

Grange Farm Attendance Policy

INTRO

At Grange Farm school we want to ensure that our pupils are able to take the fullest possible advantages of all that we have to offer.

We want every pupil to attend school every day that they can and hold the view that regular attendance is important to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all of our pupils.

This attendance policy sets out what is expected so that this may be achieved.

Our aims are to raise attendance and improve punctuality by

- Ensuring that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning.
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupils' successes and achievements.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- Making parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities.

Parents/carers have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Parents should also ensure that children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them.

SCHOOL TIMES

We expect children to be at school/in the playground/ in the classroom by 8.50am in time for the start of morning registration at 8.55am. School finishes at 3.30pm.

Children should be collected promptly unless they are attending an after school activity. In the very unlikely event that a child is not collected at the end of the school day and we cannot contact parents/carers or emergency contacts, the Children and Families First services will need to be contacted.

REGISTRATION

The school must keep attendance registers for all pupils on the school roll. The class teacher will call the register twice a day and every pupil will be marked as present, absent or engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site.

It must be shown, by the use of approved codes, whether an absence is authorised or not.

Pupils arriving after registration and before 9.30am will be marked late.

Pupils arriving after 9.30am will be marked with an unauthorised absence mark unless there is an acceptable reason for lateness when they will be marked with an authorised absence mark.

Absence, legally, has to be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. Only school can decide whether an absence is authorised or not and does not have to accept the reasons given by a parent or carer.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

When a child is absent parents should:

- Notify the school by telephone as early as possible on the first day of absence, ideally by 9.00am
- Call into school and report to office staff
- Email adminstaff@grangefarm.coventry.sch.uk

If parents fail to contact the school, for safeguarding reasons, the school will try to contact the parent to establish that the child is safe and the reason for the absence.

If school has not been notified of a satisfactory reason for a child's absence the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The ultimate responsibility to authorise an absence or not rests with the Headteacher. The school expects regular attendance, but also wishes to be supportive to parents with relevant problems; however in the case of illness the school has a right to request further information.

If a child's attendance is below 90% then the school will inform parents by letter and if appropriate invite them into school to discuss strategies for improvement. A referral to the Children and Families First Education Welfare Officer will also be considered.

Notification of any medical / dental appointments must be given in advance.

APPLICATIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

As of September 2013 Government Regulations state that schools cannot authorise holidays during term time. The Government's guidance states that only under special circumstances may the Headteacher consider giving permission for a child to be absent from school for a maximum of 10 days in any one school year.

Grange Farm School will not therefore authorise leave in term time unless it is for exceptional circumstances. All such applications will need to be on the school application form, which is available from the school office. Applications will need to be at least 3 weeks before the expected absence, and include the reason for the request. An appointment may, on request from the parent, be made to discuss the request and the reasons behind it face to face with the Headteacher.

In line with national and local guidance the school would like to outline clearly when permission will definitely not be granted:-

- During transition time as a pupil is settling into the school.
- Before or during Year 2 and Year 6 SATs or important revision periods leading up to these.
- If the pupil has attendance **below 95 %**.
- If the pupil already has unauthorised absences.

The school will reply in writing to the parent/carer within 3 working days with reasons for the decision.

Pupils who fail to return within 10 school days of any agreed return date or after 20 days of unauthorised absence if exceptional leave of absence has not been agreed can be deleted from the School Register.

PENALTY NOTICES

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices for failure to ensure regular school attendance.

Parents or carers who take their children out of school in term time without school's permission or are late returning from an exceptional leave of absence, may receive a Penalty Notice fine of £60 per parent per child, which must be paid within 28 days.

If payment is made after 28 days the penalty is increased to £120. Where a fine remains unpaid the Children and Families First Service will submit the case for prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Please note that Penalty Notices can be issued after 10 unauthorized absences in a 12-week period – this is 10 registration periods, i.e. 5 days. Children who are late without good reason after 9.30am also receive an unauthorized absence mark unless there is an acceptable reason for lateness.

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