Pupil Attendance Policy

Mission statement:

"Enjoy, learn, achieve"

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Our Grove Expectations

Pupils, staff and parents are:

- Good listeners and thoughtful speakers
- Are honest and tell the truth
- Are kind and don't hurt others or their feelings
- Respect all property
- Are supportive of others
- Always do our best
- We treat others as we would like to be treated

Mission statement: "Enjoy, learn, achieve"

This policy has been written with regard to the following:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

For further information from Birmingham City Council on school attendance including Leave in Term Time please see:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50157/education_legal_intervention_referral/690/school_attendance_advice_for_schools_and_professionals

What does the law say about attendance?

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Attending school is important

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

School Attendance Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education.

Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

<u>At Grove we will:</u>

Work together to improve attendance.

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Contents

1　　　**<u>Attendance – Our Vision</u>**

100% attendance for every child

At Grove School parents, children, staff and governors believe that:

- Every child is important to and is valued by the school
- The school has a commitment to providing the highest possible standard of pastoral care, guidance, support and education and this is harder to achieve if children have poor attendance/punctuality
- Every child should attend school every day when school is open except where a statutory reason applies
- Good attendance and punctuality will prepare children for adult life
- We do not want children to experience feelings of isolation, being behind with work or being left out of school events

It is therefore the responsibility of the whole school community to ensure all children attend school regularly and form good habits in punctuality.

Our revised home school agreement (September 2025) states:

The school target for attendance is 94%. There are lots of rewards and incentives for good attendance in school.

Children will not be granted leave in term time except in exceptional circumstances as per the Birmingham City Council Leave in Term Time Policy (see also the Grove School attendance page) If children are taken out of school in term time, each parent may receive a fine.

We request parents contact the school office on 0121 464/4669/1032 to inform the school about an absence.

PARENTS/CARERS

I/we shall:

· Make sure that my child comes to school everyday, arrives on time, wears school uniform and brings their PE kit on the correct day;

· Contact the school as early as possible on the first day of absence if my child will not be attending due to illness or any other reason;

CHILDREN

I shall:

· Come to school every day and arrive on time;

2   Aims of the school policy on attendance

- To ensure we protect children from the negative outcomes of poor attendance and support all children to develop their full potential

- To ensure all staff, parents and the Governing Body understand the school policy on attendance

- To ensure that there are procedures in place to monitor pupil attendance effectively and these are followed, resulting in good attendance for all pupils

- To ensure that all pupils receive their full entitlement to education throughout their school life

- To ensure that parents and carers are supported by school and external agencies through a process of early intervention and collaborative information sharing

- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence

- To act early to address patterns of poor attendance

- To ensure we are mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support.

The senior leader responsible overall responsibility for pupil attendance is MS J Baker
The administrator responsible for attendance is Mrs M Murphy
Our Family Support Worker, Mr C Bennett, helps and supports families to improve school attendance and punctuality.

3   Completing attendance registers

Schools must complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence

Admission register ('the school roll')

 The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with their starting date, information regarding parents, and details of the school last attended.

 A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies.

Attendance register

 Schools must also take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session.

On each occasion they must record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason
they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

At Grove:

* The school doors open at 8.30am. Pupils can come into school from 8-30am. Pupils can access breakfast from 8.30-8.45am

 * Electronic registers are completed between 8.45 and 8.50am.

 * Teachers complete the electronic register. On a designated whiteboard displayed by the door to the classroom the teacher will record: the date (format 06.09.23) , the number of pupils present out of the number of pupils on roll
 (format 29/30) and the full name of each pupil who is absent. Attendance Ambassadors may complete the attendance whiteboard. The teacher must check that this has been completed correctly.

* At 8-45am the doors to school are closed and staff electronically record late arrivals of pupils at the school gate. They are recorded as L (late arrival before the register has closed) on the school register, this is then changed to present by an administrator. A member of the administrative team takes children who arrive late in school to class. Once all pupils are in class an administrator will check every class attendance board. This is completed daily in the morning and at the start of the afternoon nursery session.

* After 8.50am a child will be marked as late.

* After 9.15am a child will be marked as late, unauthorised , code U.

* In Key Stage Two if a child is frequently missing part of the first lesson due to late arrival at school the child may be required to complete the work missed at playtime with a member of staff.

Once all registers are completed, attendance boards checked and first day absence calls made an administrator completes a daily absence form. The daily attendance report is shared and discussed with senior staff between 10.00-10.30am.

If we do not hear from a parent ie have a reason for absence we may make a home visit. After 3 days absence a home visit may be made to check on the welfare and well-being of the pupil.

4 <u>Our absence procedures</u>

* If a teacher receives a letter from a parent providing a reason for absence, then it must be passed on to a member of the administrative staff in the main school office. Letters and telephone calls from parents/carers are used to provide a code for an authorised absence by a (See Appendix A: Absence Codes). Letters from parents/carers are maintained on our electronic pupil filing system.

* An administrator makes first day absence calls to ascertain the reason for a child's absence. The reason for absence is recorded on the school's electronic system using the absence codes. Administrators are present in the school playground from 8.30-8.55 am. Parents can verbally inform them if their child is not present and the reason for their absence.

*Parents can inform school of an absence using the school website

* Any child, for whom we have no recorded reason for their absence from school, has a letter emailed/posted to the family home detailing when the child was absent and requesting the return of a letter to update our records . N codes should remain on register no longer than two weeks, following a two- week period the absence becomes unauthorised.

* An absence of three days or more with no contact with the child's family or a pattern of poor attendance is a concern. School staff will continue to contact parents/relatives and may carry out a home visit to check on the welfare of the child/family. If school have no contact and remain concerned we may contact the police and request a safe and well visit.

* An administrator discusses absent pupils, especially those whom the school has identified as vulnerable, with the senior management team on a daily basis. Administrators send senior leaders a ' comments ' report which states the name and class of a pupil and a reason for absence. Leaders use this to identify concerns on the day or over the week. Leaders may contact parents by telephone, for example, if a pupil has attended hospital.

<u>What do we do if we are concerned about a pupil's attendance?</u>

When teachers note a pattern of absence, reduced attendance or have concerns about a child's attendance they will ask to meet with the parent/carer to discuss their child's absence record. This meeting is recorded using the school's electronic system.

Following a meeting with the teacher if the child's attendance does not improve over a three-week period the year group leader will meet to discuss school's concerns about attendance.

If school continues to be concerned about a child's attendance a senior leader will discuss attendance concerns with our Family Support Worker. Parents will be invited to an Early Help Attendance meeting. We recognise that poor punctuality and attendance may be due to range of reasons. We can offer advice and support. This is part of our Early Help offer.

Our Family Support Worker or an Assistant Head Teacher will complete a Three Houses/wishes and feeling assessment with the child to gather information about what is working well, what the child is concerned about and what needs to change. This allows staff to understand reasons for poor attendance through the eyes of a child.

Early Help

https://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/early-help

What do we mean by Early Help?

Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person or their family early in the life of a problem, as soon as it emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth to adulthood, and applies to any problem or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on their own. It also applies to all children and young people, with any form of need.

Early Help requires that agencies should work together as soon as a problem emerges or a need is identified to ensure the child gets the right response, and the right services, from the right people at the right time. Our aim is to meet need early and avoid a problem escalating or the need increasing.

Early Help is provided to prevent or reduce the need for specialist interventions unless they are absolutely the correct response to meet the need and resolve the problem.

The **Early Help Assessment** and **Our Family Plan**, using the Signs of Safety and Wellbeing framework. For more information **click here**.

If a pupil's attendance does not improve following the above procedures then school will follow Birmingham City Councils Fast Track to Attendance procedures. These can be found at:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5462/leave_of_absence_legal_process

5   Monitoring Attendance

At Grove all staff are responsible for monitoring the attendance of all pupils.
All staff are proactive in improving attendance and punctuality of pupils.
All staff are able to speak with parents about pupil attendance.

As well as our daily first day absence procedures we monitor attendance in the following ways:

- Year group team meetings
- Senior leadership pastoral meetings (weekly)
- Daily review of attendance with the lead administrator for attendance and a senior leader
- Weekly reviews of those pupils who are persistently absent (PA)
- Fast Track to Improve Attendance
- ELIT referrals
- Referrals to Child Missing in Education Team
- Leave in Term Time Penalty Notices.

Senior leaders rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) so that all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

As a school we are required to:

Provide the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U). Local authorities must agree the frequency that attendance returns are to be provided with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month.

Provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils.

As a school we can make contact with GPs to obtain more information in the best interests of a child.

6.   Fast Track to Improve Attendance.

Information can be found at:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5462/leave_of_absence_legal_process

The Designated Liaison Person is Ms J Baker
The lead administrator for attendance is Mrs M Murphy
Early Help attendance support is offered by Mr C Bennett

Information about the process school follows with regard to Leave in Term Time can be found at:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5462/leave_of_absence_legal_process

Only in exceptional circumstances leave of absence in term time will be granted. It is unlikely that a leave of absence for a family holiday will be granted. If parents are considering taking their child/ren out of school in term time we request they complete a Leave in Term Time form. A meeting will be arranged with a senior leader to find out more about the request. We do not grant leave from school in term time.

If parents do take pupils out of school for a long period of time we will contact the parents to arrange a video What's App call to check to see if the child is safe and well.

7 Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent (PA) and pupils who are severely absent (SA)

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

Particular focus should be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them. All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

 If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. Schools and local authorities should be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues in these cases and where these remain, conduct a full children's social care assessment.

At Grove we:

School use data to identify pupils who are at risk of poor attendance. Leaders are proactive in engaging parents to problem solve and address barriers that may lead to poor attendance.

When pupils join Grove we carefully explain the school expectation for high attendance and how we celebrate and reward good attendance.

Offer Early Help Attendance meetings with our Family Support Worker

Through Early Help/Family Connect we can signpost and support access to any required services.

If, following early intervention and support, attendance does not improve school will seek the advice and support of the Attendance Team in Birmingham.

Where a pupil's attendance does not improve and absence is severe school may request support from Children's Advice and Support Service.

We endeavour to listen to parents and understand reasons for poor attendance the barriers that families may face. Through our work with external agencies we seek to reduce and remove barriers outside of school.

8 **Children Missing In Education (CME)**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf57a4dcb0757928e5bd39/Children_missing_education_guidance_-_August_2024.pdf

Our responsibilities

Schools must enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be entered from the beginning of the first session.1

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily attendance register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals at which they will make a return to the local authority (an 'attendance return18') with the details of any pupil of compulsory school age who has failed to attend regularly (excluding where they were out of school and attending an approved educational activity covered by codes D, K, V or B), or has been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence had been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O and/or U).

Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten consecutive school days after a leave of absence or is absent from school for reasons statistically recorded as unauthorised absence for twenty consecutive school days the pupil's name can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to find out the location and circumstances of the child or have succeeded but agree there are no reasonable grounds to believe that they will attend the school again. In deciding there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again both school and local authority must agree, including that there are no reasonable steps that could be taken (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance. Neither ground for deletion applies if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

9. <u>Removal from roll</u>

A pupil's name can only be lawfully deleted from the admission register if a reason is set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended applies.

10. <u>Pupils with medical conditions or special education needs</u>

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers.
Their right to an education is the same as their peers. School are mindful of barriers for these pupils and work with parents to put into place Addional support where necessary. These include:

- Putting in place a medical care plan with the school nurse service and, if appropriate external agencies
- Establish strategies to remove in-school barriers that these pupils may face

Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support from other agencies such as alternative provision provided by the local authority.

11. <u>Part-time timetables</u>

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the child's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part – time timetable to meet individual needs.

At Grove part-time timetables are agreed with medical and/or special educational needs professionals, usually with the Educational Psychologist. There are formal arrangements in place to review a part-time timetable with parents and external agencies. The absence for part of the day or week is an authorised absence. The SENCO is required to submit a return to BCC detailing the part-time (reduced timetable support plan).

12 .Elective Home Education

The school follows the Birmingham City Council policy for Elective Home Education.
This policy can be found at: www.grove.bham.sch.uk/parents/attendance.
Information from Birmingham City Council for parents can be found at:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/443/elective_home_education

The policy from Birmingham City Council can be found at:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/2919/elective_home_education_policy_revised_january_2023

Birmingham Local Authority encourages parents / carers to inform them directly of the withdrawal of a child from school, even though schools will also notify the local authority.

We request that parents inform the Head Teacher of their intent to home educate in writing. An email to the Head teacher is accepted as providing written intent to home educate.

13 . Medical evidence

If a child's attendance becomes a concern to school we can request medical evidence. Telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are not acceptable as medical evidence. A child sent home from school, by school is medical evidence.

We will write to parents of children who we require medical evidence for. Medical evidence can include the following:

- a copy of the prescription
- slip with date, pupil's name and surgery stamp signed by the receptionist
- medical appointment cared with one appointment entered
- letters concerning hospital appointments
- print screen of medical notes
- doctor's medical certificate
- doctor's letter

Once the school receives medical evidence the absence is authorised. None production of medical evidence results in an unauthorised absence being recorded.

14.   Celebrating Success

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, it is important that good patterns of attendance are

developed from the outset. This is integral to the school's expectations and ethos.

Recognising and rewarding good attendance is an important part of the work of all staff. We celebrate success in the following ways:

    i.   Postcards sent home to congratulate children on good or improved attendance.

   ii.   Weekly assembly with a certificate for the class with the highest attendance.

  iii.   All pupils who were present every day in the week the attendance certificate was awarded receive a Grove Bank coin

  iv.   100% attendance for the term assemblies bronze, silver and gold – certificate, badge, prize and a wristband.

   v.   Attendance newsletter every term.

  vi.   Attendance displays.

 vii.   Attendance reported on the school website.

viii.   Attendance celebrated in school letters

  ix.   Fantastic Fridays – one pupil from each year group is awarded a prize if they have attended 100% in the previous week.

   x.   Challenges held at least three times a year to reduce absence at the end of a term

  xi.   Individual attendance charts for pupils

 xii.   Spot prizes for the class with the highest attendance

xiii.   Attendance parties

xiv.   An end of year family reward

Attendance codes can be found in the following document:

Attendance and absence codes

285. On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder).

286. The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities,

and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

287. As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Providing remote education', pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register.

288. The codes are set out in regulation 10(2) Table 1, 10(3) Table 2 and 10(4) Table 3, 10(8) and 10(10) of the regulations and summarised below.