

### VISION

*To provide a rich a varied learning community where all children reach their potential.*

### INTRODUCTION

*Parents have a legal duty to make sure their children are educated. Regular attendance includes pupils being punctual and persistent lateness will be seen as absence. A pupil's punctuality is a legal requirement and is treated in the same way as irregular attendance.*

We believe that, if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance and punctuality are crucial. As a school we actively promote a positive attitude to attendance and punctuality across the school.

### OBJECTIVES

The Federation will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive training on registration regulations and education law and complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Stress to parents/carers the importance of punctual attendance
- Include attendance rates in annual reports to parents, including late arrivals
- Ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of attendance procedures by the Head teacher and the school governors
- Send letters to parents of pupils who show a pattern of persistent lateness

### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

#### Keeping registers

Schools must take an attendance register twice a day. Any absences will be recorded with a specific code depending on the type of absence. Absences fall into two main categories; authorised or unauthorised. Only the school, not parents can authorise absence. If leave of absence is required parents must ask for permission in advance. If a child is sick or for other unforeseen absence, school should be notified as soon as possible.

#### Family holidays during term time

The Department for Education requires Local Authorities to implement government regulations regarding the taking of Leave of Absence in term-time. This came into force on the 1st September 2013. The new law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

**Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional. Therefore Head teachers will only be able to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and this will still be at the discretion of the Headteacher.**

**No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right.** The Education Regulations state that applications must be made in advance by a parent/carer with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each leave application is considered individually by the school taking into account any factors presented by the family. Application forms are available on the school website or from the school office. Headteachers will also welcome early discussion with you around potential applications.

Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and as such may result in a Penalty Notice. Penalties are applied by the Local Authority and as such are not at the discretion of the headteacher. If a Penalty Notice is not paid, the matter may be taken to prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Amendments to 2007 Penalty Notice regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1st September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices in line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecution if the fine is not paid.

### **Sick children**

If a child is sick, the absence must be authorised. Schools should accept parents' notes and not routinely ask for doctors' letters. However if the absence is long-term or repeated, proof may be required that a child is genuinely unwell and unable to attend school. Copies of any appointment letters or medical reports should be kept.

If a child is [too ill to attend school](#) for more than 15 working days the local authority should be providing some education for them. If they provide home tuition this should be for at least 5 hours a week.

### **Children who won't go to school**

Often a problem at school or at home can lead to a child being reluctant to go to school or completely refusing to go. It's important to keep talking both to the school and to your child. Check whether any of the following reasons apply to your child as you may be able to get extra help:

### **Bullying**

Mental health problems including anxiety or depression. Ask the special educational needs co-ordinator about [extra help in school](#). If the difficulties are severe your child might get alternative education as a sick child.

## **Difficulties at home**

Things like family breakdown, bereavement, illness, housing problems, or being a young carer can affect your child. The school may be able to provide additional pastoral support.

## **Possible penalties**

There are a number of legal and other avenues that the school can pursue if your child fails to attend regularly. These range from a voluntary parenting contract to a fine or prosecution with a possibility of a custodial sentence in some cases.

Regular school attendance is important. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable full-time education. This could be at a school or other arrangements such as home schooling.

If your child is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If you fail to do this, you risk getting a penalty notice or prosecution.

If you are having difficulties getting your child to attend regularly, talking to the school as early as possible can help to solve any problems.

Your local authority can also help if you are struggling to ensure that your child goes to school. This is usually through the Education Welfare Service.

## **PUNCTUALITY AND SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES**

It is very important that all children arrive at school on time. It is part of the daily routine and is also very disruptive for the rest of the class when a child joins the group late.

We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and the school aims to work in partnership with parents to achieve punctuality. We will discuss with pupils, where appropriate, and contact parents if there are concerns about punctual attendance. Any concerns which affect a pupil's punctual attendance will be investigated including factors that could relate to child protection, behaviour, and discipline and anti-bullying policies. We will work with parents and pupils to resolve any problems as quickly and efficiently in the interest of the child.

## **LATE PROCEDURES**

All adults entering school are requested to sign in so that, in the event of a fire, we know who is in school. Parents arriving with children after 9.00am should report to the office and sign in giving a reason for child's lateness.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

This is not an exhaustive list and Head teachers must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter. Leave is only acceptable against exceptional circumstances and should not be granted on the basis of attendance record, academic performance or the 'experience' offered by being out of school. Where a head teacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances which do not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice. The decision of the Head teacher is, however, final.

**Grewelthorpe & Fountains CE Primary Schools Federation**

<b>Policy:</b>		<b>Attendance &amp; Punctuality Policy</b>
<b>Signed Chair of Governors:</b>		
<b>Date Signed:</b>		
<b>Governors Meeting Ratified:</b>		<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2017</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>		<b>Spring 18</b>
<b>Review schedule</b>		<b>Annually</b>