punctuality in Reception, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two will be awarded a certificate in celebration assembly.
- ◆ At the end of the school year, individual awards are given for the whole academic year.
- ◆ Parents are informed through the school's newsletter about the standards in attendance and punctuality and are thanked for their support.
- ◆ Summary and detailed pupil attendance reports are available to staff for the purpose of monitoring and assessment. Class teachers monitor their children's attendance and may have their own merit and reward systems for children who are consistently at school on time.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is helpful for staff to physically count the number of children present in their class at morning registration (and at other times of the day when the class reassembles, i.e. after break). The number present is recorded. This allows for speedy recognition of any absences in the event of fire drills or other occasions when it is necessary to evacuate or re-group in case of emergency.

If a significant number of children are reported absent for the same reason, for instance, chicken pox, support and advice is sought from Public Health and where necessary, the local authority.

If children are either absent, or sent home from school due to sickness and diarrhoea, parents and carers are advised the child must not return to school until 48 hours after the last episode, to avoid other children becoming ill.

GOVERNOR MONITORING

The Governing Body monitors attendance at curriculum, general purposes and full governing body meetings. The Headteachers' report informs governors of the overall statistics every term and governors also make comparisons with previous years and against local and national statistics to monitor how well the school is doing overall. The Headteacher is held to account for overall pupil attendance.

REPORTING PUPIL ATTENDANCE TO LOCAL AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Whole school attendance data is reported to the local authority and central government on a termly basis through the census. The schools registration database system supports exchanging this information electronically. The administrative team are responsible for ensuring that information is provided by the deadlines set by relevant local and central government departments. Procedures for collating and submitting this information is periodically provided by the local authority.

Helpful links and useful information:

Southwark Council

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/schools-and-education/information-for-parents/behaviour-attendance-and-truancy>

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/schools-and-education/information-for-parents/behaviour-attendance-and-truancy/penalty-notice-for-irregular-attendance-and-term-time-leave>

Did you know that:

- 100% attendance means your child has attended every day.
- 97% attendance means your child has been absent for approximately half a day a month.
- 95% attendance means your child has been absent for approximately half a day every two weeks.
- 90% attendance means your child has been absent for approximately half a day every week.
- 85% attendance means your child has been absent for approximately one day per week.
- 75% attendance means your child has been absent for a day and a half each week.

ANY CHILD WITH AN ATTENDANCE OF UNDER 90% IS CONSIDERED TO BE A PERSISTENT ABSENTEE

Why is it important for children not to miss school?

All parents want the best for their children and for them to get on well in life. Having a good education is important to ensure that they have the best opportunities in their adult life. They only get one chance at school, and your child's future may be affected by not attending school or alternative provision regularly.

If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child catch up.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up.

Setting good attendance patterns from an early age, from nursery through primary school will also help your child later on in their life. Children who have a poor school attendance record may have less chance of securing a job when they are adults.

Being on time is also vital. Arriving late at school can be very disruptive for your child, their teacher and the other children in the class. Some parents may be finding it difficult to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If this is the case please speak to Mrs Richmond as soon as possible so that the situation can be addressed.

What might the impact of poor attendance be on your child?

In primary schools less than 65% of children achieve good results in English and Maths with an average of 15 days absence a year compared to almost 90% where the average is less than 8 days. Parents can be very surprised at how quickly their children can accumulate 15 days absence within a year.

Research has also shown that children who are not in school can become vulnerable. For example, children who play truant are more likely to be drawn into crime than those who do not.

What does the law say?

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must receive a suitable, full time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full time education.

Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly. If your child fails to attend regularly – even if they miss school without you knowing – the Local Authority (LA) may take legal action against you.

The LA is responsible for making sure that parents fulfil their responsibilities. Parents are responsible for making sure that their registered children regularly attend school or any alternative provision arranged them.

If you think you might need to take your child out of school, discuss the reasons with the school as soon as possible.

Reasons such as family bereavement or taking part in an agreed religious observance would be acceptable for **short** absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school include family holidays, birthdays and shopping.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly?

Your child's school is responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the LA. As a parent, you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly, even if they are missing school without your knowledge.

You run the risk of being issued with a penalty notice of being taken to court.

The LA may decide to prosecute a parent. If this happens:

Parents can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly; Magistrates can also impose a Parenting Order, which means that the parent has to attend a counselling and guidance programme, usually a parenting class.

What about authorised absence?

There may be times when your child has to miss school because she or he is ill. This is to be expected and you should follow the school's procedures for notifying illness.

Children may also have to attend a medical or dental appointment in school time. However, you should try to make routine appointments such as dental check-ups during the school holiday or after school hours. Any absence must be requested as far in advance as possible. Absences can only be authorised by the school.

What can you do to help?

- If you suspect that your child may be missing school or is unhappy at school you should contact the school as soon as possible so that you can work with them to resolve any difficulties.
- Be on alert for any particular reasons for non-attendance, such as bullying or problems with school work and discuss these with the school.
- If your child is ill or absent for any other reasons, contact the school on the first day of absence.
- Follow the schools' procedures for notifying absence, and always let the school know of any days that your child is unable to attend.
- Make sure your child arrives at school on time.

- Take an interest in your child's education. Ask them about their day and praise and encourage their achievements at school.

The world is run by those who turn up.

Attending school every day = 100% attendance

Attending 4½ days a week = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed per year

Attending 4 days a week = 80% attendance = more than half a term missed per year.

Attending 3½ days each week = 70% attendance = more than a quarter of the school year missed.

An average attendance of 80% or less across a child's school career adds up to missing a whole 2 years from school.

Being late for school reduces learning time.

If your child is 5 minutes late every day they will miss three days of learning each year.

If your child is 15 minutes late every day they will miss 2 weeks of learning each year.

Make every minute count



Grange Primary School



School Attendance

Information for parents and carers