



Attendance Policy

Version	Date	Description	Chair of Committee	Ratified (Y/N)	Next Review Due
1	June 2018	Draft presented to Curriculum Committee	Paul Ilott		June 2020

The majority of our pupils at Granta School have patterns of good attendance because they enjoy coming to Granta School for their education and because of the arrangements we make to meet their individual needs.

The DFE has set out clear guidance to promote full attendance and expects all pupils to achieve 95% attendance. The government recognises below 90% attendance as persistent absence which could trigger a cause for concern. However, children and young people who experience significant health conditions should not be alarmed: reasonable adjustments can be made both to maximise attendance and recognise genuine reasons for absence.

In making decisions about pupil attendance the school will appropriately take into account medical reasons and exceptional circumstances in discussion with parents and when appropriate seek guidance from Cambridgeshire Local Authority Educational welfare officer.

As a school we are flexible with the planning of our arrangements for return to school following a health related absence and we will support families to enable access to education after operations as swiftly as possible.

In some cases a phased return or part time attendance can be organised with a bespoke plan to support exceptional health needs: physical and emotional and mental health.

PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Registration: Roll call registration takes place twice a day and registers close at 9.30am, then at 1.45pm.

LATENESS

At Granta School we appreciate most pupils arrive by education transport and travel to Linton can be subject to unavoidable delays. The same can be true for parents who transport their own children if they live some distance away. Any student arriving in school after registration has been closed will be recorded as 'L' (late). If they arrive after registration period has finished for reasons other than congestion they may be recorded as 'U' (unauthorised absence). In the vast majority of cases, if lateness becomes frequent and problematic, the schools first response will be one of concern and welfare and we will support the family to manage whatever barriers to timely arrival have become problematic. Parents and carers should be advised that lateness at the beginning of the day is particularly detrimental to academic and social progress because pupils rely on predictable routines to start their day well, especially pupils with autism and or Learning disabilities.

We expect pupils to begin lessons immediately after registration in all cases.

The Education Welfare officer may be asked to carry out audits of attendance at the school, to support the school in developing responses to individual or group matters of concern, or to attend meetings with the parents/ carers of the child concerned.

ABSENCES

Absences from school will be either Authorised or Unauthorised depending upon circumstance.

Authorised absences are where a student has been absent and a satisfactory and legal reason has been communicated to the school via the teacher or school office.

The school expects authorised absences to be kept to a minimum so each pupil can maximise full attendance and not fall below 95% satisfactory attendance.

Any routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours or during school holidays when possible.

Where absence through illness has led to attendance of below 90%, parents/carers will be contacted and be expected to provide medical information and/or appointments evidence.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

Unauthorised absences are when no letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parents and carers or the reason provided is not deemed as acceptable by the school.

Examples of these may be avoidable lateness after the end of registration, shopping, excursions which have no or little educational benefit, meeting friends.

The school, using DfE guidelines, makes the final decision about whether or not any absence is seen as Authorised or Unauthorised.

Families who foresee a school absence for their child should ask for permission ahead of the date from the head teacher using the schools request form.

IMPACT OF REDUCED ATTENDANCE ON LEARNING

In order to understand the impact of attendance, find the table below that indicates the number of hours lost for learning and impact of reduced attendance from school.

We refer to this chart in discussion with parents and carers to help to maximise school attendance.

Table to show levels of school attendance and impact for days absent by hours lost for learning:

Descriptor	Attendance	Equals absent number of days	Learning hours lost
Excellent	100%	0	0
	99%	2	10
Good	98%	4	20
	97%	6	30
	96%	7.5	37.5
Satisfactory	95%	9.5	47.5
Cause for Concern	90%	19	95
	89%	21	105
	88%	23	115
	87%	25	125
	86%	27	135
Serious cause for concern	85%	28.5	142
	84%	30.5	152
	83%	32	160
	82%	34	170
	81%	36	180

Your child could fall below 95% with intermittent absences.

For example: if they missed as little as half a day over a 2 week period or patterns of occasional days.

If your child's attendance is 94-90%.

They are below the government threshold of 95% which is deemed satisfactory.

Your child will miss up to 18 days in a school year and this will make it difficult to make expected progress within the year.

SAFEGUARDING

The school reserves the right to invite parents into school to discuss any attendance issues that raise potential safeguarding concerns.

This could be to follow up a range of child protection concerns of risk of significant harm such as neglect, child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation.

In addition if the school suspects that a pupil may be at potential risk as a result of their absence from school the Safeguarding designated persons for Granta School reserve the right to refer these concerns to the appropriate external agencies which will be social care or police using the child protection procedures.

The school will usually notify parents / carers if a referral is to be made. However in exceptional circumstances it may not be appropriate to do so and therefore, depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern, a referral may be made without informing the parent / carer.

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

The school recognises that when a child is missing from education at school it is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or a risk indicator of sexual abuse or exploitation. The school follows the LSCB procedures.

Under section 8 h of the Education Regulations Act (2006) the school will make 'reasonable' enquiries into the location of pupils with 10 days continuous unauthorised absence or for those who fail to return from leave of absence granted during term time.

A referral will be made to the Local Authority Education welfare that a trace cannot be established to enable this to be investigated further by the police.

Every attempt will be made to communicate with parents to ensure the child is safe and well. Parents and carers should be advised this may include home visits by the EWO / Police to establish a child is safe and well.

The school will contact relevant agencies after first day of absence without confirmation from parents / carers if the child is subject to a 'Child in Need' plan or due to risk assessment is considered extremely vulnerable.

RELUCTANCE TO GO TO SCHOOL

Sometimes pupils seem anxious about leaving home to go to school, or vice versa. They may tell you (or us) that they feel unwell or give another reason to not attend. You (or we) may notice that they are worried from the things that they say e.g. that they do not want to do particular subjects, feel that they have no friends or are being bullied. If this is the case please contact the school immediately to speak to the

class teacher. If we have concerns we will also contact you. Many children with special needs experience high levels of anxiety over small upsets but it is important that their concerns are attended to by us all.

HOME EDUCATION

On rare occasions parents and carers make enquiries about home education in schools. Granta School has supported families to move their children back into the school system when special education needs have not been met previously. In all instances the child found it difficult to adapt to a new placement due to lack of routine attending school and needed sensitive support and a phased integration. .

The school can not agree to home tuition for one of its pupils without the consent of the local authority. The school can not accept pupils from other places to follow "home tuition" programmes on the school site without the agreement of the local authority. Granta does not support the implementation of specific approaches such as ABA programmes which sit outside the usual classroom range of personalisation. For example, we do not host children to attend classes with their own supporters and engaging only within their own programme parameters. We will however work in partnership when such a programme foresees transition into full time Granta education. We will not rearrange other children's school experiences to accommodate specific programme approaches for individuals.

The Local Authority will determine whether or not to accept home education requests or challenge the request due to parental capacity to meet the special educational needs provision required to enable a child to make expected progress overtime.

Parents should be advised they are unable to withdraw their child from any school if they are subject to a 'School Attendance Order'.

Any request for home education must be put in writing to the Head Teacher in the first instance to enable the school to arrange an Education Health and Care Plan review with the Local Authority. It will not be deemed acceptable to withdraw a child for any reason prior to an EHCP review and agreement from the Local Authority.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PUPIL ATTENDANCE AT GRANTA SCHOOL

We expect all staff to be excellent role models by having outstanding attendance and punctuality records. The following people can help with any concerns or questions regarding attendance & punctuality:

Sarah Crouch – Deputy Head Teacher
Lucie Calow – Head Teacher
Linda Alefounder – business manager
Key Stage Managers.

PARENTS/CARERS

If your child is absent from school for any reason (appointments, illness or other) or is going to be late, you should inform the school office before 9.00 am on the morning.

If your child is late to school they will need to be signed in at the school office.

Any child taken out of school due to illness or appointments need to also be signed out at the school office and also signed back in in on their return. The school should be notified in advance of all known appointments so that children with autism can be prepared for a change of routine in their school day.

TRACKING ATTENDANCE

We know that data is part of whole school information that enables school senior managers to have discussions with teachers and to ask questions to seek wider school improvement. That constant questioning is more likely to affect change and to help the school to become more responsive to pupil circumstances.

The school currently has a paper register system (but will soon have an electronic attendance system) that closes at 9.30am and 1.45pm for separate sessions on SIMS. The advantage of this system is that the office can respond to any queries about pupil attendance and provide immediate replies.

Registers are also an important part of fire evacuation procedures and "lock down" procedures.

The school tracks attendance for Early Years class, main school and Post 16 using the DFE codes (see appendix 1) as follows:

- on a daily basis by the receptionist who will alert the head teacher to any urgent potential concerns
 - on a regular (average 4 weekly) basis by the head teacher
- For inclusion in annual reviews/ CIN meetings or other pupil meetings where their general wellbeing is under discussion.

- Annual end of year performance:

- ❖ end of year reporting to Governors to compare actual end of year attendance with school target and national performance data for special schools in School dashboard.
- ❖ Tracking using inclusion indicators for Pupil premium, LAC, ethnicity and our vulnerable groups identified as Autism and PMLD.
- ❖ Attendance target set for next academic year.

In "keeping in touch" data provided to the local authority.

WE FOLLOW UP PUPIL ATTENDANCE USING A 'THREE LETTER SYSTEM'

The school follows the Cambridgeshire Local Authority procedures using a three letter system and template letters are attached to this policy. (See Appendix 2)

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS TO MAXIMISE TIME FOR LEARNING

The following information has been taken directly from the Cambridgeshire County Council website:

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Children of school age who are registered at a school must, by law, attend that school regularly. Regular attendance is the best way of ensuring that a child makes the most of the educational opportunities which are available to him or her.

When a child is absent from school, he or she misses not only the teaching provided but is also less prepared for the lessons after his or her return.

There are only 190 statutory school days in one year and 175 days (weekends and school holidays) available to use for holidays. Therefore every school day counts!

KEY INFORMATION

Prior to June 2013, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 allowed for head teachers to grant leave of absence for a term time family holiday in 'special circumstances' and for extended leave in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to these regulations remove references to family holidays and extended leave. The amendments make it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances and that head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

At Granta School we appreciate there might be very rare occasions that parents and carers may wish to apply for absence to be authorised for exceptional circumstances. Parents and carers are invited to apply with reasons in advance to the Head Teacher and mark the envelope confidential.

Holidays in school term time will not be sanctioned other than for exceptional reasons such as the availability of disability accommodation, disability travel arrangements, access to carers or an exceptional off site learning opportunity.

Your Childs attendance data is available to you at any point and may be very helpful in discussions with your child’s medical team, social care team or carers.

YOUR PARENTAL AND CARER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

If your child is registered at school you must ensure that s/he attends regularly to aim for full attendance. Parents should be aware we will always contact the parent where the child lives to follow up attendance matters because we recognise that in cases of any shared parental responsibility this can be pragmatic.

The DFE regulations make it clear that parents, carers or relatives do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term time holiday or other any other reasons unless they are exceptional.

If parents take their child on a regular holiday in term time this will be counted as unauthorised absence and listed on your child’s school record. This will be considered the same as truancy and you will be at risk of a Penalty Notice being applied and a fine.

If parents wish a relative or adult to pick up their child at the end of the school day to suit their family circumstances we require notification and proof of identification for safeguarding purposes.

REVIEWING THE IMPACT OF THE ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Head Teacher will report the overall progress with pupil attendance and any issues arising to the Governing Body.

GOVERNANCE

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years unless regulations for attendance from the DfE change.