

Grindleford Primary School

Attendance Policy

Approved – FG 28/4/22

Review – Summer 5 2025

Introduction:

The staff and Governors of Grindleford Primary School are committed to providing the finest education possible. We believe that means enabling every pupil to learn to use their basic skills as well as to promote achievement in a wide range of other subjects. This takes place in a school where everyone believes in the importance of taking an increasing degree of responsibility for ones behaviour and learning.

Attending school is vitally important for all children to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them at Grindleford Primary School. It is the legal duty of every parent to ensure that their children receive an education by attending regularly and punctually. Parents/carers are at risk of prosecution if they fail in their duty to ensure regular attendance.

The school has a collective commitment to ensure it provides an inclusive education for all pupils. In order to benefit from this education pupils need to attend school regularly and punctually. It is recognised that there are many reasons for poor attendance and this attendance policy outlines the strategies adopted by the school to encourage all children to attend school on a regular basis. There is a clear correlation between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so will performance and achievement, further poor attendance can lead to social exclusion and, in some cases, to anti-social behaviour and crime.

Our Aims

- To encourage children to maintain high attendance and punctuality at all times.
- To encourage parents to support their children in achieving 100% attendance in order to instil good habits early in school life.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils whose attendance figures fall below the school/local authority guidelines.

Objectives

- To ensure that parents and carers understand their legal responsibilities and the importance of regular school attendance for their child.
- To ensure that children are aware of the importance of good attendance.
- To keep parents and carer informed of their child's attendance levels and inform them of any concerns immediately.

Responsibilities

Parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of legal responsibilities.
- Ensure children arrive punctually and well-prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they contact the school by 9.30am on the first day of absence providing a reason for the absence and each day thereafter; unless agreed otherwise.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify school of any changes to their contact details.

School will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Contact parents by phone or text them when a child fails to attend and no message has been left to explain the absence, on the first day of absence by 9.30am.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain an explanation.
- Inform parents of their child's attendance on a yearly basis.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through individual and class reward systems.
- Monitor levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Notify MAT Attendance Officer after five consecutive days unexplained absence.
- Refer irregular or persistent unexplained patterns of attendance to MAT.

Registration and Punctuality

- Punctuality is important in ensuring that children have access to maximum teaching time.
- Registration begins at 8.45am. Pupils are marked late if they arrive after 9am but before 9.30am. An arrival after 9.30am is recorded as 'arrived after registers have closed'.
- Afternoon registration is 1pm.
- Incidents of persistent lateness will be discussed with parents by the Head teacher.

Pupils leaving during the school day

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside school time.
- Pupils must be signed out in the school office on leaving school and back in on their return.

Home/School Partnership

Grindleford Primary School believes that there should be close partnership between the parents/carers and school. The Headteacher and staff will encourage open and honest dialogue with parents/carers, and follow up concerns. It is the parent's responsibility to inform school by telephone as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

Family Holidays and Other Absences

Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006, which came into force on 1st September 2013 states that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases it is the head teacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, the application form must be requested from the school office (see Appendix 3) and submitted for consideration by the head teacher (in the first instance), on behalf of the Governing Body, at least 2 weeks prior to the requested leave.

Separated parents will be expected to have discussed any holiday requests with other parties with parental responsibility. School will contact other parties with parental responsibility to ensure this has been done.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996 (see Appendix 4).

Appendix 1 – Letter 1

This letter will be sent out if one of the following things happen:-

- Attendance below 90% without good explanation
- No parental explanation for an absence
- Pattern of poor attendance emerging – e.g. every Friday off
- Lateness x 5 in a four week / monthly monitoring period

Dear

The school office carries out regular analysis of all attendance and informs me if there are any concerns compared to what the school would expect your child's attendance to be.

The following concerns have been brought to my attention: (Please delete as necessary)

- We have not received an explanation for your child's absence on
- Your child's attendance has dropped below 90% and we would urge you to try and improve it or provide an explanation that the school can authorise
- A pattern of absence has been noted
- Your child has been late for school twice or more in the last two week monitoring period

I am sure that you understand the importance of your child attending school regularly and on time. If they are not at school, or miss important parts of lessons due to lateness, this will affect their progress and achievement.

I would be grateful if you could try to improve the situation. If the school can be of any help or you would like to discuss the reasons for the absence please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or telephone me.

If there is a good explanation for the situation that the school has been informed about – please ignore this letter.

I am sure that we will continue to work together to ensure that your child has the best possible education that they can.

Please do not hesitate to contact should you wish more information or wish to discuss anything further.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher.

Appendix 2 – Letter 2

Please note letter 1 must have been sent first

This letter will be sent out if one of the following things happen:-

- No improvement/attendance below 85% without good explanation
- No parental explanation for further absences in any further four week monthly monitoring period
- No improvement / pattern of poor attendance continuing – e.g. every Friday off 2 in any further four week / monthly monitoring period
- Lateness x 5 in any further four week / monthly monitoring period

Dear

I wrote to you on with concerns about your child's attendance. I am sorry to say that the school has seen little or no improvement and I feel that it is now necessary for you to make an appointment to see me.

At that meeting we can discuss any problems that you might be experiencing and see if the school is able to offer any support. It is in everyone's interest for your child to be attending school regularly and on time.

If I do not hear from you in the near future, then I will have no option but to refer your case to the EWO Service. (Education Social Worker)

I look forward to hearing from you so that we can discuss the situation and agree a plan for improvement.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 3 – copy of school holiday form

Grindleford Primary School

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

PLEASE NOTE - The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** state that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Name of Child(ren) Year Group
.....
..... Year Group
..... Year Group

Childs Address
.....
.....
.....

Name of Applicant(s) and Address (if different).....
.....

I / We wish to apply for our child(ren) to be absent from school for EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES on the following dates.

From..... To.....

Total number of days our child(ren) will be absent from school

Please supply in as much detail as possible the reason for your request and why you feel it is **exceptional circumstances**. Please include the names of the adult(s) who will be with your child(ren) during their absence from school.

Continue

over the page if necessary

Signed (both parents if applicable) Date

.....
.....

IF THE REQUEST IS FOR A FAMILY HOLIDAY PLEASE SUBMIT IT BEFORE THE HOLIDAY IS BOOKED.

Appendix 4

The Educational (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**.

Term-time holiday

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear the head teachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.

On 6 April 2017 the Supreme Court appeal, in relation to the Platt v Isle of Wight case determined that under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 attending school 'regularly' means:

"in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school"

From 1 September 2017, if requested, Derbyshire County council will consider the issue of a penalty notice for any period of holiday absence which has not been authorised by the head teacher regardless of a child's wider school attendance.

The Education (Penalty Notices)(England) Regulation 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices)(England) Regulations 2007**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.