



# Attendance Policy

<b>Last review date:</b>	<b>October 2024</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>
<b>Next review date:</b>	<b>October 2025</b>
<b>Person/s responsible:</b>	<b>Mrs R Madar - Head teacher Mrs J Phull – Admissions Manager</b>

## Grange Park Junior School Mission Statement & Values:

Our Mission Statement is our way to talk about and share our ten school values and our school motto. Every member of our school community works hard to show these values through our words and actions.

**Determination  
Resilience  
Aspirational  
Courage  
Integrity  
Equality  
Respect  
Friendship  
Kindness  
Empathy**

**Striving to be the best that we can be!**

## **Introduction & Background**

Grange Park Junior School is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. We strive to promote our values by instilling in our pupils excellent behaviour for learning, monitoring pupil attainment and giving every child the best educational experience possible. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

This policy has been developed in consultation with school governors, teachers, local Head teacher Associations, the Local Authority and parents / carers. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

This policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

This document should be read in collaboration with the DFE publications below:

- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#)

## **Why is regular attendance so important?**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and disrupts teaching routines which in turn may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Any loss of time at school can adversely affect a child's attainment and all pupils benefit from regular school attendance.

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Missing out on</b>	<b>Which means.....</b>	<b>Over 13yrs of schooling is.....</b>
<b>90%</b>	<b>1 day per fortnight</b>	<b>4 weeks per year</b>	<b>Nearly 1.5 years missed</b>
<b>80%</b>	<b>1 day per week</b>	<b>8 weeks per year</b>	<b>Over 2.5 years missed</b>
<b>60%</b>	<b>2 days per week</b>	<b>16 weeks per year</b>	<b>Over 5 years missed</b>
<b>40%</b>	<b>3 days per week</b>	<b>24 weeks per year</b>	<b>Nearly 8 years missed</b>

## **Promoting Regular Attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

**To help us all to focus on this we will:**

- give you details on attendance in our regular newsletters
- report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments via parent evenings and through a school report at the end of the academic year
- celebrate good attendance by displaying class certificates
- reward 100% attendance through weekly class certificates and individual certificate at the end of the academic year

## **School Attendance Target**

The school target for attendance is **97%** and above and in order to improve attendance, you and your child/children have an important part to play in meeting these targets. The minimum level of attendance for our school is **96%** and we will keep you updated regularly about progress in regard to this percentage both on our newsletters, on the website and letters sent.

Our target is to achieve better than this as we know that excellent attendance is the key to successful education and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in Hillingdon. Throughout the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

### **Understanding types of absence**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required by contacting the school by 8.30am for each day of absence.

**Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness and medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time.**

**For medical appointments, Parents/Carers need to provide proof of the appointment in advance. If it's an emergency appointment at any medical profession, please request an attendance card as proof.**

**Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (Attendance Support Team) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:**

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been authorised
- excessive illness without medical evidence

Whilst children may be off school because they are ill, it also happens that children can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is essential that you do not cover up their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

**You can support your child by:**

- ensuring regular and early bed times
- helping with homework
- having uniform and equipment prepared the night before
- providing a healthy breakfast
- reporting any academic or social concerns promptly
- retaining open and honest communication with your child's school
- being positive about school (even if your own experience was less than positive)
- encouraging your child to invite friends home for play dates

The Head teacher reserves the right to exercise her final discretion based on the evidence provided.

### **Telephone Numbers**

There are times when we need to contact parents whether it be in an emergency or about absence, so we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers at all times. Please ensure that if you change a mobile number or your home number that the school is informed immediately.

### **Punctuality**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and does not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Arriving late for school disrupts lessons, can be embarrassing for the child; and can also encourage absence.

**How we manage pupils who are LATE:**

- The school day starts at **8:45am** (doors open at 8.40am) and we expect your child to be in class on time.
- The school gate will be closed at **8:55am** and children arriving after this time must be brought, by an adult, to the main reception through Lansbury Drive.
- In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after 9am they will receive a late mark, however if they arrive after 9.30am they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised late mark on the Attendance Register. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists
- If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership team to resolve the problem. However, please be aware that you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. Please take note of the punctuality board in the playground and in the main reception area.

**Grange Park Junior School**  
**Absence procedure including Persistent Absentees**

**This is the process followed when pupils are absent from school**

If pupil is absent, parent/carer to contact school by phone or in person at reception on the first day of absence and every day thereafter by no later than 9.00am with a reason for absence

If pupil absent and parent/carer does NOT inform school, the school will make a call to establish reason for absence

If no contact on day 2 of absence then all other contacts are called to ask parent to call the school. If on day two of absence by 2:30pm onwards, the school is unable to establish contact, a home visit will be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy DSL and a second staff member to ensure that your child is safe and not at risk of harm

**SCHOOL ABSENCE MONITORING PROCEDURE**

**Stage 1:** The school will begin to track the attendance of any pupil falling below the school target of 96% after the first four weeks of the academic year. A period of attendance monitoring will begin.

**Stage 2:** Parents/Carers will be notified by letter when attendance falls below 96%.

**Stage 5:** Parenting contract / Attendance panel reviewed after a 4 week period. Where the review is successful (less than ten unauthorised sessions) a closure letter will be sent. Where the review period is unsuccessful a referral will be made to the Local Authority Attendance Support Team for legal intervention via the Stronger Families Hub

Once contact has been made and a reason for absence established, it will be recorded on the school Attendance Register system

**Stage 3:** Parents/Carers will receive a further letter when attendance drops below 92% inviting them into school for a meeting to discuss reasons contributing to low attendance or punctuality, the school expectations and how the parents/carers and the school can work together to improve the child/children's attendance. Attendance will continue to be monitored.

**Stage 4 – Persistent Absentee:** If attendance and/or punctuality concerns persist, when attendance falls below 90%, parents/carers will be invited into school to commence formal interventions. Where parents accept the offer of support a parenting contract is completed, when the offer is not accepted an attendance panel will be held in their absence

**Getting Your Child to School Really Matters    Remember Absence = Missed Learning Opportunity**

## **Attendance Contracts and Attendance Panels**

Grange Park Junior School follow the Local Authority, Attendance Support Team guidance for parenting contracts and attendance panels

### **Attendance Contracts**

- To work in partnership with the parent(s)/carers
- Formal written agreement between a parent/carer and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternation provision
- Parents cannot be compelled to enter a parenting contract and they cannot be agreed in their absence.

### **Attendance Panel**

- A formal intervention
- Takes place when a parent/carer has failed twice to attend an organised meeting to discuss attendance and a parenting contract was to be offered
- The attendance panel agreement is held in the parent/carer's absence and agreed by the attendance officer and responsible senior leader.

## **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'Persistent Absentee' when they **miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers full support and co-operation to tackle this.

## **Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance & Holidays taken during term-time**

The school will make every attempt to contact the parent / carer by telephone and in writing. In the first instance we would invite them to discuss attendance unless the absence relates to leave in term time without permission. Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, attendance may be enforced where necessary through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education. A referral may be made to the LA under the following circumstances based on the national framework for penalty notices.

A single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of ten sessions (usually equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling ten school week period. This may span different terms or school years. This will include unauthorised absence for lateness Code U.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall **not** be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the head teacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. All requests for exceptional circumstance leave must be put in writing to the headteacher. This letter must contain: The reason for the request, the dates of absence, including the return date, evidence relating to the reason for booking and details of any bookings made. Examples of the type of evidence required may include evidence of the date of a flight booking and evidence of family bereavement abroad. Where circumstances are considered to be exceptional the school may choose to only authorise some of the days requested.

Where a parent removes a child when the application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty notice may be requested by this school. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

- A term time holiday taken without permission would count towards the ten sessions
- A national limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period. At the third (or subsequent) offence(s) other legal prosecution will be considered

Penalty notices are issued to each parent or carer for each of their children for example two parents with three children would receive a total of six penalty notices, one parent with two children will receive a total of two penalty notices.

From September 2024 each penalty notice is £80 if paid in the first 21 days, from days 22 to 28 the fine doubles to £160 for each penalty notice.

For the second offence issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be charged at a higher rate of £160 for days 1 – 28, with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

The Attendance Support Team has asked us to point out that it is not possible to pay these fines by instalments or lower the cost when they have increased, or to simply fine one parent.

Payment can be made online and instructions on how to pay are included on the penalty notice letter.

If a penalty notice is not paid or the Attendance Support Team assesses that that the level of absence warrants court action, the local authority will arrange for a court hearing.

There are a range of sentencing options available to the magistrate including the maximum penalty of a fine of up to £2500 per parent for each offence as well as the possibility of up to three months in prison.

## **Telephone Numbers**

There are times when we need to contact parents whether it be in an emergency or about absence, so we need to have at least three up to date contact numbers at all times. Please ensure that if you change a mobile number or your home number that the school is informed immediately.

## **Punctuality**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and does not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Arriving late for school disrupts lessons, can be embarrassing for the child; and can also encourage absence.

### **How we manage lateness:**

- The school day starts at **8:45am** (doors open at 8.40am) and we expect your child to be in class on time.
- The school gate will be closed at **8:55am** and children arriving after this time must be brought, by an adult, to the main reception through Lansbury Drive.
- In accordance with the Regulations, pupil who arrive late to school between 9am to 9.30am will receive a late attendance mark in the Attendance Register, however if your child arrives after 9.30am they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised late mark on the Attendance Register. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists
- If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership team to resolve the problem. However, please be aware that you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

## **Performance Licences**

The applicant for a Performance Licence (usually the Production Company or theatrical agent) is obliged to seek the view of the school when applying for an absence request. Such a request will only be considered by the school when the child's attendance is at least 90% and the child is making at least expected levels of progress. A request may be declined if either of these thresholds is not met or if the timing of the requested absence could be detrimental to the child's education.

## **Deletion from Roll**

For any pupil leaving Grange Park Junior School, other than at the end of year 6 parents/carers are required to complete a 'Pupil Exit Form' which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all our pupils. In such cases, the school will submit an online deletion form to the Attendance Support Team to complete the removal of a pupil off roll.

## **Children Missing Education**

In Children Missing Education - Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (2016), children missing education are defined as those who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 school days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'.

There will not always be a safeguarding concern for children who are missing education. Most children are moving schools supported by their parents/carers, schools and local authority admissions services. A smaller number, however, are at risk of dropping out or disengaging from education and being out of school, they are at risk of exploitation, going missing and significant harm.

In the circumstances of a child going missing who is not known to any other agencies, the Head teacher should inform the Children Missing Education (CME) Officer of any child who has not attended for 10 consecutive school days without provision of reasonable explanation which can result in the child being removed from the school roll. Prior to doing so, the school will have made enquiries to ascertain whether the child is still residing at the home address and is not attending or whether the child is missing.

## **Equal Opportunities**

We ensure that every member of the school community experiences equal chances, irrespective of ethnic origin, race, religion, colour, nationality, political beliefs, disability, age, sex or sexual orientation and that every member of the school community is valued as an individual and that everyone understands that stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice and racism will not be tolerated.

## **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish both its absence figures and its Attendance Policy to parents/carers and to promote attendance. School attendance data must be available to the Local Authority and the Department for Education. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.

All school staff are committed to working with parents/carers and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible which in turn optimises your child's attainment. Please support us and your child in order to achieve this.

### **Named Staff with a Responsibility for Attendance:**

Alongside an individual's class teacher, the following named staff members have responsibility for pupil attendance:

Mrs R Madar - **Head teacher**

Mrs J Phull - **Admissions Manager**

Mrs R Taylor - **Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection**

**Contact details for attendance:** Mrs Phull – Tel: 020 8353 4265 (Option 2) / Email: jphull5.312@lgflmail.org

### **Role of the Governor**

Issues regarding attendance are reported to governors during formal meetings.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Board to ensure it is up to date with current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice.

### **Relevant Policies**

- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions Policy.

**Approved by:** FGB

**Date approved:** October 2024

**Review Date:** October 2025