

Greenmead Attendance Policy

The school staff and governors of Greenmead School, alongside the LA, believe that it is essential for all pupils to attend school regularly and avoid any absence. Any loss of time at school can adversely affect a child's attainment and all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly (above 85%) and on each day the school is open to pupils;
- Arrive punctually;
- Engage with the education being provided;
- Arrive at school appropriately prepared for the day.

We expect that all parents/carers/persons that have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that the child/ children in their care arrive at school each day punctually and properly prepared for the school day;
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.
- Contact the school whenever the child/children is/are unable to attend school, on the first day of his/her/their absence, and send a note on his/her/their return to school in the home school book.

We expect that school staff will:

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils;
- Monitor every pupil's attendance particularly those pupils whose attendance has dropped below 85%.
- Monitor attendance of every pupil on a child protection plan or where there is cause for concern.
- Office staff will contact parents/carers as soon as possible on the first day of absence where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Designated person for attendance is to liaise regularly with office staff to ensure poor attendees are tracked and acted upon.
- Teachers to follow up and liaise with designated person for attendance for all unexplained absences to obtain notes giving a reason for the absence and the likely date of return;
- Emphasise the importance of good attendance and take positive steps to encourage it;

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children;
- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils concerns;
- Make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance;
- Refer irregular or concerning patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service;
- Designated person to arrange TAC meetings to ensure concerns of poor attendance are being addressed and all the relevant professionals are clear of the concerns.
- Meet, where possible, the requirements of the UN Convention – The Rights of the Child, by ensuring that children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them.

Holidays

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays. **No parents/carers can demand leave of absence for their child/children as a right.** Requests for leave during term time must be made to the Headteacher in writing. A form can be obtained from the school office. Any absence that is not authorised, parents could be subject to a Fixed Penalty Fine of £60 per parent/per child doubling to £120 if the fine is not paid within the prescribed period.

The Local Authority advises Headteachers to only authorise absence for leave in special or exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher will decide whether or not to authorise the absence having considered:

- Where there has been trauma or bereavement.
- One- off situations e.g. due to parent's/carers work/employment commitments.
- Opportunity for such a holiday is unlikely to arise in the future.
- If your child is of statutory school age (5).

As previously stated absence from school (whatever the reason) can adversely affect a child's ability to benefit fully from their educational opportunities and to keep up with programmes of study.

Appointments

If a child has an appointment during the school day it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of this by supplying the school with a copy of the appointment letter and informing the class teacher via the home/school book.

Wherever possible we would encourage parents/carers to book GP appointments outside of school hours. If this is not possible we may seek your consent to contact your child's GP for proof of appointment.

Encouraging Good Attendance

- Greenmead School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:
- By celebrating good and improved attendance;
- By providing a caring and welcoming learning environment;
- By responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils;
- By marking registers accurately and punctually. If pupils arrive at school after the close of the register without a written explanation, the lateness will be recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill;
- By publishing and displaying attendance statistics;
- By monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the Education Welfare Service if the irregular attendance continues.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9:30a.m. The school will endeavour to contact them that day.
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If, by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made the school will send a letter of concern to parents/carers (via email or post) or invite them into school to discuss their concerns. The school will tell parents/carers that if the absence persists a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service.
- The EWS will make repeated efforts to contact the parent/carer and establish why the pupil is not attending school. If the problem is quickly resolved and the pupil returns to school, or if a legitimate reason is provided for the absence, the EWS will continue to monitor the situation. If problems appear to be ongoing an Education Welfare Officer will be allocated to work with the family.
- The Education Welfare Officer will make arrangements to meet with the parent/carer, at home, in school or at the Town Hall, to discuss the reasons for the pupil's non-attendance. The EWO will support and advise the parent/carer and the school, with a view to resolving any difficulties and improving the pupil's attendance.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the EWS can result in further or legal action, and application for an Education Supervision Order, or a court prosecution.
- We encourage children to take part in extra curricular activities as far as possible. However if your child's attendance levels fall below 85% they will not be able to participate in extra curricular activities that take them out of school on a regular basis such as horse riding. They will be able to start again once their attendance has reached an acceptable level.

Changing Schools

It is important that families who decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school they inform Greenmead School staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next;
- The address of the new school;
- The new home address, if it is known.

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. If a parent/carer appears to have removed their child from school or the child has completely stopped attending without providing the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

School Organisation

In order for the Schools Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff will make attendance a high priority and convey this to pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving consistent messages about the value of education.

In addition to this the School has the following responsibilities:

Headteacher, Governors and designated member of the school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- Agree a whole school attendance policy;
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that the appropriate resources are provided;
- Implement a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence;
- Ensure that key staff have timetabled periods for liaison and follow up work with the EWS and appropriate access to attendance data;
- Consult and liaise closely with the EWS on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay;
- Work in close collaboration with the EWS during their termly register analysis;
- Implement an attendance award scheme with assemblies, certificates and rewards;
- Ensure that the attendance percentages/graphs are displayed around the school and to set whole school attendance targets;
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with the EWS. Hold School Attendance Panels where appropriate, in liaison with the school EWO.
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Service regularly;
- Share the class teachers concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Education Welfare Officer;
- Discuss absences with a parent/carer on the return of their child to school to ascertain the reason behind the absence and minimise the likelihood of further absence.

Admin Officer to:

- Oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually;
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Service regularly.
- Share the teachers concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Education Welfare Officer.
- Follow up any unexplained non-attendance;
- Monitor pupils whose attendance is of concern to ensure immediate follow up of any further absences from school;
- Discuss absences with a parent/carer on the return of their child to school to ascertain the reason behind the absence and minimise the likelihood of further absence.

Class Teachers to:

- Complete registers accurately and punctually;
- Record all reasons for absence in the register;
- Inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance of concerns;
- Be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and report these concerns as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

Missing children:

All children that have gone missing on the school register should be referred to the Education Welfare Officer by completing a PR1 from.

Definition of a missing child:

- Children in families who are victims of domestic violence who have to go into sudden hiding.
- Children in families who have disappeared without leaving a forwarding address.
- Children in families who have gone on extended leave and have failed to return when due to do so.
- Runaways - Children who have gone missing notified by other local authorities