



Statement

Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship and the Governors are committed to providing a full and efficient education of all pupils. Regular attendance is essential to allow children to fully access the curriculum. To this end Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship and the Governors will do as much as they can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

Aims

All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with National Curriculum regulations, therefore;

- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure attendance at school as required by law
- Situations may exist beyond the control of parents/carers and pupils which may need to be addressed in partnership by Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship and external agencies

Expectations

Parents/carers and pupils can expect the following from the Fellowship:

- Regular, accurate and efficient recording of attendance
- Early contact with parents/carers when a pupil's absence if no message is received by telephone or no prior notice has been given, this is on a daily basis and is recorded
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to the Fellowship
- Encouragement and tailored support to pupils towards good attendance
- Bespoke support plans for pupil's that are unable to access school for reasons such as medical recovery etc

The Fellowship has the following expectations from parents/carers:

- That they ensure their child attends school regularly
- That they will contact the school by telephone or in person at the start of the first day of absence; whenever their child is unable to attend school
- That they will ensure their child arrives in school on time and prepared for the school day
- That they will contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- To avoid, where possible, taking any planned absence during term time
- They will inform the Fellowship of any planned medical procedures/circumstances that may result in a child's long-term absence to ensure an appropriate support plan can be established

The Fellowship has the following expectations from pupils:

- That they attend school regularly
- That they arrive at school on time and are appropriately prepared for the day
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problems or reasons that may hinder them from attending school



Responding to Non-Attendance

On the day of the absence, if a telephone call or prior notice has not been received from parents/carers the receptionist will;

- Attempt to contact parents/carers by telephone to obtain an explanation for the absence, this will be logged and monitored
- If parents/carers are non-contactable the pupil's emergency contacts will be contacted to enquire about the absence
- If there is no response by 12.00pm, the Senior Leadership Team/Safeguarding and Pastoral Team will determine whether it is necessary for a staff member to carry out a home visit on the day of absence
- If a pupil is absent long term, a bespoke support programme will be established with the safeguarding and pastoral team and, where appropriate, weekly home visits will be carried out
- If a pupil is admitted to hospital, the Fellowship will liaise with parent/carer and the hospital to determine the appropriate course of action to support the child's recovery, education and reintegration into school

School Organisation

For this policy to be successful every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils the importance of attendance in accessing the quality education being provided. This means staff will arrive to lessons on time and be well prepared.

Specific responsibilities allocated to staff:

Headteacher:

- To oversee the whole policy
- To report to governors
- To liaise with class tutors
- To oversee the operation of the attendance system and the collation of attendance data
- To oversee the work of administration staff
- To report to the Trust when necessary
- To oversee the reintegration process and plan for the return of long-term absences

Class Tutor:

- To complete registers accurately and on time both AM and PM
- To record any reasons for absence in pupil planners on the registers
- To inform the safeguarding and pastoral team of any concern

Administration Team:

- Update registers onto School Pod
- Note telephone messages and mark in registers
- Highlight irregular absence and inability to contact parent/carer to Senior Leadership Team/Safeguarding and Pastoral Team



Safeguarding and Pastoral Team:

- Make weekly home visits with pupils that are absent from school long term
- Liaise with parents/carers regarding pupil's attendance concerns
- Produce termly letters to all parents/carers stating their child's current attendance
- Produce attendance letters and analysis of attendance figures when required
- Liaise with stakeholders regarding a pupil's attendance concerns
- Keep an up to date folder with all attendance paperwork including intervention/actions and evidence
- Liaise with pupil's SEND caseworkers regarding any changes to a child's circumstances that may impede their regular school attendance
- Liaise with the Attendance and Inclusion Team and refer to the Education Welfare Service when necessary

Governors:

- Governors may be given specific role/interest in monitoring attendance and/or policies

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Attendance at school is high on the government agenda at the moment. The government is urging Head Teachers to challenge poor attendance and stop authorising holidays during term time. The Department for Education has deemed **pupil's with attendance less than 90% are 'persistent absentees'** and follow up is necessary.

What is an Authorised Absence?

Authorised absence is where approval has been given in advance for a pupil to be away, or the school has accepted an explanation offered as satisfactory reason for absence. All other absence must be regarded as unauthorised. The following may be reasons for authorising absence:

- Illness
- Family bereavement
- Medical or dental appointment
- Days of religious observance
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removal from roll or reinstated

As an organisation we ask that we are informed of any unavoidable absences as soon as possible and we reserve the right to ask for evidence of appointments such as doctor's appointments.

What is an Un-Authorised Absence?

Absences are unauthorised when the explanation for an absence is deemed an unsatisfactory or unnecessary reason to be absent from school. Absences will not be authorised under the following circumstances:

- Family holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Shopping trips/birthday outings



- No parent/carer communication
- Lateness; arrival 30 minutes after registration closes without parental explanation

Irregular Attendance/Refusal to Attend

Parents/carers of pupils of compulsory school age are responsible for making sure their child receives a full time education and can be prosecuted for Irregular attendance under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1). Where a child has not attended regularly at school the Local Authority have the options of issuing a fixed penalty notice in respect of the parents of the child, bringing proceedings before the family courts for an Education Supervision Order or prosecuting the parents under Section 444 before the Magistrates Court. Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued for persistent lateness where the child arrives after the closure of registration.

As a Fellowship we endeavour to support all of our pupils to attend school every day, we therefore ask that parents/carers act upon any concerns they have regarding their child's attendance and contact the school at the earliest opportunity to prevent any attendance issue worsening.

The Local Authority's Code of Conduct and details on Fixed Penalty Notices can be located at:
<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-and-behaviour/school-absences/131943.article>

Reintegration

The return to school for a pupil after a long-term absence requires special planning therefore support programmes will be tailored to the pupil's individual needs and may involve phased or part time re-entry with support in lessons and/or at home as appropriate.

Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have removed the reference of holidays during term time and now provides that a leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances relating to that application. The onus is on the parent/carer to present the case in writing at least two weeks before the event. Retrospective granting of permission, should only therefore be on rare occasions. Therefore parents/carers of Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship who are requesting time off during term time need to complete a 'Request for Pupil Absence During Term Time Form' detailing their exceptional circumstances for the absence. Educational benefits will be considered; however, reasons purely based on financial circumstances cannot. The form needs to be submitted to the Fellowship two weeks in advance and the Senior Leadership Team, according to the child's needs, will review these requests on individual basis. If a leave of absence goes on longer than the agreed duration, the extra days will be unauthorised.



Removal from Roll

The Fellowship will only remove pupils from roll when this has been agreed by the local authority. In the instance a change of school placement is required an emergency review will be held with parents/carers to change the named school on the pupils Educational Health Care Plan.

Parents/carers moving out of the area are required to inform their child's SEND caseworker of this as the earliest opportunity, and inform school in writing detailing their new address, proposed last day in school, new school, if a placement has been found, and potential schools if a placement has not been confirmed.

Elective Home Education

Whilst the local authority encourages parents/carers to enrol their child at school, they also recognise that parents/carers have an equal right to educate their child at home. The local authority wishes to work with parents/carers who home educate in order to ensure that those children are provided with efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs which they might have. It also wishes to ensure that parents/carers who choose to electively home educate their children, do so for the right reasons and have an intention to educate at home from the point they remove their child from school.

If parents/carers have a desire to home education their child we as a fellowship ask that the headteacher is informed of the parents/carers intention to home educate their child in writing. The school will initiate a meeting with parents/carers, and the child if appropriate to discuss their decision and provide a copy of the local authority's 'Elective Home Education' leaflet, if a meeting does not take place a copy of this leaflet will be sent home to parents/carers. The school will notify the Elective Home Education Team and the child's SEND Caseworker of such notification and parents/carers will be required to demonstrate, to the local authority, that they have considered the educational needs of their child and how they will meet these needs in the immediate and long-term future. A child can only be removed from roll on the grounds of Elective Home Education when this has been agreed by the local authority.

Rewards for good attendance

- At the end of the year a certificate is awarded in the main school's assembly to all pupils with 100% attendance
- Pupils who achieve 100% attendance throughout a 12 week term will receive a certificate

Interesting fact: 'if a pupil was absent from school for two weeks every year from their reception year to 18 years of age, they would miss the equivalent of one whole year's school education'