Attendance & Registration Policy

Policy ratified by the Staffing & Community Committee

Spring Term 2026

Review date: Spring Term 2028 (or as required)

Policy Owner: Rachel Davies – Headteacher

EXTERNAL POLICY

ATTENDANCE, REGISTRATION AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

At Grove Park, we are committed to every child reaching their full potential and therefore we follow all guidance from the Department for Education (DFE) with regard to school attendance. We also work closely with Hounslow's School Attendance Support Service (SASS) to ensure we are doing all we can to help all children to benefit from their education as fully as possible.

We also recognise that attendance is a key part of our commitment to safeguarding and child protection. At Grove Park, we acknowledge that children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

RATIONALE

Regular attendance and punctuality are important if children are to take part fully in the life of the school and take advantage of the learning opportunities offered by the school. We recognise that attending school regularly and punctually is vital to the educational process and encourages a good pattern of work.

AIMS

To ensure all pupils attend school regularly and on time so they can achieve their full potential.
- To promote positive attitudes towards attendance among pupils and families.
- To identify and address barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity.
- To safeguard children by monitoring absence and responding to concerns appropriately.
- To work collaboratively with families and external agencies to support improved attendance.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Headteacher has the overall responsibility to ensure that:

- the school follows the DfE Guidance: Working Together to Improve School Attendance: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf
- the school has an attendance lead who has delegated responsibilities to lead on and monitor attendance and punctuality;
- pupils are registered accurately and efficiently and that staff know how to use the school's registration system;
- the school liaises with the School Attendance Support Officer to set attendance targets;
- parents or carers are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised;
- pupil attendance and lateness is regularly monitored;
- attendance letters are sent home to parent as part of the school's monitoring of attendance
- school attendance statistics are reported to the LA (via the census) and the governing body;
- the school provides the School Attendance Support Officer with registers of attendance and attendance statistics as requested and supports in following up long term absences;

- pupils who have been absent for long periods because of ill health receive appropriate learning support;
- attendance data is analysed and compared with previous years' in order to identify and address any trends or patterns, particularly with vulnerable groups of pupils;
- the school follows all guidance related to Children Missing from Education (CME)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education/children-missing-education-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-schools

All teachers are expected to:

- register pupils accurately;
- register pupil attendance and lateness promptly at the start of morning and afternoon sessions;
- encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually and inform the attendance lead if there is a problem that may lead to absences or if they have concerns about a child's pattern of attendance or punctuality;

Pupils will be encouraged to:

- attend school regularly;
- inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences (as appropriate to their age);
- arrive at school on time and follow advice given to them by school to help make this happen;

Parents and carers will be asked to:

- ensure their child/children attends school regularly and on time;
- e-mail absences@grovepark.hounslow.sch.uk or phone the school on the first day of non-attendance by 8:30am;
- contact school on each subsequent day of non-attendance;
- avoid making medical and dental appointments during school hours;
- not book holidays, trips or events during term time;
- work with the school to meet any attendance targets that are set to help improve attendance.

The Governing Body will:

- recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies;
- ensure the Policy is up-to-date and reviewed regularly and line with DfE legislation;
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties;
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts where they are needed most;
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance;
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.

GUIDELINES

- We value our role of working in partnership with parents;
- Parents have the responsibility to ensure regular attendance and punctual arrival;
- Our responsibility is to support attendance and examine problems that may lead to non-attendance or lateness;

- First letters are sent to parents whose attendance has fallen below 90%;
- Target letters are sent to parents whose attendance does not improve;
- A referral to the School Attendance Support Officer will be made if targets are not met;
- First letters are sent to parents where a pattern of lateness is identified;
- The attendance lead will meet parents to discuss any concerns;
- We keep a register of attendance at the start of every morning and afternoon session;
- Staff mark the register for the correct day, session and week.

- Attendance must be marked using the correct codes Codes (pages 76 – 92 of the DfE Guidelines)

Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

- The reasons for absence must be entered as soon as possible. The attendance information is entered into SIMS promptly by the school office;

- Regular attendance data printouts shall be made available for the School Attendance Support Officer as requested;

- An email or telephone call by 8:30am is required on the first day of absence – parents can leave a message on the school voicemail system;

- In the absence of a message or note on the first day of absence, the school will text and then phone home to ensure pupils are safe with carers;

- Unauthorised absence, i.e. when a child is absent without good cause which could include shopping trips, holidays in term time, truanting or where a teacher feels a child is being kept home without good reason. This should be recorded and where a pattern emerges or concern arises parents and the School Attendance Support Officer will be informed;

- Late arrival and early departure should be monitored and reported to the attendance officer, if it is a regular occurrence. If a child regularly arrives after 8:50am (before register closes) or after 9:20 (after register closes) or leaves before lunch or 3:20pm then they and their parent should report to the office, where a record is kept of the fact and noted in case of an emergency. This should include the time of arrival and departure and the reason for being late, where appropriate, should be signed by the parent.

- The Inventry system is used to track and monitor children leaving/returning to school during the school day.

Term Time Leave

- If parents need to request term time leave in exceptional circumstances, they are asked to complete a Term Time Leave Request Form (see below). Term Time Leave may only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher The government has not defined the 'exceptional circumstances' referred to in the 2013 regulations, rather it is for each Headteacher to decide what they view to be an exceptional circumstance, this is done on a case-by-case basis.

Process when parents apply for term time leave:

1) Parents complete form with request (form available on school website or from the school office);
2) If parents require support, they can request a meeting with the attendance lead;
3) Headteacher makes a decision, signs form;
4) A parentmail is sent informing parents of the decision
5) Copy of form is kept by the School Office and entered into SIMS using the correct code;
6) Class teachers are informed of the term time leave application;
7) If parents disagree with the decision, then a meeting can be requested with the Headteacher.

Punctuality

Lateness into school causes disruption to that child's learning and to that of the other children in the class. It is of extreme importance therefore that all children arrive at school on time.

We have adopted a soft start approach to the start of the day and children are able to come into the classroom from 8:40am. The school day starts at 8:50am when a bell is rung in the playground.

If a child arrives after 8:50am, but before 9:20am:

This will be recorded as Code L in SIMS: Late arrival before the register has closed;

The child's name, class and time of arrival will be recorded by the member of staff on the soft start door and the number of minutes late will be recorded in SIMS by the office;

If a child arrives after 9:20am:

This will be recorded as Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed (after 9:25am)

If a child arrives after 8:50am the playground gates and soft start doors are closed so children need to use the main entrance on Nightingale Close. They will be registered by the School Office using the correct code (L or U depending on the time).

Addressing Punctuality Concerns

If a child starts to develop a regular pattern of lateness – the class teacher will make verbal contact with the parent (in the playground after school or by phone) and alert the attendance officer if there any issues that appear to be of concern after the discussion.

If punctuality still remains an issue then the attendance lead will contact the parents and ask them to come to a meeting.

CONCLUSION

During the school year we wish to encourage the highest possible individual attendance rate and view this procedure as a necessary and important objective so that all pupils can take full advantage of their education.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Attendance (authorised & unauthorised) remains higher than 96% (90% in Autumn 1);
- Unauthorised absence rate remains under 2%;
- All registers are filled in correctly and promptly;
- Parents are made aware of their responsibilities for attendance and punctuality and are involved in discussion should their attendance and/or punctuality cause concern;
- The School Attendance Support Officer continues to be satisfied by the efforts made by the School to maintain high levels of attendance;
- Regular evaluation of attendance data informs school strategy through patterns and trends in attendance.

GROVE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL – TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST FORM

We would ask you to seriously consider your request to take your child out of school. Lack of continuity may affect your child's academic progress. We do not authorise any holiday taken during term time, in accordance with advice given by the DFE and the London Borough of Hounslow. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 specify that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The government has not defined the 'exceptional circumstances' referred to in the 2013 regulations, rather it is for each Headteacher to decide what they view to be an exceptional circumstance.

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

If you wish to request Term Time Leave, please complete the form below and submit it to the school office. The Headteacher will consider your request and you will receive an e-mail informing you of their decision. No other member of staff (e.g. the office staff) are allowed to make any decisions with regard to Term Time Leave requests, so we respectfully ask that you do not ask them to give an explanation for the Headteacher's decision.

If a child stays away from school for more than any authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance. If a child does not attend school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period that the leave was granted for or if a child is continually absent for a period of 20 school days, the school may have to take the child off roll. In these circumstances it is up to the parent to inform the school, as once removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain their place.

The threshold for a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence. These sessions can be consecutive or not. The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years.

Child's name:	Year Group/Class:
First day of absence:	Date child is expected to return to school:
Number of days absence from school:	Today's date:

Reason for term time leave request:

I have read and understood all of the above information and understand that my child's absence may result in an official warning or Fixed Penalty Fine.

Name of Parent/Carer (please print):	Signature of Parent/Carer:

Headteacher's comments:

I **am not** authorising the above term time leave request ☐

I am authorising all of/some of the request for term time leave due to exceptional circumstances ☐

Agreed date of return: _____

Signed: